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ORGANIZATION AND MISSION OF THE RESERVES FOR THE 70'S

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ORGANIZATION AND MISSION OF THE RESERVES FOR THE 70's

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Cranston R. Rogers, COL, CE
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Review of the present force structure and training mission of the reserve components and its advantages and disadvantages. Review of factors influencing the effectiveness and the readiness of reserve component units. Development of correlation between the TOE of the unit which determines its training mission and its actual readiness posture. Review of factors affecting recruiting and retention in reserve units. Recommendations are made as to type of units for a proposed force structure and a basic type unit is proposed as a substitute for almost all units of the present force system, particularily for the infantry and the combat service support units. The training mission for the proposed type unit is also recommended. Advantages of the proposed type unit and its training mission in obtaining high strength and readiness levels in the zero draft environment are discussed as well as disadvantages of the proposed type unit.

ORGANIZATION AND MISSION OF THE RESERVES FOR THE 70's

INTRODUCTION

For all practical purposes, the United States Army began an all-volunteer basis of maintaining its strength as of the first of 1973. Furthermore, at this same time, the security of the United States became dependent upon the mobilization of a land force comprised of 55% from the active Army and 45% from the Army Reserve Components.[1] These two steps may not be compatible during the period of the all-volunteer force without revisions to the force structure and training mission of the reserve components so that service in the reserve components is attractive to the individual reservists.

As of 31 January 1973, the strength of the US Army Reserve was approximately 25,000[2] less than authorized. Furthermore, the readiness posture of most reserve units is less than that being reported due to the high attrition rates now being experienced. The reduced strength and high attrition are due to a lack of the draft which was formerly available to induce personnel into the reserve structure. Higher drill pay, leadership improvements, positive recruiting programs, and appeals to patriotism are all being utilized to improve the strength posture of reserve units. While the trend is upward from the bottom experienced in September 1972,[3] it may take up to two years before the strength situation becomes healthy enough that the reserve components will be fully effective upon mobilization. A healthy situation would occur upon the achievement of selective enlistments from waiting lists coupled with concurrent achievement of an improved readiness posture sufficient to justify the mission-ready capabilities required for M-day.

Reserve service must be made more attractive to the individual reservist than that prevailing in early 1973. The greater attractiveness must be in addition to improvements achieved as a

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[1] Melvin R. Laird, Sec. of Defense, Speech delivered to the Annual Convention of the Association of the United States Army (Washington, D. C., 11 October 1971).
[2] J. Milnor Roberts, MG, Chief of Army Reserve, Speech delivered to the Mid-Winter Convention of the Reserve Officers Association (Washington, D. C., 16 February 1973), p5.
[3] Ibid., p6.

result of increased drill pay, better leadership and concerted recruiting efforts. The reserve program must appeal to all reservists regardless of rank and military occupational speciality (MOS). The MOS of the individual reservists is especially critical since it determines the type of duty and training he performs during drills. The type of duty, specifically the interest it engenders for the individual reservist is as important as pay and other fringe benefits as an inducement to join the reserve. Therefore the force structure and the training mission have a direct and overriding bearing on the attractiveness of reserve service since it determines what a reservist does on drills.

The force structure and the training mission are recommended for change to provide the increased attractiveness of service necessary to produce the healthy condition required to achieve maximum mobilization effectiveness.

EXISTING FORCE STRUCTURE AND TRAINING MISSION OF RESERVE COMPONENTS

THE EXISTING FORCE STRUCTURE

The present force structure of the Army Reserve Components was developed to provide the type force required upon mobilization. It is based on the existence of each and every unit required upon mobilization either as an active army unit or a reserve unit at some location either in CONUS or overseas. In other words, each and every unit including each detachment that would be required for the contingency planned upon mobilization, exists in the present reserve component force structure or is already activated.

The force structure so constituted results in a myriad of many different types, sizes, and variations in branch of units. This mixture of units when coupled with the complex dimension of geography results in a highly disarranged combination of units in any given geographical area. In many cases, organic units are fractured and spread across the entire country. In the typical case of an infantry, artillery, or engineer battalion, the subordinate units are usually close enough geographically for command and control and in most cases can train together as battalions on weekend drills if desired. However, many combat sup-

port and combat service support units are so split-up that they cannot be commanded and controlled by their organic headquarters and in some cases do not even train together during annual training, much less during weekend drills.

TRAINING MISSION OF THE EXISTING FORCE STRUCTURE

The training mission of each reserve unit is developed from the Army Training Program (ATP) that is singularly applicable to the particular Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) unit. The ATP is put together very logically to provide a senario for the unit to achieve maximum readiness capability simply by following the training program. The training program requires training in each of the various elements of the mission which each specific unit must perform as its TOE mission. Furthermore, the ATP anticipates performance of this mission under environmental constraints and includes those functions necessary for the unit to exist under those external conditions as required for performance of the mission. That is, if the unit is expected to exist in the field and be part of a mobile force, its ATP would include subjects required for existing in a field environment and training in convoy movements.

