

Paid Duty Days for Army Guardsmen and Reservists

A Comparison of Fiscal Year 2000 with Fiscal Years 2010 to 2013

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Key findings

- Excluding most of those serving on extended active duty, the median guardsman or reservist has served only a few days more in recent years than in FY 2000.
- In FY 2000, the median guardsman included in the analysis was paid for 39 duty days, and the median reservist for 38 duty days—numbers that matched the respective statutory minimum training requirements for each component.
- In FYs 2010–2013, the medians increased by only two to six days depending on the year—ranging from 41 to 45 days for guardsmen and from 40 to 42 days for reservists.
- In all the years we looked at, many guardsmen and reservists served more than the statutory minimum; many also served less.

SUMMARY ■ By law, reservists and guardsmen are generally required to train 38 or 39 days per year, respectively, although soldiers who are in initial entry training or on extended periods of active duty serve more. Some have suggested that, in recent years, few guardsmen and reservists have served only 39 days per year.

In this report, we look at the number of paid days of service for Army reservists and guardsmen in fiscal years (FYs) 2010 through 2013, compared with a pre–September 11, 2001, baseline of FY 2000. We refer to paid days of service as *paid duty days*. We focus in particular on paid duty days for the median soldier because this better indicates what the typical guardsman or reservist experiences. This is because averages can be skewed by small numbers serving much more or less than the norm. This report focuses on Army guardsmen and reservists who are not mobilized, who are not Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) or Reserve Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMAs), and who have completed initial entry training. Excluding these groups allows us to focus on the guardsmen and reservists most likely to serve the statutorily required number of days. This analysis does include guardsmen and reservists on some forms of extended active duty, such as active duty for training (ADT) or active duty for operational support (ADOS).

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

The Army comprises the Regular Army and its two reserve components (RCs): the Army National Guard (ARNG) and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR).¹ Once guardsmen and reservists complete initial entry training on entering military service, most train on a part-time basis thereafter. By law, these guardsmen and reservists are generally required to train 39 or 38 days per year, respectively.² This time is divided between weekend drills (typically, one weekend a month at local armories and readiness centers) and periods of annual training (typically two weeks of extended training at larger training centers).

On occasion, guardsmen and reservists can expect to serve longer periods of active duty, however. As noted above, new recruits generally serve extended periods of active duty while completing initial entry training. Moreover, after September 11, 2001, the Army increasingly employed its RCs to fulfill operational demands in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, meaning that many RC personnel and units have been mobilized for extended periods to train, prepare for, and conduct overseas deployments, as well as conducting domestic missions; some have been mobilized multiple times. When RC personnel are involuntarily mobilized, they serve on a full-time basis for the duration. Such mobilizations are currently limited to approximately 12 months by defense policy.³ In addition, some Guard and Reserve personnel serve full-time as part of the AGR program for such purposes as organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training fellow members of their RCs.

The Army asked RAND to assess how the number of paid duty days for Army guardsmen and reservists has changed over the past several years. This would not appear to be a difficult question to answer, but several complexities about how to approach the question make it less than straightforward:

- For example, one approach would be simply to add up the total number of days paid to guardsmen and reservists in a year and divide by the total number of soldiers to get an *average days paid per soldier*.
- However, calculating *average days paid per soldier* can be misleading. To illustrate, consider the difference between nine soldiers being paid for 40 days a year and one soldier being paid for 360. If calculating the average days of pay (i.e., 720 days divided by 10 soldiers), the one soldier paid for 360 days pulls the average number of days per soldier up to 72 days. However, nine out of 10 soldiers are only paid for 40 days, so 40 days is a better measure of what the typical soldier experiences.

- Moreover, to focus specifically on part-time guardsmen and reservists in a normal year would involve excluding (1) AGRs, (2) soldiers undergoing initial entry training or other extended active duty training, and (3) soldiers mobilized to meet operational demands. Even then, the calculation might capture soldiers serving on extended periods of active duty for other reasons but not technically as part of one of these three groups.

WHAT TIME FRAME DOES THE ANALYSIS COVER?

First, we looked at FY 2000, which spanned October 1999 through September 2000. This gave us a pre-September 11, 2001, baseline. Then, we looked at FYs 2010–2013 to see if things had changed since September 11, 2001, and, if so, by how much. At the time we conducted this analysis, we did not have complete data for FY 2014.

HOW DID WE CALCULATE “PAID DUTY DAYS” PER SOLDIER?

Our analysis quantified the number of paid duty days for Army Reserve and Guard soldiers in a given FY. Paid duty days are the sum of active duty days (e.g., annual training) plus inactive duty periods (e.g., weekend drills). We counted two inactive duty periods as one inactive duty day; we provide the rationale for this and give an example in the next paragraph. Some guardsmen and reservists may volunteer for or conduct additional unpaid duty, similar to Regular Army soldiers working more than 40 hours per week; we were not able to capture this situation in our analysis. In addition, we did not capture days on state active duty, for example, when a governor employs his or her guardsmen for state domestic emergencies that are not paid for with federal funds.

