



“The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive study of the structure of the Army, and policy assumptions related to the size and force mixture of the Army...”

2015 NDAA, Section 1703(a)(1)

THE COMMISSION’S MISSION AND METHOD

Congress established the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) in the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (NDAA FY15) (Public Law 113-291). The Congress was prompted to form the NCFA, in large part, over two major concerns. The first was how the

Army should best organize and employ the Total Force in a time of declining resources. The second was whether the Army should proceed with the transfer of AH-64 Apache aircraft from the reserve components to the Regular Army, as directed by the Army’s Aviation Restructure Initiative.

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The issue of how best to organize and employ the Total Force, particularly the reserve components, is not new; the Army, indeed the nation, has wrestled with this question for decades. In 1993, the Regular Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and the associations representing those elements met to consider how best to restructure the reserve components. The decision to include the National Guard and Army Reserve leadership in the discussion, along with providing seats at the table for the relevant associations, was important in preventing any second guessing of the agreed-upon changes. It also gave the resulting “Offsite Agreement” (Memorandum for Record, Subject: AC-RC Leaders’ Offsite Agreement as of 29 October 1993, DACS-ZB dated 10 November 1993; see Appendix C) a desired aura of credibility and legitimacy, especially with Congress. Today’s challenges to simultaneously resource readiness, force structure, and modernization in the face of fiscal constraints are, in many ways, echoes from the past.

Understanding the history involved and appreciating both the historical and the current relationships between the components, the Commission approached its mandate with a clear understanding that in order to address the apparent rift between some elements of the Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, the Commission’s final report would have to provide policymakers with credible recommendations that could stand up to intense scrutiny. In that regard, the Commission has made every effort to be unbiased, comprehensive, inclusive, balanced, and transparent. Commissioners and staff thoughtfully and seriously considered every proposal submitted from within and outside the Army. This holistic approach maintained an eye toward what is best for the nation. No component, group, association, or individual was given short shrift or shown favoritism. The result is a final product that is thoroughly researched, based on realistic assumptions, and backed by solid data.

THE COMMISSION’S TASKS

The Congress directed the Commission to undertake a “comprehensive study of the structure of the Army” in

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The National Commission on the Future of the Army: from left, Sergeant Major of the Army (Ret.) Raymond F. Chandler, General (Ret.) James D. Thurman, The Honorable Robert F. Hale, Mr. Don Tison (Designated Federal Officer), General (Ret.) Carter F. Ham, The Honorable Thomas R. Lamont, General (Ret.) Larry R. Ellis, The Honorable Kathleen H. Hicks, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Jack C. Stultz.

order to assess the size and force mix of the Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve and make recommendations in those areas where the Commission thought appropriate. In considering recommendations, the Commission was instructed to take into account “anticipated mission requirements for the Army at acceptable levels of national risk and in a manner consistent with available resources and anticipated future resources.” Furthermore, the Commission was assigned the specific task of studying the transfer of all the Army National Guard’s AH-64 Apache helicopters to the Regular Army, taking into account the same considerations as those regarding the Army size and force mix. The final report was due to Congress and the President by February 1, 2016.

To help commissioners organize the study efforts and allocate resources, the Commission at the outset enlisted three separate elements to conduct parallel assessments of assigned tasks. The Commission greatly appreciates the assistance provided by experts from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Army War College, and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command for their contributions in mission analysis. This mission analysis, conducted at the Commission’s meeting in May 2015, helped chart the Commission’s work.

Given the scope and complexity of the tasks and the limited time to accomplish them, the Commission decided to focus on several overarching principles to guide its work. Primary among those was adopting a Total Army approach in which each component would be considered distinct, essential, and interdependent. The Commission focused on the differing strengths and limitations of each component’s capabilities, particularly regarding cost efficiencies, while taking into account how the components rely on each other to achieve mission requirements.

The commissioners also agreed that all recommendations must take into account acceptable levels of risk, potential impacts on the All-Volunteer Force, and fiscal implications. Furthermore, the commissioners sought to ensure that the needs of Combatant Commanders and the Governors were paramount. To that end, the capacity of the Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve to support current and anticipated homeland defense and disaster assistance missions in the United States was an essential requirement.

RISK ASSESSMENT APPROACH

The NDAA FY15 characterized risk in the Commission’s tasks and considerations as national, military, operational, and strategic. The Commission chose to simplify the risk framework into the Army’s ability to fulfill two basic



U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Kelley.

responsibilities: (1) to provide options to the President, Secretary of Defense, and Combatant Commanders when called upon (risk to mission), and (2) to ensure the health of the force (risk to force).

“Risk to mission” addresses the Army’s ability to provide well trained, appropriately equipped forces when employed. Missions are at risk when Army forces do not have appropriate or sufficient capability and capacity, or cannot bring capability and capacity to bear when needed to defeat an adversary or achieve other assigned missions. Risk to mission can be measured in the near term as comprising the manning, training, and equipping for possible “fight tonight” contingencies. Risk to mission should also be measured in the long term as an expression of the preparedness of the force to meet over-the-horizon challenges.

“Risk to force” addresses the Army’s ability to maintain the health of its All-Volunteer Force. The force is at risk when units suffer undue casualties, when units deploy without being fully prepared for their assigned missions, when soldiers experience prolonged periods of repeated, extended deployments, or when the Army cannot recruit and retain enough qualified men and

women with the needed skill sets. As with risk to mission, risk to force should be measured in both the near and long term.

