

Integration of Army Regular, Reserve and Guard Forces

PURPOSE: Explain how the Army today integrates (associates) Regular units/individuals with Reserve and Guard units/individuals. Assess past initiatives and lessons learned.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates signed Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 1200.17, "*Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force*"¹ on 29 Oct 08. This watershed Directive established an overarching set of principles and policies to promote and support the management of the United States Army Reserve (USAR) and the Army National Guard (ARNG), herein collectively identified as the Reserve Components (RC), as an operational force. The Directive also promulgated as policy that the Active Component (AC) and the RC would be "integrated as a total force based on the attributes of the particular component and their individual competencies."²

To align the Army with DoDD 1200.17, Secretary of the Army John McHugh published the Army Total Force Policy (ATFP) 2012-08³ on 4 Sep 12. The ATFP directs as policy the integration of the AC and RC as a total force, capable of meeting high operational tempo demands and providing predictable capabilities to combatant commanders. Both policies reflect and are the culmination of AC and RC integration lessons learned over more than forty years.

Since 1973 the Army has explored a wide variety of alternatives to integrate AC and RC forces more seamlessly. A recently published RAND report, "Active Component Responsibility in Reserve Component Pre- and Postmobilization Training" provides a comprehensive treatment of this history.⁴ While inappropriate to reiterate the breadth of the history, it is nonetheless useful to reference several examples to illustrate the historical challenges associated with AC-RC integration.

In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the Secretary of Defense implemented the Total Force Policy which sought to integrate all military assets into a single force. In the late seventies, the Army adopted the Roundout Strategy which aligned several Guard maneuver brigades Regular divisions. The Regular division provided some oversight of the training and readiness of its Guard round-out brigade, which was to deploy with the division in the event of a contingency. The CAPSTONE program, launched in 1979, sought to align RC units with AC or other RC units with which they would likely be employed in wartime.⁵

The first test of the Total Force Policy occurred in Operation DESERT STORM (ODS) in 1990-91. The Roundout Strategy did not significantly improve collective unit readiness and resulted in longer than anticipated post-mobilization periods for three Guard maneuver brigades that ultimately were not validated and deployed before ODS combat operations ended. On the

other hand, a 2014 RAND study, “*Assessing the Army’s Active-Reserve Component Force Mix*”⁶ noted that “there were multiple instances of smaller RC support and logistics units mobilizing and deploying in time comparable to some AC units of the same type.”

In the wake of ODS, the Department of the Army Inspector General, the Government Accounting Office and the Congressional Research Service all issued reports on RC mobilization and training which led to congressional legislation to improve RC readiness and training. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 1991 directed the Army to establish a pilot program to assign AC officers as advisors to RC combat units and high priority RC combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) units. In 1993 the Army National Guard Combat Readiness Reform act was designated as Title XI of NDAA for fiscal year 1993. Title XI included twenty sweeping change provisions intended to improve Guard combat unit readiness, training, and deployability.

A major component of Title XI was the requirement to associate each Guard combat unit with a Regular combat unit whose commander (at the brigade level or higher) would approve the Guard unit’s training program; review its readiness report; assess its manpower, equipment, and training resource requirements; validate its compatibility with Regular forces and; approve vacancy promotions of officers.⁷ Although combat operations in the aftermath of 9-11 stressed the ability of the Regular Army to support this requirement, the Army continues to meet congressional intent of the associate unit program. The legislated roles and responsibilities formerly executed by the commanders of associate Regular units are now performed by commanders of First Army in the Continental United States; the 196th Infantry Brigade in the Pacific area of responsibility; and the U.S. Army Europe for conventional RC units located in the European area of responsibility.

