

UNITED STATES ARMY REGIONALLY ALIGNED FORCES: OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

A Monograph

by

MAJ Andrew Beal
United States Army



School of Advanced Military Studies
United States Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

2014-01

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 22-05-2014		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) JUL 2013 - MAY 2014	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE UNITED STATES ARMY REGIONALLY ALIGNED FORCES: OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Major Andrew M. Beal, United States Army				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD 100 Stimson Ave. Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Regional alignment will allow the Army to provide the means to accomplish national strategic objectives on scale previously unrealized. Regional alignment will deliver a low-cost means to increase the stability of selected countries or regions while simultaneously decreasing the probability and frequency of the U.S. engaging in high-cost sustained land combat operations. Regionally aligned forces will not stop the U.S. from engaging in future wars on land, and the U.S. Army must always prepare to dominate the nation's future adversaries with overwhelming violence. However, the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge required to optimize the potential of a regionally aligned force will allow the U.S. to more effectively shape the land domain in peace, dominate in war, and transition to a better peace. Through an enhanced contextual appreciation of regional systems, U.S. Army regionally aligned forces will move closer to bridging the constant tension between efficacy and efficiency within the military. Through a measured and deliberate pace of change the U.S. Army has the opportunity to make cultural and institutional changes within itself to optimize the concept of regional alignment and cement their politically perceived relevancy irrespective of war, while simultaneously remaining vigilant and ready to win the next war on land.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Regionally aligned forces, United States Army, national strategic objectives, landpower, culture, language, force generation, officer education					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 74	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)

Reset

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL PAGE

Name of Candidate: MAJ Andrew Beal

Monograph Title: United States Army Regionally Aligned Forces: Opportunities for the Future

Approved by:

_____, Monograph Director
Christopher N. Prigge, COL, Ph.D.

_____, Seminar Leader
Michael J. Swanson, COL

_____, Director, School of Advanced Military Studies
Henry A. Arnold III, COL

Accepted this 22nd day of May 2013 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

UNITED STATES ARMY REGIONALLY ALIGNED FORCES: OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE, by MAJ Andrew Beal, 74 pages.

On May 6, 2013 the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) collectively published a white paper titled “Strategic Landpower: Winning the Clash of Wills”. Within a section entitled, “Employment of Landpower Short of War,” the paper articulates a vision of the application of landpower that proactively seeks to prevent conflicts that place U.S. national interests at risk before they turn violent. A central component of this vision is regionally engaged forces. Before the publication of this white paper, the Army had already established the foundation for providing regionally engaged forces to combatant commanders with its Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) execute order. As the U.S. military reduces its overseas basing footprint, regionally aligned forces provide the means by which the U.S. Army will contribute to shaping the human domain to achieve strategic effects in support of the President’s strategic objectives and policy aims. There is a popular belief that the Army has been historically less than enthusiastic about these kinds of operations short of war, particularly when executed with general purpose forces. However, the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, and SOCOM are eagerly embracing this mission set. The U.S. military’s landpower will deliver the means to accomplish foreign policy objectives, peaceably, through deliberate operations as conceived in the Strategic Landpower whitepaper. The potential for the Army to provide the means to accomplish tangible foreign policy objectives, in support of combatant command requirements, and informed by coordination with critical interagency partners, is emerging through the implementation of a regionally aligned force.

Regional alignment will allow the Army to provide the means to accomplish national strategic objectives on scale previously unrealized. Regional alignment will deliver a low-cost means to increase the stability of selected countries or regions while simultaneously decreasing the probability and frequency of the U.S. engaging in high-cost sustained land combat operations. Regionally aligned forces will not stop the U.S. from engaging in future wars on land, and the U.S. Army must always prepare to dominate the nation’s future adversaries with overwhelming violence. However, the development of skills and the acquisition of knowledge required to optimize the potential of a regionally aligned force will allow the U.S. to more effectively shape the land domain in peace, dominate in war, and transition to a better peace. Through an enhanced contextual appreciation of regional systems, U.S. Army regionally aligned forces will move closer to bridging the constant tension between efficacy and efficiency within the military.

Through a measured and deliberate pace of change the U.S. Army has the opportunity to make cultural and institutional changes within itself to optimize the concept of regional alignment and cement their politically perceived relevancy irrespective of war. Namely, the U.S. Army needs to enhance how it develops talent within the force, and generates combat power for regional alignment while simultaneously remaining vigilant and ready to win the next war on land.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My foremost thanks goes to my family for their shared sacrifice in the production of this monograph, and all my professional endeavors. Next, this monograph would not have been possible without Major David Derrick, of the Department of the Army G-3/5/7 DAMO-SSO (action officer for regional alignment), and the access he granted me to the current planning efforts of the U.S. Army with regards to regional alignment. Additionally, Colonel Jeffery Broadwater, commander 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, and Major Joey Errington, former planner for 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division and their current fires battalion operations officer, for sharing their invaluable first hand understanding of the implementation of regional alignment as the U.S. Army's proof of principal unit. Mr. Rusty Rafferty, as well as all of the librarians, at the Combined Arms Research Library have my enduring gratitude for their assistance in gathering much of reference material for this monograph and saving me countless hours of independent research. Lastly, my thanks to numerous peers, but mostly to my monograph director, Colonel Christopher Prigge, for their candid feedback, guidance, and recommendations that improved greatly the scope and rigor of this monograph.

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INTRODUCTION

Regional missions are driven by combatant command requirements. This requires an understanding of the cultures, geography, languages, and militaries of the countries where they are most likely to be employed, as well as expertise in how to impart military knowledge and skills to others.

— General Raymond T. Odierno, in HQDA,
FRAGO 1 to HQDA RAF EXORD

The U.S. Army conceived the Regionally Aligned Forces policy in an attempt to stave off the historical precedent of slashing U.S. Army force structure and capability during interwar periods.¹ Quietly, insiders will discretely concede that Regionally Aligned Forces is the strategic communications vehicle by which the U.S. Army can articulate its Relevant and Ready themes to Congress to attempt to slow down the pace of erosion of its share of the federal budget. However, regional alignment as an organizing concept for the U.S. Army has the potential to be much more powerful than an argument over budget. Although some may perceive the impetus for regionally aligning the U.S. Army as budgetary in nature, this monograph is not about budgets, but rather the future of the U.S. Army and the opportunities that regionally aligning the force presents for the U.S. Army to best serve its nation. This monograph will address some of the incremental changes the U.S. Army should undertake to increase the efficacy and efficiency of the application of future landpower in service to the nation. During a time of austere military resources, the U.S. Army must remain central in the nation's efforts to avoid conceding the most strategically

¹For a breakdown of U.S. Army endstrength throughout the history of the United States see: Allan Millett, Peter Maslowski, and William Feis, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (New York: Free Press, 2012), app. B, app. C. Douglas Macgregor in *Breaking the Phalanx* gives an efficient accounting of the reoccurring trend of American politician's actions to divest the country of its landpower and move towards isolationism following war. Douglas Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1997), 12.

significant portions of the international community to state and non-state actors whose interests are in competition with ours.²

Robert Kaplan espoused a dubious vision in his semi-prophetic February 1994 article in *The Atlantic* titled “The Coming Anarchy,” in which failing states vied with non-state entities for control of the means of coercion over a certain population or territory.³ Regional alignment is perhaps the U.S. government’s best opportunity to shape regional systems by enhancing their security and stability to allow development that compliments regional interests as well as those of the United States. Failure to develop effective landpower that can shape regional systems, short of war, makes Kaplan’s anarchical morass more probable. Regionally aligned forces have the potential to intervene in regional systems before they lose structure and approach chaos. This makes regionally aligned forces both effective and relevant.

Additionally, a regionally aligned force can prove significant in shaping regions that contain developed nations. For example, although the U.S military is reducing its forces stationed in Europe it still has obligations to fulfill to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.⁴ Regional alignment allows treaty obligations to be met responsively in a cost-informed manner. Largely from bases in the continental United States, regionally aligned forces can project responsive forces to the European theater (or other theaters) to support a wide range of activities from ensuring interoperability with other treaty members, to deterrence activities, to direct intervention against aggressors in support of national objectives.

²Macgregor, 5-6.

³Robert Kaplan, “The Coming Anarchy,” *The Atlantic*. February 1, 1994, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1994/02/the-coming-anarchy/304670/?single_page=true (accessed November 26, 2013).

⁴Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2012), 3.

Critics of regionally aligned forces could argue that the U.S. Army has always done a wide array of operational missions including theater security cooperation missions, and multilateral training missions—the principle activities envisioned for Regionally Aligned Forces.⁵ With a cursory examination of the regional alignment force concept, one could conclude erroneously there is nothing new or unique about regionally aligning the U.S. Army. However, when one takes a long view of regionally aligned forces, the concept is formidable in its potential to improve the U.S. Army’s productivity and power. Additionally, it will change how policy level leaders view the U.S. Army in terms of its capacity to achieve national objectives by shaping regions preemptively, to avoid costly entanglements, and buttress partner nations against mutual threats and in pursuit of mutual interests. Additionally, by developing partner capacity the United States can expand options to deal with emergent scenarios. When direct involvement of U.S. ground forces is impossible or unpalatable, a well-developed regional partner can still advance U.S. national interests so long as specific desired outcomes do not require tight control. In its essence, regional alignment is a global economy of force that allows the U.S. Army to hedge against emergent conflict in the land domain and to apply contextually informed forces at the critical moment when called upon by the national command authority.⁶ The looming question is whether the U.S. Army has the internal will and external support to make the reforms necessary to optimize itself for regional alignment.

Amongst the services, the U.S. Army has always been the country’s most loyal servant. U.S. Army officers find it repugnant to question or rebuff the orders of their civilian political

⁵Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) G-3/5/7, *FRAGO 1 to the Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) Execute Order (EXORD)* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2013), 3. 2

⁶Economy of force—“The judicious employment and distribution of forces so as to expend the minimum essential combat power on secondary efforts in order to allocate the maximum possible combat power on primary efforts.” Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2013), 81.

leadership to a greater degree than the other services. Contemporary strategic guidance from the Department of Defense is overtly guiding the Army towards a regionally aligned concept.⁷ But at the same time, the U.S. Army only desires to bend within the confines of its self-image. The U.S. Army perceives itself as an artisan of war with a premium placed on the skills that it takes to be successful in war. Furthermore, the U.S. Army's idealized force approximates the image of the army that saved Western Europe in 1945.⁸ Regional alignment keeps faith with the Army's deep valuation on developing and sustaining the skills required for war, but pushes the boundaries of what skills should now take on increased priority. This monograph posits that the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and the U.S. Army has an opportunity afforded by regional alignment to increase its ability to not only manage, but also exploit an increase in interactions amongst key regional partners, current threats, and potential adversaries.

Douglas Macgregor prognosticated that "America cannot afford to enter the new millennium as a nostalgic posthegemon with expensive industrial age armed forces that simply do not fit the new strategic environment."⁹ The U.S. Army has an opportunity to leverage its new organizing principle of regional alignment to become the force it should be to best address current and future national objectives. There are four critical areas of development the U.S. Army must advance to address current and future national objectives: language capabilities, officer development, force generation, and maintaining our ability to fight and win in any permutation of conflict including traditional warfare.

The U.S. Army should gradually and deliberately increase its leadership's ability to understand and communicate within as many operational environments as possible. The

⁷Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 3; Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2014), 23.

⁸Carl Builder, *The Masks of War* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), 33, 188.

⁹Macgregor, 2.

underlying assumption is that it is extremely difficult to predict future contingency areas. More than any other service, the U.S. Army, has less discretion as to the location, modalities, and timing of the missions and adversaries it will confront in the future.¹⁰ An increasingly unpredictable global environment necessitates an expanded capacity within the officer corps to excel in any environment. The U.S. Army cannot exclusively rely on superior technology. Low-cost dynamic adaptation by determined adversaries necessitates an officer corps that can negotiate the widest arrays of cultures. Additionally, a more capable officer corps will require enhanced tools to generate forces to execute the missions of regional alignment, while remaining ever vigilant to fight traditional warfare.

Complexity in the world, and its constituent regional subsystems, will continue to increase. “In the global information age, power is distributed among countries in a pattern that resembles a complex three-dimensional chess game in which you play vertically as well as horizontally.”¹¹ The world is more interconnected than it has ever been, and continues to trend in that direction. Seemingly small interactions between regional actors will continue to lend rise to emergent properties on a larger scale that bear directly on U.S. national interests.¹² Therefore, U.S. Army leaders require additional tools to understand regional systems, and the significance of their continuously changing features.

Ostensibly, the most important role the U.S. Army could fulfill is the defense of the homeland from a peer competitor simultaneously engaging in cyber, nuclear, biological,

¹⁰Builder, 128, 131.

¹¹Joseph Nye and David Welch, *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History*, 9th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2013), 340.

¹²Neil Harrison, *Complexity in World Politics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 2.

chemical, traditional, and irregular warfare.¹³ Nearly as important would be the defense of a key ally, and recent events in Central Europe remind the nation of its obligations under Article Five of The North Atlantic Treaty.¹⁴ However, what the nation will likely require the U.S. Army to do in the future is “intervene militarily in areas where America has no presence but has real or declared interests that have been threatened.”¹⁵ During periods marked by low levels of land intervention it is prudent to engage in a global effort to understand the future regional systems in which the United States will ask its land forces to intervene. Taken in abstraction, Regional Alignment is in part a global reconnaissance. Within the land domain, it will likely prove difficult for the United States to adopt future strategies, operational approaches, or tactical actions that preclude the necessity to understand specific regional environments. In the future the U.S. Army’s ability to gain a contextually nuanced appreciation of regional systems will likely prove decisive in achieving desired strategic objectives before, during, and after military interventions on land.

Prediction of future operational areas is difficult at best. Therefore, the U.S. Army must capitalize on periods of low operational tempo to understand as many potential operational environments as national priorities and resourcing permit. To optimize the U.S. Army’s ability to understand these environments it should increase its officer corps’ linguistic capacity, erudition, and generate and align forces to give its officers experience in these environments prior to large-

¹³Irregular Warfare—“Is characterized as a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s).” Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2013), X.