Other elements of the Joint Force rely on Army support, just as Army forces rely on capabilities from other Services. Because of this interdependency, Army risk to mission has a domino effect on the capability of the entire joint force.

Lastly, a major concern was determining a reasonable estimate of “anticipated future resources,” illustrated by the fact that during the short lifespan of the Commission, the defense budget took an unpredictable course until passage of the Bipartisan Budget Agreement of 2015, which apparently settled the matter for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. In the end, the Commission looked to the Future Year Defense Program and the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA), as amended, for guidance on future resources.

“To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace.”

—George Washington

FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT

The Congress created the NCFA as a federal advisory committee subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (Public Law 92-463). FACA, while outdated in many ways by advances in technology (e.g. maintaining records for “public inspection and copying at a single location in the offices of the advisory committee”), guided the Commission in striking a balance between being inclusive and transparent with the public, yet protective of information in the interests of national security.

FACA committees must be sponsored by a federal agency that would be responsible for ensuring compliance with the law, from the creation of the committee through its expiration. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) sponsored the NCFA, and by working in close coordination with the Department of the Army, did much to ensure the Commission's success. With the benefit of having learned from the experience of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force (NCSAF), former Secretary of the Army John McHugh nominated Mr. Don Tison, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G-8, to serve as NCFA's Designated Federal Officer (DFO). This was important because the DFO is the sponsoring agency's representative and is responsible for ensuring compliance with FACA and all other legal requirements. As such, a senior individual with deep understanding of the Army and its culture was vital to assessing the most practical means of applying the requirements of FACA and facilitating the work of the NCFA. Moreover, the OSD appointed the NCFA's DFO prior to the Commission beginning its work, which provided valuable lead time to organize for success.

As the DFO, Mr. Tison, with the support of former Secretary McHugh and current Army leaders, selected a versatile staff, as well as a few alternate DFOs to assist him in executing his responsibilities. The DFO staff worked hand-in-hand with the NCFA staff and OSD in facilitating the commissioners' efforts. The assembled DFO team had the flexibility to expand and contract as needed to support the Commission in executing its mission. Figure 4 depicts the relationships among OSD, the Army, commissioners, NCFA staff, DFOs, and the legal, ethics, policy, and logistics elements of support.

Aside from compliance with FACA, a primary objective of the DFO was to support the commissioners' desire for achieving as much transparency with the public as possible. To that end, the proactive efforts to prepare for the NCFA ensured that the Commission and its staff would immediately demonstrate inclusiveness and transparency with the public.

Nevertheless, compliance with FACA comes at a cost in terms of personnel and resources. The Commission realized that several of the goals of FACA could be accomplished in a much more efficient manner without compromising the desired goals of the law. For example, the NCFA maintained a thorough and comprehensive website (www.ncfa.ncr.gov) that made available every aspect of NCFA activities, including minutes from proceedings. This allowed the public to track the Commission's progress and interact with the Commission through public comment and news announcements. Yet, the NCFA, via its supporting DFO team, also had to enter information into the General Services Administration website, an antiquated site at best. This type of redundancy is unnecessary, given the relative ease with which websites can now be established and maintained. Moreover, FACA still requires a physical reading room when a virtual reading room is not only easier to maintain, but also easier for the public to access. No one registered a visit to the NCFA reading room. In short, from how meetings are conducted to how records are kept, FACA needs to be updated to reflect the advances in technology since the law's inception in 1972.

Ultimately, a sound understanding and application of the relevant laws, specifically the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-409), and its interplay with FACA and the law establishing the Commission, as amended, provided the protections necessary to allow the commissioners to freely and thoroughly discuss and analyze the voluminous amount of classified and sensitive information provided them in OSD-approved closed meetings and in a classified setting.

