

Program Research Project

MANNING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD UNITS FOR DEPLOYMENT

BY

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USAWC PROGRAM RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

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ABSTRACT

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Reliance on the Army National Guard (ARNG) to meet the Army's needs in the global war on terror since 9/11 has transformed the ARNG from a strategic reserve to an operational force. The Army developed the Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model as a way to generate ready forces from all three Army components to meet global force requirements. The protracted Global War on Terrorism has compounded the Army National Guard's ability to meet personnel requirements for deploying units. The ARNG must develop and implement systems to increase availability of deployable Soldiers and cross-level Soldiers to meet future needs based on the Army Force Generation model. This paper examines the shortage of available personnel in ARNG Brigade Combat Teams (BCT's) just prior to mobilization and the National Guard's ability to increase the BCTs available personnel from 65% to 100% available. Current policies for filling deploying units are resulting in negative effects for later deploying units and Soldiers. The Department of the Army and NGB must change the current systems to increase availability of Soldiers and meet future personnel needs based on the Army Force Generation model.

MANNING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD UNITS FOR DEPLOYMENT

“Our goal is to achieve full spectrum readiness for ARNG units and full deployment readiness on mobilization. I would like you to outline the systemic policy changes needed to enable Guard units to achieve and maintain P1 personnel readiness standards during pre-mobilization....”

- General George W. Casey, JR ¹

Beginning with the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and the initiation of the Global War On Terrorism (GWOT), the United States has mobilized and depended on the nation's Reserve Component to a greater extent and for a much longer period than during any other time in American history. This reliance, combined with continually evolving mission requirements, has changed the Reserve Component, particularly the Army National Guard (ARNG), from a strategic reserve to an operational force. This protracted conflict has challenged the ARNG's ability to meet personnel requirements for deploying units.

Anticipating the extended period of conflict associated with the GWOT, the Army developed the Army Force Generation Model, commonly referred to as ARFORGEN. The Army did this to help generate ready forces from all components to meet global force requirements and assist with predictability. Along with ARFORGEN, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates approved a change in policy in 2007 that has three key provisions. It allows: 1) remobilization of Reserve units in support of GWOT; 2) 12 month mobilization time; and 3) realignment of many training tasks from post-mobilization to pre-mobilization. In part, this change was the result of Reserve Component organizations running out of units that had not already mobilized, as portrayed in the “What's Left?” briefings at the National Defense University.² Due to

this change in policy, the ARNG must reassess its practice of cross leveling Soldiers and units. The near-term benefit of cross leveling mortgages the readiness of later deploying units.

This paper examines current practices used to fill the personnel needs of deploying units, specifically Brigade Combat Teams (BCT's), along with proposing programs that increase personnel readiness, thus reducing the need for actions such as "cross-leveling", which is currently used extensively.

Background

The Executive Branch of the United States has authority codified in Title 10 of the United States Code. Section 12302 is clear on National Guard and Reserve unit mobilization. In part, it states:

"In time of national emergency declared by the President after January 1, 1953, or when otherwise authorized by law, an authority designated by the Secretary concerned may, without the consent of the persons concerned, order any unit, and any member not assigned to a unit organized to serve as a unit, in the Ready Reserve under the jurisdiction of that Secretary to active duty for not more than 24 consecutive months." ³

The code is clear in three specific areas. First, it allows proper authorities to mobilize units, but it does not specifically authorize involuntarily cross leveling of Soldiers from one unit to another, a common practice since 9/11. Second, the appropriate authority may order individuals that are not part of a unit to mobilize with a unit while in Individual Ready Reservist (IRR) status to fill shortages in units, whether Active, Guard or Reserve. Third, mobilization time cannot be for more than 24 consecutive months.