In 1996, US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) conducted an evaluation of RC training support and determined several critical recommendations needed to be implemented to improve integrated training. Training Support XXI (TS XXI), as the program was called, consolidated pre- and post-mobilization training support under First and Fifth Armies. TS XXI merged RC training support under regional training brigades which largely support combat arms units and under training divisions which support CS and CSS units. As the demand for RC units increased in Iraq and Afghanistan, the focus of TS XXI gradually shifted from pre-mobilization to post-mobilization. According to a 2008 AUSA Landwarfare paper, TS XXI had a positive impact on training and mobilization of RC units in support of Iraq and Afghanistan. The author asserts, “were it not for the training support brigades, other AC units would have had to assume this function in addition to their other mission, to the detriment of both RC unit post-mobilization training and supporting AC units’ own deployment preparations.”⁸

In the aftermath of the FORSCOM 1996 evaluation, the Army continued to search for innovative ways to achieve AC and RC integration. Ultimately, in 1999 two active duty division headquarters were activated for training National Guard units; those of the 7th Infantry Division and the 24th Infantry Division. The subordinate brigades of the divisions did not activate, so they could not be deployed as combat divisions. Instead, the headquarters units

focused on full-time training of the Army National Guard. These divisions were unique organizations that broke new ground integrating the Army's active and Reserve combat units. Each division was commanded by an active duty Major General and had an active duty headquarters staff; however, the combat power of each division consisted entirely of Army National Guard enhanced-readiness combat brigades. Around 2006, these two integrated divisions were replaced by the First Army activation of Division East and Division West. These two commands are responsible for providing training support to both the USAR and the ARNG.

The Army experience with TS XXI over the last ten years of war was significantly enhanced by two other adaptations: the Guard-instituted Pre-mobilization Training Assistance Elements and the Reserve's activation of Regional Training Centers (RTCs). Both improved pre-mobilization training while reducing post-mobilization training time. Although training integration improved over the war years, many of the same problems observed in the 1990s continue to challenge AC-RC integration today, including the limited number of pre-mobilization training days, access to training ranges, personnel turnover, equipment shortages, and modernization gaps.⁹

In line with the Secretary of the Army's 2012 policy, the Army today integrates Reserve and Guard Soldiers and units with their Regular counterparts in numerous ways. Most notably FORSCOM issued, jointly signed with the Chief, US Army Reserve and Director, Army National Guard, interim guidance, "*Army Total Force Policy Implementation – FORSCOM Interim Guidance*"¹⁰ which promulgates several initiatives to promote AC-RC integration, including the Army Total Force Partnership Program and the Army Total Force Integrated Training Guidance. And, the Reserve and Guard support themselves with about 85,000 Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) Soldiers, Military Technicians, and Department of the Army Civilians serving in support of daily efforts to increase Reserve and Guard unit readiness and support global requirements.

The FORSCOM Total Force Partnership Program (TFPP) provides a framework for the alignment and partnership of selected units within the AC and RC. This program "creates partnerships between AC and RC formations to promote informal leader development, share training opportunities, develop staff functionality, and communicate lessons learned and ensures that all units have one or more partners to plan, align, and integrate training events. Although no funding is set aside for the TFPP, units are encouraged to coordinate training events with their partnered units using existing training resources."¹¹

A second major initiative from the FORSCOM guidance is the Army Total Force Integrated Training Guidance which focuses on readiness to reshape and align the Total Force. This guidance initiates deliberate steps to purposefully incorporate training between the AC and RC. The training is inclusive of major collective training events at the Combat Training Centers in Fort Polk, Louisiana and Fort Irwin, California, and Mission Command training events. Home Station Training, particularly Culminating Training Events which certify and validate formations for assigned missions, is also integral for the ATFP to ensure the AC and RC are trained to meet combatant commander requirements.