U.S. Code stipulates that guardsmen and reservists will assemble for 48 sessions of drill and instruction per year.⁴ Drill periods are considered *inactive duty*. Each drill period is typically about four hours long (i.e., one-half of a standard eight-hour day).⁵ Guard and Reserve soldiers receive the equivalent of one day’s pay of a Regular Army soldier for each RC drill period, although they do not receive most of the other forms of compensation, such as housing and subsistence allowances, that they would receive when on active duty. On a typical drill weekend, Reserve and Guard soldiers will be on duty for two

calendar days (Saturday and Sunday) but will typically conduct four drill periods (i.e., Saturday morning and afternoon, Sunday morning and afternoon). In this example, we would consider that soldiers served two “paid duty days”—that is, we would count the two calendar days, not the four drill periods for which they would receive four days of pay. So, for example, if a soldier completes all 48 drills in a given year, we would count this as 24 paid duty days. In addition to weekend drills, some soldiers execute additional inactive duty periods—for example, pilots and certain other aircrew members receive additional flight training periods to maintain flight proficiency. Some funeral honors duty is also performed in inactive duty status. In all cases, we assumed that inactive duty periods averaged four hours (i.e., one-half of a standard eight-hour day), so two inactive duty periods equal one inactive duty day of service.

U.S. Code also stipulates that guardsmen and reservists will participate in 15 or 14 days, respectively, of annual training per year. Annual training days are considered *active duty*. We count each one day spent on annual training as one paid duty day. For that matter, we count any one day spent on active duty as one paid duty day, whether for annual training or for other purposes. For example, soldiers serving on ADOS orders for the entire year show up in our analysis as having 360 paid duty days.

The data we used for our analysis came from the Defense Manpower Data Center. These data show the specific number of active duty days and inactive duty periods for which individual soldiers received pay. The data also show the soldier’s reserve category, whether he or she is AGR or IMA, and whether he or she is mobilized. However, the data do not show the specific duty status under which a soldier serves. Thus, specific data fields indicate whether a soldier is AGR or mobilized, but no fields otherwise differentiate among annual training, ADT, and ADOS for soldiers serving on active duty.⁶ Similarly, the data do not distinguish among different types of inactive duty.

WHAT GROUPS OF SOLDIERS DID WE LOOK AT?

We focused on Army Reserve and Guard soldiers assigned to Selected Reserve units. All Reserve and Guard soldiers fall into one of three major categories: Ready Reserve, Standby Reserve, and Retired Reserve. We focused on the Ready Reserve; those in the other two categories have no annual training requirements. Within the Ready Reserve, soldiers are assigned to the

Selected Reserve, the Individual Ready Reserve, or the Inactive National Guard. We focused on the Selected Reserve; most in the Individual Ready Reserve and Inactive National Guard are not required to train annually. Within the Selected Reserve, we excluded USAR IMAs and focused on Army Reserve and Guard soldiers assigned to Selected Reserve units, since IMAs have different training requirements.

All soldiers in Selected Reserve units can be placed in one of the following four categories:

1. the training pipeline (this primarily includes soldiers undergoing initial entry training, although some other types of extended training may be captured as well)⁷
2. trained, full-time AGR
3. trained guardsman or reservist—temporarily mobilized on full-time orders
4. trained guardsman or reservist—not mobilized.

While law stipulates a minimum of 39 or 38 days of training per year, category 4 can also include soldiers serving on extended periods of active duty—in ADT or ADOS statuses, for example—who are not mobilized or AGR. In short, while one would expect most category 4 personnel to serve somewhere around 39 or 38 days per year, some personnel in this category who are on expanded periods of active duty may serve substantially more than this number of days.

Our analysis focused on soldiers in the last group; for brevity, we will refer to these as *group-four soldiers*.⁸ To be included in our analysis, soldiers must have met the criteria for group four *in all 12 months of an FY*. We excluded from the analysis any soldier who served for less than 12 months (i.e., joined after the start of the FY or left military service before the end of the FY), as well as any soldier who at any point in the FY was either mobilized, AGR, or in the training pipeline. We thus focused on soldiers who would be expected to meet the statutory training requirements described above and who had the opportunity to serve for a full year (while soldiers serving for extended periods on ADT or ADOS may have different training requirements, we were not able to specifically distinguish these types of duty using the available data).

WHAT DOES THE ANALYSIS SHOW?

Our goal was to see how the typical number of paid days changed over time since September 11, 2001. We focused in particular on the median number of paid days because this is

Table 1. Soldiers Serving Each Fiscal Year, by Component

In the FY, soldiers who served	ARNG					USAR				
	FY 2000	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2000	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
At some point (≤ 12 months)	404,108	398,712	398,035	400,812	398,828	254,401	226,357	229,941	225,352	224,395
All 12 months	296,750	315,735	322,061	314,265	312,518	160,302	176,788	173,144	173,150	170,147
All 12 months and were not mobilized, pipeline, or AGR ^a	243,196	153,306	180,536	185,060	197,467	132,676	94,406	106,239	111,907	116,878

^a Group-four soldiers.

more representative of what the typical soldier experiences than is the average number of paid days. We present our results here first in the form of tables, then of figures.