Under the Westmoreland Doctrine,[4] units do not have to perform prescribed amounts of time of training in each functional area. The unit commander is given the discretion to determine the amount of training required and to be the judge that the unit is sufficiently trained in each functional area.

Taking any geographical slice of the force structure of the reserve components results in a multiplicity of diverse training requirements for that slice of units. Some of these training missions are unusually sophisticated with severe limitations and constraints on the availability and capacity to provide meaningful and dynamic training in the prescribed mission of the unit.

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[4]William C. Westmoreland, GEN, Chief of Staff of the Army, US Department of the Army Message, Subject: Army Training Policy, 30 June 1971.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PRESENT APPORTIONMENT OF THE FORCE STRUCTURE

Availability of Specific Units on Mobilization. The present system insures that a type unit will be available to round out a complete force presumed to be required upon mobilization. Assuming the size of the overall force required and the theater of commitment, it is then simple to identify all the units which would be designated to comprise the total force and thence assign these units to the active Army or the reserve components. Anything less than total mobilization allows the mobilization of each unit as may be required based on the threat existent or the force required for the less than full mobilization situation.

Identification of Units and Their Function. The present system makes it possible to readily identify each unit and the unit mission required for mobilization. If the requirement for mobilization varies from the assumed conditions, the force planners need only to select the mix of units by the mission and function deemed necessary.

Identification of Readiness Level. Under the present system each unit has a specified TOE designation, a mission, a required training program and a prescribed list of equipment all of which are assessed to determine its readiness capability to perform its mission. This factor is obviously the most advantageous element of the present system of designation of the force structure.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE PRESENT APPORTIONMENT OF THE FORCE STRUCTURE

Inability to provide mission training at home station. Many combat support units are so sophisticated and their training mission so complex that there is no capability for training directly in mission oriented activity at home station during inactive duty training periods. The unit may be located geographically in such a location that it is not possible to train at a military installation or in a civilian facility in mission related activity. Only in isolated cases is it possible for combat service support units to marry with active military installations offering mission oriented training.

Inability to provide command and control. In most instances, the reserve chain of command

does not provide command and control of subordinate units by intermediate headquarters that normally provide such function in a field or mission related type environment. Invariably, non-standard arrangements for command and control of units have been devised whereby the intermediate headquarters is not an organic arrangement for the command and control of units so assigned. This means almost universally, command and control is vested in a unit which does not fully understand or appreciate the mission of the subordinate unit or the problems associated with that type of unit. Therefore it is difficult to provide adequate command and control and certainly renders the supervision less than effective. With the present system of apportionment of the force structure there is no alternative to this situation.

Geographic location renders supervision difficult. Geographic relationships coupled with variations in TOE of the unit makes it extremely difficult to provide good supervision on a continuing basis by officers fully conversant with the mission of the subordinate unit. Frequently, geography results in isolating units with sophisticated combat service support missions from valid supervision as well as from possible performance of that mission during home station training.

Sensitivity of type of unit to good leadership. All units regardless of their mission and branch require good leadership to be effective, however, units with high incidence of built-in problems require greater leadership capability to produce an effective unit. Reserve units which through adverse combinations of problems resulting from remoteness of location of the reserve center, sophistication of mission, and competence of next senior headquarters present a greater challenge to the unit commander. Therefore the more involved or complex the unit mission may be, the greater the requirement for good leadership.

Dependence on leadership to develop high readiness capabilities. The greater the effectiveness of a unit the greater its readiness posture. Therefore the readiness posture of a unit is directly related to the quality of leadership. The effectiveness of the unit could be seriously impaired simply by an adverse combination of effects of isolated location, complex mission, and lack of appreciation of unit problems by the next headquarters. It then follows that it takes unusually good leadership to overcome the adverse conditions in order to produce

high readiness capabilities. The problems presented to the small unit commander in the present reserve force structure are so numerous and monumental that it takes outstanding leadership to produce a high readiness posture for the unit.

FACTORS AFFECTING RECRUITING/RETENTION IN RESERVE COMPONENTS

Economic Incentives to Participate. The recent increase in pay per drill has vastly increased interest in reserve participation. The major appeal in the future will be drill pay and the prime interest will be from persons participating to supplement their income.

Good Leadership at ALL Levels of Command. Good vibrant leadership throughout all commands is an absolute necessity to maintain interest in each unit of the program. Everyone, regardless of education and social order, reacts in a positive manner to good leadership and negatively to poor leadership. Without good leadership the training cannot be dynamic, useful, or meaningful. Good leadership will also improve public attitudes toward reserve service.