In testimony before the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves in December 2006, witnesses described the horror of cross leveling. They revealed that the Army Reserve stripped (cross-leveled) the 227th Transportation Company of both its

leadership and its personnel with the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of 88M to support other units deploying as part of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) I. That same unit mobilized as part of OIF II, but over 80% of its Soldiers were cross-leveled into the unit from other units including the Commander and 1SG.⁴ A BCT from the ARNG formed at the mobilization station with 2,500 Soldiers from Minnesota, 600 Soldiers from Indiana, 305 Soldiers from Nebraska, 117 Soldiers from New Jersey, 77 Soldiers from Kentucky, 18 Soldiers from Utah and 117 Soldiers from Kansas.⁵ The 288th Sapper Company of the Mississippi Army National Guard mobilized in early 2007 with all 104 Soldiers deploying on a volunteer basis; 78 of these Soldiers had less than 16 months dwell time from a previous mobilization. The unit had been part of the 155th Separate Armored Brigade structure that demobilized in February 2006 and, due to restructuring of the BCTs, reflagged under a different command as part of Engineer modularity and mobilized in less than 1 year after its return from deployment. The Adjutant General required Commanders throughout Mississippi to advertise the need for volunteers to fill the ranks, stating he could not require those same Soldiers to deploy again within 16 months of an 18-month deployment.⁶ Three months later the unit had Soldiers identified to meet the personnel requirements for mobilization. They mobilized two months later.⁷ Although these are extreme examples of wholesale personnel cross leveling, many ARNG units can tell similar stories of how they filled their ranks.

Department of Defense Directives relevant to rotations of Reserve Component units in support of operations in Bosnia and Kosovo encouraged the use of volunteers to the greatest extent possible.⁸ Support of these operations during the period between Desert Storm and 9/11 were effective and, for the most part, went unnoticed as Soldiers

volunteered to fill a specific manning document for a specific force protection mission. Prior to 2002, an average of one out of 38 BCTs deployed at a given time.⁹ Individual States' ARNG commands had responsibility for supporting the rotations at that time. The next State in the queue would typically pick 500 volunteers for a mission out of an average State strength of 6,500. Even with the relatively few units and Soldiers mobilized during this period, non-mobilized units within the State had a 5-10% shortage of personnel that they could not fill. This is because personnel in one unit were on temporary loan to the deploying unit and could not "back-fill" the position. This did negatively affect unit readiness.

ARFORGEN

ARFORGEN is a requirement driven, capability based training and readiness strategy model designed to enhance the Army's ability to meet emerging global force requirements while maintaining the ability to reset and modernize the force.¹⁰ The model assigns resource priority based on units' progression through the model's four phases of: "reset"; "train"; "ready"; and "available".

In theory, ARFORGEN provides the predictability for States to prioritize their units' needs. This helps ensure a unit is ready for mobilization. In reality, given finite personnel resources, many States are using units in the reset and train phase as bill payers to get the available units prepared to deploy. Most cross leveling of Soldiers occurs from units in the reset and train phases of the ARFORGEN cycle, which has a negative impact on the conceptual framework of the ARFORGEN model.¹¹

Brigade Combat Teams

The 15 BCTs in the ARNG are currently on a five-year ARFORGEN rotation with three BCTs per year in the ready state. This paper looks specifically at two of the 15 ARNG BCTs. The 30th BCT, from the North Carolina ARNG (NCARNG), deployed on its first rotation in 2003 and again in February 2009 and the 155th BCT, from the Mississippi ARNG (MSARNG), first deployed in 2004 and again in May 2009.

Turbulence rate is the sum of a BCT's gains, losses, transfers-in and transfers-out divided by that specific unit's end strength within a particular state. The NCARNG filled 98% of their unit for the first deployment and 96% for the second deployment from within their state through cross leveling.¹² In 2003, the 30th BCT mobilized for the first time, in support of the GWOT, by deploying 4,700 Soldiers. The turbulence rate in the year prior to this mobilization had been running 5.01%, yet it spiked at 16.82% just prior to mobilization.¹³ The turbulence rate after mobilization was 6.01%, and again spiked at 23.89% just prior to their mobilization in 2009.¹⁴

In contrast, the 155th BCT mobilized for the first time in support of the GWOT in 2004, deploying 3,292 Soldiers. The unit's turbulence rate in the year prior to this mobilization averaged 4.36%, but jumped to 23.18% just prior to mobilization.¹⁵ The turbulence rate after mobilization averaged 5.69%, and increased to about 8% for several consecutive months prior to their mobilization in 2009.¹⁶