¹⁴Article Five—“The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “The North Atlantic Treaty,” April 4, 1949, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed March 27, 2014).

¹⁵Builder, 192.

scale interventions. As with any U.S. Army reform initiative, it is set in the context of simultaneously maintaining preparedness to address scenarios calling for the execution of a broad range of land operations including traditional warfare.

This monograph is about the future. It offers a vision for the development of the force capitalizing on the opportunities and addressing the challenges of regional alignment. Largely utilizing the future officer commissioning class of 2018, section two makes specific recommendations as to how to best develop the force over time in terms of individual skills and attributes, and institutional mechanisms to address an unknowable future. However, to establish a plausible vision of a future regionally aligned force it is first necessary to establish its near-term context.

Section one of this monograph describes what the U.S. Army should expect in the near-term development of regional alignment. Although this monograph is clearly informed by the ongoing regional alignment planning efforts of the U.S. Army, it does not offer a comprehensive study of these efforts or a critique thereof. Within section one the reader should gain a familiarity of the current stated goals of regional alignment and their implications for how they will inform the next few years of regional alignment implementation. Additionally, the reader should gain a familiarization of existing and near-term language, regional expertise, cultural capacity building, and the force generation mechanisms of the U.S. Army. Central to section one is identification of some of the implied opportunities and challenges that will influence the long-term maturation of regional alignment.

THE REGIONALLY ALIGNED FORCE

A brief review of the strategic guidance that precipitated the development of the U.S. Army's ongoing transition to regional alignment is important in order to understand its charter. Two documents illuminate the imperative for regional alignment: the 2012 national defense strategy, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, and the *Quadrennial Defense Review* 2014. The 2012 national defense strategy qualifies the basis for the U.S. Army's adoption of regional alignment and the *Quadrennial Defense Review* 2014 accounts for changes since the publication of the national defense strategy.

Regional alignment is the manifestation of a principle espoused in the national defense strategy that "Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities."¹⁶ The *Quadrennial Defense Review* 2014 expanded on this principle and requires combatant commands to pursue vigorous and adaptive planning to consider new "presence paradigms" including: "Employing regionally-focused forces to provide additional tailored packages that achieve critical global and regional objectives, including in critical areas . . . Optimizing the use of multilateral, joint training facilities overseas in order to increase readiness and interoperability with our allies and partners."¹⁷ The beginning of this section will detail how the U.S. Army is acting on this strategic guidance as well as its implications for future development of the force.

The theory of regional alignment is that continuous low-level global engagement saves dollars and lives over time. The regionally aligned force is an argument over the most cost effective manner to achieve national strategic objectives in the land domain. Regional alignment

¹⁶Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 3.

¹⁷Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, 23.

advocates for proactive and persistent global engagement versus reactive responses that will likely prove costlier over time. Recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrate the costs of shaping a country so that it is complimentary to U.S. national interests after the major combat operations end. The United States spent over 1.25 trillion dollars on these two wars through March of 2011.¹⁸ Regional alignment, when viewed in the long term, could be a powerful cost saver in terms of both tax payer dollars and lives. Regional alignment is generally consistent with systems theory in that once a system approaches chaos injecting large amounts of additional energy into the system (e.g. a large scale military intervention) is going to make outcomes difficult to predict. Furthermore, returning the system to an acceptable post-intervention state becomes problematic and costly in terms of U.S. lives, and the monopolization of limited military resources (including funding) that could address other strategic priorities.

Through proactive engagement the United States is more likely to keep regional systems flexible and pliant to small incremental changes that result in the accomplishment of national strategic objectives over time. Regional alignment allows the accomplishment of national strategic objectives within a regional system's normative boundaries. Because regionally aligned forces gain access to regional systems by cooption versus coercion they have a very low probability of causing a negative reaction.¹⁹ Furthermore, the typical duration of regionally aligned missions are discrete with bilateral or multilateral agreed upon time limits. Short duration reoccurring engagements executed, in support of theater campaign plans or country plans, over several years come at a markedly reduced cost in both fiscal and human terms while maximizing strategic adaptability by not over committing too much landpower to one strategic priority. The

¹⁸Amy Belasco, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011), 1.

¹⁹Jamshid Gharajedaghi, *Systems Thinking: Managing Chaos and Complexity* (Burlington, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006), 92-93.

opposite approach is waiting for a regional system to reach crisis and introducing a significant coercive apparatus to dominate and ultimately reestablish the system in a reactive defense of national interests. Although the reactive approach is sometimes necessary, it is rarely ideal and usually at increased cost. Figure 1 illustrates the cost saving hypothesis of preemptive engagement with regionally aligned forces.

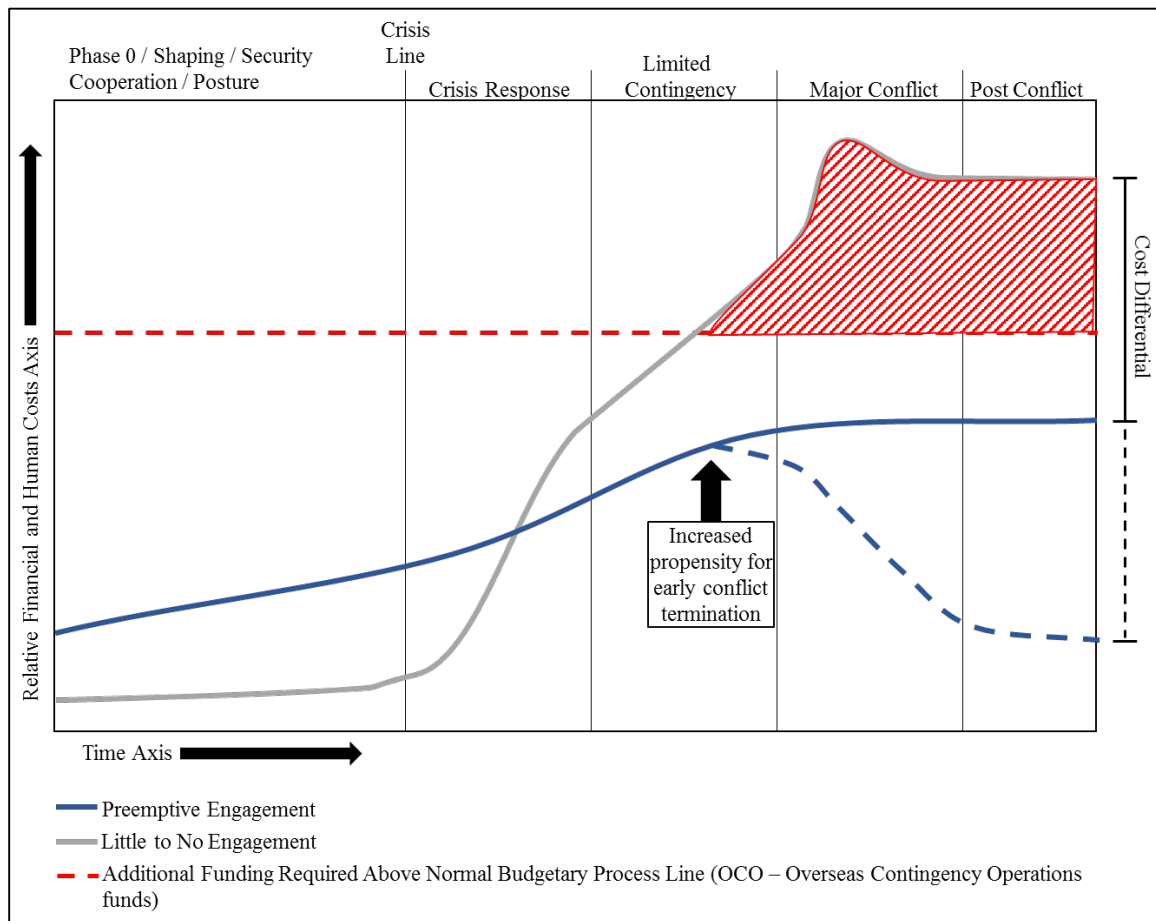


Figure 1. The Cost Saving Hypothesis of the Regionally Aligned Force

Source: Created by author. This hypothesis is a simplified and redacted version based on information from Headquarters, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, "Regional Alignment of Forces: 20 December 2013, Implementation and Concepts" (Information Brief, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, Washington, DC, 2013), 8-9.

For U.S. taxpayers the hypothesis asserts that regional alignment greatly increases the probability that a regionally aligned force executing preemptive engagement can potentially avert, and if necessary respond to crisis within normal budgetary processes, and below the threshold of Overseas Contingency Operations funding. This suggests that regional alignment will potentially avoid operations with high casualties and financial investment, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, in the red shaded area of cost. Also note that preemptive engagement increases the propensity for early conflict termination. This is the product of several factors, but mainly increased partner capacity and interoperability with regional partnered security forces, enhanced contextual understanding of the physical and human terrain gained through in-country experience, and access to local information systems through linguistic capability. Obviously crises will still occur, but by already being engaged in the crisis area the U.S. Army can generate more options through a deeper understanding of the operational environment, allowing informed preemptive action, and thereby creating a profound potential cost savings opportunity.

With the hypothesis of the regionally aligned force in mind, it is now sensible to explore its objectives. The following subsection will explain how the U.S. Army is currently executing regional alignment, and how it will likely mature it in the near future.

Objectives of Regionally Aligned Forces

The U.S. Army has several objectives for the regionally aligned force to best service the nation's foreign policy. Currently the U.S. Army sees these objectives structured by the beneficiaries of regional alignment. Although not an exhaustive list, the U.S. Army articulates its regional alignment objectives within four broad categories: partnered security forces, interagency and intergovernmental partners, combatant commands, and U.S. Army soldiers and units.

Regionally aligned forces will enable our partnered security forces by providing them increased access to the U.S. Army's best practices and tactics, techniques, and procedures; develop enhanced institutional security institutions; and enhance relationships between our

forces. Interagency and Intergovernmental partners can anticipate that regionally aligned forces will enhance unity of effort, increase U.S. Army participation in coalition activities, and improve partner capacity by enhancing cooperation.²⁰ In practice, these operations will usually manifest themselves within the sphere of security cooperation.²¹ Security cooperation can take many forms, but for the U.S. Army's general purpose forces it will usually result in scalable packages from a small cadre of subject matter experts to impart a specific skill on a single partnered foreign force, to large multilateral exercises involving the command and control of large multi-echelon formations.

These operations are already underway. In August 2013 U.S. Africa Command executed Operation Shared Accord. This operation involved approximately 4,000 military personnel from the United States and South Africa. The combined force executed training missions including tactical live fire scenarios, airborne, beach landings, medical, veterinary, and humanitarian aid operations. Both U.S. and South African general officers praised the exercise for its yield in increased interoperability between the forces and enhanced preparedness to respond to humanitarian crises.²² However, Shared Accord represents a maximal effort example of what is possible for regionally aligned missions short of war. To date, the norm for regionally aligned

²⁰Headquarters, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, "Regionally Aligned Forces," Information Brief, Headquarters, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, Washington, DC, March 27, 2013, 6.

²¹Security Cooperation—"All Department of Defense interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation." Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2012), 1-33.

²²Daniel Stoutamire, "U.S., South African Militaries Celebrate Completion of Successful Bilateral Exercise," *United States Africa Command*, August 2013, <http://www.africom.mil/Newsroom/Article/11132/us-south-african-militaries-celebrate-completion-of-successful-bilateral-exercise> (accessed February 27, 2014).

force missions has been on a much smaller scale to build discrete tactical capability to address current threats, as well as more generalized humanitarian partner capacity building.

Prior to October 2013, regionally aligned forces executed approximately 100 missions throughout U.S. Africa Command. The first regionally aligned brigade combat team, the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division based in Fort Reilly, Kansas, resourced the preponderance of the land forces for these missions with a short duration rotational deployment concept. Although the scope and scale of these missions varied, the majority of missions involved highly trained officers and non-commissioned officers of 50 or fewer U.S. military personnel. Partner capability enhancement varied, but included basic field craft, mortar training, and even training on small tactical unmanned and unarmed aerial surveillance vehicles. Although, these missions were limited in scope and duration they built regional partner capacity to address mutually shared national security objectives such as checking the proliferation of transnational extremist organizations.²³ Although regionally aligned forces did not engage in direct ground combat to advance a national security objective, they did enhance the capacity for regional partners to enact solutions to mutual challenges over time. This approach is well suited to address the fact that “U.S. forces will no longer be sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations.”²⁴ A large-scale operation involving the commitment of a land force approximating that of the U.S. commitment in Iraq or Afghanistan, over the past decade, could more expeditiously deliver a quick and likely decisive outcome to extremist organizations in a discrete region of Africa. However, the concomitant stability operations thereafter would likely prove ubiquitously unpalatable throughout the United States in the contemporary political and fiscal environment.

²³Michelle Tan, “AFRICOM: Regionally Aligned Forces Find Their Anti-terror Mission,” *Defense News*, October 20, 2013, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131020/SHOWSCOUT04/310200014/AFRICOM-Regionally-Aligned-Forces-Find-Their-Anti-terror-Mission> (accessed March 29, 2014).

²⁴Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 6.

The regionally aligned force is proving that it can deliver near-term effects, within the fiscally constrained environment, to advance longer term combatant command theater campaign plan end states over time.²⁵

Across all regionally aligned missions, the combatant command can take measure of the capacity and capability of the partnered forces informing theater, country and contingency planning to maximize the strengths and mitigate the challenges of this partner in future operations. Additionally, U.S. governmental agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and international agencies such as the United Nations can inform their appreciation of the partnered nation's military ability to contribute to humanitarian response operations, or how the partnered nation's military can enhance (or detract) development in their country or a neighboring partner in need. Perhaps most significantly, the ambassador or country team can influence partner perception and potentially behavior by creating desire for enhanced cooperation through the demonstrative benefits of conducting operations with regionally aligned forces, or by having a tangible event for the ambassador and host nation to display as evidence of the unassailability of their relationship.