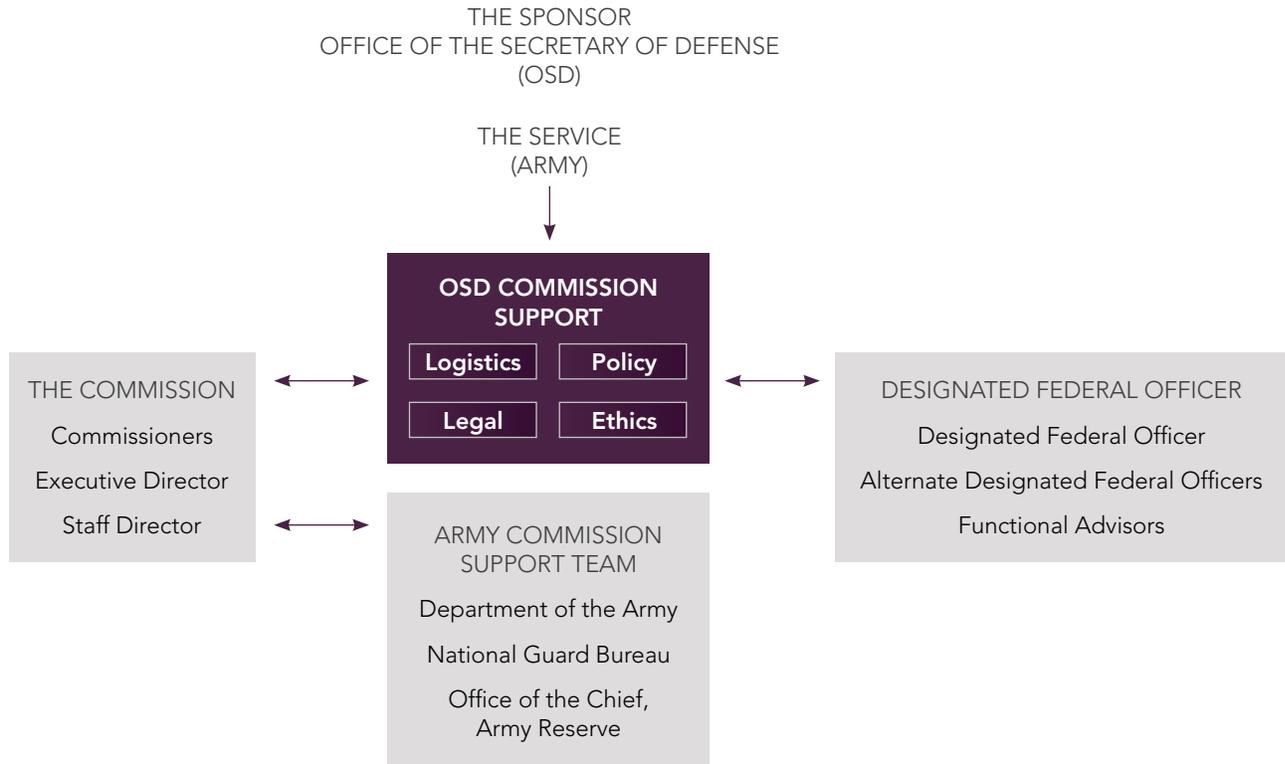
The Commission did not have to draft its report in compliance with all FACA requirements. A provision (section 1061) of the NDAA FY16 (Public Law 114-92) permitted the NCFA to conduct expedited meetings. This meant FACA did not apply to a meeting of four or fewer commissioners, a change that greatly aided the drafting process.

Recommendation 2: Congress should apply the Federal Advisory Committee Act provisions of the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act's Section 1061 to all similar commissions.

Recommendation 3: Congress should update the Federal Advisory Committee Act's requirements in a way that reflects changes in information technology, allowing commissions to use their own websites to post minutes, testimonies, and public comments and provide a public reading room.

Figure 4

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY



THE COMMISSION'S ORGANIZATION

The commissioners decided early on to have a multidisciplinary operating staff with all components well represented; indeed, both Army Reserve and Army National Guard staff outnumbered Regular Army staff. OSD, the Joint Staff, and Congressional Research Service contributed staff as well. Overall, the staff included a mix of direct hires, employees detailed to NCFCA from government entities, and contract employees. They came to NCFCA with a wide range of operational and institutional experience and were encouraged to speak with candor and rely on evidence in their reasoning.

The experience of the NCSAF informed many of the NCFCA's organizational decisions, allowing this Commission to get up and running in short order. The Commission is appreciative of the advice and information provided by NCSAF alumni.

Congress mandated a broad set of tasks for the Commission. To better manage that workload, the Commission established five subcommittees: Operational, Institutional, Force Generation, Aviation, and Drafting (Figure 5). Each subcommittee had a membership of three to four commissioners and its own dedicated staff and DFO. The OSD approved all subcommittees and their terms of

THE COMMISSION'S MISSION AND METHOD

Figure 5
SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS / TASKS

| | | SUBCOMMITTEES | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | OPERATIONAL | INSTITUTIONAL | FORCE GENERATION | AVIATION | DRAFTING |
| | | COMMISSIONERS | | | | |
| | | HON Kathleen H. Hicks, Chair GEN Carter F. Ham SMA Raymond F. Chandler LTG Jack C. Stultz | LTG Jack C. Stultz, Chair GEN Carter F. Ham SMA Raymond F. Chandler | GEN Larry R. Ellis, Chair HON Thomas R. Lamont HON Robert F. Hale GEN James D. Thurman | HON Robert F. Hale, Chair HON Thomas R. Lamont GEN Larry R. Ellis GEN James D. Thurman | GEN Carter F. Ham, Chair HON Thomas R. Lamont HON Kathleen H. Hicks LTG Jack C. Stultz |
| | | STAFF LEAD | | | | |
| | | Mr. Kerry Schindler | Mr. Johnny Thomas | Ms. Cherie Emerson | LTC Steven Pierce LTC Gregory Hartvigen | Mr. Eric Minton |
| | | DFO (Commission DFO oversight: Mr. Donald Tison) | | | | |
| NDA TASK | SECTION | MAJ Vince Morris | LTC Michael Lockwood | Mrs. Deborah Gantt | Mr. Mark Pizzuto | Mr. Mark Von Heeringen |
| FUTURE DEMAND | 1703(a)(1)(A) 1703(a)(1)(B) 1703(a)(2)(A)(i) | Primary Responsibility (PR) | Secondary Responsibility (SR) | SR | | |
| FORCE GENERATION | 1703(a)(2)(A)(iii-vi) 1703(a)(2)(B) | SR | SR | PR | | |
| COST EFFICIENCY | 1703(a)(1)(B) 1703(a)(2)(A)(ii) | SR | PR | SR | SR | |
| APACHE TRANSFER | 1703(b) | SR | | | PR | |
| ARNG ALLOCATION | 1703 (a)(2)(C) 1703 (a)(2)(D) | SR | PR | | | |
| SUBMIT REPORT | 1703(c) | SR | SR | SR | SR | PR |

reference, including a mission statement, objectives, scope, and methodology. A DFO attended all subcommittee meetings, as required by FACA. Commissioners outside a given subcommittee did not participate in that

subcommittee's activities. The subcommittees gathered information, conducted research, and analyzed relevant issues and facts for consideration and deliberation by the full Commission.