Due to over 60% of the MSARNG being mobilized or on alert in the FY 09-10 period, the State's Adjutant General (TAG) requested the National Guard Bureau (NGB) help find over 700 Soldiers from other states to fill the unit at mobilization (called 'pass back').¹⁷ As a result, the 155th BCT received the following companies from other State

or Territory ARNG entities (company “plugs”): two companies from the Ohio ARNG; one company from the Kentucky ARNG; and one company from the District of Columbia ARNG. In addition, NGB requested 130 IRR Soldiers to fill the remaining positions in the 155th BCT. This was all after the MSARNG cross-leveled 128 Soldiers from other MSARNG units.¹⁸ If the MSARNG had filled the 155th BCT completely from within the State, the turbulence rate would have been 24.2%.

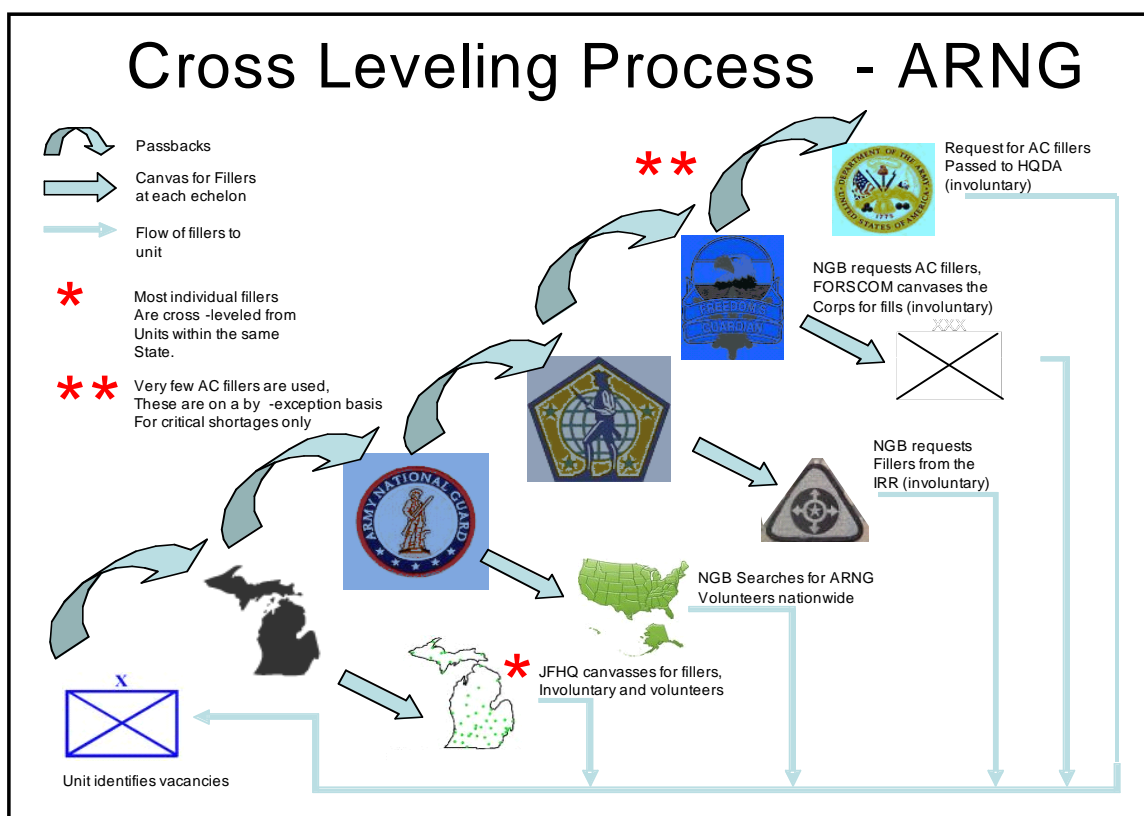
By comparing these two BCTs, we can see an increase in turbulence between first and second mobilizations.

