

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

KEEPING THE AIR RESERVE COMPONENT RELEVANT

by

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ABSTRACT

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The Air Force has developed a 20-year force structure plan that could potentially result in a significant reduction in the number of existing fighter aircraft which reside in the air reserve component. As the Air Force works through the process of retiring these legacy aircraft, downsizing its active component, and bringing new weapon systems on line, it must consider follow-on missions for reserve units losing their flying missions. As it stands today, there are Air National Guard (ANG) units losing their flying missions but still have yet to be aligned to a follow-on mission. This essay will explain how the U.S. Air Force presents its forces to combatant commanders, show the reserve and Air National Guard success in fitting into this system, and address the question of why we have an air reserve component, specifically an ANG. Finally it will present one possible solution to leverage the proven capabilities of the ANG and reserves, which is to keep a major portion of its combat flying wings, specifically fighter units, dispersed throughout the states in the air reserve component.

KEEPING THE AIR RESERVE COMPONENT RELEVANT

National and military leaders will always be struggling with the notion of transformation – how much and how fast can and should the military change to keep up with the current world situation? A very brief history of the armed forces shows that this transformation footing is nothing new. Prior to World War II, the military arm of national power resided in two departments; the War Department and the Navy Department. The War Department's job was to mobilize the populace, mobilize industry, and mobilize the Army if Congress declared war. The Navy Department was the State Department's strong arm of diplomacy typically not crossing the threshold of a declared war.¹ Post World War II, in 1947, these two services were unified under the Department of Defense. This unification was a step to a more efficient fighting force, but with the addition of the Air Force; the nation now had three distinct services operating almost exclusively in the medium in which they fought: land, sea, and air. In an effort to increase efficiencies, Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act which mandated the services to collaborate on developing a joint doctrine. This legislation had far-reaching effects on the services moving each away from the era of doctrinal excursions and toward a force that planned and executed as joint partners. The military reluctantly accepted this major transformation and successfully created a force capable of executing a joint fight in a major theater war. Shortly after the Goldwater-Nichols Act was signed into law, the Cold War came to an abrupt end. This should have been seen as the end of a long era of major power conflict and a shift to a period more accurately characterized by conflict between major and minor powers—small wars rather than major wars. The Cold War may have ended close to two decades ago, but the nation has yet to settle into a long term vision for the size, makeup, and mission of its military. As Max Boot pointed out in his book, *The Savage Wars of Peace*, the armed forces must reorient themselves to better handle small-war missions, because such clashes are an inevitable result of America's far-flung imperial responsibilities.² Call it far “flung imperial responsibilities” or call it national interests, either way this nation has shifted from a policy of containment to one of engagement. This shift in policy is again felt in the military as all branches again embark on another form of transformation.

What makes today's round of change so difficult is that it is occurring concurrently with the global war on terrorism (GWOT). So, while the Air Force continues with its global commitments it must also engage in another series of mission adjustments. These missions are only the latest the Air Force has been called on to support in a string of 16 consecutive years of combat in the Central Command (CENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR).³ Simply put, today's

environment presents the same challenges to the Air force as it has throughout history – do more with less.

Just like other services the Air Force is struggling with balancing Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) direction with existing budgets. The Air Force evaluation of the most recent QDR identified strategic environment calls for the expansion of both capacity and capability.⁴ At the same time the Air Force is downsizing its forces by 40,000 positions, predominately from the active component. The Air Force's plan is to accept the risk in the near term by downsizing the current combat wings of 81 to 78. They then plan to use excess resources to recapitalize the force in the near term to eventually grow to 86 combat wings by FY2025.⁵ These recent cuts combined with high operations tempos require the Air Force to rely heavily on its reserve components centered on a concept called total force. The total force concept is designed to strengthen the Air Force by creating synergies between active duty and reserve component units.⁶ This concept has a proven track record under the current force mix, but due to changes precipitated by advances in technology, aging aircraft, shrinking budgets, and recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) moves, the Air Force is faced with reevaluating the laydown of combat aircraft. In the not so distant future the Air Force will undoubtedly see a significant reduction in the number of legacy fighter aircraft. The legacy fighters slated to retire reside predominantly in the air reserve component, yet the decision where the next generation fighters will be based has yet to be determined.