Ostensibly, U.S. combatant commands and ambassadors are the principal beneficiaries of a regionally aligned U.S. Army. Regionally aligned forces provide U.S. combatant commanders, in partnership with their Department of State ambassadors, greater access to U.S. Army resources with improved responsiveness to prevent conflict and shape the land domain within their areas of responsibility. Scalable force packages will maximize efficiency without marginalizing long-term

²⁵Combatant commands derive theater campaign plan end states from the Guidance for Employment of the Force and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan produced at the national-strategic level. Additionally these end states are informed by interagency partners such as the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The doctrinal temporal expectation to accomplish an end state is five to 10 years and are broad in definition. Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Plans, *Theater Campaign Planning: Planner's Handbook*, vol. 1.0 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2012), 8-9.

efficacy. This directly supports the 2012 presidential charge to the U.S. Army, and the Department of Defense at large, to “conduct a sustainable pace of presence operations abroad, including rotational deployments and bilateral and multilateral training exercises.”²⁶ Access to joint-capable headquarters provides previously under-realized opportunities for partner engagement above the tactical level. U.S. Africa Command is not the only combatant command conducting regionally aligned missions involving upper echelon headquarters. U.S. Central Command conducted Operation Eager Lion 2013 in Jordan. The 1st Armored Division headquarters oversaw a training exercise involving approximately 8,000 combined U.S. and Jordanian military personnel to enhance interoperability, strengthen relationships, and demonstrate commitment to a critical regional partner adjacent to Syria.²⁷ This is important because combatant commands are losing structure within their headquarters, yet simultaneously expected to contribute to developing “strategically complementary approaches to deepen cooperation with close allies and partners, including more collaboratively planning our roles and missions and investments in future capabilities.”²⁸

An advantage combatant commands receive from the regionally aligned force is access to additional planning instruments from unit headquarters aligned to their commands. This is a timely development as Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced in June of 2013 an aggregate reduction of high level headquarters within the Department of Defense by 20 percent, including combatant command headquarters.²⁹ Through regional alignment, combatant

²⁶Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 5.

²⁷C. Todd Lopez, “1st Armored Division troops aligned with CENTCOM, ready for Eager Lion kick-off,” The Official Homepage of the U.S. Army, June 3, 2013, <http://www.army.mil/article/104693/> (accessed November 26, 2013).

²⁸Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, 24.

²⁹Hagel, Chuck, “Statement on Strategic Choices and Management Review,” Speech, Pentagon Press Briefing Room, Washington, DC, July 31, 2013.

commands now have access to additional planning capacity from the division and possibly corps headquarters aligned to their command. This can potentially enhance the focus and consistency of conceptual and detailed planning on a regional basis.³⁰

So how should this look? Figure 2 provides a graphical depiction and a summary of one of the possible future alignment concepts based on the author's interpretation of the 2012 national defense strategy, the *Quadrennial Defense Review* 2014 and the evolution of numerous unclassified information briefings on the subject of regional alignment largely produced by the U.S. Army G-3/5/7. Figure 2 is not an attempt at an exact projection of the specific number of units within each geographic combatant command. Regional alignment will adjust to developing national priorities as well as demand signals from combatant commands. However, the logic of the model below is sound because it resources each combatant command with sufficient units to rotate and sustain operations over time in accordance with the priority of each combatant command as interpreted from the aforementioned strategic guidance documents. Discussed subsequently, the force generation cycle that supports this alignment does not, nor can it sustain the availability all units aligned to the combatant command all of the time, necessitating multiple units assigned to each combatant command. In general, a combatant command will have, at a maximum, the ability to employ one-third of the forces aligned to it at any given time within the funding and authorities established within national strategic directives such as the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan.³¹ What the reader should discern from figure 2 is a visualization of the scope,

³⁰“The terms “sequester” and “sequestration” refer to or mean the cancellation of budgetary resources provided by discretionary appropriations or direct spending law.” Statement of budget enforcement through sequestration; definitions, Public Law 99-177, § 900, 105th Cong., 1st sess. (January 3, 2007), 387.

³¹Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan—A plan that provides guidance to the combatant commanders and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to accomplish tasks and missions based on current military capabilities. JCS, JP 1-02, 150.

scale, distribution, and the potential of regional alignment to shape environments in support of national interests throughout the globe.

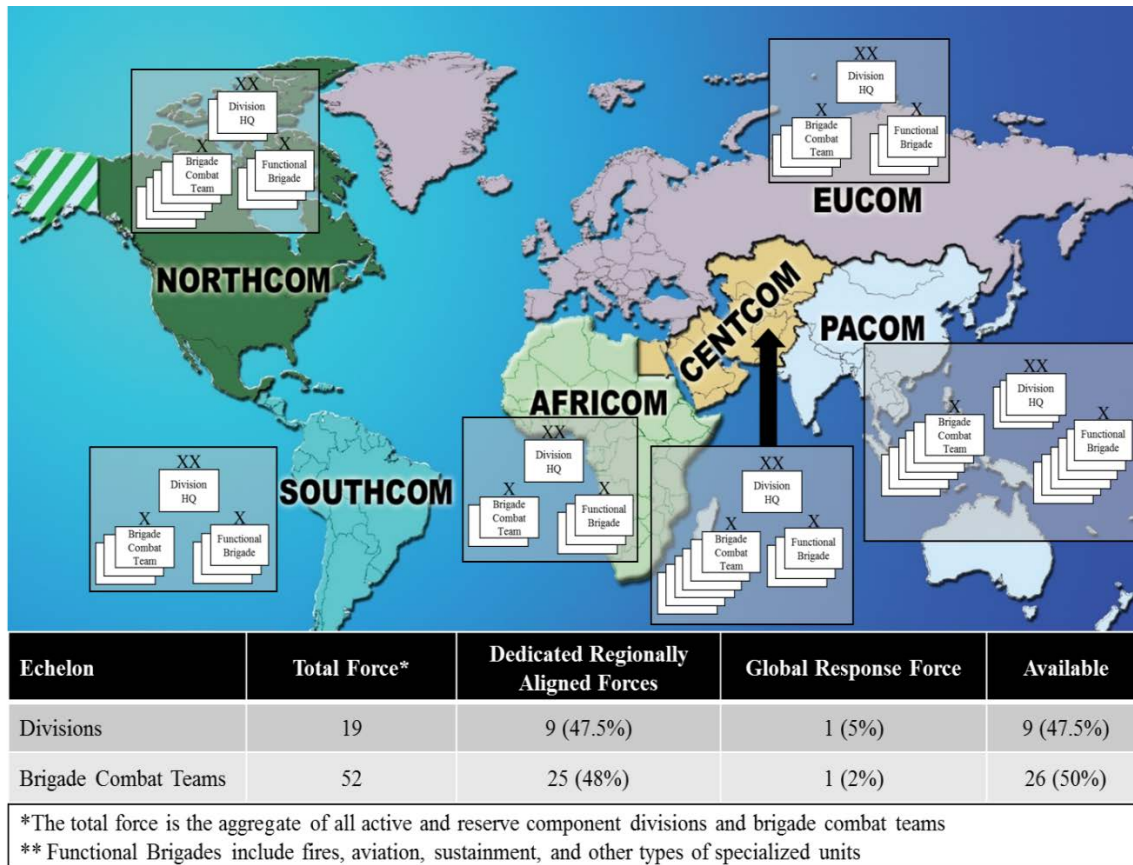


Figure 2. Future Concept of Regionally Aligned Units

Source: Created by author using Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, "GCC Map," ACQWeb, <http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/pacc/cc/images/map.JPG> (accessed February 27, 2014).

Note also the relative weighting of resources by combatant command. Clearly Pacific Command and Central Command receive a larger share of units than the other commands in accordance with current national level priorities and ongoing operations. Additionally, note that the Global Response Force is a division headquarters and a brigade combat team. This is slightly

misleading. It takes multiple brigade combat teams to ensure that there is one brigade combat team always at the highest possible state of readiness to respond to a contingency throughout the world in a matter of hours if necessary. The brigade combat team in the global response force will rotate with other brigades whose training, organization, and equipping allows them to be rapidly deployable across the globe. Subsequent examination of the force generation process will depict why it is not possible to have all units continuously available to a respective combatant commander.

For those readers that are familiar with the global force management process, figure 2 may prove problematic, as there is not a delineation between assigned, allocated, apportioned, or service retained forces. Although not currently the case, the model in figure 2 assumes that the Department of Defense has allocated those forces to the combatant commands through the rotational allocation process. This lengthy process usually takes two years to plan prior to execution, so achieving this degree of allocation will take years to accomplish.³² Recalling that the U.S. Army only had one regionally aligned brigade combat team in the summer of 2013, it will likely take several years to achieve a robust degree of alignment. The intent here is not to illustrate the finer points of the global force management process, but to establish that regional alignment is feasible within the existing process, but will take years to implement completely.

For those unfamiliar with the global force management process, assigned, allocated, and apportioned forces have been distributed to a combatant command, for execution or planning, to achieve a national strategic objective. Service retained forces are those that have not been distributed to a combatant command, and their service maintains them in a state of readiness commensurate with their anticipated demand. A unit can be service retained and still be regionally aligned. The only difference between a service retained regionally aligned unit and that

³²Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2011), H-3.

of an assigned, allocated, or apportioned unit is that if the combatant command requires the use of the service retained unit outside of extant global force management authorities they must pursue additional authorities to use them through the request for forces process.³³

Additionally, figure 2 does not provide a distinction between active or reserve component forces. Again, this is an intentional omission. Clearly reserve component forces will participate meaningfully in regional alignment. U.S. Northern Command, the combatant command that includes the homeland, will receive a disproportionately larger share of reserve component forces for numerous reasons. National Guard units do not have some of the constitutional encumbrances that active duty forces have operating in the homeland. Namely, National Guard units may perform law enforcement activities while serving under Title 32 United States Code authorities, whereas active duty units are significantly restricted from such roles as codified within Title 10 United States Code and emanating from the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878. The legal flexibility of the National Guard makes them particularly suited to service the demands of U.S. Northern Command. However, across all combatant commands, the implication of U.S. Army active duty end strength declining from approximately 570,000 to 450,000 (or potentially 420,000) makes the reserve component force participation in regional alignment a matter of mathematical necessity.³⁴

As with any operation in the land domain, the soldiers that execute regional alignment, irrespective of their component, will prove the most important to its overall success or failure. Therefore it is beneficial to examine the opportunities presented by regional alignment for the U.S. Army to make additional investments in its human resources. The advantages presented by regional alignment to the soldiers of the U.S. Army are numerous, but can generally fit within three categories of enhancement: morale, knowledge, and skill.

³³For a more complete discussion on Global Force Management see JCS, JP 5-0, app. H.

³⁴Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, 29.

Perhaps somewhat of an intangible, but important benefit of regional alignment is that it will enhance the morale of soldiers. Regional alignment is a vehicle by which leaders and soldiers can focus their efforts on clearly defined missions. Additionally, the funding and resourcing that accompanies regionally aligned missions in support of combatant commands allows soldiers to exercise the skills that most of them envisaged as the standard activities of their profession upon entering service. Although the routine tasks of garrison life are essential to the proper function of an installation, without a respite afforded by a tangible mission they often lead to disillusionment. In the near future of military austerity, regional alignment will prove a key vehicle to sustaining a mission focus that holds the force in higher morale.

The enhanced knowledge base requisite for regional alignment centers on developing an understanding of regional cultures and its constituent elements. Although the initial focus for forces will have to be on mastering the cultural basics to avoid offense and ensure continued access to the partnered forces, a deeper and contextualized understanding should be the ultimate goal. Again, when one perceives regional alignment as a global reconnaissance, the U.S. Army should seek to expand its understanding of regional systems. This increased understanding should result from a broad effort to understand as many cultures as possible, but should also seek a detailed understanding amongst those cultures that are of increased importance to the combatant commander. This will require a multidisciplinary academic and experiential investment in the leaders of the force to enable tactical units to expertly operate within regional systems upon an unforeseen contingency as well as to enable the U.S. Army's most senior leadership to proffer the best possible, and contextually informed, military advice to U.S. civilian leadership.

The skills required of a regionally aligned force are broader than that of a force only preparing to fight major decisive campaigns. In addition to maintaining their traditional warfare fighting ability, regionally aligned soldiers will acquire the ability to impart and communicate their expertise to partnered forces. First, this requires mastery of the tasks to impart on partners.

Any soldier who has taught a military skill to any audience knows that he or she must master it to a degree beyond that of what is required for execution alone. The second component, and easily the more difficult, is the acquisition of language skills to interact with partnered forces. Not every soldier will become an expert linguist, nor should they. However, within regional alignment there is an increased demand for linguistic skill. In many circumstances a rudimentary level of linguistic skill is all that is required to avoid offending the partnered force. Yet when one looks at regional alignment as a global reconnaissance, it is appropriate for select personnel to develop robust linguistic capabilities that will serve the United States in future contingencies.

Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture

The desire of American commanders for linguistically adept forces is not new. In 1902 while fighting in the Philippines, Major General Adna R. Chaffee wrote the following in his annual report to the War Department:

An important duty as yet not taken seriously by the officers of the Army serving in the Division, but which ought not be longer neglected if they would meet to the full the demands which the situation requires and may be reasonably expected of them as enhancing the efficiency when serving here, is the acquirement of a workable knowledge, both oral and written, of the native dialect where stationed . . . I believe that the interests of the government are deeply involved in this matter . . . I recommend . . . a bonus of two hundred dollars to each officer and intelligent enlisted man who shall attain a state of proficiency in a native dialect, and one hundred dollars additional for proficiency in Spanish.³⁵

Regionally aligned forces require a degree of language, regional expertise, and cultural proficiency previously unrealized in U.S. Army general purpose forces. An October 2013 U.S. Army draft of its emerging language, regional expertise, and culture strategy powerfully expressed its relation to Landpower: “People live on land and, ultimately, it is on land is where

³⁵War Department, “Annual Report of Major General Adna R. Chaffee, United States Army, Commanding the Division of the Philippines, September 30, 1902,” in *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1902: Volume IX. Reprint of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army and Department Commanders* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1902), 205.

conflict must be decided. Language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural understanding are among the key enabling competencies of Landpower.”³⁶

The perceived need for language, regional expertise, and culture proficiency has grown and declined over the course of the modern military era.³⁷ However, the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan increased the U.S. Army’s attention on the importance of language, regional expertise, and culture. As general purpose forces came into close and constant contact with indigenous security forces and the population at large, it exposed a capability gap in terms of language, regional expertise, and cultural training. The Defense Language Institute was a key agent in addressing this capability gap. Their efforts to arm the force with linguistic, regional expertise, and cultural skills are currently supporting the transition to regional alignment. The Defense Language Institute is largely conducting this transition with the tools developed in response to Iraq and Afghanistan.