This trend is very similar when looking at other BCT formations across the National Guard. With almost 25% of the BCT’s unit personnel changing in one month, just prior to mobilization, the risk of having Soldiers and the unit unprepared at mobilization increases drastically. The average end strength for BCTs during pre-deployment over the past two years is 3,800 and the average turbulence is 1,644 Soldiers for the 12 months prior to mobilization. This astounding rate of over 23% has been increasing since the first ARNG BCT deployed.¹⁹

Since turbulence rate is only counted within a specific State and does not include fillers (unit ‘plugs’, Active Duty or Reserve ‘fillers’, IRR, etc.) the actual turbulence for a BCT can run much higher. The 1/34th BCT from the Minnesota ARNG (MNARNG) deployed in 2005 with 47% of the mobilized strength coming from outside the BCT’s available strength pre-alert.²⁰ The 1/34th received 40% of their deployed strength from other units in the MNARNG, 6% from the IRR and 1% from other Guard states and the Active Component.²¹ The implications of increased turbulence on readiness are troubling for leaders.

Cross Level Procedures

One of the most significant challenges in mobilizing BCTs is pinning down personnel shortages and the ability to track progress in filling those shortages.²² Current practices within the National Guard, for units identified for sourcing, include a pre-mobilization meeting conducted 12 months prior to the unit's mobilization. This meeting involves NGB and the respective state's mobilization readiness team. During this initial meeting, the group analyzes the readiness of the mobilizing unit, including projected personnel shortfalls the State cannot fill. The chart below provides a graphical representation of the cross leveling process.



In the case of 155th BCT, the MSARNG identified an initial shortfall of 700 Soldiers they could not fill from State assets.²³ NGB identified four plug units from other states

(two OH, one KY, one DC) for mobilization approximately nine months prior to mobilization and requested an additional 130 IRR fillers to meet the unit at the mobilization station.

Cross leveling is often considered “cherry picking” Soldiers from their hometown unit to mobilize with a unit from another town.²⁴ The formations from other towns pay the price of these Soldiers placed on “temporary loan”.²⁵ This practice of cannibalization has broken unit cohesion in almost every “small town USA” that has an ARNG unit.

The MSARNG, like many other States, developed an involuntary cross level policy in 2003 to ensure units that deployed met P1 readiness standards. This policy used the Standard Installation/Division Personnel System (SIDPERS) database to fill personnel requests from deploying commanders by exempting those on voluntary mobilization and Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers.²⁶ The policy had no exceptions for Soldiers with recent/prior mobilizations or Soldiers in units with a future deploying date.²⁷ After the 155th BCT deployment in 2004 and the combat deaths of several Soldiers that had been cross-leveled, MG Cross, the TAG of the MSARNG at the time, revoked the cross leveling policy.²⁸ From 2005 until late 2008, the MSARNG only filled units with volunteers and the remaining personnel shortages became pass backs to NGB. In October 2008, the new TAG of MSARNG, MG Freeman, instituted a new cross leveling policy that exempted members of future deploying units (sourced units thru FY 12), Soldiers over the age of 58, and Soldiers with less than 24 months dwell time from the last month of hostile fire pay. The State’s G1 developed a database using SIDPERS data and incorporated hostile fire pay data provided by NGB, along with a flow chart used in the involuntary selection process. The cross level flow chart uses volunteers

first, then goes to those without hostile fire pay, then those with hostile fire pay prioritized by grade, then date of rank. If no Soldier meets the requirement for fill, the State passes the shortage to NGB for fill.

The NCARNG has also gone through various cross leveling procedures and has adjusted its policies since 2003. The 30th BCT was the first ARNG BCT to mobilize in support of the GWOT in 2003. During its first mobilization, the process was centralized, not by choice, but due to the fact they only had three weeks notice to mobilize. They established a system for Soldiers to volunteer, but also established an ad hoc system, worked by both the NCARNG J1 and J3 mobilization team, to fill positions using an involuntary cross-leveling system. Although they did not keep an accurate count, they estimated that between 900 and 1,000 of the unit's final headcount of 4,700 Soldiers, were either involuntarily cross-leveled or volunteered from other units in the NCARNG.²⁹