THE FACT-FINDING PHASE

Comprehensiveness and transparency drove the Commission's work. Commissioners and staff made every effort to consider all alternatives and ensure stakeholders had an opportunity to make their case before the Commission.

The overall Commission strategy during the fact-finding phase was to cover as much of the Army as feasible in the shortest time and at the least cost to taxpayers. To that end, on several occasions, the Commission took advantage of commissioner travel with other organizations to schedule visits to parts of the Army that might otherwise have been omitted. For example, Vice Chairman Thomas R. Lamont's travel to the Pacific with another national commission provided the opportunity to arrange a visit to Hawaii on his way back to the continental United States. This allowed the Commission to hear directly from distant stakeholders, including U.S. Army Pacific, the Governor of Hawaii, and the Adjutants General of Guam and Hawaii. The NCFAs trip to Germany was also planned around Chairman Carter F. Ham's presence in Europe on other matters. Lastly, the Commission met with U.S. Forces Korea (USFK), U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ), and the 2nd Infantry Division when those commanders were visiting the D.C. area on other business.

The Commission conducted site visits to gather firsthand information from soldiers and leaders, looking them in the eye and hearing the tones in their voices. The Commission established some basic criteria to help guide site visit selection. First, the Commission asked the Department of the Army, National Guard Bureau, and Office of the Chief of Army Reserve for recommendations. From this start point, the commissioners expanded the list to include as many geographically diffuse locations as possible. Figure 6 illustrates that most locales with heavy Army concentrations were visited.

Second, commissioners wanted to go to locations that featured a mix of Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve units. A good example is North Carolina. Fort Bragg and the surrounding area offered a wide variety of unit types from all components. Commissioners first met with U.S. Army Forces Command, which provides trained and ready land power to Combatant Commanders. At the time of the Commission visit, soldiers from Fort Bragg were deployed to dozens of countries, including Iraq, Afghanistan, and Liberia. Other major units engaged during the North Carolina site visits were U.S. Army Reserve Command, XVIII Airborne Corps, and U.S. Army Special Operations Command, as well as elements of the North Carolina Army National Guard. In short, North Carolina was an essential stop.

Third, the Commission sought formations with differing functions. Especially important for this planning parameter was the focused effort to meet with a wide variety of aviation units. Over the course of its fact-finding phase, the Commission visited seventeen states and the District of Columbia, conducting more than 320 individual engagements with Army units stationed in the United States and Europe covering many types: mission command, institutional, maneuver, signal, sustainment, intelligence, protection, fires, medical, and cyber. Of these, 100 were Regular Army while 130 were Army National Guard. Army Reserve units numbered about thirty, as did multicomponent or joint units.

The Commission had interactions with all fifty-four Adjutants General. Commissioners also attended the Adjutants General Association of the United States (AGAUS) conference in Georgia and the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) general conference in Tennessee. The Commission engaged, in person or through written correspondence, with thirty-three Governors and also attended the National Governors Association's summer meeting in West Virginia. During site visits, the Commission met with fifteen General Officer Commands from the Army Reserve. Two of these units were undergoing post-mobilization training and validation during the Commission visit.