Dynamic Training Programs. The training of all reserve component units must be dynamic and continuously moving and challenging to *all* reservists. Lecture type instruction must be reduced to that minimum essential for support of training in general. Training must be predicated on learning and obtaining proficiency by doing the job in person (OJT) or performing as a unit (unit operations).

Meaningful Work Accomplished During Training. The training must not only be dynamic and motivating; it must also be useful and meaningful and result in some beneficial attainment to those performing the training, to the military establishment, or to the civilian community. Make-work type of training must be eliminated or reduced to the barest minimum and only utilized when no other type of training would suffice. The attitudes of the young people of the military age generation are such that useful work must be a byproduct of training in the reserve components in order for them to be motivated to participate.

Type of Unit. Combat units per se do not appeal to the average reservist. War has been deglamourized by the reporting of the fighting in Viet Nam. As a matter of fact, the reporting

and the television coverage has been so realistic that it will be very difficult to motivate young men to join reserve combat units. The reserve combat units are experiencing difficulty with retention of personnel because they cannot interest the reservist, particularly when the training is dull and has no purpose.

The other than combat units that cannot offer dynamic and meaningful training will have just as great difficulty as the combat units in retaining personnel. If good leadership is saddled with a requirement for mission type training in uninspiring functions, it will be difficult to keep the interest of unit personnel. Engineers, medics and military police have the greatest potential for maintaining unit strength. Not only do these branches offer dynamic and meaningful training, but their training has a civilian counterpart which results in attainment and improvement of skills offering good civilian pay.

Those units that have a beneficial purpose or a civilian correlation to their mission have the greatest potential to maintain high strength and effectiveness levels.

Public Attitudes Concerning Reserve Service. The adverse image of the military created by the Viet Nam War has become very deep-seated and must be turned around in order to achieve a general acceptance of service by those of military age. The role of the military has been misrepresented during the past half decade, and the leadership of this country must take deliberate action to overcome this adverse image. The military must take extra care to enhance its own image, and take positive steps to make a good impression on the general public. The training of its reserve components, which interfaces directly with a large segment of the public, is especially critical due to the public exposure.

Role of Reserve Components in Peace. The reserve components must be given a twofold peacetime mission, one preparing it to perform a wartime mission and a second which directs its peacetime training to producing beneficial effects on the civilian community as a part of training to perform its wartime mission. In other words, while the reserve is training to perform in the eventuality of a war, its training program should have a beneficial effect on the civilian community and assist in the nation-building process of the country.

Conclusion. If all the items listed above were to be beneficially implemented, recruiting and retention would not be a problem in the reserve components and the authorized strength of the reserve components would be readily attained. Futhermore, the military's image would be materially enhanced if both its active and reserve components could help solve some of the country's domestic problems while training for a wartime mission to preserve and maintain the security of the country.

PROPOSED TYPE UNITS FOR FUTURE RESERVE COMPONENT FORCE STRUCTURE

BASIC UNIT PROPOSED

Organization. The organization proposed would consist of the standard infantry or combat engineer organization consisting of 3 - 36 man platoons per company; a company headquarters sufficient to provide the administrative, supply, mess, and maintenance support functions; four line companies per battalion; and a battalion headquarters company which in addition to the normal staff sections for personnel, intelligence, operations, and supply, would also provide communication, medical, and maintenance support. The recommended organization could be made identical to a combat engineer army type battalion minus its engineer equipment and water purification sections. Additionally, engineer detachments or engineer light equipment companies possessing a similar mix of equipment and maintenance support as presently contained in a combat engineer battalion would be established separately but attached to the battalion headquarters.

The platoons would consist of 3 - 10 man squads with a squad leader and assistant squad leader. The remaining eight men would have rank and MOS functions similar to combat demolition specialists and construction specialists in the combat engineer squad. The platoon headquarters would contain a platoon sargent, two radiomen, a driver, and a toolroom keeper. The basic battalion could be considered a *neuter* branch with the expectation that on mobilization it could be designated as required for the mission assigned.

Equipment Authorized. The unit would be made 100% mobile with either cargo or dump

trucks or a mix of these vehicles. The balance of the equipment would be similar to an engineer combat battalion with the exception of the engineer construction equipment which would be available in an engineer detachment. The weapons assigned would be similar to the infantry line company including light machine guns and rocket launchers.

Training Mission. The training mission would be a combination of the ATP for both a combat engineer and an infantry rifle company and would provide training in small unit tactics and the use of all the basic infantry weapons. Additionally, the unit would also train in all the combat engineer functions since there is some advantage in all soldiers including combat service support personnel being proficient in these functions. The training would emphasize basic soldiering with a heavy reliance on discipline and field training. A considerable portion of the training time would be devoted to unit operations during which the units would perform construction work in support of a domestic action program. These projects are emphasized since they offer considerable training in planning, supervision, coordination, movement, and execution of mission activity.