Like many States, the current system used by the NCARNG has matured with trial and error over the past six years. In 2008, the 30th BCT received notice for a second deployment that would be a full spectrum operation requiring full personnel readiness and duty qualification for all authorized positions. With over 12 months of notice for the second deployment, the NCARNG began to identify all the vacancies. The process called for the J1 to conduct formal boards that included representation from each of the NCARNG's Major Subordinate Commands (MSC's). Each MSC produced lists of potential fills against vacancies following rules that exempted: Soldiers with less than 24 months of dwell time; key leaders; key full time support Soldiers; units on the "available" list over the next 24 months; and those Soldiers exempt due to being in an officer producing program.³⁰ Each formal board included members from subordinate units, to

select Soldiers to be involuntarily cross-leveled.³¹ A second and third round of boards were required, which included adjusting business rules such as adding future deploying units due to the increased demand to fill vacancies. In February 2009, the 30th BCT's final mobilization strength was 3,503 with 1,027 of these Soldiers placed by involuntary cross leveling and 325 as volunteers along with over 200 fills from the IRR.³²

These are just two examples of how cross leveling is currently conducted and how States have changed their processes over the past 6 years. There are 54 ARNG States and Territories, which means there may be up to 54 ways of cross-leveling soldiers. For States that do cross level Soldiers, the principle variations are dwell time and the reasons for Soldiers being exempt from cross leveling. Neither the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army nor the NGB provide any specific guidance on cross leveling Soldiers other than Personnel Policy Guidance that states that the TAG may cross level Soldiers.³³

Strength versus Deployable Strength

The ARNG has a 349,157 Force Structure Allowance (FSA) for FY09 and a congressional end strength allowance of 352,600; although this has been increased to 358,200 through an out-of-cycle Program Budget Decision (PBD). With end strength allowance almost the same as the FSA, the average unit in ARNG formations are "filled" at 100% of required strength. This sounds good on paper, but for combat readiness purposes, we need to know how many of that 352,600 are deployable.

As of 15 April 2009, the ARNG had 46,491 Soldiers that had not completed initial entry training (IET).³⁴ Of this number, 28,120 were awaiting initial training, 14,699 were in training and 3,672 were awaiting phase II training.³⁵ This represents 13% of the

ARNG FSA. This percentage has increased since 9/11 as the ARNG has changed recruiting strategy from an almost even split of prior service (PS) enlistments and non prior service (NPS) enlistment to 75% of enlistments being NPS.³⁶ This has put a tremendous demand on available training seats for new enlistments. In 2008, the average time from a Soldier's enlistment to start of Phase I of IET for a NPS enlistment was 7 months. These Soldiers are enlisting against unit FSAs and are part of a unit's assigned strength, yet they are not deployable.

Since 2005 there have been a number of Soldiers who enlisted under new programs such as the "College First" and "Active First" enlistment options. Although not widely used, the College First option exempts the Soldier from mobilization for 2 years after the completion of IET, if that Soldier is a full time student. Active First is a program that allows a Soldier to enlist in the ARNG and at the completion of IET transfer to the Active Army for a two-year obligation, then transferred back to the ARNG for the remainder of their contract. Exact numbers for NGB are unknown, however estimates show 3,000 Soldiers, or 1%, are in ARNG formations under this contract and therefore, unavailable for deployment with the ARNG.

A prior service enlistment from sister services, other than those that attended Marine Corps Basic Training, must attend the Warrior Transition Course (WTC) prior to being a mobilization asset. The WTC is a four-week course designed to refresh the skills of prior service members to indoctrinate them into the current workings of the Army. The ARNG currently has 1,193 coded in a reserve status to attend the WTC with more awaiting a class seat.³⁷ These soldiers are not available for deployment.

Soldiers enrolled in or appointed to attend an Officer producing course, such as Officer Candidate School, Reserve Officer Training Course, or the Warrant Officer Training Course, are considered non-deployable as well. The ARNG has 6,524 Soldiers currently enrolled in Officer producing courses.³⁸ This equates to 2% of the ARNG's personnel strength.