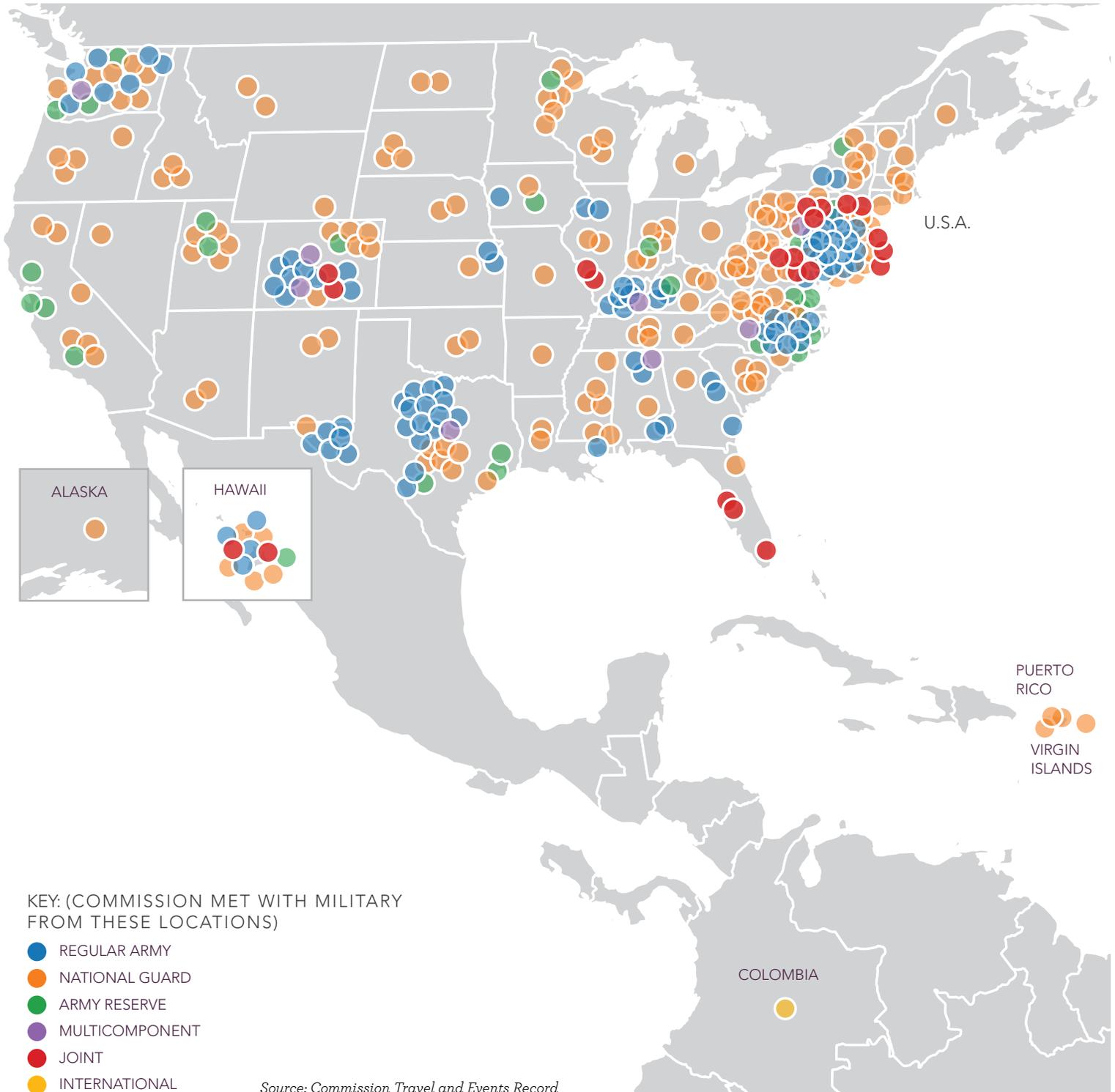
In the D.C. area, commissioners met with senior leaders from OSD, National Security Council, Department of the Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB), Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee (ARFPC), Association of the United States Army (AUSA), NGAUS, AGAUS, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Reserve Officers Association, and National Governors Association, as well as other non-government experts. The Commission also held monthly closed and open meetings in Arlington, Virginia. The closed meetings involved classified material while the open meetings allowed commissioners to hear from a wide range of witnesses and members of the public.

Commissioners met with all six geographic Combatant Commands (Pacific Command, Northern Command, Southern Command, Central Command, Africa Command, and European Command), two functional commands (Transportation Command and Space Command), and two sub-unified commands (U.S. Forces Korea and Cyber Command). Additionally, Commissioners met with official representatives of Australia, Colombia, Estonia, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Korea, Poland, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

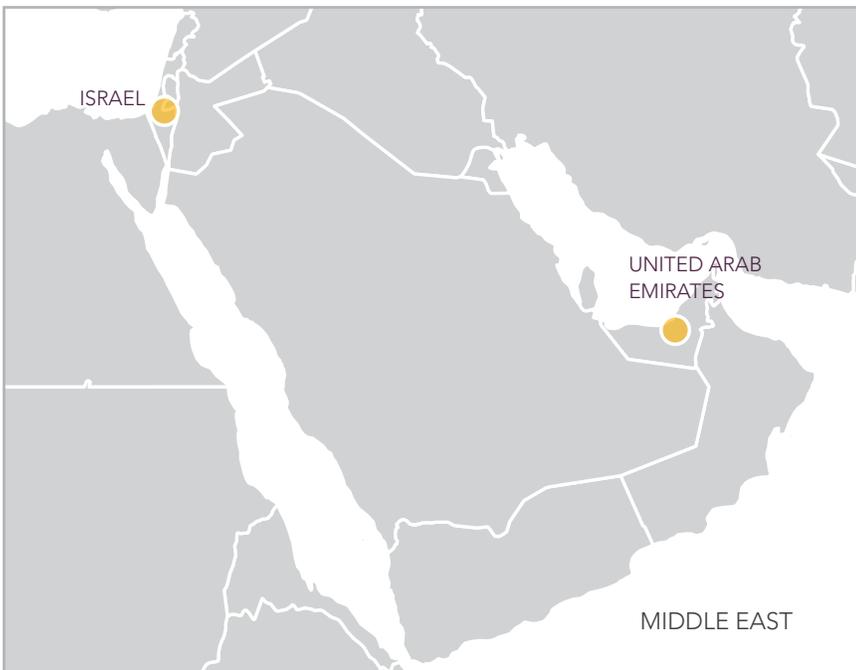
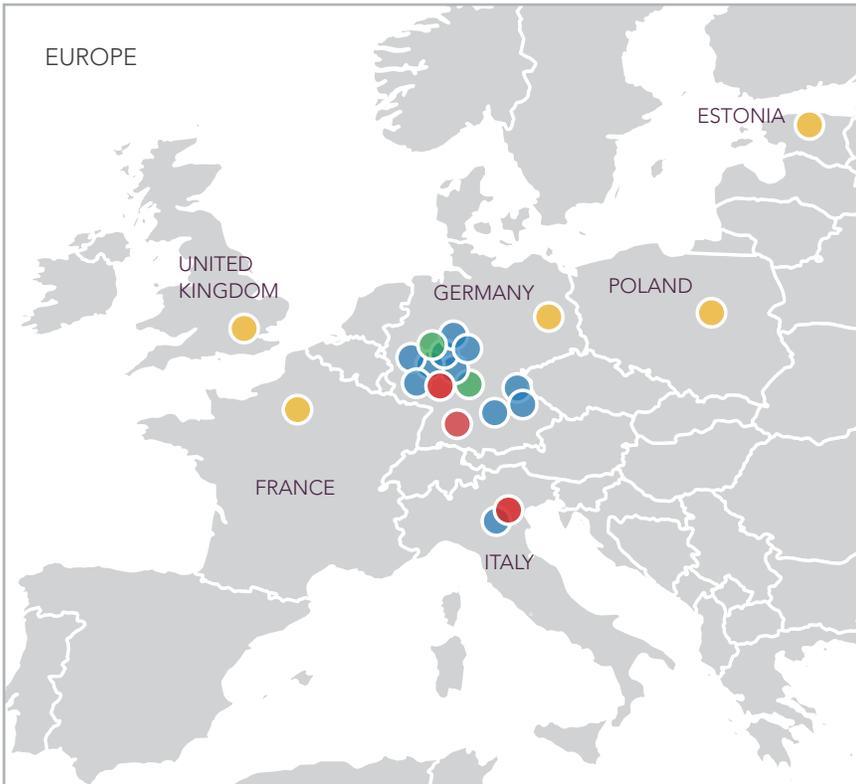
In short, the Commission endeavored to be as comprehensive in its approach as possible.