As the Air Force continues through the process of retiring these legacy aircraft, downsizing its active component, and bringing new weapon systems on line, it must consider follow on missions for reserve units losing their flying missions. As it stands today, there are ANG units losing their flying missions but still have yet to be aligned to a follow on mission. The Air Force is certainly concerned with this challenge. In a presentation to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Lieutenant General Brady, Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower and Personnel, stated:

In addition to maintaining and shaping the active duty force, we must continue to focus on the balance of forces and specialties between Regular, Air National Guard, and Reserve components-the Total Force. ... We continue to realign manpower to our most stressed areas and are watchful for any new areas that show signs of strain. As we look to the future in implementing BRAC and QDR decisions, we must ensure a seamless transition to new structures and missions while preserving the unique capabilities resident in our Regular Air Force, Air National Guard, and Reserve communities.⁷

This essay will explain how the U.S. Air Force presents its forces to combatant commanders, show the reserve and Air National Guard (ANG) success in fitting into this system, and address

the question of why we have an air reserve component, specifically an ANG. Finally it will present one possible solution to leverage the proven capabilities of the ANG and reserves, which is to keep a major portion of its combat flying wings, specifically fighter units, dispersed throughout the states in the ARC.

How the Air Force Presents its Forces

During the Cold War era, the Air Force planned to operate largely out of garrison. The Force was large with numerous bases overseas and an extensive supporting infrastructure in place. As the Soviet Union collapsed, the world environment changed. The shift from a bipolar balance of power created a security environment that was much more unpredictable, consisting of numerous potential adversaries with not only the will but the ability to threaten U.S. national interests. The U.S. policy of containment (of the Soviet Union) shifted to one of global engagement. As the U.S. moved into this new posture of engagement, it coincidentally undertook a major downsizing of its military, to include the Air Force. By the mid 1990s, the Air Force found itself operating with a third fewer people and two thirds fewer overseas bases than it had just a decade prior.⁸ Even during these years of downsizing, the Air Force found its commitments around the world increasing. By the early to mid 1990s, it was conducting four times as many deployments than the previous decade.⁹ These deployments were characterized as unplanned and short notice, many times to isolated locations requiring units to take much of its own infrastructure. In addition to being unplanned and short notice, these deployments were distributed unevenly across the force causing a chronic source of hardship on a small group of airmen.¹⁰

The Air Force was treating these deployments as unique events until October of 1994, when Iraq made some threatening moves toward Kuwait. The Air Force deployed aircraft quickly to the region, but the deployment was almost completely ad hoc.¹¹ These escalating series of deployments culminating in the 1994 deployment was the straw that broke the camel's back prompting the Air Force to explore the idea of going back to its roots as an expeditionary task force.¹² The goal was to provide a force capable of conducting military operations on short notice in response to crisis. These forces would be tailored to achieve limited and clearly stated objectives all while making deployment workload more predictable and more evenly spread across the force. The Air Force officially changed the way it presents its forces in August 1998 when then Air Force Chief of Staff, General Michael Ryan, and Acting Secretary of the Air Force, F. Whitten Peters, formalized the concept and divided the force into ten nearly-equally capable Aerospace Expeditionary Forces (AEFs).¹³

The AEFs are designed to provide combat power on a rotating basis to the combatant commanders. This initiative was truly a total force concept. The AEF construct relies heavily on all forces, active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force reserves.¹⁴ The ten AEFs are composed of geographically separated units across the Air Force that will be available to deploy to steady-state rotational locations, or remain on-call at home stations. Each AEF is composed of approximately 130 aircraft and 12,500 personnel providing roughly equivalent capabilities including fighter and bomber squadrons, assigned theater lift and tanker forces, tactical leadership, and a full complement of combat support.¹⁵ AEFs will be deployed as Air Expeditionary Task Forces (AETFs) that can be tailored up or down in size and capability to match combatant commander's requests.

Originally, an AEF cycle was 15 months long. The 15-month cycle was divided into five, three month periods each period having two assigned AEFs. Airmen could plan to deploy every AEF cycle for 90 days. The Air Force was nearing the end of its second successful 15-month rotation cycle when the terrorist attacks occurred in September 2001. Many predicted the AEF concept would not survive the potential upcoming rise in operations tempo. But even under the stress of surge activities to meet the demands of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and Noble Eagle, the AEF concept remained intact, relatively unchanged, and successful. One of the minor adjustments the Air Force did make to its AEF concept was to expand the cycle to 20 months. Now airmen could plan to deploy for 120 days each cycle. This change was made to better meet the demands in Southwest Asia.¹⁶ As it stands now, these ten AEFs enable the Air Force not only to meet its global commitments, but it also established a system that provides relative stability and predictability to its airmen.