Medical deployability is a big concern for deploying commanders, as Soldiers who they expect to meet medical deployability standards sometimes fall out during initial medical review at the mobilization station. In FY06, out of 96,603 ARNG Soldiers taking a physical, 13.8% did not meet the minimum physical profile standards for deployment.³⁹ This rate was less than half of that reported by the Army Reserve. Since 2006, several medical and dental readiness initiatives have reduced this number, one example being early TRICARE. It is difficult to track current data, as reports vary greatly between Government Accounting Office, Army Posture Reports and NGB data. Additionally, many Soldiers are put through the Soldier Readiness Process prior to mobilization and are transferred out of their unit or left in the rear, and do not make it to the mobilization station. The April 2009 briefing to the Director of the ARNG shows 24,776 Soldiers as non-available for medical reasons. This is 7% of the ARNG personnel strength. Despite this, database input by the States show only 10,118 or 3% of the ARNG Soldiers coded with medical issues.⁴⁰ For this report, we will use the assumption that 5% of ARNG strength is not deployable due to medical reasons.

Officers and Warrant Officers who have not completed the Basic Officer Leadership Course, to include professionals such as medical personnel that have not completed residency requirements, are exempt from deployments. There are currently 3,880

Warrant and Commissioned Officers that have not completed their qualification course and approximately 200 professionals that have not completed their requirements.⁴¹ This equates to over 1% of the ARNG personnel strength that is not deployable due to Officer Qualification.

Of course, there are always “other” reasons a unit’s Soldiers who are otherwise qualified, are not able to deploy. Legal issues, such as the Lautenberg amendment, failure to keep a family care plan, pregnancy and family hardship are just a few examples. Although accurate data are not available for these cases, virtually every commander has had cases where the Army releases Soldiers from active duty at their mobilization station for such reasons. For this report, we will assume that 2% of the ARNG formation is non-deployable for “other” reasons.

A final consideration when analyzing availability of personnel for future deployment is Soldiers on a current deployment with other units, to include dwell time for Soldiers that have just returned. Many Soldiers have been re-directed to mobilize with another unit, yet the BCT they are assigned to is required to hold positions for those Soldier when they return. This number varies greatly according to each States’ policy on dwell time and is dependent on the previous and current Operational Tempo. For this report, we will use 10%, which could be a very low number depending on the unit and State.

Reality is that when a commander gets an alert order, that commander cannot just look at the unit’s current strength report; he or she must analyze it in detail for the underlying numbers. Under the current business rules, when you add all the Soldiers in a non-deployable category just examined, for any given time, 35% of the Soldiers mobilizing with a BCT will come from outside the BCT’s pre-alert assigned strength.

Identifying the actual requirements is neither art nor science; currently, it is no more than speculation.

Leadership comments on Cross leveling

The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves held numerous hearings and conducted interviews during site visits throughout the country. How the Reserve components were filling their formations was part of the fact-finding research. Major General (Retired) Arnold Punaro, the Chairman of the commission, interviewed Dr David S.C. Chu, then Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, along with other senior Department of Defense leaders. Mr. Punaro related that the ARNG had mobilized over 250,000 Soldiers since 9/11 and that the ARNG was cross leveling more and more Soldiers between units and states as the GWOT continues.⁴² He further stated that the Army Reserve was finding it more difficult to cobble units together.⁴³ He also revealed that the Army Reserve had to cross level 62% of Soldiers from non-deploying units to deploying units for their most recent rotations compared to just 6% in FY 02, more than a ten fold increase in 7 years.⁴⁴ Mr. Punaro paraphrased comments by General John W. Bergman, the commander of the Marine Forces Reserve, who stated that the principle that you “train as you fight and fight as a unit” was broken; it “is on its head.”⁴⁵ He further stated that many units headed to combat look like a “patchwork quilt” and that he would be hesitant to command such a unit.⁴⁶ A Battalion Commander told the commission the process was “evil” and he went even further by stating that it breaks unit cohesion and puts Soldiers at risk. Concerned leaders have even suggested that cross leveling may be associated with and contribute to some combat casualties.⁴⁷