THE COMMISSION'S MISSION AND METHOD

Figure 6
COMMISSION ENGAGEMENTS



THE COMMISSION'S MISSION AND METHOD



KEY: (COMMISSION MET WITH MILITARY FROM THESE LOCATIONS)

- REGULAR ARMY
- NATIONAL GUARD
- ARMY RESERVE
- MULTICOMPONENT
- JOINT
- INTERNATIONAL

THE COMMISSION'S MISSION AND METHOD

COMMISSION TRANSPARENCY: ABOVE AND BEYOND FACIA FLOORS

The Commission also strived to be available to the general public while traveling around the country. To that end, the Commission held open meetings in Fayetteville, North Carolina; Killeen, Texas; Long Beach, California; and Tacoma, Washington—all areas with a large Total Army footprint. At each of these stops, local officials had the opportunity to share their views on the Army while commissioners heard many heartfelt expressions of support for the Army, its soldiers and families, and its mission.

The Commission also received significant input from Congress, including written comments from almost eighty Members. Commission staff met with professional staff of the House Armed Services Committee, the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Subcommittees on Defense of both the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, as well as with staff and Members of the House National Guard and Reserve Components Caucus.

The Commission actively used a variety of communication strategies to stimulate public interest, including Twitter. NCFA issued media advisories on upcoming events, distributed press releases about each meeting, and responded to queries from reporters. All of this activity is documented on www.ncfa.ncr.gov. The NCFA's communications staff actively worked with media to arrange coverage of open meetings in the D.C. area and around the globe. During site visits, the NCFA staff was able to obtain on-post internal media assistance in encouraging local media to publicize the Commission's visit and support public participation in the open meetings. NCFA accommodated every media request, ensuring transparency with the public.

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYTICAL REVIEW

The Commission's comprehensive approach extended beyond site visits and face-to-face engagements to an analytical phase of research and modeling. During six months of fact-finding and information gathering, the Commission collected a mountain of data, thousands of pages of written submissions, and many hours of testimony from across the Army and around the globe. The effort to make sense of so much information was daunting, and the Commission recognized early on that it would need a culminating analytical event to present analysis, integrate conflicting information, and weigh the results. The various proposals produced by the subcommittees were another key element the Commission had to discuss in a classified setting. The Commission settled on a two-day Comprehensive Analytical Review (CAR), hosted by the Institute for Defense

SELECTED NCFA ANALYTICAL TOOLS

System for Periodically Apportioning Demands

(SPADES): The TRADOC Analysis Center (TRAC) developed SPADES to model force sufficiency problems over time. Force sufficiency modeling done with SPADES accounts for a high amount of variability under different scenarios. This allows TRAC to examine, on a month-by-month basis, how a proposed force structure could be expected to deliver capacity during periods of both peace and war under various policy options.

MARATHON: The U.S. Army Center for Army Analysis (CAA) developed MARATHON for analyzing inventory, demand, and force generation of ready forces over time. The discrete-events simulation engine mimics, on a day-by-day basis, how the Army matches a changing supply to demands that vary over extended time periods under varying force generation policies. The Army uses MARATHON to model the entire operating force structure (over 200 unit types) for the Total Army Analysis process, as well as for ad hoc studies on force structure, demand over time, and alternative force generation policies. This model reflects a wide variety of plausible demand futures, any proposed inventories or end strengths, and virtually any force generation policy.

