



ROATM

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POSITION PAPER

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Simplified Reserve Component Order System

Requested Action

- ROA supports simplifying the Reserve and National Guard duty order system without compromising individual drill training compensation.
- Any study group should include beneficiary associations.

Discussion

There are too many types of orders that confuse the administration of duties for members of the Reserve and National Guard. This leads to other than seamless transition between civilian and active duty, and between duty statuses. Often duty periods are interrupted by days off of duty status as a serving member awaits new sets of orders. Pay can be delayed, and credit toward retirement can be lost.

Members often transition between duty statuses to support different funding and accounting requirements. The Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation suggested there are currently 30 types different duty statuses, while the Wexford Group suggested there were as many as 42.

It has been suggested that the Reserve can serve on active duty when in uniform, and be off of duty status when not on Reserve Component assignment. Oversimplification could result in unforeseen consequences.

While ROA supports reducing the number of duty statuses and needed orders to perform, a more thorough discussion is required. ROA suggests that the ultimate goal might be three Title 10 duty statuses: Active duty, active duty for less than 30 days, and inactive duty for monthly training and administration.

Too many US Code statutes restrict personnel and education benefits for active duty for less than 30 days, which is the reason for a separate category.

Background

The 11th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) looked at the structure of the Reserve Component and suggested that the current compensation was based on a strategic rather than an operational Reserve. The QRMC recommended:

1. Transitioning Reserve compensation to a “total force” pay structure.
2. Paying just Regular Military Compensation, allowances and incentives to Reserve members for each day of Reserve service, regardless of the type of duty.
3. Aligning Reserve and Active duty retirement systems more closely by allowing Reserve and Guard to receive a reduced retired pay upon their 30th anniversary of service, and
4. Reducing the number of authorities to order a member to duty from 30 to 6.
 - The QRMC proposes six authorities under which a commander calls or orders a reserve component member to perform duty. These proposed authorities involve just three types of full-day duty—active duty, full-time National Guard duty, and federal service—and one type of duty for a partial day, inactive service. The six authorities are:

- Title 10, Armed Forces
 - 1) Active duty
 - 2) Inactive reserve service
 - 3) Federal service
- Title 32, National Guard
 - 4) Full-time National Guard duty
 - 5) Inactive National Guard service
- Title 14, Coast Guard (USCG)
 - 6) Active duty

According to the QRMC, DoD Reserves, USCG Reserves and the National Guard would all serve under Title 10 active duty orders. DoD and USCG would do monthly training under the same. Title 32, would be for federally subsidized duty, including monthly National Guard drill. Coast Guard would be called up under Title 14 during times of emergency by the Secretary of Home Land Security. Inactive orders would only be used for partial days work, such as administration.

ROA disagrees with items one through three as suggested by QRMC, because it would likely hurt retention and hollow out the Reserve Force by reducing inactive duty compensation. The arguments behind this objection are available at ROA's white paper "Drill Pay under Fire." <http://www.roa.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/QRMC%20White%20Paper%20V4.pdf>

On QRMC recommendation number four ROA agrees to a simplification, but by means other than how the QRMC recommends.

- ROA concurs that the sheer complexity serves as a barrier to a continuum of service, and that the number of authorities should be reduced.
- The ROA does differ from the QRMC study recommendation that the number of authorities should be reduced to just six including Title 32 and Title 14.

The National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force concurs that Congress should reduce the number of separate duty statuses should be reduced to no more than six as recommended by the QRMC and the Reserve Forces Policy Board, but suggests that the Air Force can implement this change in a way that does not diminish the overall compensation of the Air Reserve Component members.

As the Pentagon is recommending changes to the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH), such reform will undercut the recommended means that the QRMC suggests to adjust compensation for inactive duty training.

The goal of just having active and inactive Title 10 status for the military's Reserve, National Guard and Coast Guard Reserve goes a step too far. Without changes to benefits and budgeting, different budget authorities must remain. Consolidating the different types of Active duty for training into a single type of budget might be a good first step.