Dr. Chu's response included a couple of important points. Reserve component staffing was not at 100% coming out of the Cold war. This relates to end strength authorizations being smaller than force structure authorizations, so average units were undermanned, which was the result of resource policies prior to 9/11.⁴⁸ General Peter Schoomaker, then Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, testified in response to questions about cross leveling that, "all this runs counter to the military necessity of deploying trained, ready, and cohesive units. In my professional military judgment, we must not perpetuate the mistakes of our past mobilization policies."⁴⁹

The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves to Congress used the word "cross leveling" 19 times in their final report. Throughout this report, various leaders from the ARNG, Army Reserves and Department of the Army concluded that they must reduce the need to cross level soldiers. Fragmentation driven by the current GWOT must end. Staffing units under our current system, which is opaque, unresponsive and slow, results in a disjointed, unsynchronized effort that leaves commanders frustrated, puts unit readiness in jeopardy and puts soldiers lives at risk.⁵⁰

TTHS

DoD Instruction 1120.11, Programming and Accounting for Active Military Manpower, authorizes all active components to set up Training, Transients, Holding and Students (TTHS) accounts.⁵¹ Training accounts for the biggest part of this account for the Active Army and includes new enlistments and appointments that have not completed Initial Entry Training, or Officers that have not completed their basic branch qualification.⁵² Trainees account for 58% of the Soldiers assigned to TTHS accounts in

Active Army.⁵³ This overhead account is above the Active Army's force structure requirements.

The Army Reserve (USAR) first established a TTHS account in 2003 at the direction of the Chief, Army Reserve.⁵⁴ Modeled after the Active Army TTHS accounts, the Army Reserve's goal was to manage Soldier and unit readiness better, with readiness as the driving factor. This initiative, known as the Federal Reserve Restructuring Initiative, reduced the USAR's the Force Structure Allowance from 219,000 to 173,000. The Army Reserve only had a 205,000 end strength authorization requiring the average unit to only be manned at 93% if they met total USAR end strength. This plan called for the reduction of 46,000 in force structure and the establishment of a USAR TTHS account of 20,500 Soldiers. The net result showed increased readiness, as the force structure supported fully manned units while the TTHS process accounted for non-deployable soldiers.

The Active Army has used TTHS accounts for years and has approximately 13% of its strength at any one time is in a TTHS account.⁵⁵ For example, in late 2008, the Active Army had about 15% (or 80,000) Soldiers assigned to the TTHS account.⁵⁶ A National Guard version of this type of account would be similar to that of the AC, which averages approximately 13% of its strength in a TTHS account.⁵⁷ To increase readiness, the Army Reserve was approved for a TTHS account in order to assign Soldiers who are non DMOSQ or non-deployable to the TTHS account, freeing up unit spaces for deployable Soldiers.⁵⁸

STOP LOSS

The effect of a stop loss on mobilizing Soldiers is unknown. The recent directive to end the use of stop loss for all ARNG Soldiers mobilizing on or after September 1, 2009 will affect future mobilizations.⁵⁹ There are currently 58,090 ETS Eligible ARNG Soldiers and 11,269 (19.3%) are under Stop Loss.⁶⁰ The ARNG must develop a plan to mitigate this potential loss of trained and ready Soldiers or cross leveling will escalate even higher.

Recommendations

Although there is not a single, simple solution to address the personnel readiness issues the ARNG faces, there are ways to mitigate the readiness issues by revising current policy. Today's reality is that cross leveling continues to escalate and unit personnel readiness is declining as a result. The possibility of never having to cross-level, to some extent, is not realistic and there is no quick fix to solve the current challenges, but there are actions that could address many of the issues that result in declining ARNG unit personnel readiness rates.

Solution 1: The "T" account. The ARNG needs a TTHS type account, with the emphasis on the "T" for training, to assign Soldiers to until they complete IET. This would have an immediate and dramatic affect on unit readiness, as existing laws and policy require units to assign new ARNG recruits against unit positions. This results in skewed personnel reports and gives a false sense of unit readiness. The majority of ARNG Soldiers are part time and the majority of them attend professional schools through a combination of correspondence, distance learning, and two-week resident

courses. This means there is little need within the ARNG for the “transient”, “holding” or “student” accounts of the Active Army TTHS account, only the ‘T’ for training account.