Joint Integrated Campaign Model (JICM): JICM is a computer simulation used by elements of the Department of Defense to analyze major combat at the strategic and operational (theater) levels. JICM was originally developed by the RAND Corporation under contract to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. While JICM reflects the entire Joint warfight, the model predominantly focuses on ground combat operations at the brigade-and-above level. JICM is used by the Army to, among other things, validate the feasibility of the force lists and concepts of operation in the jointly developed planning scenarios. In the process, JICM also provides important data on the speed of advance, casualties, equipment losses, fuel consumption, and other factors critical for analysis of support force requirements.

Analysis of Mobility Platform (AMP): AMP is a federation of computer models sponsored by the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command used as part of the budgetary decision process looking specifically at strategic and operational transportation requirements and capacity. AMP models the movement of personnel, equipment, and supplies from home station to ports and airports in the United States, transit from U.S. ports and airports to overseas ports and airports, and onward

to their final destinations using all available methods of transport. AMP is used by the Army to, among other things, validate the transportation feasibility of force deployments in the jointly developed planning scenarios. In the process, AMP provides important data on estimated arrival dates of units into a theater of war, strategic lift asset requirements, and the feasibility of maintaining the required levels of supply to meet warfighting requirements.

Force Requirements Generation (FORGE): CAA created the FORGE model to inform decisions about support force requirements at the strategic and operational (theater) levels. FORGE applies Army doctrine, the concept for providing support and sustainment elements from the jointly developed planning scenarios, JICM output, and other analytic processes to determine the doctrinal requirements for a balanced force capable of conducting and sustaining major combat operations. FORGE uses doctrine, combat forces employed, and other high-level data from the warfight plan in order to develop the required enabler capabilities such as trucks, military police, engineers, and all of the other Army capabilities required for the Joint warfight to succeed. FORGE is used by the Army to broaden the scope of the jointly developed planning scenarios beyond the brigade level to encompass all of the capabilities the Army must provide to the specified combat forces so they can conduct the operation as described in the planning scenario. In combination with the brigade-and-above force requirements listed in the jointly developed planning scenario, the FORGE output allows the Army to conduct analysis of the total force requirements for major combat operations.

Isocost Model: CAA adapted the Isocost model from the model developed for the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force. The adapted version combines plausible future demands for forces and availability policies to determine what inventory mixes could meet the demands. Units are further sorted by comparing equal-cost (i.e. isocost) mixes of Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve units of same type to determine the lowest average annual cost mix that can meet the demands. Summary data from the analysis of individual unit types was then used to consider potential trades between different types of units and different components.

Integrated Risk Assessment and Management Model (IRAMM): IDA developed IRAMM as a tool to create informed estimates of the probabilities and risks associated with significant future threat scenarios. IRAMM allows knowledgeable experts to express their views on strategic risk during one-on-one, not-for-attribution interviews. Each respondent uses a common risk definition and scales for estimating consequences, and these responses are tabulated for use in group discussion among respondents following the interviews. This two-step process provides a coherent framework to help evaluators identify areas of consensus as well as differences in judgments regarding the adverse consequences to the nation that would result under each scenario.

The Stochastic Active-Reserve Assessment (SARA) Model: The IDA SARA model is a tool for assessing force structures and force readiness policies in diverse and uncertain scenarios with a variety of future threats. Modeled force generation policies include the force structure size and mix, rotation rate, readiness posture, and deployment lengths. The SARA model permits analysis and allows consideration of a range of possible scenarios, generating 10,000 twenty-year scenarios based on user-specified expectations about the future. Users can either use default historical averages or specify the types of operations they expect to occur and, on average, how often.

Significant Activities (SIGACTs): The SIGACTS database, maintained by IDA, is the most comprehensive, official military record of daily activity for the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, containing some three-quarters of a million entries. Nearly one-third of those entries have been identified as having been generated by U.S. Army units; the bulk of the remainder comes from the other U.S. Services, non-U.S. coalition partners, and host nation forces. SIGACTs reporting was mandatory and a matter of command emphasis in both theaters. Commanders and staffs at all levels used the data to track enemy actions and their impacts, formulate effective countermeasures, and provide general situational awareness. SIGACTs entries typically answered questions related to who, what, where, when, and how for enemy-initiated attacks as well as friendly generated actions. Because of SIGACTs and a variety of supporting operational information, the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan arguably provide the most complete, near-real time, empirical documentation of warfighting in U.S. history.

THE COMMISSION'S MISSION AND METHOD

“Only in America would the government sit down with its citizens and say, ‘Hey, how ought we structure our defense forces?’”

Ted Vorhees, Fayetteville City Manager, testifying before the Commission in Fayetteville, North Carolina, June 10, 2015.

Analyses (IDA), with several more days of follow-up analysis and discussion.

The analysis leading up to the CAR took months.

The Commission used contingency planning assessments, scenarios, and intelligence estimates to assess Army capacity and capabilities. Staff planning products—such as estimates, intelligence on the operational environment, defense studies, reports, and histories—were used to describe and better understand the anticipated future environment. Geopolitical relationships, political actors, tactical functions, cultural tensions, economic efficiencies, and strategic importance were also added to the equation. The NCFA staff produced a detailed list of questions for the commissioners to consider during and after the CAR to ensure no gaps remained between the Commission’s specified and implied tasks as well as the mandated considerations.