For the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan language training demand grossly exceeded capacity. Placing credentialed language instructors in each formation requiring language training was, and will likely remain, cost prohibitive.³⁸ The personnel management considerations for soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians, or even contracted language instructors are in and of themselves daunting and unpalatable in a time when increased access to language resources across a dispersed force, curriculum adaptability, and cost efficiency are paramount. In response to increased requirements a commercial-off-the-shelf online virtual system of language

³⁶Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), *Army Strategy for Language Proficiency, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Understanding Draft Version 12*, unpublished draft, Washington, DC, 2013.

³⁷For the purposes of this monograph the modern military era is anything after 6 August 6, 1945, the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima, Japan. Martin van Creveld, “Technology and War I to 1945,” In Charles Townsend, *The Oxford History of Modern War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 223.

³⁸HQDA, G-3/5/7, *FRAGO 1 to the HQDA RAF EXORD*.

instruction bought time for the Defense Language Institute to mature a Department of Defense internal online training capability tailored to military linguistic requirements.³⁹

The Defense Language Institute has already established scalable training packages for the regionally aligned force. The Defense Language Institute has 34 language training detachments located on bases throughout the United States as well as forward deployed locations in Asia and Europe. However, the physical detachments have limited throughput capacity and cost concerns. Obviously in a military environment dominated by fiscal constraint, a bold expansion of brick and mortar linguistic training capacity is unlikely. Regionally aligned forces will rely heavily on distance learning capability and disciplined individual soldier initiative.⁴⁰ The accomplishments that the Defense Language Institute has made in terms of access to language training through distance learning are laudable and have the potential to keep growing. Currently, the Defense Language Institute has four distance learning (largely internet based) resources that are available to every unit and individual soldier in the U.S. Army at no cost to the user. The four online Defense Language Institute resources are Rapport, Headstart2, Language Survival Kits, and Country In-Perspective.⁴¹

The Rapport training centers around six to eight hours of on-line course material that introduces soldiers to basic cultural and linguistic elements of a foreign area. This rudimentary course teaches greetings and other perfunctory phrases. Additionally, this block of instruction inculcates the soldier with a familiarity of customs and courtesies. This course will not give its students much of a capability, but as the title of the course implies it will sensitize soldiers to the

³⁹Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, "Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces," Information Brief, Defense Language Institute, Monterey, CA, 2013.

⁴⁰HQDA, G-3/5/7, *FRAGO 1 to the HQDA RAF EXORD*; Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, "Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces;" HQDA, *Army Strategy for Language Proficiency, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Understanding*.

⁴¹Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, "Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces."

new environment sufficiently and have the tools to avoid accidentally offending the host nation population.⁴²

Headstart2 is the Defense Language Institute's flagship online training resource. This is an 80- to 100-hour course available for 21 languages. Soldiers can expect to acquire 1,000 key terms and phrases. The course work is bifurcated into two sections, one dealing with linguistic fundamentals and the other is vocabulary and phrases most relevant to military operations. For example, the military linguistic training includes key terms about weapons, land navigation, emergency medical care, as well as other militarily relevant topic areas. Because there is a considerable investment of time for soldiers completing this course it is probably not practical for every soldier to complete this training, but it does provide a valuable skill set for those personnel that are going to engage in close daily contact with non-English speakers.⁴³ Yet this program has the capacity to deliver the Army's stated goal of having one linguistically trained soldier per platoon with a proficiency level of Memorized Proficiency (0+/0+) in Regionally Aligned Units.⁴⁴

The Language Survival Kit and Country In-Perspective resources are packages of both digital and hard copy language and culture resources. These resources are adequate for conversant engagement at the lower end of the tactical spectrum. However, these resources will not enable nuanced mid-grade or senior leader level conversation.⁴⁵

⁴²Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, "Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces."

⁴³HQDA, *Army Strategy for Language Proficiency, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Understanding*; Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, "Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces;" author's experience of the Headstart2 program of instruction in French.

⁴⁴For a summary of the definitions of all language proficiency ratings see Appendix A of this monograph.

⁴⁵Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, "Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces."

Live classroom instruction is the only Defense Language Institute resource with a stated goal of inculcating a “measurable level of language performance and proficiency.”⁴⁶ However, as the U.S. Army transitions from a period of sustained violent counterinsurgency to smaller scale regionally aligned missions, the demand for language, regional expertise, and cultural competencies will not abate, and in all probability will increase to support a globally engaged and regionally aligned force. As regional alignment drives demand for more language training, it is probable that this will spur innovation in cost informed solutions to expand the tools to impart greater linguistic capability across the U.S. Army.

However, it is important to reflect on the current vision the U.S. Army has for language training to inform what is probable in the future. In February 2014 during the Army Leader Development Forum 14-2, representatives from U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command briefed senior leaders on the U.S. Army’s Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Strategy. Figure 3 reflects a model of how the Army envisions future language training in terms of who will receive what training and what level of proficiency based on the information briefing presented at the forum.

⁴⁶Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, “Support to the US Army Regionally Aligned Forces.”

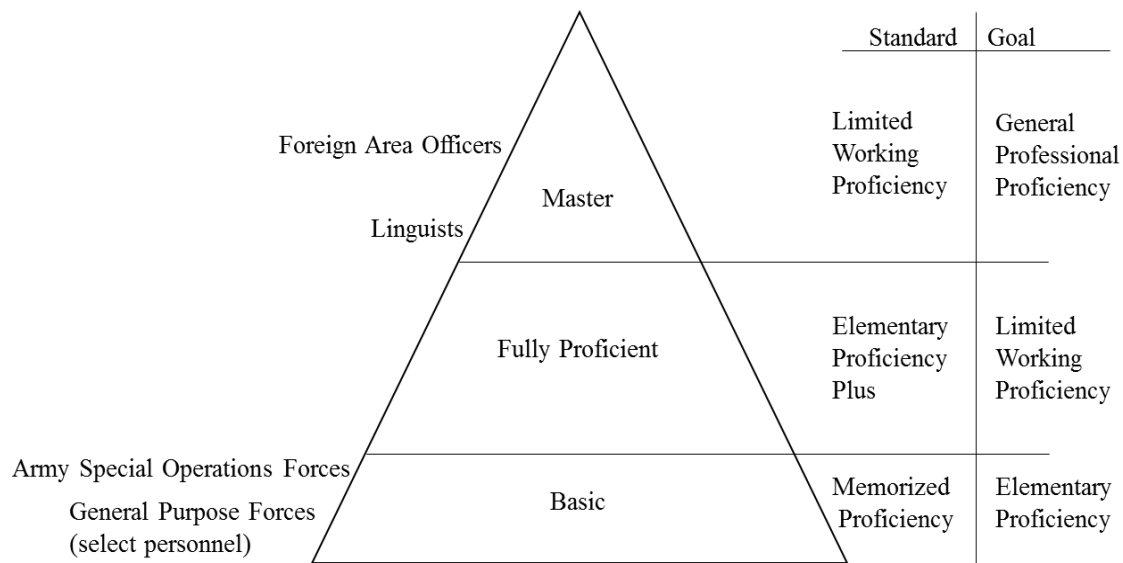


Figure 3. U.S. Army Language Training Concept

Source: Created by author using U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, “Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Strategy” (Information Brief, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Eustis, VA, February 26, 2014), 4, 6.

U.S Army contemporary thinking has the concept of language training as a separate construct from the regionally aligned force, and omitted language training as a component of professional military education. However, the U.S. Army will incorporate regional expertise and cultural training in professional military education.⁴⁷ There are probably several good reasons to keep language training outside of the parameters of the regionally aligned force and professional military education. However, its importance to the success and maturation of the regionally aligned force is central. Linguistic capabilities will likely bear heavily on the future of the regionally aligned force as a viable concept. The subsequent section will explore a possible way of increasing the linguistic acumen of the force at large.

⁴⁷U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, “Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Strategy,” Information Brief, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Eustis, VA, February 26, 2014, 2.

The great challenge of language, regional expertise, and culture will not be in the routine activities of sensitizing corporals to respect the modalities of a host nation's culture to avoid offense. The true challenge lies in imparting a nuanced contextual appreciation for a foreign system as well as the culture of our interagency partners. For example, Raul Prebisch's structuralism economic theory was widely accepted throughout developing nations beginning in the 1950s. His theory, in short, stated that there were inherent (or structural) biases in liberal free trade that disadvantaged developing economies largely in the southern hemisphere. The structural bias stemmed from economies in the southern hemisphere largely producing raw materials and northern industrialized economies producing technologically advanced manufactured products. Prebisch argued that over time the relative value of unfinished goods would invariably decline comparable to finished goods creating a self-reinforcing structural disadvantage for developing nations. Whether or not this theory remains valid in an ever increasingly interdependent global political economy is not relevant to this discussion. What is relevant is that our interagency partners likely understand structuralism, the ruling elite of our multinational partners in developing nations likely give it some degree of credibility, and far too many of our junior and mid-grade leaders (those executing regionally aligned missions abroad) have never heard of structuralism. The larger point offered by this example is that U.S. Army leaders engaged with interagency and multinational partners cannot be the least learned, necessitating an increased institutional valuation of graduate level learning and the mechanisms to achieve it.

The interdependent nature of all actors in the land domain, and the clear supporting role that land forces play in shaping operations short of armed conflict dictates that for Army leaders and headquarters to engage with joint, interagency, international, and multinational partners they should have a heightened awareness of the various actors' perceptions and perceived realities. So the question for the regionally aligned force is how to educate and train its leadership to understand the context of the system they are planning and operating in and still have time to

build a conventional force that can dominate the elements of offense and defense within decisive action. Section two will explore how to increase the erudition of our junior and midgrade leaders to enhance a nuanced contextual understanding of the land domain.

However, in order to get leaders access to regional partners to gain the experience necessary to inform a nuanced contextual understanding of the land domain, the U.S. Army has to generate the forces to get them there. The next subsection explores how the U.S. Army builds combat power for regional alignment.

Building Regionally Aligned Combat Power: Manning, Training, and Equipping the Force

The Army has developed a baseline for training Regionally Aligned Units. The following description, based on figure 4 below, centers on the brigade combat team, the Army's principal unit of action. The standard training plan is a 24-month cycle that utilizes the Army Force Generation model as its regulatory and doctrinal basis.⁴⁸ Units conduct a series of training events to advance to a level of collective and individual training proficiency required for decisive action, as well as those skills specific to their regionally aligned mission set.⁴⁹ Critical to the success of this training plan is the inherent nesting of personnel and materiel resourcing incumbent within Army Force Generation.⁵⁰

⁴⁸For a complete discussion on Army Force Generation see Army Regulation 525-29. Note that this regulation is currently under revision, in part, due to the ongoing development of the regionally aligned force concept. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 525-29, *Army Force Generation* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2011).

⁴⁹Decisive action is the "continuous, simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability or defense support of civil authorities tasks." HQDA, AD RP 1-02, 1-12. Although this definition implies a broad range of military operations, for brigade combat teams decisive action training is often dominated by near peer and insurgent scenarios manifested through iterative and progressive force on force and live fire training exercises.

⁵⁰Headquarters, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, "RAF Training Concept," Department of the Army, Washington, DC, January 2013.

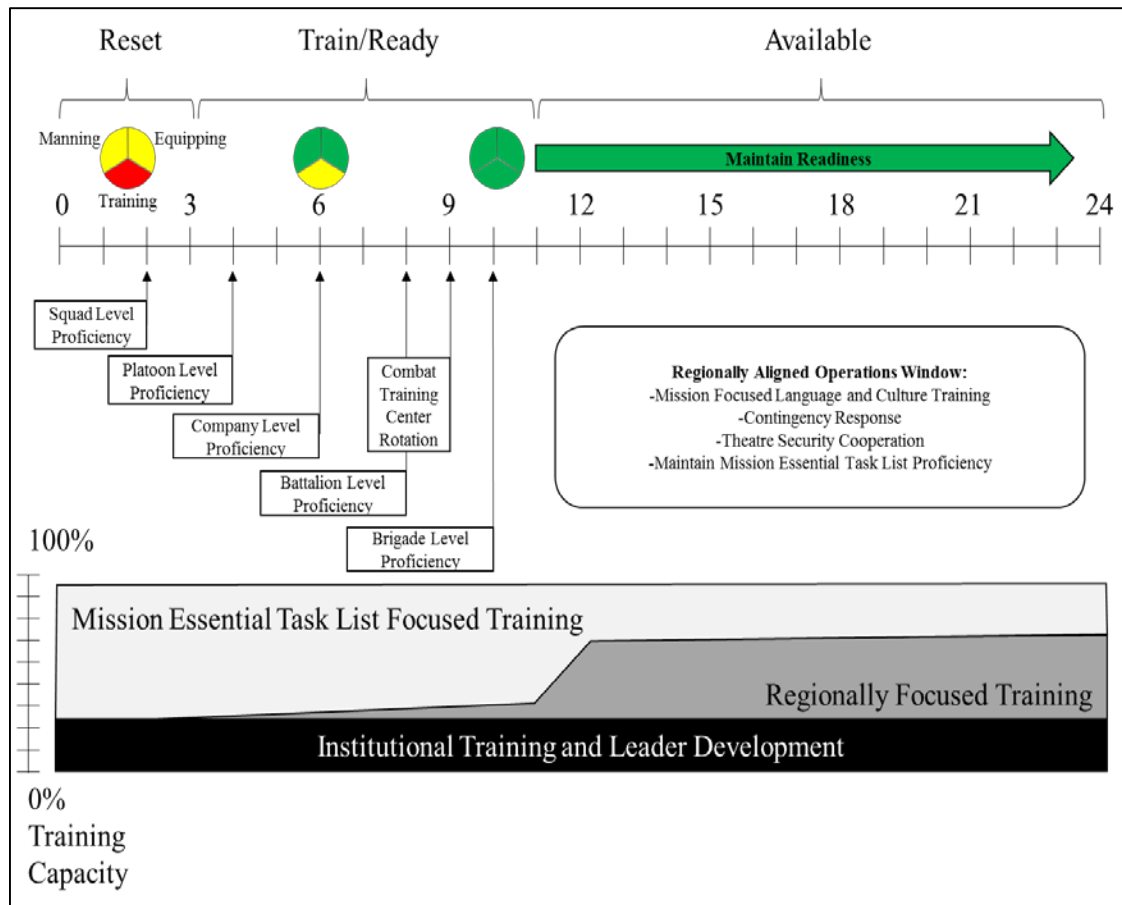


Figure 4. Regionally Aligned Force Generation
(Active Component Brigade Combat Teams)

Source: Created by author using a synthesis of several unclassified information briefs, but all of its components can be referenced in Headquarters, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, “Regional Alignment of Forces: 20 December 2013, Implementation and Concepts” (Information Brief, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, Washington, DC, 2013).