This ARNG “T” account would be in addition to the current authorized end strength and current validated FSA. As described earlier in this paper, 13% to 15% of the assigned Active duty strength is against the Active Army’s TTHS account. On the other hand, since the ARNG does not have a TTHS account, the 13% of the assigned strength of the ARNG that has not completed IET yet counts toward unit end-strength. If the ARNG, with the support of Congress, would adopt a policy allowing a “T” account, personnel readiness would increase and cross leveling would decrease in a corresponding fashion as recruiting fills those positions.

Solution 2: Reduce the time from enlistment to IET. The current backlog of untrained Soldiers in the training pipeline negatively affects readiness. Reducing the current time from which the average Soldier enlists until starting training from 7 months to 3 months, would increase overall personnel readiness and provide a larger pool of deployable Soldiers. The U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command’s (TRADOC) ability to increase training seats is linked directly to IET. Reducing wait time by 4 months would reduce Soldiers assigned in the training pipeline from 46,000 to 30,000, thus providing 16,000 additional trained and ready Soldiers for mobilization.

An authorized ARNG “T” account, which would require an increase in end strength authorization, combined with increased availability of IET seats, will ultimately lead to an increased number of ready, trained and available Soldiers in units preparing to mobilize as part of the ARFORGEN model. Implementation of these two solutions would dramatically decrease the need for cross leveling by 59%.

Solution 3: The IRR. The IRR provides the capability for fillers as part of the total force. The IRR consists of approximately 75,000 Soldiers who are available to fill shortages.⁶¹ The Army should first use the IRR rather than cross leveling as the primary source of fill to a maximum of 10% of unit deployable strength if needed to fill vacancies rather than involuntarily cross-leveling Soldiers from future deploying units.

Solution 4: By Product Recommendation: Soldiers attending the WTC should receive constructive credit for the enlisted professional education course, Warrior Leader Course (WLC). The WTC incorporates all program of instruction task for WLC.⁶² This professional education course is a requirement for all junior enlisted Soldiers. In addition, this recommendation would keep Soldiers with their unit. Although this will not reduce cross leveling, implementing this recommendation will increase personnel readiness along with saving the Army valuable school training seats and funding cost.

Conclusion

The Department of Defense, the Army and the ARNG could increase the ARNG's personnel readiness dramatically by implementing three actions. The Secretary of Defense changed mobilization guidance in early 2007 that make stabilization and personnel readiness prior to mobilization more important. This change included the authorization of multiple mobilizations of Reserve Units and personnel, changed the maximum mobilization time from 24 months to 12 months and made many training tasks pre-mobilization task versus post mobilization task. These changes make personnel readiness vital to the success of the deploying commander when they start training on pre mobilization task 12 months prior to mobilization.

Secretary of Defense Gates stated, "I don't think there's any organization in the world that devotes more effort, more time, more money and more creativity than the American military to developing the men and women in it".⁶³ The ARNG has stepped up and, through ad hoc procedures, met the personnel demands of mobilization in support of GWOT. As an operational force, the ARNG needs the authorized end strength to accomplish the mission based on the FSA required, allowing the retention of unit cohesion. "Put men from the same villages together and the sections of ten and the squads of five will mutually protect one another"⁶⁴ is still relevant when analyzing the mobilization of ARNG units. We should not throw together a mix of individuals at the last minute to go fight a war on America's behalf. We can and must do better for our soldiers and our country.

Endnotes

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²⁴ COL Dave Sheridan, The Political Cost of Leadership in Time of War: Removing a Hidden Burden on the Reserve Component Soldier and Restoring Unit Cohesion (National Defense University n.p n.d.) 10

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³¹ Ibid

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³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ COL Michael Jones, National Guard Bureau ASM, interview by author, Arlington, VA, April 23, 2009

³⁷ LTC Jay Briggs, DMOSQ Data, NBG-ART-I Individual Training Branch, Arlington, VA, May 5, 2009

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