Table 1 shows the sizes of the populations we looked at. The top row shows the total number of soldiers who served at any point in a given FY for a given component. Soldiers could have served one month, 12 months, or any number in between. For example, 404,108 soldiers served in the ARNG at some point during FY 2000. The second row shows the number of these who served for all 12 months; in FY 2000, 296,750 soldiers served in the ARNG for all 12 months. The third row eliminates all those who were in the training pipeline, were AGRs, or were mobilized at any point in the year. In FY 2000, 243,196 soldiers served for all 12 months in the ARNG but were not mobilized, in the training pipeline, or AGRs at any point during the year. This last row corresponds to group-four soldiers, as described earlier.

For each component the total number of personnel who served at any point in a given FY (top row) remains fairly stable over time, with the exception that the number in the USAR for FY 2000 was somewhat higher than the numbers for FYs 2010–2013. However, the number of group-four soldiers decreased substantially for each component between FY 2000 and FY 2010, before rising again in each FY after 2010. For

example, group-four personnel in the ARNG dropped from 243,196 in FY 2000 to 153,306 in FY 2010 but climbed to 197,467 in FY 2013. This fluctuation is largely accounted for by the fact that the number of guardsmen and reservists who were mobilized at any point in a given year increased substantially between FY 2000 and FY 2010 but has been declining since.

Table 2 shows the average and median number of paid duty days for soldiers in group four. In FY 2000, for example, summing number of paid duty days for group-four soldiers and dividing that by the total number of soldiers in group four (243,196) yields an average number of paid duty days for all ARNG group-four soldiers of 46 days. However, the median soldier in that group was paid for 39 days—that is, one-half of the soldiers were paid for 39 days or less, and one-half were paid for 39 days or more. Since the average is higher than the median, this suggests that some soldiers were paid for much more than 39 days. Median days better indicate what the typical guardsman or reservist within a given population experiences.

Why was the average higher than the median—that is, why were some group-four soldiers paid for substantially more than 39 days in FY 2000? While we could not answer this question definitively, it does appear this is because group four includes soldiers serving on extended periods of ADOS; such soldiers could have served on active duty for up to the entire

Table 2. Paid Duty Days for Each Fiscal Year, by Component

	ARNG					USAR				
	FY 2000	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2000	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Average	46	76	70	65	63	39	50	53	51	50
Median	39	45	43	41	42	38	40	42	41	41

FY, despite being neither mobilized nor AGRs (other soldiers on ADOS may have only served for a portion of the FY). Also, soldiers in certain career fields—such as pilots—train additional days to maintain their individual proficiency qualifications. In addition, soldiers who have not yet mobilized but who are preparing for mobilization often train more than usual in the year before mobilization. Our analysis did not exclude soldiers preparing in one FY to mobilize in the next. This probably was not much of a factor in FY 2000; the number of guardsmen and reservists mobilized annually was much lower before September 11, 2001, than after. However, mobilization could have been a greater factor for FYs 2010–2013. Again, however, we did identify specifically why some soldiers were paid more or less than the median.

Average paid duty days for Guard group-four soldiers for FYs 2010–2013 show a consistent downward trend, declining

from 76 days to 63. However, the averages for Reserve group-four soldiers—as well as the medians for both the Guard and Reserve—are fairly constant over FYs 2010 to 2013. Moreover, they are only two to six days higher than in FY 2000, depending on the year. The reason for the trend specific to Guard average paid duty days may be that the number of guardsmen on extended ADOS was comparatively high in FY 2010, but has declined since.

Figures 1 and 2 show the second way we present the results of the analysis. These figures show the actual distributions of paid duty days for Reserve and Guard group-four soldiers in FYs 2001 and 2013, respectively. Distributions for FYs 2010–2012 are included at the end of this report. Figure 1 shows the results for FY 2000.

Note that the total number of soldiers, the average paid duty days per soldier, and the median paid duty days match

Figure 1. Distribution of Paid Duty Days for ARNG and USAR Group Four Soldiers in FY 2000