The first 10 months of the regionally aligned forces concept is principally concerned with decisive action mission essential task list proficiency from the individual level through the brigade level.⁵¹ During these first 10 months, units execute a series of situational training, live

⁵¹A mission essential task is a “task a unit could perform based on its design, equipment, manning, and table of organization and equipment/table of distribution and allowances mission.” HQDA, ADRP 1-02, 1-25. The mission essential task list is the collective of all mission essential tasks. The mission essential task list is a key document that Army commanders and their staffs use to prioritize and resource unit training.

fire training, and mission command exercises to meet specific proficiency gates.⁵² These exercises are progressive by echelon, beginning with the individual soldier then squad, platoon, company, battalion, and culminate with a combat training center exercise to validate the proficiency of the brigade at large for their U.S. Army standardized mission essential task list. As the brigade is progressing through its training regimen, it is also receiving new personnel and equipment. By the sixth month of the process the brigade should receive all required personnel and equipment authorized by the Army based on what type of brigade combat team it is. Theoretically this gives the unit a full three months to train with all of its required personnel and equipment prior to the combat training center exercise—the decisive action capstone training event. Simply stated, at the end of this 10-month period the brigade has been manned, trained, and equipped to a level where it could deploy to a combat zone and perform the mission to which the U.S. Army conceived it to perform.

In the eleventh month, the regional training focus increases significantly in order to ensure that the brigade can execute regionally aligned forces missions in support of the combatant commander during their regionally aligned operations window. The Army Service Component Command of the combatant command works closely with the parent headquarters of the brigade combat team to ensure that regional training resources regionally aligned units to accomplish the combatant commands in-theater priorities.

There are no absolute training mandates in this concept and a percentage of training energy will go towards decisive action and regional specific training throughout the 24-month cycle. The bifurcation between the decisive action and regional specific training phases is useful to measure the preponderance of the training focus throughout the force generation cycle. The

⁵²Mission command—“The exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.” HQDA, ADRP 1-02, 1-25.

bottom third of figure 4 represents this as the percentage of training capacity on the bottom third of the chart. Decisive action training will have to occur after the tenth month because a regionally aligned unit has no stop-move or stop-loss tools at its disposal. As personnel rotate in and out of the unit it will destabilize small units, requiring them to requalify on certain tasks to maintain the required readiness status to remain in the “available” force pool as dictated by U.S. Army regulation.⁵³ For example, when a tank crew shoots gunnery and becomes qualified, removal of key personnel from the crew, such as the tank’s commander, makes it unqualified and degrades the unit’s readiness rating. This is not a new challenge for the U.S. Army. Tactics for managing personnel turbulence are within U.S. Army doctrine.⁵⁴ However, with regionally aligned missions competing for time and resources (depicted on the right half of figure 4), old methodologies may prove themselves as suboptimal and result in distractions from the combatant command’s regional priorities for the unit. A mechanism that mitigates personnel turbulence would enhance crew stability and reduce requirements for requalification during the regionally aligned operations window. Section two explores mechanisms to mitigate personnel turbulence.

Readers should conceive of the depiction of institutional training and leader development in figure 4 as a fixed constant. It must occur to impart immediate tools and skills within the unit, as well as ensure the institutional solvency of the U.S. Army in the long term. This involves troop schools such as the sniper school, unit movement officer course, and Airborne School that enhance the unit’s ability to conduct its operations. Additionally, formal leader development through institution schooling such as the non-commissioned officer education system builds

⁵³“Units in the Available Force Pool are at the highest state of training and readiness capability and the first to be considered for sourcing operational requirements.” Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation, 525-29, *Army Unit Readiness Reporting and Force Registration - Consolidated Policies* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2010), 4.

⁵⁴Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 6-20-21, *Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT) Gunnery* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2009), 12-20.

capacity in individual leaders for positions of increased leadership responsibility. Although these activities compete with regionally aligned missions for time, personnel, and planning capacity, they are largely sacrosanct because of the near-term benefits they provide to the units, and their long-term necessity for the sustainment of the U.S. Army.

With a familiarity of regional alignment and the opportunities and challenges previously espoused, it is pertinent to transition to how to optimize regional alignment in the long term. The purpose of section two is to offer reforms for the long-term maturation of the force in the context of regional alignment. Section two is broad and conceptual. It discusses how the U.S. Army can better develop its leaders to understand and communicate within operational environments in preparation for service to the nation in an unknowable future. However, leaders are of reduced value without their formations. Therefore section two also explores how to generate forces to achieve regional missions while remaining always ready to execute a broad range of land operations including traditional warfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO OPTIMIZE THE REGIONALLY ALIGNED FORCE

There are three areas that the U.S. Army must address to make the concept of regional alignment as effective as it can be in service to the nation: a revised leader development system, greater efficiency in how the U.S. Army generates combat power, and sustainment of the U.S. Army as the preeminent land combat force in the world. Readers should consider that the reforms recommended in this section will take decades to fully enact. Should any further consideration be given to these recommendations, there should be an accompanying robust detailed planning effort that resources an incremental implementation, and has a built in mechanism of iterative reform. This section provides recommendations to reform U.S. Army officer development, force generation, and sustain a broad spectrum of warfighting capability including the ability to dominate any adversary in traditional warfare.

Officer Development for the Regionally Aligned Force

General Raymond Odierno, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, continues to reinforce the importance of leader development in maintaining the U.S. Army as a ready and relevant land power.⁵⁵ The implications of regional alignment bring leader development to the fore as the primary means for the transition to this new organizing principle. In order to achieve the optimized regionally aligned force envisioned within this section, the U.S. Army must reform its officer development model in three areas: language, regional expertise, and culture; assignment strategies and career progression; and professional military education. All three of these areas are interrelated, necessitating a synchronized reform effort.

Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture

Residential language training courses are costly. Once a soldier learns a language, maintaining that skill requires motivation and discipline. Not everyone in the force can or should be a linguistics expert. However, the U.S. Army's current linguistic capacity is not sufficient for regional alignment or traditional warfare. This section makes recommendations as to the initial measures to expand language capacity within the U.S. Army. Although there is certainly an argument to make for increasing the linguistic capacity of the entire U.S. Army, the recommendations below focus on the officer corps for three reasons. First, most officers come from undergraduate institutions that can provide the foundational level of linguistic skill at little to no cost to the U.S. Army. Second, the framework of the enlisted education system would have to undergo a massive restructuring at a very high cost to accommodate linguistic training for every soldier. With relatively minor changes, the officer education system can expand to include linguistic training for a relatively small part of the force. Third, the population of officers in the

⁵⁵David Vergun, "Odierno: Leader development No. 1 priority," The Official Homepage of the United States Army, February 12, 2014, http://www.army.mil/article/120024/Odierno__Leader_development_No__1_priority/ (accessed March 19, 2014).

U.S. Army is relatively small. The U.S. Army only commissions a few thousand officers every year, but there are officers dispersed throughout the force.⁵⁶ This makes officers both the cheapest and easiest population to build language capability in, and then distribute that capability across the force. Once the U.S. Army expands its linguistic capability across the officer corps it could potentially expand the program to certain occupational specialties in the enlisted ranks who have a high probability of interacting with non-English speaking populations, however that discussion is beyond the scope of this monograph. Gradually, these reforms will change how the U.S. Army perceives its baseline competencies within its officer corps.

Changes of this nature do not often occur quickly and when they do, they do not often endure. Therefore, the manner in which the U.S. Army implements the linguistic reforms presented below should be deliberate and generational in nature. The tools for change are already available in their infancy enabled by the catalyst of more than a decade of war largely characterized by near constant interaction with foreign populations. As previously mentioned, Defense Language Institute programs such as HeadStart2 are sound, and fiscally responsible, intermediary assets commanders can leverage as the U.S. Army transitions to the new organizing principle of regional alignment. However, to achieve the aforementioned increase in capability the U.S. Army should adopt an increased valuation of linguistic attributes into the accessions and promotions process through a deliberate and phased long-range plan.

The initial phase should focus on officer accessions. Prior to commissioning, officers should demonstrate that they have an “elementary proficiency” in both listening to and reading a foreign language from a menu of centrally selected languages approved by the Department of the

⁵⁶Between 1990 and 2011 U.S. Army yearly active component officer accessions remained below 8,000 personnel, and the entire officer corps remained below 38 percent of the total active component force. Defense Manpower Data Center, “Appendix D: Historical Data Tables,” in *Department of Defense Population Report* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2011), 19, 21.

Army and influenced by input from Army Service Component Commands.⁵⁷ At the outset of this initiative, the focus should be on establishing a tangible and demonstrative process that reinforces the emerging narrative that the U.S. Army values language attributes in its officer corps. As subsequent officer commissioning classes matriculate, the narrative of linguistic valuation will be reinforced. Within a generation of officers, few will remember that there was never an officer language requirement.

The U.S. Army should strive for the widest possible base of languages and expand its extant linguistic incentives program. A tiered incentives program that grants greater compensation for more difficult languages and guides linguistic diversity should be part of a larger linguistic strategy. However, the aptitude, interest, and commitment of individual officers and cadets to select and develop their language skills must be given primacy. Dictating specific secondary languages to cadets would likely yield a suboptimal output by dampening the requisite individual initiative to endure the crucible of learning a second language. The tiered incentive program should utilize Adam Smith's notion of the "invisible hand" to allow the individual preferences of its officers to accomplish the program's objectives.⁵⁸ Furthermore, the incentive program should reward skill as well.

Apart from maintaining individual officer preference, two elements dictate the feasibility of the initial element of this proposal: timing and cost. The timing of the implementation of this element is paramount. The U.S. Army should conduct this implementation slowly. The U.S. Army should present Reserve Officer Training Corps and West Point cadets with their linguistic requirements at the outset of their commissioning program to provide them with sufficient time to leverage the assets of their undergraduate educational institution in gaining their initial linguistic

⁵⁷For the definition of "elementary proficiency" as well as all other standardized language proficiency definitions see Appendix A in this monograph.

⁵⁸Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations: Part Two* (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1776), 160.

proficiency. Ostensibly, allowances for Officer Candidate School attendees would be necessary, as well as potential wholesale exemptions for specially managed officer populations such as chaplains, medical providers, judge advocates, and potentially other officers with highly specialized skills. These officers should still have the opportunity to participate in the aforementioned tiered incentive program, but their participation would be less than compulsory.

The primary cost saving mechanisms for the implementation of the initial element is that the cadet's undergraduate institution incurs the costs of instructors and classroom infrastructure. The cadet pays the temporal costs in terms of potentially absorbing additional coursework above what may be required for their degree completion whilst they are still a cadet. This saves time, which equates to funding, once the cadet has entered active duty. Although there will be some cost in adapting the institutional apparatus to support this initiative, the institution has the advantage of time (four years from initiative adoption, potentially year group 2018) to develop the plans, policy, and programming to support it.⁵⁹ Most importantly, an initial linguistic aptitude requirement, as a precondition to commissioning indoctrinates the force with an enhanced appreciation for language.

The second element of reform is a tiered progression system that requires officers to increase their linguistic proficiency over their career. Prior to graduating the captain's career course, officers would demonstrate a limited working proficiency in their designated language. Officers selected for resident Command and General Staff College would demonstrate a limited working proficiency plus in their designated language. These requirements would incur additional direct cost to the U.S. Army in the form of instructors, infrastructure, and allowances within the curriculum. Cost mitigation comes in the form of a long planning horizon that affords sufficient

⁵⁹For an overview of how the U.S. Army develops its programming see Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 1-1, *Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, January 30, 1994), Army Publishing Directorate, http://www.apd.army.mil/pdffiles/r1_1.pdf (accessed March 20, 2014).

time for rigorous study of the problem to develop a cost informed implementation guidance and leveraging a currently untapped linguistic resource: international exchange officers attending career courses and the Command and General Staff College. Currently there is approximately one international student per every 15 U.S. military officers attending the Command and General Staff College. These officers could be a strong consideration in the formulation of staff groups. The college could assign U.S. Army officers to staff groups to optimize access to an international officer who is a native speaker of their secondary language. Leveraging the linguistic skills of international officers and a relatively long lead time for implementation mitigates costs and increase feasibility. Implementation at the career course level would not occur until approximately 2022, and implementation at the Command and General Staff College would not occur until approximately 2028 synchronized with the mean career timelines of the year group 2018 cohort of officers.

It is important to take note that establishing a limited working proficiency plus level of linguistic skill through institutional mechanisms would be problematic and potentially infeasible for non-resident Command and General Staff College participants, yet acceptable in the aggregate. As the U.S. Army returns to identifying only its top promotable captains and majors for attendance of the resident Command and General Staff College course, it will likely reemerge as a discriminator for command and promotion potential.⁶⁰ Largely, future battalion commanders will be resident attendants of the Command and General Staff College. Concomitantly, the proposed linguistic requirements for graduating this course will perpetuate the narrative of enhanced linguistic appreciation through these future battalion commanders as they lead and mentor their formations.