Summary. The proposed units would be well disciplined, trained to live in the field, operate and maintain vehicles and miscellaneous equipment, have a good background in tactics up through battalion level and be able to perform combat engineer functions. Such a unit would be above the level of the infantry rifle battalions in sophistication of training but well within the capacity of the average reservist to implement. The NCO's, officers, and the battalion staffs would receive training in all basic unit operations and staff functions. All headquarters personnel would be fully mission trained in the basic support functions of administration, supply, mess, communications and maintenance.

OTHER UNITS PROPOSED

It is also proposed that artillery, armor, engineer, medical, and signal units as presently constituted should continue in the force structure. It is also proposed that a sufficient number of general support maintenance and depot maintenance units be organized to maintain the equipment of the proposed force structure.

It is further proposed that liberal utilization be made of cadre strength units. This approach is particularly advantageous for those units in which the leadership, management and critical skills required to make the unit effective involve a relatively small percentage of the total strength of the unit, whereas the balance of the personnel would be relatively low skilled and could be quickly trained to perform their mission after mobilization. Cadre strength units will offer a decided advantage in the zero draft environment to maintain reserve strength since most of the positions created would carry both rank and responsibility as reserve service inducements.

The USAR School program would continue in approximately the present posture except its program should be carefully monitored that critical skills for both officer and enlisted personnel are maintained as a pool to provide fillers for those positions determined to be most critical.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSED BASIC UNIT

Improved Unit Readiness. The readiness posture of the basic unit will be vastly improved in comparison to most units of the present system and particularly the present infantry units. The improved readiness would stem from the high degree of interest the individual reservist would have in his training mission; from the advanced stage of training achieved by the unit in basic military functions such as small unit tactics, proficiency in use of small arms, ability to live in the field, competence of administration, supply, maintenance, and mess functions; and most importantly, from a very high esprit de corps. With good discipline already established and the relatively advanced educational level of the average American of military age, the unit would become proficient in most any combat or combat service support function with about three weeks of unit training provided fillers were available who were already trained in operating the special equipment that would be required to support the TOE mission.

Greater Flexibility of Units for Mobilization. The force structure proposed for the reserve components is based upon the availability of *neuter* units which could be readily converted to any TOE mission required. The more sophisticated combat service support units and

combat units such as artillery and armor would be provided as such in the force structure. Well-trained, disciplined units with good esprit de corps could be converted within three weeks time to any routine TOE mission. This conversion time would be equal to or less than that now required for most units of the existing force structure to be ready to perform their mission upon mobilization. Most units in the existing system now require more than five weeks training after mobilization because their reserve training is ineffectual due to the lack of dynamic training and the low interest shown for training missions. Greater flexibility would exist to meet various requirements depending upon the contingency requiring mobilization and the location of the commitment.

Higher Strength Levels Due to Greater Interest in Participation. Maximum strength levels would exist due to the interest generated by units offering dynamic training and serving the community, thereby furthering the cause of nation-building. The basic unit would be at full-strength because these units would offer all the advantages of inducement into the reserve program that the present force structure lacks.

Improved Ability to Perform Domestic Action Work. With the basic unit organization as proposed, a considerable amount of inactive duty training time would be available to perform domestic action work in the local community. Domestic action provides a decided incentive to induce personnel into the reserve program since the reservists would be participating in useful work for the betterment of the community. Favorable publicity would be generated by successful accomplishments of construction of facilities such as little league fields and improvements to local parks and municipal facilities used by the public. Domestic action would generate greater esprit de corps in the unit, improve the posture of the reserve program, engender reinlistments, induce new enlistments, and enhance the stature of the country's military forces.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSED BASIC UNIT

Lack of Unit Identity. A force structure predicated on *neuter* units to be reorganized upon mobilization and trained as a specific type unit, creates the disadvantage of not being able to identify specific TOE units for mobilization. This situation could cause a problem in asses-

ing what is available, however, it may not be a severe disadvantage since the desired mix of units cannot be determined until a mission and a theater are assigned.

Lack of Readiness level for Specific Unit. The proposed basic unit does not provide a means to determine readiness level for a specific mission in accordance with the prevailing standards. However, the basic ability to operate as a unit and esprit de corps are measurable and valid indicators of a unit's readiness posture.

SUMMARY

The present force structure is cumbersome to supervise, difficult to implement, contains many restraints to producing dynamic training and lacks appeal to reservists in the absence of considerable financial inducements. The proposed basic unit is suggested as a substitute for the infantry and the majority of the combat support and combat service support units. The basic unit has the advantage of developing units offering dynamic training, high esprit de corps and excellent discipline and also maintaining units at high strength levels. Furthermore, the basic unit will readily enhance the military image at the community level and offer much higher readiness levels for a force with greater flexibility to meet our mobilization requirements of the 1970's and into the 80's.

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