The Commission and multiple agencies performed redundant analysis in parallel to ensure findings were consistent or, if not, that any inconsistencies were rationalized. Participating agencies included the Center for Army Analysis, Training and Doctrine Command Analysis Center (TRAC), IDA, and RAND Corporation. The goal was to identify the levers of Army force management, understand the interrelationships, and examine the implications for the size and mix of the force. Some of these activities included cost estimates, modeling of joint force campaigns, reviewing significant activities from combat operations, and interviews or seminars. These analytical efforts incorporated the assessment of risk and identified potential trade space.

The CAR allowed commissioners to evaluate plausible relationships between supply and demand of forces over time. Applying known and projected data within simple and complex models, commissioners evaluated comparisons of these relationships. Particular conditions that can cause variations in these relationships—such as the global security environment and policy generation—are critical when identifying and integrating areas of potential risk and areas of potential material misstatement. NCFA staff analysts made presentations that included an overview of the Army

today, rules of allocation, and modeling outputs using both baseline Program Objectives Memorandum budget forecasts and forces constrained by the BCA. NCFA staff provided findings and indicators regarding force mix, stationing, rotational goals, strategic lift, expansion, generating force, training, mobilization, recruiting, and equipping. NCFA staff led a discussion on generating force size and sufficiency, and RAND provided a review of its study on “Regrets and Other Potential Contingencies.” At the end of the two days, the commissioners had a better collective understanding of the proposals under consideration as well as each proposal’s feasibility and second- and third-order effects. Commissioners identified additional modeling and research questions to help transition the proposals to recommendations.

CONDUCTING THE RISK ASSESSMENT

Assessing the magnitude of a potential military challenge, its probability, and whether the force has attained an acceptable level of readiness to meet that challenge are all highly subjective. Magnitude might be best understood in terms of the cost to U.S. interests, which can range from relatively concrete measures, such as lives, property, and resources, to intangible metrics, such as deterrence and U.S. credibility. The probability of challenges that might require the use of U.S. Army capabilities is always difficult to measure, but our nation repeatedly finds itself in need of the kind of land forces only the Army can deliver. The nature of the conflict and sometimes the location are not always predictable several years out. However, by tracking geopolitical, technological, and other important trends, such as those laid out in the next chapter, and bearing in mind historical patterns, the Commission drew some conclusions about the general range and pace of likely threats and their potential costs to U.S. interests.

To conduct the risk assessment, the Commission first established its view of the future strategic environment, identifying missions that might require Army forces. By looking at these missions in isolation, the Commission sought to identify capability gaps. The Commission then looked at potential combinations of missions over time to determine the appropriate overall size of the Army and the capability and component mix of forces within the Army.

The Commission’s findings and recommendations are grounded in its assessment of the Army’s ability to satisfy global requirements, notably those present or emerging in Europe, the Pacific, the Middle East, and at home. The most stressing combination of missions the Commission assessed involved three significant, near-simultaneous events: a large-scale homeland defense response, a large-scale conventional force operation, and a limited-duration deterrence mission elsewhere.

This combination reflects the Department of Defense's current strategic guidance for force sizing and shaping. Although the world is unlikely to present exactly this set of challenges in the place, time, and order assessed, the Commission considered the scale of these combined challenges as reasonable to comprehensively assess risk to mission and risk to force.

PREPARING THE REPORT

Following the CAR, each subcommittee developed or refined proposals for the full Commission to consider. The task of turning the Commission's analysis, findings, and recommendations into a useful report for policymakers was the primary task of the Drafting Subcommittee. The NCFA apparently is the first commission sponsored by OSD to use a drafting subcommittee, and the Commission suggests that future commissions consider adopting one as well. During the November closed meeting, commissioners reached agreement in principle for most recommendations. These agreements were crucial to allow the Drafting Subcommittee to move from an outline to explanatory text.

The Drafting Subcommittee assigned each chapter to one of its four commissioners, who served as the lead writer. Two different NCFA staff members were also assigned to each chapter to assist in the writing by developing outlines and serving as resource channels. The editor managed the individual chapter writing process under the supervision of the Executive Director. This approach facilitated development of graphics,

vignettes, and sidebar information as the outline transitioned into report text.

During the July 16, 2015, open meeting, the Commission unanimously approved a draft outline presented by the Drafting Subcommittee for the final report. The starting outline was generated by reviewing other commission reports for best practices. This outline provided subcommittees a framework for their findings and allowed the staff to begin filling in administrative information in annexes, such as the list of site visits and public comments. While changes occurred, the original outline served to organize information as the Commission progressed.

Prior to enactment of the NDAA FY16, which significantly freed up the writing process by limiting FACA's application to only meetings with five or more commissioners, the Commission adopted a hub-and-spoke method for getting inputs and edits from all eight commissioners while remaining FACA compliant. The editor, under the supervision of the Executive Director and Staff Director, provided each of the eight commissioners with a draft report and then received and processed comments, questions, and edits from them individually. After consolidating this input, the editor provided the new version of the report back to commissioners for further review and edits.

Following an OSD security review, the Commission gathered to address security review comments and proof read the final report before delivery to the printer for production and an on-time public release of the Commission's report.