⁶⁰Secretary of the Army, Army Directive 2012-21, "Optimization of Intermediate-Level Education," Washington, DC, 2012.

The third element, likely both the most efficacious and contentious, is the incorporation of language proficiency requirements into promotion and centralized selection boards. The Canadian Army has a long standing requirement for dual language proficiency for senior officers so a model exists that the U.S. Army could study over time and adapt to its own purposes.⁶¹ The third element would affect a relatively small, but important population: brigade commanders. Admittedly, foreign language proficiency should not be the sole discriminator for the selection of brigade commanders. However, if regional alignment, and its intrinsic requirement for linguistic acumen, is the true direction of the U.S. Army, then it must indoctrinate the force, and particularly our future general officers, with an enhanced valuation of language. As a precondition to graduating the U.S. Army War College (or an equivalent thereof) officers would demonstrate a general professional proficiency in their designated language. Not only would this give the nation an expanded bench of proven and seasoned officers capable of nuanced engagement up to the strategic level without a translator, it would also complete the normalization of linguistic excellence throughout the officer corps. Additionally, these linguistic attributes would place a special relevance on senior Army officers within combatant command headquarters and regional interagency leadership positions. Again, this element is only possible with a generational conception of implementation. Implementation of this phase prior to 2038 (the approximate time that year group 2018 would begin to attend the War College) would likely be self-defeating and potentially institutionally embarrassing. Forcing a change of this magnitude in a shorter time horizon would likely result in a grass roots backlash from the force, as well as prove cost prohibitive.

⁶¹Canadian Armed Forces, *Canadian Armed Forces Selection Board Guidance Manual* (Ottawa: Director General Military Careers, 2013), 1-1/5, 2-2/9, 2-5/9, 2-7/9.

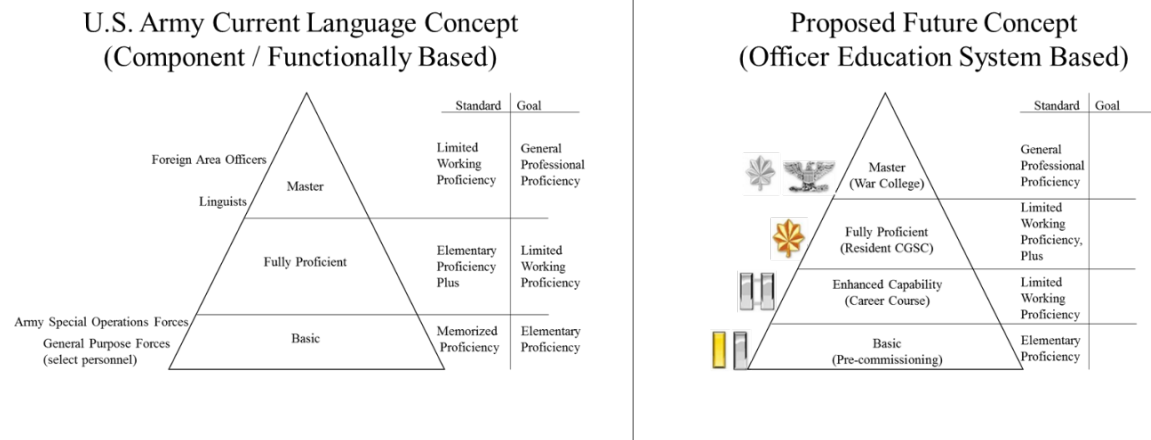


Figure 5. Current and Proposed Language Proficiency Concepts

Source: Created by author.

Some may question the viability of a proposal that takes decades to enact fully. Although the U.S. Army's organizing principle often shifts over time, there are two relatively stable trends that will ensure the relevancy of a linguistically adept land force for the near future. First, there is a strong probability that global population growth will continue in the coming decades forcing more populations into greater interaction with each other and increasing the complexity of the land domain. A United Nations study estimates that global population could reach 10.6 billion by 2050.⁶² Our propensity to understand the context of an increasingly complex domain will largely dictate our probability of success in future operations including traditional warfare. Second, the information environment in which the U.S. military operates will require increasing transparency to host nation, domestic, and international audiences. In tandem, land operations in an age of increasing transparency, and global scrutiny, will become ever more dependent on erudite engagement within the human systems they interact. Both these trends point the U.S. Army to a

⁶²United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, *World Population to 2300* (New York: United Nations, 2004), 13.

direction that has a greater valuation on language proficiency. Language proficiency is the key to opening the doorway to regional and cultural expertise to expand our understanding of the context within which regionally aligned units operate. Yet, these trends in and of themselves will likely not be sufficient to galvanize change within the system without a proponent.

Many agencies could serve as a proponent for a comprehensive linguistics, regional expertise, and cultural understanding program. However, one agency is seemingly well designed and positioned within the current U.S. Army structure to serve as at least an interim solution: the Army Irregular Warfare Center within the Mission Command Center of Excellence, at the Combined Arms Center in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This organization is the U.S. Army's proponent for security force assistance, so a linguistics program such as the one detailed above is complimentary to their current scope of responsibilities.⁶³ Additionally, the Combined Arms Center is the parent organization of the Defense Language Institute, the Command and General Staff College, and the schools that administer company grade officer education. Furthermore, as the United States reduces its involvement in the conflict in Afghanistan, and diminishes the scope and the scale of its irregular warfare activities (at least temporarily) there may be some planning capacity available for taking the broad concepts described herein to a detailed and executable program that could develop and endure under the purview of the Irregular Warfare Center. Lastly, the Irregular Warfare Center is less of an academic institution and more of a bridge to enhance the efficacy of warfighters in the current and future operating environments. The operationalized bent towards practical application in the field would assist in ensuring program relevancy and endurance. The inherent risk of charging an organization like the Irregular Warfare Center with a program such as this is that they could fall prey to sacrificing long-term programmatic developmental objectives for near-term emergent warfighting requirements. However, regardless

⁶³Security force assistance—"The unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of legitimate authority." HQDA, ADRP 1-02, 1-33.

of the specific organization that is charged or created to fulfill the role of proponent, the important thing is that they can generate the synthesis required to develop a nuanced and contextually informed understanding of future operational environments.

Regional and cultural expertise is only meaningful if the U.S. Army can synthesize the natural and socioeconomic aspects of an operating environment's constituent systems in a way that allows a sufficient understanding of the context, and conveys that understanding in an operationally significant manner. Because this is extremely difficult to do, the U.S. Army has to make a significant investment in two areas that may face institutional resistance. First, the U.S. Army has to become comfortable with a greater degree of geographic specialization within its general purpose forces. Second, the U.S. Army has to educate its officers to deliver the appropriate mix of social scientists, engineers, economists, and other academic disciplines to create staffs that are capable of assisting a commander in achieving a synthesized contextual appreciation of an operating environment.

Assignment Strategies and Career Progression

The U.S. Army must become more comfortable with aligning a soldier to a region for the duration of his or her first 20 years of service. It is both inefficient and ineffective to reassign a soldier every few years to a regionally aligned unit to which he or she has to relearn the operating environment and incur the costs associated in doing so. Granted, there is a point of self-diminishing returns when too much specificity lurches towards myopia, but soldier alignment at the combatant command level provides increased specialization over the current situation without having to completely reinvent the U.S. Army's human resource management systems.

A myriad of mechanisms already exist within current U.S. Army Human Resource tools to make the discrete aspects of the assignment process support the concept of a regionally aligned soldier. However, a deliberate adaptation of existing systems to assign the right soldier to the right regionally aligned unit based on regional experience, graduate education, and linguistic skill

is necessary for effective regional alignment. This is not a proposal for a return to the regimental system where a soldier spends the vast preponderance of their entire career in a single unit, or even a specific installation, but rather adapting the existing system to focus the skills that most benefit regional alignment whenever possible.

Granted, emergent wars, leader development, supporting the generating force, broadening assignments, joint and interagency requirements, amongst other assignments outside of regionally aligned units will and must occur. These requirements coupled with the fact that human resource professionals must have enough flexibility in the assignment system to make it function preclude mandates that would see a soldier only assigned to a unit aligned to specific region for decades at a time. Additionally, there is an inherent benefit to expanding the experience of a soldier beyond one region of the world especially as that soldier rises to an organizational level of leadership. Therefore, the goal for rates at which individuals return to where they possess the greatest regional expertise, and are most directly beneficial to regional alignment, should approximate two-thirds of the time in service for career soldiers. Ostensibly, adapting existing human resource systems to achieve a two-thirds rate will take time to implement and mature.

A generational approach to adapting the assignments process to best compliment regional alignment will prove the most enduringly efficacious, and initially feasible. If the U.S. Army synchronizes the adaption of the assignments process to reach the goal of two-thirds regionally aligned assignment rate with the officer cohort of year group 2018, the previously identified cohort for enhanced linguistic development, and then it should afford sufficient time for a successful initial implementation. The U.S. Army should use the officer corps, beginning no earlier than year group 2018, to ensure the functionality of a new regionally aligned assignment process prior to expanding it across all ranks. The officer population is a relatively small component of the force, but represents a sufficient sample size to validate modifications to the assignments process. After several years of assignment cycles enough experiential data should be

available to expand this assignment strategy to the force at large. See the figure below for a generalized leader development timeline for a hypothetical officer in year group 2018.

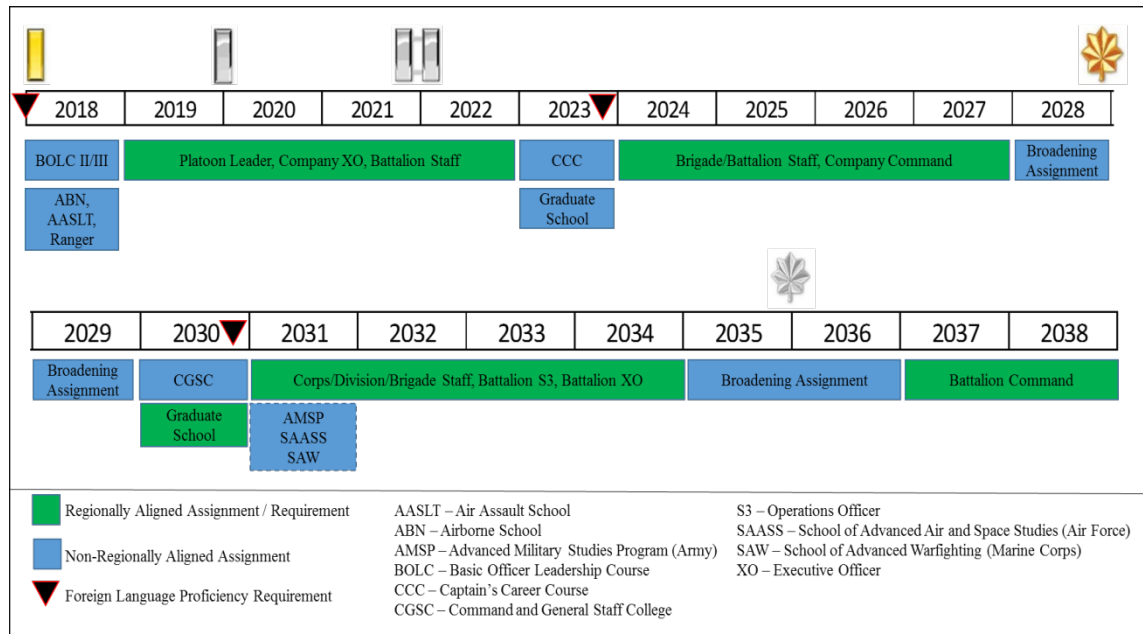


Figure 6. Year Group 2018 Leader Development Timeline, 2018-2038

Source: Created by author.

The leader development model depicted in figure 6 allows an officer to spend two-thirds of their first 20 years of service in operational assignments regionally aligned. This model is not a grand departure from existing leader development models, but rather a slight adjustment that reinforces regional alignment as an organizing principal. It delivers a more linguistically adept, culturally aware, and contextually informed officer to meet the challenges of increasing complexity in the land domain. Cyclical re-assignment to the same region of alignment will allow an officer to develop increased expertise, yet balanced with broadening opportunities that allow for the development of organizational level leaders who can lead in any operational environment.

Lastly, this model allows for the institutional reinforcement of attributes central to effective regional alignment at designated intervals through professional military education.

Professional Military Education

As an effective regionally aligned force depends on its ability to understand the context in which operates, its focus should be on the middle and upper contingents of the U.S. Army professional education system focusing on two areas: the captain's career course, and the Command and General Staff College. First, there should be little if any change to the manner in which the U.S. Army institutionally develops lieutenants. Lieutenants should remain focused on mastering the technical and tactical aspects of their branch specific roles, and most importantly maximizing the efficacy of their leadership abilities. This is a critical point in an officer's career where they master the fundamentals of how to fight and win traditional warfare. Without this foundation the U.S. Army hazards its officer corps ability to deliver its primary responsibility to the nation and a dilution of focus towards regional considerations is impertinent. However, captains have the advantage of this warfighting foundation, through both education and experience, and this is the appropriate grade to begin to expand deliberately their academic attributes to support regional alignment in earnest.

As end strength declines and operational tempo slows down temporarily, it affords the U.S. Army to make an additional investment in their captains as they attend the career course.⁶⁴ Most Army installations have existing partnerships with civilian academic institutions to provide opportunities for officers to attain graduate degrees while they attend their captain's career course

⁶⁴The duration of a temporary decline in operational tempo is unknowable. The implication for the regionally aligned force is that these operational respites are fleeting, and represent critical windows of opportunity for posturing the force for future interventions. Since the end of the Cold War the United States averaged a military intervention every two years with the typical duration of intervention lasting five to 10 years. James Dobbins, Seth Jones, Keith Crane, and Beth Cole DeGrasse, *The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Security Research Division, 2007), xvii, <http://images.contentreserve.com/imagetype-100/1736-1/{014d9363-4edc-42e3-9867-94a19d3deab1}img100.jpg> (accessed April 1, 2014), xvii.

or gain acceptance into a program of record that grants a graduate degree. This opportunity should transition to a requirement and a precondition for graduating their respective career course. The cost is that the U.S. Army will have to allow additional time at the captain's career course. Even with an extended career course timeframe, the career course curriculum may have to endure some modification to maximize the academic rigor of the courses. Additional rigor will entice educational institutions to offer a reasonable amount of constructive credit for the career course to make earning a graduate degree possible within the time available.