To support the intent of ATRP, First Army has recently undertaken a major reorganization to adjust its primary mission focus from RC post-mobilization to RC pre-mobilization. Known as Bold Shift II, this effort seeks to account for both the reality of the planned reduction of operational deployments and requirement to maintain the multi-component integration achieved in the past decade of warfighting. Building upon TS XXI, implementing Bold Shift II will greatly enable the Army to maintain an operational RC through AC-RC integration.¹²

Following a monumental effort providing training support to thousands of RC units over the last ten years in support of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, First Army continues to provide indispensable training support to advance AC and RC integration. First Army retains 3,299 authorized Title XI positions providing the continuous engagement and habitual relationships with RC units throughout the Army force generation cycle to enhance pre-mob collective training while reducing redundant training costs. As FORSCOM's Executing Agent for AC to RC integration, and coordinating authority for Multi-Compo Integrated Training IAW Army Total Force Policy, First Army remains essential to providing the RC unprecedented pre- and post-mobilization training support.

Finally, current fiscal constraints and required downsizing of Corps and Division Headquarters (HQs) creates operational gaps in these HQs that affect mission command, and provide a unique AC-RC integration opportunity. To overcome the resulting capability gaps, FORSCOM, in cooperation with the Reserve and Guard, as directed by Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) is conducting a Multi Component Unit (MCU) pilot, defined in *Army Regulation 71-32 Force Development and Documentation*, as a unit "made up of sub-units from two or three manned components."¹³ Under the MCU, the Reserve will man an element of 56 Soldiers co-located with the XVIII Corps Headquarters at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The 101st Airborne Division HQs at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, will include a 123-Soldier Guard element not co-located with the Division and 5 Reserve Soldiers co-located with the Division. The MCU framework requires Regular Army Commanders and the supporting Reserve and Guard elements to share responsibility for training¹⁴ and qualifying assigned Reserve and Guard Soldiers. The MCU framework is key to the pilot assessment and subsequent implementation in the other Corps and Division HQs.

ARMY PERSPECTIVE:

The 2014 Army Strategic Planning Guidance states, "In the years to come, the Army will continue to rely on the Army National Guard and Army Reserve to meet future commitments. Continuing operational use of the RC provides predictable, recurring, and sustainable operational capabilities, and strategic depth to the Total Army, both in its formations and their collective readiness to respond when called."¹⁵ The ATRP directs the Army, as a total force, to provide operating and generating forces to support worldwide commitments.

The Army will continue to integrate the Total Force. The strength of the Total Force, combined with efforts to incorporate the AC and RC units in the Global Force Management process will support the execution of the ATRP.

The United States will continue to rely on the Army Total Force to fulfill national defense needs as regional and global instability continues. Manning, training and equipping the Regular, Reserve, and Guard forces similarly will be critical in preserving the Army's capabilities and the required capacity to fulfill these needs. Lessons learned from past multi-component integration efforts, as well as outcomes from the Corps and Division HQ MCU Pilot, will help shape Total Army integration strategies in the coming years.

ENDNOTES:

¹ Department of Defense. *Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force*. (Washington, D.C.: 2008).

² Ibid.

³ Department of the Army. *Army Directive 2012-08 (Army Total Force Policy)*. (Washington, D.C.: 2012).

⁴ RAND's National Defense Research Institute. *Active Component Responsibility in Reserve Component Pre- and Postmobilization Training*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2015).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ RAND's National Defense Research Institute. *Assessing the Army's Active-Reserve Component Force Mix*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Chapman, Dennis. *Planning for Employment of the Reserve Components: Army Practice, Past and Present*. (Arlington, VA: 2008).

⁹ RAND's National Defense Research Institute. *Active Component Responsibility in Reserve Component Pre- and Postmobilization Training*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2015).

¹⁰ Forces Command. *Army Total Force Implementation – FORSCOM Interim Guidance*. (Fort Bragg, NC: 2013).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Department of the Army. *EXORD 016-15, First Army Restructure*. (Washington D.C.: 2015)

¹³ Department of the Army. Army Regulation 71-32, Force Development and Documentation. (Washington, D.C.: 2013).

¹⁴ DoDI 1215.06. Uniform Reserve Training and Retirement Categories for Reserve Components. Enclosure 2. (Washington, D.C.: 2014).

¹⁵ Department of the Army. Army Strategic Planning Guidance. (Washington, D.C.: 2014).