



National Commission on the Future of the Army

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000
Arlington, VA 22202

SUBJECT: National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) Minutes from Engagement - 13 JUL 15, with MajGen Arnold Punaro (retired)

Date: 13 July 2015

Time: 1258 - 1402

Location: 5th floor Conference Room, NCFA Staff HQs, Taylor Bldg, Crystal City, VA

Format: Meeting with Individual

Attendees:

MajGen Arnold Puanro (retired)

Commissioner Carter Ham (Chairman)

Commissioner Thomas Lamont (Vice Chairman)

MG(R) Ray Carpenter – NCFA Staff Executive Director

Mr. Mark von Heeringen – Alternate Designated Federal Officer

Documents Submitted to Commission:

- 1) Final Report: Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, ‘Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st Century Operational Force, Jan 31, 2008
- 2) Executive Summary: Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, “Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st Century Operational Force”, Jan 31, 2008
- 3) Reserve Forces Policy Board Final Report to the Secretary of Defense, “Eliminating Major Gaps in DoD Data on the Fully-Burdened and Life-Cycle Cost of Military Personnel: Cost Elements Should Be Mandated by Policy,” Jan 7, 2013
- 4) Info Memo: Office of the Secretary of Defense Reserve Policy Board, Subject: “Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board on Reserve Component Use, Balance, Cost and Savings: A Response to Questions from Secretary of Defense,” Feb 11, 2014
- 5) Reserve Forces Policy Board Final Report to the Secretary of Defense, “Department of Defense Cyber Approach: Use of National Guard and Reserves in the Cyber Mission Force,” Aug 18, 2014

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Meeting Summary

Commissioners Ham and Lamont met with MajGen (Ret) Arnold Punaro to discuss the purpose of the National Commission on the Future of the Army, gather his views on the issues before the Commission, and help prepare for his time as witness for NCFA public hearing later in the week. Key threads of the discussion included the following:

Mr. Punaro began by indicating he did not believe the Commission's work would go to the dust bin of history and that he viewed the Commission's charter as being about the role of ground forces in the future, and with respect to the Guard, not about Apache helicopters, but rather the role of the Guard in ground combat. He firmly stated the Guard should be the combat reserve of the Army and stressed the Guard and Reserve Force provided the additional important benefit of direct connectivity to the population.

Other discussion items included considering ways Active Duty Soldiers might serve with the Reserves for up to 3 years at a time using Reserve appropriations, the concept of holistically capturing the fully-burdened costs of personnel, attracting younger generations "millennials and post-millennials" into the military, the state of ground force combat readiness, and impacts of Budget Control Act on modernization and force size.

When asked specifically for his personal thoughts on the AH-64 transfer proposal, Mr. Punaro was quick to assail cost as the only logic for the transfer and concluded that Guard and Reserve forces, need to be more integrated with the Active Component. This led to further discussion about looking at the concept of multi-component units and simplifying or even reducing the number of call-up authorities, with the caveat that support from other Services would be needed.

Mr. Punaro offered that the Army needs to do a better job of understanding the civilian workplace skills of its Guard and Reserve members and manage to them. Other ideas included dual status commanders under Title 10 authority, and creating in place contingency plans for civil defense and emergency response to improve consequence management.

The meeting concluded with Mr. Punaro stating that Reserve dwell times shouldn't be limited to 1:5 ratio, and while predictability is a critical factor, RC units should habitually work with AC units and in so doing, there needs to be a more fair assessment of costs allocated to reserve units – and maintained, e.g., Guard Brigades are not more expensive when called up than their Active counterparts, but tracking fully-burdened lifecycle expenses is key to understanding that.