The specific degree type the officer pursues should be largely at the discretion of the U.S. Army. The notion of Adam Smith's invisible hand, mentioned previously, for language selection is suboptimal at this point. The officer's Army Service Component Command of alignment should heavily influence, if not dictate, the disciplines of graduate degrees students pursue to best support greater understanding of their regions. Obviously, the Army Service Component Command should consider the officer's undergraduate background and to some extent the officer's preference. However, the focus of this master's program should be to ensure that each regionally aligned unit has the right mix of graduate level economists, political scientists, civil engineers, historians, or any other germane academic discipline. The U.S. Army needs to be conscious of the marketability that this enhanced leader development will imbue on its officer corps and ensure that it is the foremost beneficiary of the degree selection process. Obviously, partnered civilian academic institutions, and cost to the U.S. Army, will inform the variety of degrees available. But, increased demand for services, coupled with the associated increase in revenue, should entice partnered civilian academic institutions to supply an increase in capacity over time to deliver the appropriate breadth of degrees that best compliment regional alignment. Admittedly, there is an inherent friction in this proposal: what if an officer fails to graduate?

Being that a regionally aligned force requires a more learned officer corps, an academic failure at graduate school should be a discriminator for things such as resident attendance at the

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Furthermore, if the officer completes their degree on their own time, at their own expense, or within existing educational benefit structures, prior to their board for resident Command and General Staff College, then the U.S. Army should not hold any prejudice against them. Although failing to complete a graduate degree at the career course should not be a sole discriminator in terms of continued service or company command, it should bear heavily on any consideration for advanced civil schooling opportunities. Even with a declining end strength, there will likely remain a requirement for leaders who can demonstrate excellence in the field but are of marginal academic aptitude. Yet a declining end strength does afford an opportunity to increase the valuation of academics.

Academic accomplishment should take on increased significance in terms of additional civilian and military academic opportunities, promotion, and command potential. Additionally, the U.S. Army must encourage and incentivize our most talented officers to pursue advanced degrees in the most rigorous and challenging graduate programs in the country, and abroad, during the developmental timeline afforded to broadening opportunities represented in figure 6. Graduate level performance, coupled with the dual requirements of a career course curriculum, should provide the U.S. Army with a sound indicator of academic potential to pursue additional graduate level education during broadening opportunities. This rigorous military and academic environment should also serve as a key indicator of an officer's capacity to attend the resident Command and General Staff College.

Every resident Command and General Staff College attendee should attain a second master's degree: a master of military arts and science from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. These masters should be specific to the officers region of alignment and must address an enduring challenge within the region. The focus for this degree program should not be the balance of academic disciplines aligned to a region. The critical academic task for the future organizational level leaders of the force are to get them thinking and writing in a manner that

increases the contextual appreciation of the regions to which they will serve upon graduation. Their research and writing should provide a direct benefit to the regionally aligned force. General officers commanding regionally aligned units should have a significant degree of influence over the topics that students write about in their monograph or thesis creating a tighter nexus between the intellectual needs of the regionally aligned force and the operations of the Command and General Staff College.

The Command and General Staff College should assume the burden of resourcing master's degrees and not outsource the requirements to partnered academic institutions. The core cost would center on acquiring enough professors with a doctorate to ensure that every monograph or thesis committee has doctorate representation. Yet, an expansion of doctorate positions at the Command and General Staff College is also an opportunity. This expansion of doctorate requirements should largely be satisfied with civilian professors, but there should be deliberate accommodation for active duty doctorate positions. These officers would become part of a specially managed and elite cohort of officers. Although they would principally serve at the Command and Staff College, they would also serve at the highest echelons of the regionally aligned force on a rotational basis.

There is already a doctorate program resident at Fort Leavenworth known as the Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program.⁶⁵ An expanded Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program could manage increased requirements for active duty doctorate holding officers. However, the management of this cohort of officers should look more like the Functional Area 47 officers (U.S Military Academy Professors) than the current Advanced Strategic

⁶⁵“The Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program develops field grade officers as strategic planners and as future senior leaders through a combination of practical experience, professional military education, and a doctoral degree from a university in a strategy related field of study.” Christopher Prigge, “Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program,” Information Brief, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2014.

Planning and Policy Program career track.⁶⁶ These officers would abandon a career path resulting in promotion to general officer, and would instead sign up for an extended commitment to the Command and General Staff College. Periodically these officers would rotate into key staff positions throughout the regionally aligned force to ensure that they have the recent operational experience, and to provide additional intellectual tools to general officers commanding the regionally aligned force.

Again, because change on this scale is difficult, the implementation for this program should coincide with the second broadening opportunity window for year group 2018, which will begin approximately in 2034. This affords the Command and General Staff College two decades to study the funding, the modalities, the scope of the program, and most importantly to evaluate the talent and potential of individual officers in year group 2018 to execute this program. As the Command and General Staff College matures the program, it should look to expand it to the U.S. Army War College, and other institutions such as the Defense Language Institute that require doctorate level leaders.

Officer development is only one component of the broader requirement for comprehensive leader development. Too broad a focus at the outset of addressing any problem can lead to stagnation and thwart necessary change. By focusing our initial efforts on adapting the officer development system to more directly compliment regional alignment the U.S. Army can establish a basis from which to export its greatest successes and mitigate the inevitable frictions and emergent risks to the force at large. However, since regional alignment is already under

⁶⁶“Functional Area 47 officers are required to have a Ph.D. in their designated academic discipline, or to have a master’s degree and be able to obtain a Ph.D. within 3 years of appointment.” Headquarters, Department of the Army, Department of the Army Pamphlet, 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2010), 295-296.

implementation, the U.S. Army should undertake some prudent adjustments to generate the regionally aligned force complimenting the adaptation of its officer development system.

Regionally Aligned Force Generation

The stability of the force is paramount to the success of regional alignment. As previously identified in section one, commanders currently lack the proper tools to sustain readiness over a 24-month force generation cycle.⁶⁷ The current force generation model does not afford commanders personnel stability to support regional alignment. What field commanders require is twofold. First, they must have a mechanism that delivers comparable results to a stop-loss in terms of personnel turnover. Second, the manner in which the U.S. Army assigns soldiers to regionally aligned units must gain a greater appreciation for the operational demand and grant less primacy to self-imposed constraints of supply.

First, the U.S. Army should envision a regionally aligned unit as deployed in place. As the brigade combat team has taken primacy as the unit of action for the U.S. Army, and since its manning systems evolved to resource accordingly, it is appropriate to sustain this construct. However, the U.S. Army should resource commanders with a personnel management tool that approximates the effects of a stop-loss. This will be difficult and require years to implement. It will require the alignment of the generating force and the operating force without the war time authorities or the exigencies of large-scale sustained combat deployments. However, by adopting this model it will provide two key benefits. This alignment will keep our manning systems and mind set expeditionary and prepared for war, and it will yield an aggregate increase of training readiness across the force.

⁶⁷Department of the Army, G-35 DAMO-SSO, "United States Army Regionally Aligned Forces," Information Paper, Department of the Army G-35 DAMO-SSO, Washington, DC, 2012, 2.

The assignment of soldiers at the brigade combat team level should have increased synchronicity with the training and equipping of the unit. As the U.S. Army enters a period likely characterized for the next two to three years with a lack of major combat deployments it should seize the opportunity to reform the construct of manning, equipping, and training. Over the last decade of conflict, resource scarcity often drove suboptimal combat power generation activities. Now that the U.S. Army is at an ebb in the scope and frequency of deployments it is appropriate to reform how it builds and sustains combat power. In short, the U.S. Army should man a unit, then equip it, and then allow it to train itself to reach decisive action and regional proficiency.

The vast preponderance of soldiers should arrive to the unit coinciding with brigade and battalion change of command dates. This will minimize personnel turnover throughout the force generation cycle. Current force generation models do not resource a full complement of authorized personnel until the brigade is six months into their training cycle. Individual and collective training qualifications occur during months one through six of the force generation cycle. Unfortunately, this ensures that units will not have stabilized and qualified crews going into their combat training center rotation without retraining between the sixth and tenth months of the force generation cycle. Whatever efficiencies gained by a delay in manning are vacated when a unit has to requalify a significant portion of a unit on gunnery or other tasks. This reality is particularly stark for heavy brigade combat teams where gunnery costs quickly ascend into the millions of dollars for fuel, repair parts, range maintenance, and ammunition amongst other costs.

Reforms such as this are not new. In 1981 the U.S. Army instituted the New Manning System. The purpose of this program was to increase the “combat effectiveness through the reduction of personnel turbulence.”⁶⁸ However, the system centered on a 36-month construct aligned with the standard initial term of enlistment for junior soldiers. Unfortunately, the U.S.

⁶⁸David Marlowe, “New Manning System Field Evaluation,” Technical Report, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Washington, DC, 1985, I-2.

Army did not assign leaders to units in concert with the junior soldiers. This created a great deal of cohesion amongst the junior enlisted soldiers, but did not engender sufficient loyalty to their leaders.⁶⁹ Amongst other examples, former Chief of Staff of the Army General Peter J. Schoomaker directed the development of a unit manning concept in September of 2003 based on a 36-month manning cycle. This manning concept is notable because it anticipated that a unit would attain 26 to 28 months of availability per 36-month cycle.⁷⁰ Commonly referred to as lifecycle manning, this concept failed to reach complete maturity under the strain of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and difficulty in synchronizing lieutenant accessions with the concept at large. The recommendation herein would see that the cyclical unit manning construct center on two-year increments of assignment.⁷¹ The essential aspect of this recommendation is that the unit manning cycle aligns with the force generation cycle. Furthermore, the U.S. Army should synchronize the unit manning cycle with the brigade change of command date for all soldiers in the brigade. This ensures that everyone in the brigade is on a similar timeline. The broader point is that the U.S. Army must see its force generation apparatus (the means by which it produces combat power to achieve national objectives) as the independent variable, and the assignment process as the dependent variable. Meaning that if the U.S. Army decides to enact a change in the force generation cycle then the assignments process should react without hesitation to support it. Figure 7 provides a graphical depiction of the potential advantages of the above reforms.

⁶⁹Marlowe.

⁷⁰Jamie Gayton, "Have We Finally Found the Manning Holy Grail?" *Military Review* (2004): 17-20.

⁷¹For non-centrally selected personnel four year assignments may be optimal.

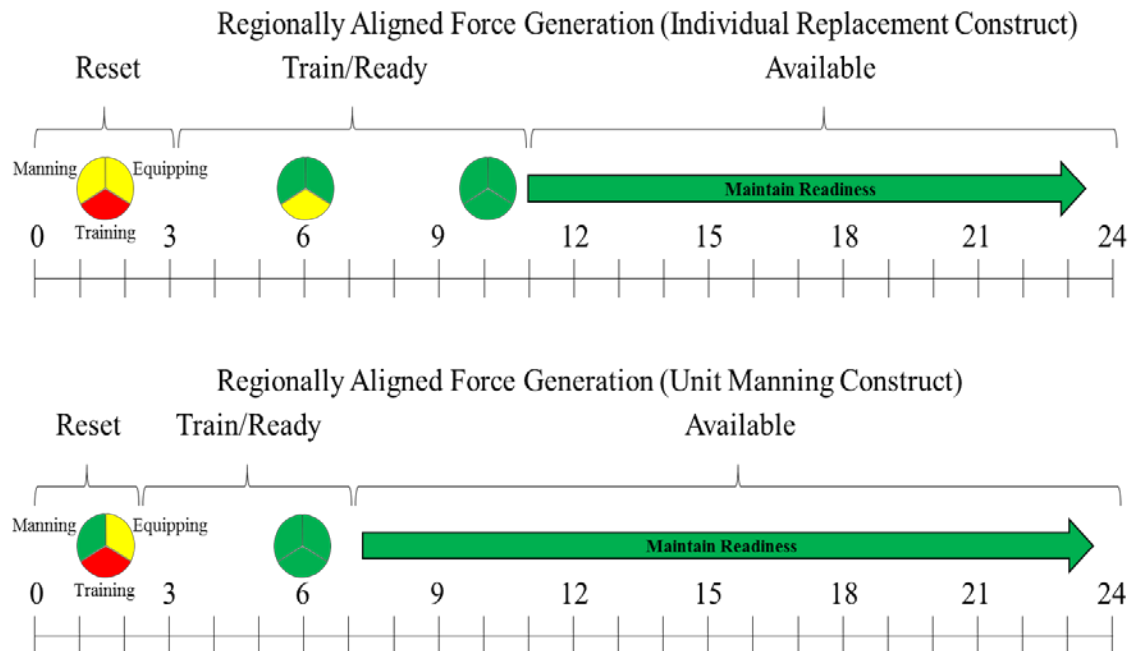


Figure 7. Comparison of Force Generation Constructs

Source: Created by author.

One other element bears consideration with regard to force generation, and that is the maintenance of a regional response force. This response force should not seek to provide redundancy to the global response force. The regional response force, in all likelihood, is not going to conduct a forced entry operation into a region to defeat an adversary with overwhelming force. That is what the global response force does. The regional response force would be a near-term tool that a combatant command could utilize to take advantage of an emergent opportunity. The combatant command would inform the composition of the force, and give it planning priorities, similar to a reserve, to allow it to prepare for multiple scenarios.⁷²

⁷²Reserve—“That portion of a body of troops which is withheld from action at the beginning of an engagement, in order to be available for a decisive movement.” HQDA, ADRP 1-02, 1-32.