While the AEF concept has proven to be a success, it is currently under stress. Due to continued overseas presence required by today's environment, 26 percent of today's airmen exceed 120 days deployed.¹⁷ The majority of the career fields that have exceeded the AEF planned cycle, typically pulling 180-day deployments, are vehicle operators, signal analysts, pavement and construction equipment operators, security personnel, and medical personnel.¹⁸ Others career fields that typically are effected by surge operations that last longer than typical deployments are Office of Special Investigations personnel and logistics personnel. These are the individuals most involved with setting up, maintaining, and protecting expeditionary airfields, running the bases, and caring for troops.¹⁹ Some of the extended deployments stem from the extra training airmen require to accomplish their deployed tasks which often are not their regular specialties. The missions that tend to fall into the unpredictable category and missions that tend

to last for extended periods outside the planned AEF cycle are not optimum for a reserve force that must balance military and civilian commitments.

The main issue the reserve components have struggled with in while trying to fit into the AEF system is accessibility through volunteerism. Under the AEF concept, access to the total force is critical. It is impractical under current mobilization procedures to rely on activation of Guard and reserve forces to fill a 120-day rotation cycle. This may suggest that the AEF cycle should be expanded to one year, to allow an activated unit to be utilized effectively. There is certainly debate going on whether the Air Force should remain on a 120-day rotation cycle or increase that cycle to better align with the forces deployed today. However that debate seems to be on hold; in an interview with the Air Force Times in August of 2006, the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Moseley, indicated that the standard AEF deployment would remain 120 days. He stated, "I've resisted going beyond 120 days because the [personnel] footprint gets bigger."²⁰ General Moseley went on to explain that if flying units were deployed beyond the current rotational period, more airmen and repair gear would have to be deployed to handle the additional maintenance required for the aircraft, such as phase inspections which consists of a complete strip down and rebuild of the aircraft that can last ten days or more.²¹ Twenty-six percent of Air Force airmen find themselves dealing with unpredictable schedules while the flying units, particularly the operational arm of fighter units, remain on predictable ground. This predictable ground is what the reserve components need to continue to fill their requirements through volunteerism.

What the air reserve component needs more than its active component is consistency, consistency not only in duration of deployment but in mission. A typical fighter unit fits this bill. A fighter unit will prepare for an AEF deployment three months prior to deploying, deploy for four months, reset for a month, and resume their routine training cycle. The reserve components, specifically within the fighter community, have fit into this cycle successfully with a volunteer force, vice activated force, by swapping out personnel regularly throughout the 120-day rotation. In many missions this presents a problem of continuity – relations built with U.S. or coalition forces may be lost; relations with host nations may be strained. These problems are minimal within combat air forces, specifically fighter units. Pilots in the ANG and reserves fly year round, typically training in the specific mission they will be called to perform during their AEF rotation. Generally since missions do not change, minimal spin up is required. Pilots and maintainers flowing in and out of theater have little to no problems with the swap out concept. While the AEF construct has brought stability to the majority of airmen, the constant within the AEF deployment schedule has been the fighter force. The Air Force has been a leader in respect to

total force integration and the AEF concept only emphasizes the Air Force's commitment to this concept. The ARC has unique challenges, but it was successfully included in the AEF plan and has met the required tasking since inception.

To understand the issues affecting the reserve component, a few concepts must be understood. Reserve units have two basic categories of personnel, full-time and part-time. Full-time personnel are either Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) or military technicians. AGRs serve under the same federal pay status as active duty personnel, but are under Title 32 vice the active soldier under Title 10 of the U.S. Code. Military technicians are federal civil servants who must, by statute, serve as drilling members of their Guard unit. The part-time force of the reserves are those who are required to, as a minimum, drill one weekend a month and perform a two week training event each year. This philosophy of the "weekend warrior" is not reflective of many positions within the ANG, specifically its fighter pilots. Fighter pilots today are required to fly a minimum number of sorties every month to maintain a combat mission ready status, or CMR status. This number varies from airframe to airframe and varies slightly from active component to reserve component, but overall, fighter pilots in the reserve component are an operational force ready to deploy at any time, maintaining equal readiness as their active duty counterparts. While ANG and reserve units have successfully fit into the Air Force's AEF plan and have effectively maintained an equal CMR status, the ARC is not without its limitations. Reserve units cannot handle long term commitments that require the entire complement of select individuals to deploy for 120 days every AEF cycle of 20 months. Efforts have been explored in the past and should continue into the future to leverage the advantages of the reserve component.