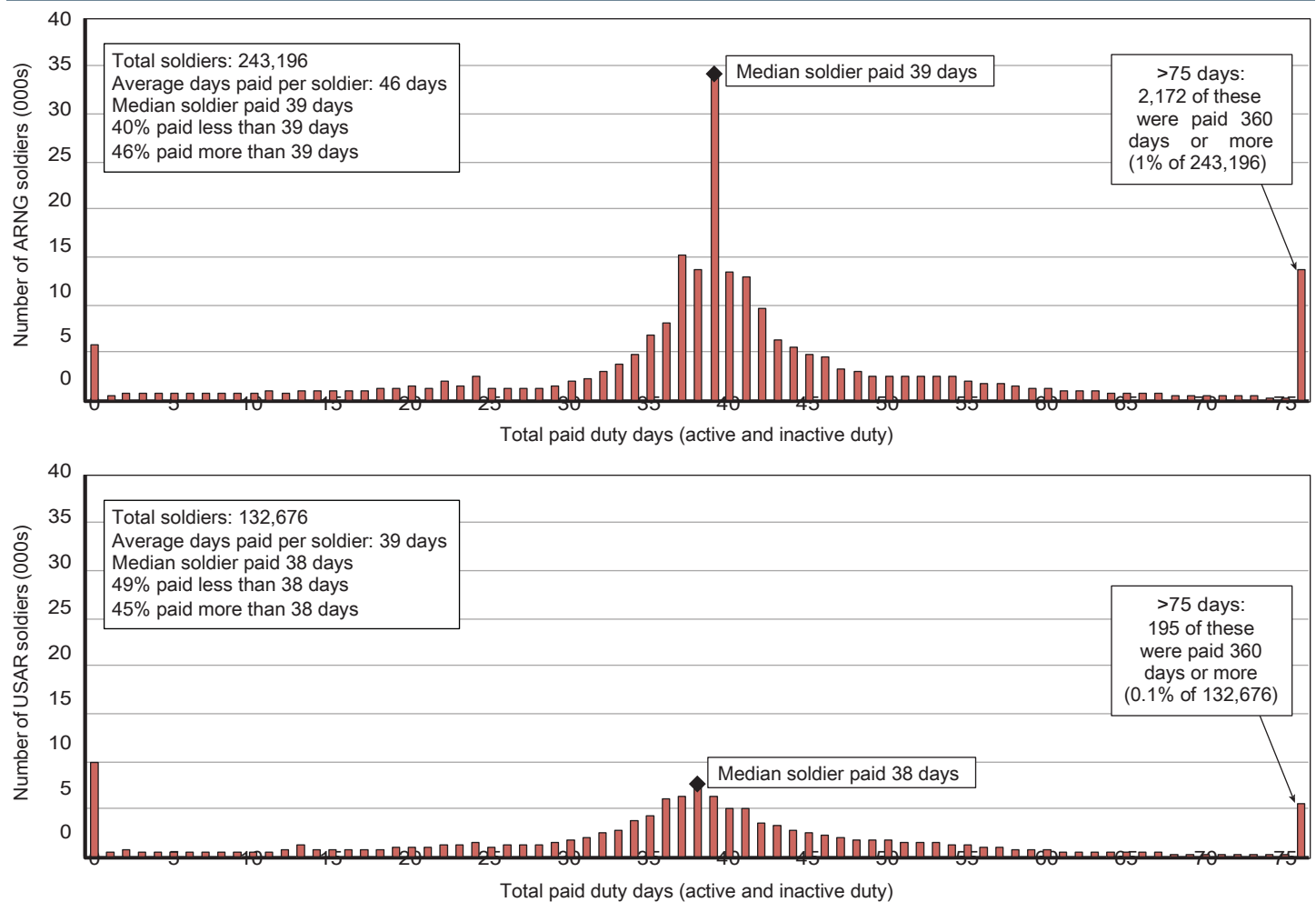
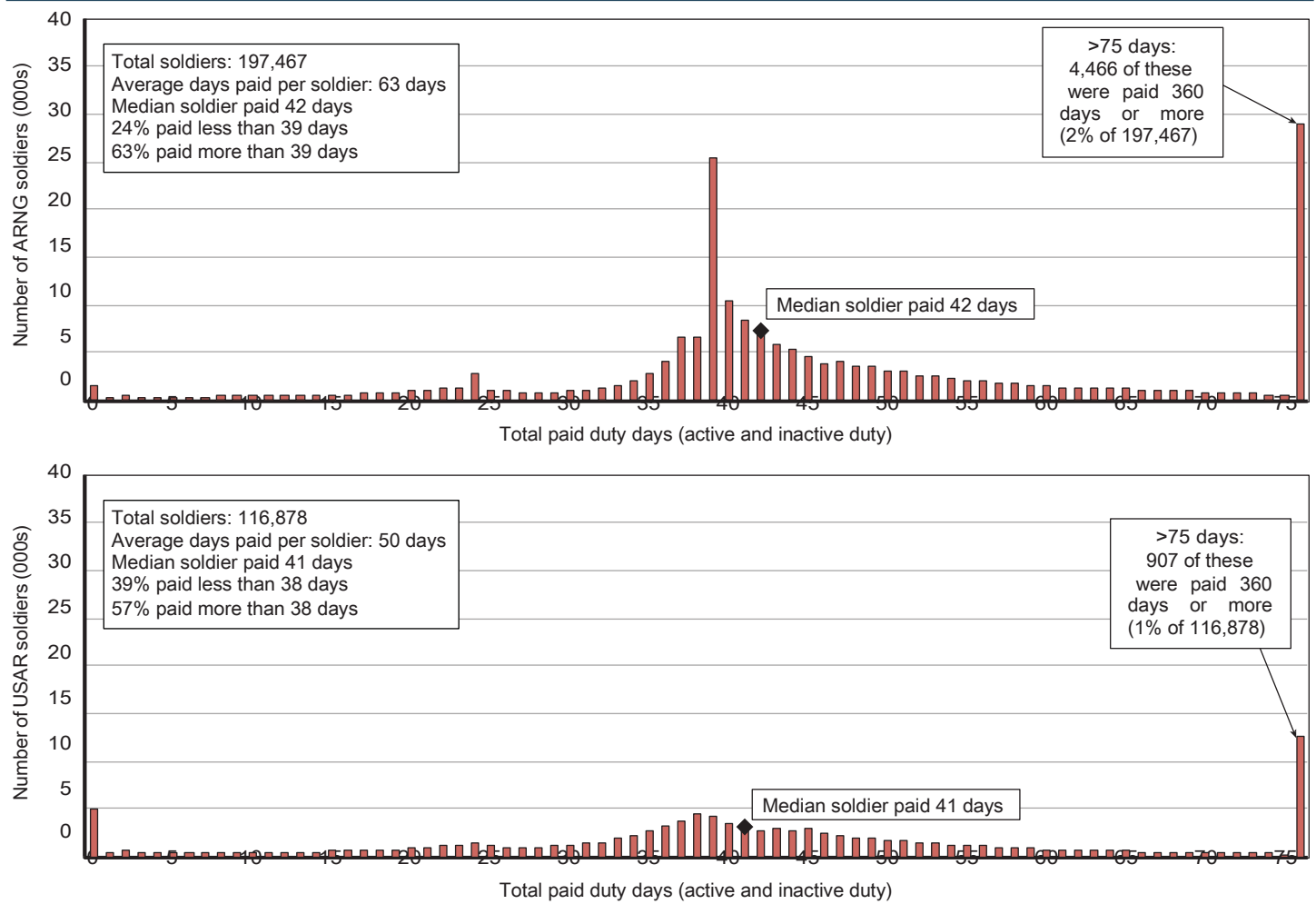