The regional response force could be a veterinary detachment, construction engineers, a tactical command post from a division headquarters, an entire infantry company, or a scalable and modular task force specifically designed to capitalize on emergent opportunities that a combatant command perceives as top priorities or at least probabilistic. Thus far, a key constraint on regionally aligned units is gaining the country clearances through the Department of State and the correct funding streams to support expeditious movement of units.⁷³ However, the interagency community could mature coordination mechanisms to expedite the processes so that the deploying force reaches their destination in five to seven days versus what has typically taken weeks.

The thinking and planning for a regional response force should not be constrained as to the possible scenarios they could address. This force is likely an indirect approach to achieve an object unrelated to the narrow purpose of the mission itself. A hypothetical scenario might involve a veterinary detachment addressing an outbreak of a domesticated animal disease that threatens the livelihood of a key constituency of an important regional actor central to a U.S. ambassadorial initiative. The narrow focus of the mission is to protect the livelihood of peoples within a defined area. The broader purpose of the operation is to bolster the position of a key actor and increase trust between this individual and a U.S. ambassador as part of comprehensive regional strategy. The missions that the regional response force executes are not as important as its ability to react quickly to capitalize on emergent opportunities.

In order for a regional response force to be plausible it requires a force distribution approximating something like the model in section one that was graphically portrayed in figure 2: Future Concept of Regionally Aligned Units where each combatant command has multiple units. The reason for this is when one considers figure 4: Regionally Aligned Force Generation, even in

⁷³MAJ Joey Errington, interview by author, Fort Riley, KS, September 30, 2013.

the second year of the force generation cycle units are still going to have to maintain their proficiency in accordance with the U.S. Army doctrine that informs their training requirements. It does not matter if the unit is an infantry company or a water purification unit, there is training at the cost of availability, which units must do in order to maintain readiness and be able to deliver a level of performance that will meet combatant command expectations. This is mitigated by giving brigade level commanders tools that stabilize their personnel in a similar manner as a stop-loss, but is not a panacea. The multiplicity of units allows, with proper management, for forces to be continuously available to the combatant command. Obviously, to sustain a regional response force it will take vigilant senior leader oversight to ensure the unit is ready to deploy continuously.

First Principles: Winning the Nation's Wars in the Land Domain

The United States has had a relatively poor performance record of predicting the location and nature of future war. Regional alignment possesses both preventive and preparatory attributes to gain and maintain a relative advantage in or avert emergent conflict. In essence, regional alignment is tantamount to a global reconnaissance. As discussed previously with regard to force generation, regional alignment could be a powerful catalyst for higher levels of readiness that extend beyond the narrow constructs of the global response force. Regional alignment keeps U.S. landpower globally engaged, increases understanding of potential conflict environments, and allows for the development of relationships that will bear heavily on future conflict prosecution and termination. In a very pragmatic sense, regional alignment allows the U.S. Army to understand the terrain (human and physical) of future wars better, and keeps units at a higher state of readiness to address those future wars. However, the greatest advantage of regional alignment is that by keeping our leaders, at all echelons, globally engaged it reinforces the centrality of the

human dimension of land warfare and gives opportunity to reinforce the Army's cultural identity as the nation's loyal artisans of war.⁷⁴

Technology will continue to increase exponentially. We must continue to master technology and maintain critical material advantages over our potential adversaries. However, war on land is personal, visceral, and horrific. It happens between people. "It is a supremely dangerous error to assume that technology is a solution for the problems of war. A Strategy devised by technocrats, based solely on the superiority of weaponry is no strategy at all. Machines do not win wars."⁷⁵

Colin Gray agrees that "strategic history tells us that people matter more than machines."⁷⁶ Therefore, our ability to fight and dominate future warfare in the land domain will likely hinge, to a great degree, on the caliber of soldiers and leaders the U.S. Army produces versus a mastery of technological tools. Regional alignment is an opportunity to make qualitative investments in the human component of the U.S. Army to prepare the nation for the next war. This assertion is not new and is consistent with the cultural underpinnings of the institution. Field Marshall Viscount William Slim made a similar point in his memoir *Defeat Into Victory*:

Until the very horror of modern mass destruction forces men to find some more sensible way of settling national disputes, war will remain, and while it remains it will continually change. Yet because it is fought between men rather than between weapons, to the side which is better trained and of higher morale – advantages which are obtained neither easily, quickly, nor without the sacrifice of more than money in peace.⁷⁷

Regional alignment is a bet that soldiers, well developed and thoughtfully trained, provide the U.S. Army with a decisive advantage beyond the limitations of the technological approach.

⁷⁴Builder, 186-187.

⁷⁵Barry Strauss and Josiah Ober, *The Anatomy of Error: Ancient Military Disasters and Their Lessons for Modern Strategists* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 10.

⁷⁶Collin Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare* (London: Phoenix, 2006), 100.

⁷⁷William Slim, *Defeat into Victory* (London: MacMillan Publishers Limited, 1956), 550.

Carl Builder documented the premium that the U.S. Army places on developing the skills for war. Yet, Builder also acknowledges that the U.S. Army seemingly is bound to develop the skills within its own self-image. “The Army may have more of a need for linguistic skills than main battle tanks; but that is not how the Army would like to imagine itself of its needs.”⁷⁸ This does not mean that the U.S. Army needs to rid itself of its fleet of main battle tanks. However, the U.S. Army should increase its relative valuation of the skills and attributes required for successful implementation of regional alignment such as language.

Regional alignment, and the opportunities it presents to enhance the skills of our leaders, is in and of itself a powerful tool in the U.S. Army’s preparedness to shape the operating environment and ultimately to prevail in future traditional warfare and the ensuing transitions to post-hostilities. Although the U.S. Army must prepare for all contingencies there will be an antecedent period prior to conflict. In these windows of opportunity, the U.S. Army can shape the land domain through interaction amongst native security forces and peoples that will prove significant during the prosecution of a possible future war. What commander would not like to walk the ground and meet the military leaders of an area that he or she may one day fight with, or possibly against? Lastly, the U.S. Army will invariably be called upon to bear a significant role in transitioning war environments to their desired post-hostility construct. This is unique to the land domain, because it is the only domain where people permanently live. Other services sail or fly away from their war time operating environments when the combat is over. The U.S. Army must stay after the fighting is over, and only through skilled engagement amongst native peoples can it responsibly complete its mission and return home with honor.

⁷⁸Builder, 33, 188.

CONCLUSION

When looked upon with an extended conception of time it becomes clear that the potential of regional alignment extends far beyond a budgetary argument. The detractors of regional alignment may be recalcitrant because of Carl Builder's notion that the Army is so enamored with how it perceived itself as the savior of Europe in 1945, that it has difficulties changing into something that would move too sharply away from that 70-year-old ideal. However, change is necessary. First, the President and the Secretary of Defense have explicitly told the U.S. Army to engage globally with a low cost approach. Second, because the world is more unpredictable, the U.S. Army must increase its ability to deal with unexpected threats. Third, if the junior and mid-grade leaders that are executing regional alignment perceive it and treat it as a global economy of force that allows us to conduct a reconnaissance of the globe, then it will directly support the U.S. Army's ability to fight the next war.

However, the best and most enduring argument for regional alignment is that it creates increased propensity within regional systems to avert war. Every soldier who has faced combat should appreciate this facet of regional alignment. This is not to imply that soldiers with combat experience would ever shirk their duty to fight the next war. However, soldiers hate war. The cost savings hypothesis of regional alignment, explored in section one, extends beyond simply money. Regional alignment allows the U.S. Army to save human capital as well.

Additionally, when the U.S. builds partner capacity it increases the ability of regional actors to solve regional problems. This is beneficial because it increases the probability that the solutions proffered will occur within the region's normative social boundaries. If Gharajedaghi is correct, then this should markedly improve the probability of keeping those regional social systems from reaching chaos and forcing the expenditure of dollars and U.S. soldiers' lives to bring the system back in line with U.S. national interests.

This monograph asserts that in order to capitalize on the aforementioned opportunities of regional alignment that the U.S. Army must adapt its leader development system and force generation apparatus accordingly.⁷⁹ Currently there is no requirement for officers to get a graduate level education except for a small minority of specially tracked officers. This monograph posits that all officers who attend the captain's career course should get a graduate degree in an academic discipline that best serves the requirements of their combatant command. Additionally, all officers who attend resident Command and General Staff College must get a second graduate degree, a masters of military arts and science. Again, this is to invigorate thinking and writing in support of combatant commanders that has a high degree of academic rigor. Obviously, there should be a direct short-term benefit to the combatant command, but the larger benefit is to the force at large in terms of establishing a capability to research, write, and think critically to a degree previously unrealized.

Additionally, this monograph advocates for an increased capacity to communicate abroad. Again, nested within officer development is a call for measured and increased linguistic acumen over the course of an officer's career. To both save costs, and as a catalyst to the system, this monograph asserts that officer language training should be a prerequisite for commissioning. Not only does this save money by passing temporal and financial burdens to the cadet and his or her undergraduate institution, but also more importantly, it establishes a new norm of linguistic expectation in the officer corps. To be fair to the cadets, they should receive notification of these new requirements prior to entering into their cadet contracts with the U.S. Army and the U.S.

⁷⁹With regard to leader development, this monograph did not address the non-commissioned officer corps. This was intentional, and in no way should the reader interpret this as an undervaluing the contributions the non-commissioned officer corps makes to the force every day. Rather, the reforms espoused herein should be matured with the officer corps first and then exported across the force to the degree necessary to meet operational requirements. It is difficult to conceive of non-commissioned officers having an institutional mandate for graduate level education, but they could certainly exploit increased linguistic capacity to great effect.

Military Academy so that expectations are clear. This obviously implies that year group 2018 (the group of cadets that will be commissioned to second lieutenant in the year 2018) would be the first possible year group to initiate this program. For year groups 2018 and beyond, the pre-commissioning language requirements will normalize the notion that there are linkages between officer development and linguistic aptitude. By linking the officer education system and language training it allows for a high level of institutional control and quality assurance. Additionally, because the officer education system is progressively selective, the population of officers requiring the most difficult language training reduces over time. This is important, because it ensures that the U.S. Army is investing in those leaders that will have the most influence on the force as they command at the organizational level (battalion and higher). These officers will have been through the language curriculum and can pass their valuation of language on to their subordinates. Granted, it will take several successive year groups to entrench the program fully, but it will deliver a force of linguistic breadth and depth that can provide the United States a unique information advantage never before institutionally resourced on such a scale. Again, this requires a generational conception of time for full implementation.

Central to the feasibility of the recommendations in this monograph is that implementation can only be successful over an extended timeframe. First, this is a time of fiscal austerity. Making broad and rapid changes in the U.S. Army is usually very expensive. Second, the U.S. Army needs time to warm itself to the notion that change is a prerequisite to see the fulfillment of regional alignment. Basil H. Liddell Hart once stated that “The only thing harder than getting a new idea into the military mind is to get an old one out.”⁸⁰ Trying to convince the U.S. Army officer corps that they all need to be bilingual and have a robust graduate level education will take a long time and face resistance. Therefore, establishing the appropriate

⁸⁰Basil H. Liddell Hart, *Thoughts on War* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1944).

proponent to allow the increased valuation of language and education will be critical to any enduring success.

Just as critical as education is the experiential component of regional alignment. First, the U.S. Army must generate the forces necessary to project units abroad to accomplish their discrete goals for each mission, but also as a longer and more enduring survey of the world and reconnaissance of potential future operational environments. Second, to generate this combat power in a way that maximizes the availability of forces for missions abroad, brigades need enhanced personnel management tools whose effects approximate that of a stop-loss and stop-move policy achieved through a unit manning construct. With a sufficient amount of planning and the adoption of certain business practices it is certainly plausible that the effects of stop-loss and stop-move could pervade the force. This keeps forces ready not only to conduct regionally aligned missions, but also by establishing a deployed-in-place mindset it generates more forces to respond to a wide array of contingencies.

With increased linguistic capacity, a more educated officer corps, and enhanced force generation the U.S. Army will be better prepared to fight in the future including traditional warfare. Warfare will continue to evolve apace because the exchange of ideas about warfare has never been faster, and between more actors. The U.S. Army's ability to remain the world's most dominant landpower is largely tied to our ability to master an understanding of the cultural and physical terrain. Through this enhanced ability to understand, it allows the U.S. Army to exploit its strengths and mitigate its weaknesses. The U.S. Army should never concede its ability to ply overwhelming violence in pursuit of national objectives. This monograph is an argument that the academic and experiential opportunities offered by regional alignment will make the U.S. Army an overall more effective warfighting force regardless of the exact nature of future wars.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY RATINGS

Table 1. Summary of Language Proficiency Ratings

Level	Listening Definition	Reading Definition
0 No Proficiency	No practical understanding of the spoken language.	No ability to read
0+ Memorized Proficiency	Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs.	Memorization of all characters in the alphabet. Can read common names and places such as street signs with frequent inaccuracy.
1 Elementary Proficiency	Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs and minimum courtesy and travel requirements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	Can read either representations of familiar formulaic verbal exchanges or simple language containing only the highest frequency structural patterns and vocabulary.
1+ Elementary Proficiency, Plus	Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about all survival needs and limited social demands.	Sufficient comprehension to understand simple discourse in printed form for informative social purposes.
2 Limited Working Proficiency	Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements.	Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context.
2+ Limited Working Proficiency, Plus	Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence.	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests.
3 General Professional Proficiency	Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field.	Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects.
3+ General Professional Proficiency, Plus	Comprehends most of the content and intent of a variety of forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs, as well as general topics and social conversation.	Can comprehend a variety of styles and forms pertinent to professional needs.
4 Advanced Professional Proficiency	Able to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs.	Able to read fluently and accurately all styles and forms of the language pertinent to professional needs.
4+ Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus	Increased ability to understand extremely difficult and abstract speech as well as ability to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs, including social conversations.	Nearly native ability to read and understand extremely difficult or abstract prose, a very wide variety of vocabulary, idioms, colloquialisms and slang.
5 Functionally Native Proficiency	Comprehension equivalent to that of the well-educated native listener.	Reading proficiency is functionally equivalent to that of the well-educated native reader.

Source: Defense Language Institute, *Defense Language Proficiency Test 5 System* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2009), 38-46.

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