Two such efforts that are in place today are the concept of associate units, both "classic associate" and "active associate" units. These concepts are "experiments" in place to provide an active duty presence to the reserve components, or vice versa, to leverage advantages of both components. The classic associate unit is an integration model that brings the reserve component to its active duty locations. The active component maintains principal responsibility for the weapon system and shares access with the reserve component. Both the active component and the reserve component retain separate organizational structures and chains of command.²² The active associate unit is just the reverse; in this case the reserve component brings active duty members to its location and keeps the responsibility for the weapon system in the reserves or Guard. Again, each component retains separate organizational structure and chains of command.²³ The reserve associate construct does bring manpower into the total force and allows many airmen with critical skill sets an opportunity to continue to serve, but it does not

address the advantages of a dispersed force throughout the CONUS. The active associate addresses both of these issues. To sum up the advantages of the active associate, Lieutenant General Stephen G. Wood, the U.S. Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs, recently explained the benefits of increasing the number of active associate units.

By doing this we can leverage the tremendous experience levels we have in the Guard and Reserve, as well as provide the ability to utilize the active duty airmen to sustain increasing levels of deployment necessitated by our expeditionary role.²⁴

If the reserve component is going to stay in the fighter business, the concept of associate units is the best fit for the future.

ANG Success Stories in Fighters

Since its inception, the Air National Guard has participated in every major regional conflict as well as a majority of the contingency operations the U.S. has engaged in from World War II to Operation Iraqi freedom. This inclusion has led to dependency. This dependency has led to a positive concept now articulated as the total force concept. A cornerstone of this concept is centered on new ways of accessing and integrating the reserve components with the active component. While this concept is described as a transformation, in reality it is simply a continuation of the history of success the Air Force has enjoyed while operating as a total force.

The first large scale mobilization of the Air National Guard was during the Korean War. During the conflict, 66 of the Guard's 92 tactical flying units were activated.²⁵ While the Guard performed well during the conflict, many shortfalls were identified. For the most part these shortcomings were due to the lack of modernized equipment, insufficient funds, and lack of adequate training support.²⁶ In addition, the absence of standardized rules governing partial mobilization was identified as a problem. After the war, Congress enacted measures to correct these problems. Between 1950 and 1960 appropriations for the Air National Guard more than doubled, enabling the Guard to internally address its training shortfalls.²⁷

The Air National Guard was again deployed to Southeast Asia in support of the Vietnam War. Vietnam was the first major engagement that showcased the growing capabilities of a part time militia force. While reserve forces were not activated in any significant numbers, ANG units such as Iowa, New Mexico, and New York, did deploy. These units, flying F-100 aircraft, flew over 24,000 sorties totaling more than 38,000 combat hours.²⁸ A quote from General George S. Brown testifying before the U.S. Senate summed up the Guard's performance:

... those [Guard] were the best F-100 squadrons in the field. The aircrews were a little older, but they were more experienced, and the maintenance people were also more experienced than regular units.²⁹

It may be a stretch to define the capabilities of the entire ANG force by one individual's observation, but Vietnam did mark the beginning of the ever increasing esteem the Active Duty held for the ANG. Those sentiments were echoed two decades later by Lt General Charles Horner whose comments about the guard's performance in Desert Storm:

... did not lose a single plane to enemy fire and proved a match for their active duty counterparts. They performed very well. I'm absolutely truthful about this, I cannot tell the difference between active, Guard, and reserve. And that's the way it's supposed to be.³⁰

Similar success stories can be found of reserve units supporting engagements such as Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. The ANG has proven over the last three decades that a part time force is capable of performing equally well in combat as their full time counterparts.

Why have a National Guard

The tradition of a militia in the United States dates back long before this nation was born, just this year the National Guard celebrated its 370th birthday. This long standing tradition is clearly reflected in The Constitution of the United States which lays the groundwork for the existence of the citizen soldier. Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution states that:

The Congress shall have the power ... To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress³¹

As are most things in a democracy, the language in the Constitution is a compromise between competing factions – those who wanted a strong national government and those distrustful of government who wanted ensure State's rights. The Constitution does not dictate the size of the militia force, but it does clearly articulate its existence as a balance between state and federal powers. While the fear of reduced State's rights is not on the fore front of military debate – separation of power between branches of government exists as strongly today as it did at our nation's birth. Just as President George W. Bush unveiled his plan to increase troop levels in Iraq, many in Congress looked for Constitutional ways to deny the Commander and Chief that option. This debate over separation of power will continue indefinitely and the existence of a militia may play a part in that debate, but the importance of having citizen-soldiers remains much more basic.