Figure 2. Distribution of Paid Duty Days for ARNG and USAR Group Four Soldiers in FY 2013



the entries in Table 1. In FY 2000, the median numbers of paid duty days were 39 for Army guardsmen and 38 for Army reservists, matching the minimum requirements established in U.S. Code. Several additional points of interest emerge from the figure. The tails of the distributions around the medians are long, indicating a fairly wide spread of duty days across the population. So, while the median soldier served 38 to 39 days, depending on the component, large numbers served more or less. In the ARNG, for example, 46 percent served more than 39 days, and 40 percent served fewer than 39 days. In addition, there are spikes at each end of the distribution. Those on the far left received no pay in FY 2000 (we did not attempt to determine why). For example, 5,884 ARNG group-four soldiers received no pay in FY 2000, meaning they were paid for no weekend drill or annual training periods. Those on the far right were paid for more than 75 days.⁹ In FY 2000, 13,785 ARNG

group-four soldiers were paid for more than 75 days. Of these, 2,172 were paid for 360 days or more. Although these soldiers might have been on ADOS for the entire year, we were unable to determine this, given data limitations described earlier. We also did not determine why soldiers might be paid for more than 360 days, although the numbers paid for more than 360 days were very small in all the distributions we calculated.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of paid duty days for group-four soldiers in FY 2013. The shapes of the distributions are similar to those for FY 2000. However, the percentage of soldiers being paid for more than 75 duty days (including the number paid for 360 duty days or more) increased in both components for FY 2013. This resulted in small increases in median soldier paid duty days for both components, climbing three days for both the ARNG and the USAR compared with FY 2000. There are, however, still high points in the distribu-

tions for ARNG group-four soldiers at 39 days and USAR group-four soldiers at 38 days. Even though the averages and medians are somewhat higher in FY 2013 than in FY 2000, it is still common for large numbers of soldiers to serve around 38 to 39 days per year.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In FY 2000, group-four soldiers in the ARNG and USAR—i.e., those assigned to Selected Reserve units who were not in the training pipeline, AGR, or mobilized—commonly served around 38 to 39 days per year, although some served more and some less. Looking at FYs 2010–2013, there were fewer group-four soldiers in a given year, largely because many more were mobilized in a given year compared with FY 2000. Nonetheless, for those who were in group four, the medians increased by only two to six days depending on the year—ranging from 41 to 45 days for guardsmen and from 40 to 42 days for reservists. Again, many served more days than the median, and many served fewer days. We postulate that the increases over FY 2000 resulted from an increase in the numbers serving on extended ADOS or ADT orders or preparing to mobilize in the following year. However, we were unable to determine this with certainty.

The historical data suggest that, in the future, the typical part-time Army guardsman or reservist who is not preparing to mobilize or serving on some other form of extended active duty will continue to serve somewhere around 38 to 39 days per year. It is possible that the medians will remain a few days above the statutory minimums, as was evident in the most recent years that we looked at. Some part-time soldiers will serve more than the statutory minimum, while some will likely not fulfill the statutory minimum days of training.

Notes

¹ Per U.S. Code, Title 10, Section 101 (10 USC 101), Definitions, . . . the term “Army National Guard” means that part of the organized militia of the several States and Territories, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, active and inactive, that: (A) is a land force; (B) is trained, and has its officers appointed, under the sixteenth clause of section 8, article I, of the Constitution; (C) is organized, armed, and equipped wholly or partly at Federal expense; and (D) is federally recognized. . . . The term “Army National Guard of the United States” means the reserve component of the Army all of whose members are members of the Army National Guard.

