



ROATM

POSITION PAPER

Reserve Officers Association of the United States
One Constitution Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002-5655

Direct Line: (202) 646-7713
Toll-Free: (800) 809-9448 ext 713
www.roa.org - mhanson@roa.org

LPP 03-14 February 2014

REBALANCING THE FORCE

Requested Action

- ROA urges Congress to review the impact of Active duty changes and how they will affect the Reserve Components.
- More clearly define the “continuum of service.”
- Properly identify lessons learned during and at the conclusion of overseas operations.
- Determine the Reserves enhanced role in Homeland Defense and Security

Discussion

Rather than pitting current and future warriors against the unemployed, handicapped or elderly, we must find innovative ways to reduce the cost of performing U.S. global missions. To that end we need to rebalance the force, rather than do proportionate cuts.

Since 9/11/2001, the Department of Defense (DoD) has had to redefine “business as usual.” This has meant even greater reliance on the Total Force policy: Active duty, Guard and Reserve, integrated and working in concert to achieve this country’s national security objectives during overseas contingency operations.

The Department of Defense (DoD) will undergo a transformation to a more responsive and agile force with less emphasis on land forces as the war in Afghanistan winds down. While the United States has demilitarized in the past, capabilities should not be cast aside, but instead placed into a strategic reserve as an insurance against future unknown threats.

Both equipment and manpower should be placed in reserve. After 13 years of war, this generation of warriors, both active and Reserve, are the most experienced since Vietnam. Rather than lose this talent to a reduction in force, it should be maintained strategically.

The Reserve component (RC) supplies a bank of people who are today providing great capabilities. The positive result is the leveraging of highly experienced RC people with the proven advantages of using imbedded civilian skills; skill sets that are absent from the Active component. ROA believes that properly sized missions assigned Reserve Components are great force multipliers.

The risk being faced in a period of budget constraints is that DoD planning will start with an inadequate regard for the complexities of current Total Force integration and for the unique Service core competencies. If across-the-board cuts and inflexible application were to be implemented, there are grave concerns about the possible out-comes.

Rather than the Reserve components being forces that complement total force capability (as they are today), they may simply be eliminated as an operational force in order to pay the bill for AC force size and equipment procurement. In the end, you will have a very expensive force that is much smaller in total size, and ROA would argue, is less capable overall.

The current example led to the establishment of the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force in-house struggles over resources. The Commission recommended further integration of the Active and Reserve forces. ROA thanks Congress for taking action to reduce the severity of the original cuts proposed by the active Air Force.

The Army faces similar struggles as reflected in the DoD, FY-2015 budget recommendations.

The Reserve Officers Association has strong and clear beliefs concerning military capability and specifically the value of strong Reserve forces. The following bullets describe ROA's recommended priorities for our entrusted national leaders.

- The nation must have adequate military force structure, training, and equipment to defeat any known or emerging military threat.
- The utilization of America's Reserve and National Guard during all phases of military operations is a fundamental enabler to properly gaining and sustaining the support of our citizens. It should be noted that this principle, known by many as the Abrams Doctrine, has become more important since the elimination of the draft and in times of prolonged conflict.
- Reservists, by nature of being part time and only called to military duty when needed, bring many cost efficiencies to the total military budget.
- Civilian skills and experience levels (civilian and military) resident in many Reservist service members are proven force capability multipliers.
- Within service cultures, because of the unique characteristics and paradigms resident in active personnel relative to the unique characteristics and paradigms resident in Reservists, the best managers of Reservists will normally be other Reservists.
- Reserve Component forces must be recruited, trained, and equipped as an integrated part of the Total Force and should be utilized to the maximum extent practical across the full spectrum of military missions.

Said another way, core mission areas of each service should, where practical, include RC personnel presence, and Reservists should not be relegated automatically or arbitrarily to support mission areas.

It is ROA's view that this scrutiny is too often oriented toward immediate costs with a lack of appropriate regard for long term benefit and life cycle costs.

In fairness to all, we must recognize the difficulty of the overall budget challenge that faces government departments and agencies. Within a given amount of money, optimized Reserve force structure (the proper force mix) could go a long way to insuring adequate national security. The resolve of ROA is to insure that debate is rigorous and that in the haste to transform we preserve the right force mix – right from a cost efficiency aspect and right from a capabilities aspect.



Reserve Officers Association of the United States • One Constitution Avenue, NE • Washington, DC 20002
ARMY • MARINE CORPS • NAVY • AIR FORCE • COAST GUARD • NOAA • USPHS
"Serving Citizen Warriors Through Advocacy and Education Since 1922"