A democratic armed force must remain rooted in the people. There must be a substantial portion of the U.S. military that identifies with civilians. The military must have members that

plan to return to civilian life to balance those who see themselves strictly as career military.³² The military cannot operate in isolation from the larger American society. To win the support and trust of the population, the military must be widely perceived as serving important social needs. Without this support and trust, the military will not get the resources it needs to function effectively.³³ In 1999, PROJECT AIR FORCE, a division of RAND Corporation, completed a study examining the principles for determining the appropriate mix of active and reserve forces within the Air Force. In that study the contemporary benefits of a militia force were highlighted as:

- Reservists are more fully integrated into society than members of the active components, enabling them to extend public awareness and trust of the military institution through personal contacts.
- Reserve units, particularly those in the Air National Guard, are less geographically concentrated than active units. Representation in any form contributes to public trust in government institutions.
- Call-up of the reserve force for employment is subject to stronger political checks and balances than the employment of the active component. This may discourage military involvement that lacks public support and broadening support for employments that are undertaken.
- By increasing the number of veterans in the society, reserve forces may increase the proportion of key public policy decision makers who have military experience and are thus more likely to take informed positions about military issues.
- Air National Guard units provide an efficient and effective source of disciplined manpower to satisfy state missions (disaster relief, civil disturbance, etc.)³⁴

As the conflict in Iraq continues, comparisons between this current conflict and the Vietnam conflict are inevitable. It may be premature to draw too many parallels between the conflicts but there are certainly some contrasts that stand out. One positive contrast is the public support for the troops. Public support of the war, as well as the military, during the Vietnam period was at an all time low. In contrast, today, regardless of individual opinion on the war in Iraq, one thing remains constant: the public supports its military. While the reasons for this trust may be multiple and complex, it is certainly appropriate to consider that well over 500,000 reservists have served in Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom and have returned to integrate back into the civilian populace.³⁵ In contrast, during the conflict in Vietnam the President of the United States decided not to call up his reserve component (in mass) to contribute to the war effort. This decision not to mobilize his reserve

forces may have led to the civil misunderstanding and ultimately lack of support for the war effort. An author that has captured that role of the reservist is Sylvia McDonald. In a 1996 article, *Public Perception of Reserve Forces*, Mr. McDonald states:

Young officers represent an important link between the armed forces and the civilian society and are first-class military ambassadors. They are the key players in promoting a broader understanding of the importance of our military defense.³⁶

Many argue that President Lyndon B. Johnson's decision not to call up the reserves in 1965 was a political one made to conceal escalation. Regardless of the reasons behind President Johnson's decision, a great divide resulted encouraging years of debate about the role of the reserve force. This debate was so politically charged that the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Harold Johnson, considered retirement over the issue.³⁷ General Johnson argued that a full mobilization of the military was required at the time to not only assist the military, but to mobilize the nation behind the conflict.³⁸ General Creighton Abrams followed General Johnson as the Chief of Staff and the importance of appropriate use of the reserves was not lost. After the Vietnam experience, General Abrams advocated a close operational association between the active and reserve component of the Army. Many argue on the intent of his actions in tying the reserves to the active component, labeling his work as "the Abrams Doctrine." Proponents of this doctrine contend that dependence on the reserve components was to place an extra-constitutional tripwire on the presidential use of military power, again emphasizing the ability of the reserve component to serve as the bond between the military and civil society. This bond would be in place to ensure the active component of the military would not be isolated from the civilian sectors in time of war.

This link between the civilian and military population can only be made through personal contact. Currently the reserve component is far more geographically dispersed than the active component and therefore far more capable of providing this personal contact. It is inevitable, as the military continues the trend of downsizing, that this personal link between the soldier and civilian will diminish. To make matters worse, the Air Force, as well as all military branches, is in the process of concentrating its forces. The Air Force feels it can be a more efficient force by operating larger flying wings from fewer larger-scale installations. Currently the active component of the Air Force has 75 percent of its personnel concentrated in 13 states while the air reserve component has 75 percent of its personnel spread over 25 states and that concentration is likely to continue.³⁹ This concentration of active forces will only lead to more reliance on the reserve components to reach out and integrate with the majority of the populace. The implications of further consolidation will be difficult to measure in the near future in terms of

representation, but from an operational standpoint the advantages are obvious. A dispersed air reserve component basing structure provides a critical capability in the event of a manmade or natural disaster. Each reserve or guard base is a potential forward operating location providing a potential secure site for rapid delivery, consolidation, and distribution of a multitude of services.