In this report, we technically focus on the “Army National Guard of the United States,” although we use “Army National Guard” for the sake of brevity.

² For guardsmen, see 32 USC 502, Required Drills and Field Exercises; for reservists, see 10 USC 10147, Ready Reserve: Training Requirements. U.S. Code, Title 10, Section 10147 specifies that this requirement applies to “each person” in the Ready Reserve, with some exceptions; 32 USC 502, Required Drills and Field Exercises, specifies that this requirement applies to “each company, battery, squadron, and detachment of the National Guard.” We assume the intent of the statute is that this requirement generally applies to individual guardsmen.

³ Since January 2007, DoD policy has limited the period of involuntary mobilization to a maximum of one year at any one time, even though statute permits units to be mobilized for up to two years at a time under the partial mobilization authority that has been used to authorize most RC mobilizations (10 USC 12302, Ready Reserve). At service discretion, this one-year mobilization policy can exclude both individual skill training required for deployment and postmobilization leave. See Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense, “Utilization of the Total Force,” memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Under Secretaries of Defense, Washington, D.C., January 19, 2007.

⁴ There are exceptions. For example, guardsmen who are mobilized, AGRs, or on other types of extended active duty, such as ADOS, do not drill.

⁵ Per 37 USC 206, the minimum length of a drill period for which a guardsman or reservist may receive pay is two hours. However, DoD policy is that paid periods of inactive duty for training will not be less than four hours and that no more than two inactive duty for training periods may be performed in any calendar day (Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1215.06, *Uniform Reserve, Training, and Retirement Categories for the Reserve Components*, March 11, 2014 [incorporating Change 1, effective May 19, 2015]).

⁶ Technically, annual training is a subset of ADT. For more information on RC duty statuses, see DoDI 1215.06.

⁷ In some cases, a newly recruited Reserve or Guard soldier may complete part of his or her initial entry training in one summer, attend two semesters of college, then complete initial entry training during the second summer of his or her enlistment.

⁸ In some cases, soldiers who have completed initial entry training but are undertaking additional training in an ADT status may be temporarily coded as in the training pipeline. This analysis did not include these soldiers. The analysis does include soldiers who are on ADT but not coded as in the training pipeline.

⁹ We grouped those with more than 75 days because showing the full distribution out to 360 days would have compressed the figure and made it difficult to read. We were most interested in the distribution around the median. The spikes on the right-hand side of the graph would be much smaller if the graphs showed each individual data point between 75 and 360 paid duty days. In all the distributions we calculated, there was a noticeable spike in individuals paid for 360 days, that is, individuals who were paid on a full-time basis the entire year. That is why we indicate the specific number of individuals paid 360 days (or more) in a text box at the right side of the graph. However, other than the spike at 360 paid duty days, no other value between 76 and 359 paid duty days accounted for more than 0.5 percent of the total in any of the distributions we looked at.

Appendix. Paid Duty Days for FYs 2010, 2011, and 2012

This appendix shows the distribution for paid duty days for the ARNG and USAR group-four soldiers for FY 2010, 2011, and 2012. The explanation for the figures is the same as above.

Figure A.1. Distribution of Paid Duty Days for ARNG and USAR Group Four Soldiers in FY 2010

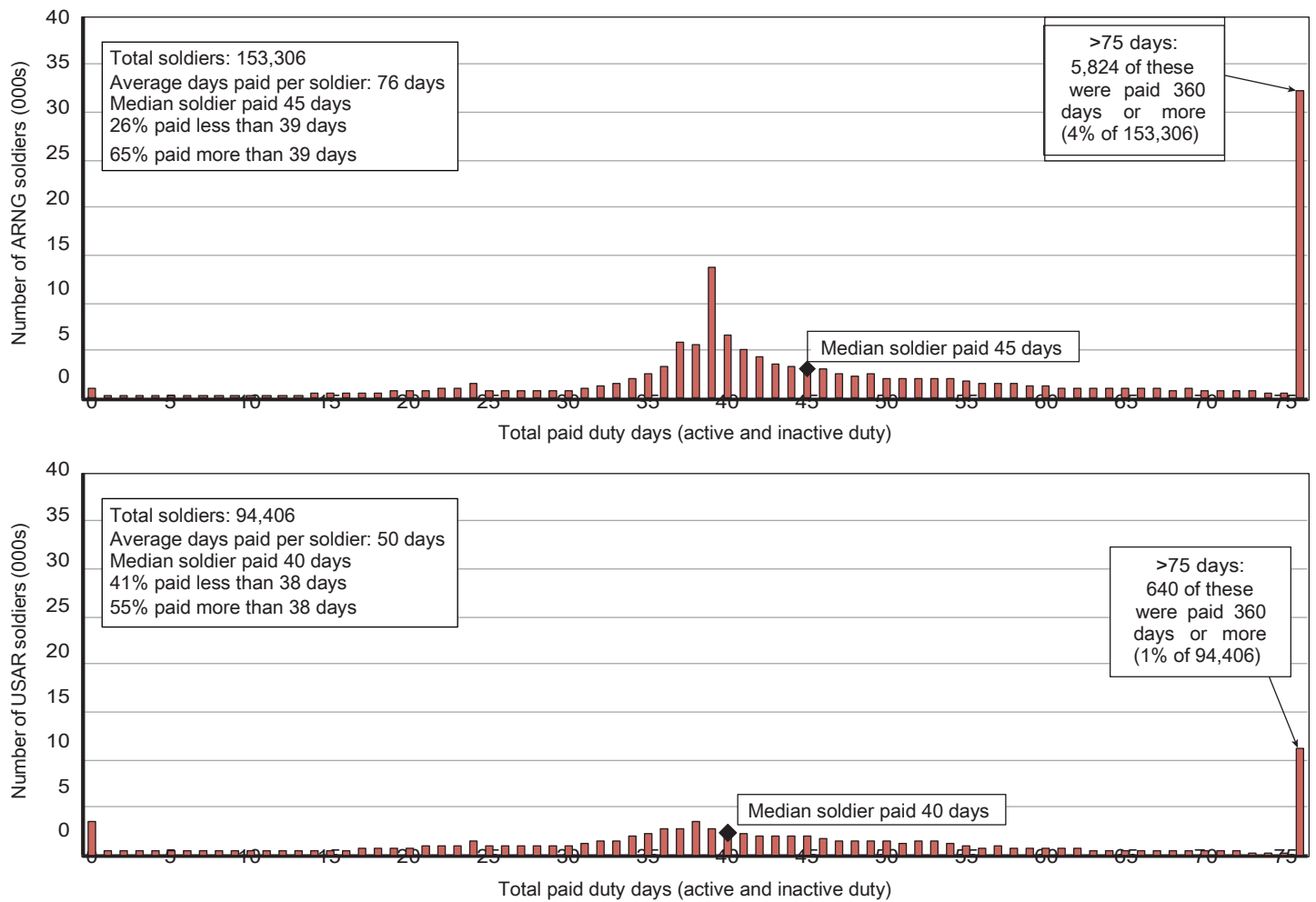


Figure A.2. Distribution of Paid Duty Days for ARNG and USAR Group Four Soldiers in FY 2011