Not only should the military take active measures in ensuring the civilian populace is informed on military matters, they must also continue to understand the culture of the larger civilian society. The military has expended considerable energy to create cultures that reflect certain values necessary in a professional fighting force. These values may not necessarily be in line with society as a whole. One measurable indicator of the difference in values is that of political affiliation. In 1976, 33 percent of the military leaders identified themselves as Republicans compared to 25 percent of the civilian opinion leaders.⁴⁰ By 1996, that number shifted to 67 percent for military leaders and 34 percent for civilian leaders aligning themselves with the Republican Party.⁴¹ Again, many conclusions can be drawn about these political affiliations, but one cannot overlook the glaring difference between the civilian sector leadership and its military leaders. Reservists again offer the bridge; as full-time employees with deeper ties to their communities, they find themselves able to identify with both the military and civilian cultures.

In the process of deciding which missions should reside in the active component and which should be considered for the reserve component, the question of allocation combat forces arises. Why does the governor of a state need a fighter wing under his control? The answer is, in most cases, he does not. Obviously an ANG fighter unit brings substantial capability to the active duty in meeting federal mission commitments. And while fighter aircraft themselves offer some intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities that may be useful in disaster scenarios, their weapons employment capability would likely not, at least in the kind of scenarios we would reasonably envision occurring in the near future. However, what a governor needs as an available resource is the trained personnel and their support equipment. A fighter unit brings both. A typical fighter wing in the Air National Guard consists of various units such as engineering, medical, communications, security, personnel, transportation, maintenance, and operations forces. Each of these units offers tremendous capabilities that has been used in the past and will be used in the future to respond to state and national level contingencies. The equipment, personnel, and capabilities that come with a flying wing are much broader than that of the flying mission itself. So while the governor of a state may not likely use the actual flying mission of units under his control to respond to a disaster within his

state, a flying wing does provide an efficient and effective source of disciplined manpower to satisfy the governor's needs.

Recommendation

Certainly no one can predict the nature of conflict in the future, but the nation must have a military capable to respond to a broad, ever changing range of threats. The Air Force has been the lead branch of the military to adapt itself to the continuous posture of a deployed expeditionary force. The change to the AEF construct and the adaptation to the total force concept have certainly led the way. To continue this process successfully, the Air Force must decide the mission and roles of its reserve components to keep them relevant in the future fight. The advantages of a dispersed force throughout the nation far out weigh the economies that can be found by consolidating the force into large-scale military bases cut off from a majority of the civilian populace. The reserve component, specifically the ANG, provides the visible part of the Air Force that generates community involvement and support and ensures a secure forward operating location within the CONUS. Options exist to capitalize on the experience and training of reserve forces and move them to active duty bases, but when an ANG unit moves to the active duty base the Air Forces loses this valuable connection with a community. Fighter units in the ARC have successfully fit into the AEF construct and have proven to be a combat mission ready force ready to deploy on short notice. Their performance in every major regional conflict as well as a majority of the contingency operations has been nothing short of remarkable. The National Guard is uniquely positioned; geographically and politically to contribute to our defense. In many respects, it is already "forward deployed" near future battlefields. The Air Force should consider keeping a major portion of its combat flying wings dispersed throughout the nation at these standing ANG and reserve bases.

Endnotes

¹ D. Robert Worley, "A Small Wars Service," Joint Forces Quarterly, no. 44, (1st quarter 2007): 28

² Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace* (Basic Books, 2002), xix.

³ GEN T. Michael Moseley, *HAC-D Readiness Hearing*, testimony before U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on appropriations, subcommittee of Defense, 110th Cong., 1st sess., 18 January 2007.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ C. Todd Lopez, "Future Total Force outlined on Capitol Hill," 22 July 2005, linked from *Air Force Link*, available from <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123011104>; Internet; accessed 22 March 2007.

⁷ Lt Gen Roger A. Brady, Presentation to the Subcommittee on Personnel on Air Force Personnel Overview, Armed Service Committee United States Senate, 1 March, 2007

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⁹ Ibid.

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