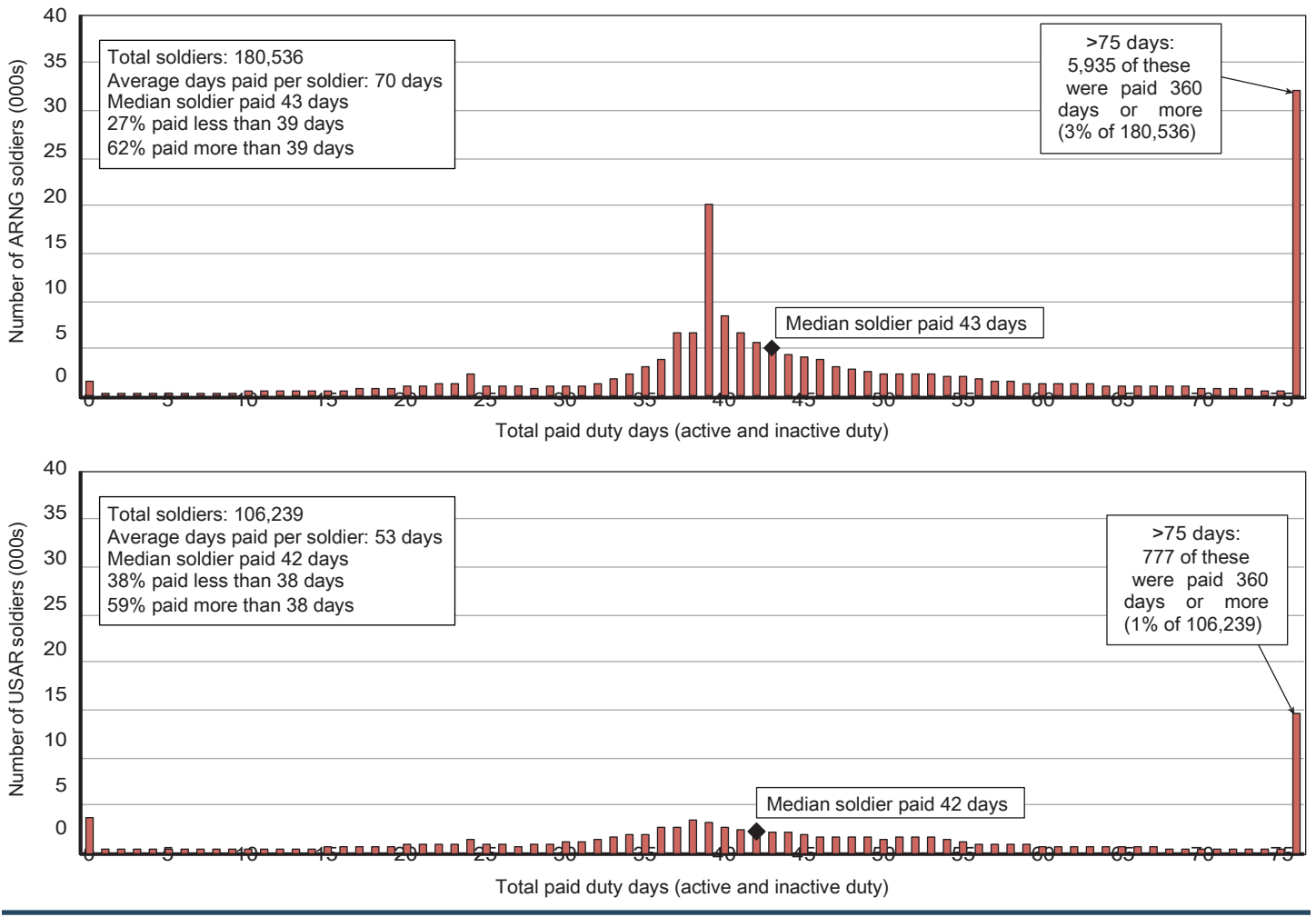
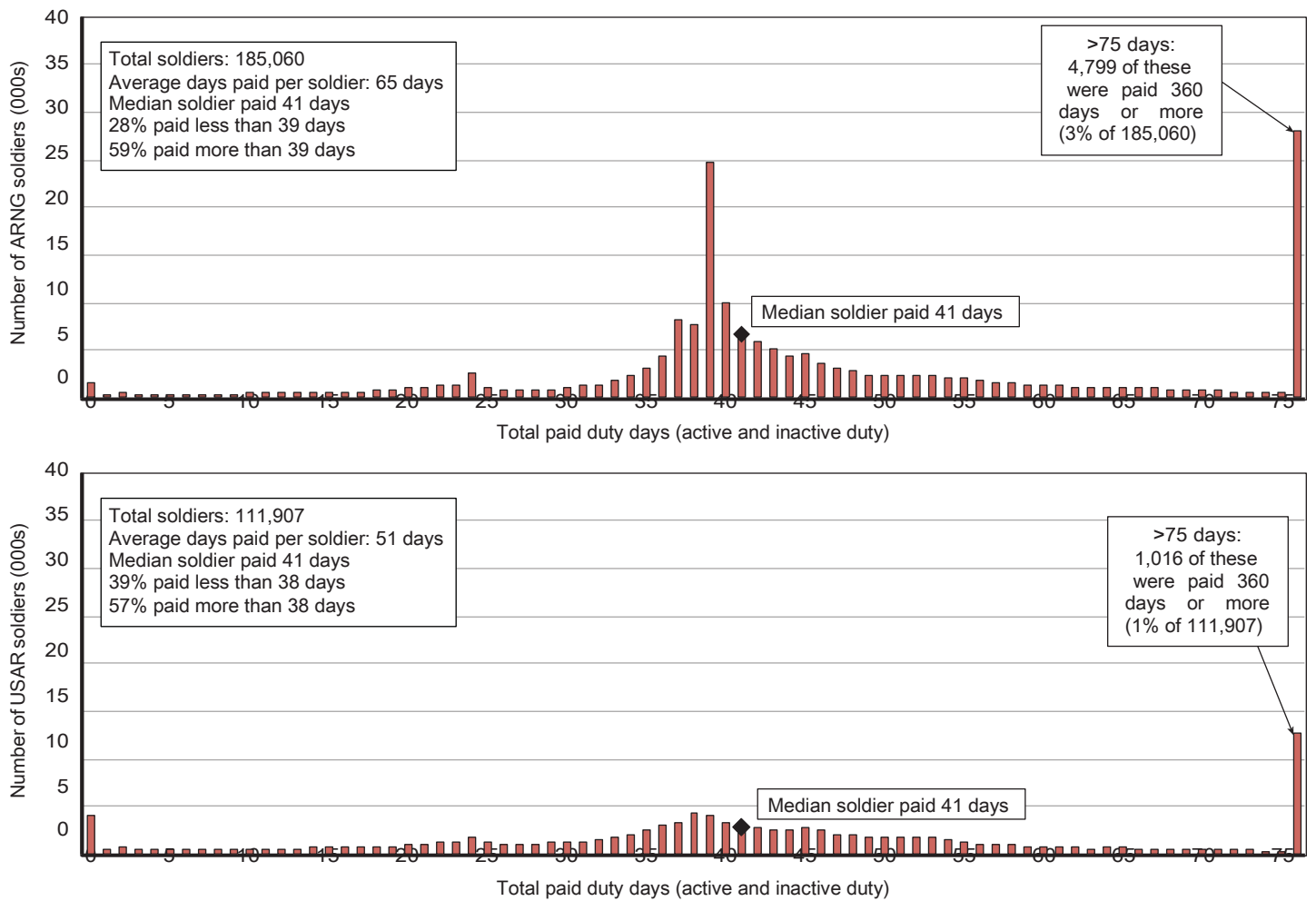


Figure A.3. Distribution of Paid Duty Days for ARNG and USAR Group Four Soldiers in FY 2012



About This Report

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