



Reserve Officers Association of the United States

Statement for the

House Armed Services Committee

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces

Hearing on the

Report of the National Commission on the Future of the Army

February 10, 2016

“Serving Citizen Warriors through Advocacy and Education since 1922.”™

**Reserve Officers Association
1 Constitution Avenue, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002-5618
(202) 646-7700**

The Reserve Officers Association of the United States (ROA) is a professional association of commissioned, non-commissioned and warrant officers of our nation's seven uniformed services. ROA was founded in 1922 by General of the Armies John "Black Jack" Pershing during the drawdown years following the end of World War I. It was formed as a permanent institution dedicated to national defense, with a goal to inform America regarding the dangers of unpreparedness. Under ROA's 1950 congressional charter, our purpose is to promote the development and execution of policies that will provide adequate national defense. We do so by developing and offering expertise on the use and resourcing of America's Reserve Components.

The association's members include Reserve and Guard Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen who frequently serve on active duty to meet critical needs of the uniformed services. ROA's membership also includes commissioned officers from the United States Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who often are first responders during national disasters and help prepare for homeland security.

President:

Col. James R. Sweeney II, USMC (Ret.)

202-646-7706

Executive Director:

Jeffrey E. Phillips

202-646-7726

Legislative Director:

Lt. Col. Susan Lukas, U.S. Air Force Reserve (Ret.)

202-646-7713

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STATEMENT

ROA applauds the comprehensive report of the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA). We will focus our comments on issues that directly affect the Army's Reserve Components – the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard. We begin by making three general observations and then move to several specific observations and recommendations.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

ROA strongly supports the overarching conclusion of the report that the Army must implement the Total Army Policy and develop a culture that embraces the concept of “one Army.” We also endorse the implicit findings of the commission that the two Army reserve components have distinct but complementary missions – the USAR under Title 10 and the ARNG under Title 32 – and should be maintained as separate entities.

The All-Volunteer Force is key to the future of the Army. Maintaining this force for the future will require requisite resources. It is also critical that future force management decisions in personnel and finance ensure systems are fully integrated. They must create an environment in which soldiers can more easily move between assignments and components. The goal should be to create a true continuum of service process that will permit the Army to attract and retain high quality people through different stages of their careers.

With the high optempo of the force, especially the Regular Army, use of multi-component units should be fully reviewed, and creative alternatives explored through pilot programs. The ultimate goal should be full integration to the degree that the unique constraints, as well as capabilities, of Citizen-Soldiers are accommodated.

It is true that many RC Soldiers are trained, competent, and prepared to be mobilized on a regular basis. It is also true that many RC Soldiers have civilian jobs or other obligations that conflict with repeated mobilizations. Regardless of their patriotism or ardor for service, they cannot be both frequently deployed and succeed in their “day jobs.” We must strike a balance among these differing realities within our force if we are truly to make best use of the precious human resources wearing the uniform of our nation.

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

In offering observations, we caution that we are still digesting the work of the commission; we are also working with the Army leadership in a collaborative discussion with its Reserve

Components and other military service organizations serving the Army’s readiness. In our experience, this collaborative approach between military officials and advocates is as rare as it is essential – it’s what this town should do more of, and we applaud the Army for doing so . . .

Within that context and its constructive potential to further shape our thoughts, we offer some early observations on the “Developing One Army” recommendations. Generally we concur with the remaining recommendations.

	<i>Recommendation 29: The Congress should expand 12304b authority to include operational requirements that emerge within the programmed budget timeline, including the year of execution.</i>
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To more fully use the RC for operational support, the present authority to use the RC under Title 10, Section 12304b, must be more flexible and be expanded. As currently written, 12304b permits mobilization of units as long as the mission is preplanned and funded. However, the timeframe for this use – planning two years in advance – precludes employment of the RC for emerging missions for which they are ideally suited. Missions suited for the RC could include theater engagement and security assistance.

	<i>Recommendation 30: The Army should budget for and the Congress should authorize and fund no fewer than 3,000 man years annually for 12304b utilization of the reserve components. The Secretary of Defense, in conjunction with the Army and the Office of Management and Budget, should also provide for the use of Overseas Contingency Operations and supplemental funding for reserve component utilization under 12304b.</i>
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The proposal to authorize and fund 3,000 man years is a good start, but more is needed. The 3,000 man years would not sustain even one brigade combat team for a year. We suggest that immediate, further study by the COCOMs for the resources they might need and use is necessary. The demand by ground force commanders is regularly exceeding availability – modification of 12304b could go a long way toward resolving that issue.

	<i>Recommendation 35: Congress should enact legislation to allow assignment of Regular Army officers, NCOs, and enlisted soldiers to Army National Guard positions to execute all functions without prejudice to their federal standing. The legislation should also permit the similar assignment of National Guard officers, NCOs, and enlisted soldiers to Regular Army units.</i>
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We support the concept that Regular Army officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted soldiers be assigned to full-time support positions in the USAR and ARNG. These assignments should be in addition to current AGR positions. It would do the units no good if current AGR slots were simply eliminated and replaced by Regular Army personnel. The USAR in particular is

understaffed, with about 75% of authorized strength; it is urgent that this shortfall be reduced. Today's systems for equipment, personnel and finance, and audits are exceedingly complex and it is unreasonable to ask units to meet the various recording keeping and archival demands with part-time Troop Program Unit soldiers. Although reasonable checks and balances are well and good, the demands for many layers of approval for routine actions seem excessive, especially in a system that is undermanned and undertrained to perform these complex record keeping functions.

	<p><i>Recommendation 47: The Army should reduce mandatory training prescribed in AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development by the following means:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) Reducing the number of mandatory training requirements and moving the reduced tasks to local command policy per AR 600-20, Army Command Policy;</i> <i>b) Developing a formal process for approving additional mandatory training tasks and reviewing existing mandatory training requirements annually for retention or deletion;</i> <i>c) Chartering the Army's Training General Officer Steering Committee to provide governance for approving all added Army and Combatant Commander mandatory training requirements;</i> <i>d) Changing the reserve components' mandatory training requirements from an annual cycle to a two-year cycle;</i> <i>e) Codifying mandatory training requirements with (1) task, condition, and standard; (2) Training and Evaluation Outline and lesson plan; and (3) the means to make this information available through the Army Training Network as the consolidated repository for mandatory training requirements;</i> <i>f) Delegating mandatory training exception approval authority to two-star commanders; and</i> <i>g) Completing the AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, revision within one year of this report.</i>
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Recommendation 47(a) would change the Reserve Components' mandatory training requirements from an annual cycle to a two-year cycle. A two-year cycle is a welcome change that we think will enhance unit readiness and preparedness; among other benefits, it permits the force to focus more of their drill time on mission essential tasks.

	<p><i>Recommendation 48: The Army should resource First Army's Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) positions from the Army National Guard and the Reserve at the aggregate manning level provided for each component not later than FY17.</i></p>
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We support the recommendation that the Army resource First Army RC positions at the aggregate manning level provided for each component. This is an excellent way to achieve multi-component success.

ROA RECOMMENDATIONS

We would like to bring to the House Armed Services Committee's attention some items that were, in the "crowded hour" of the commission's time and resources, not directly addressed:

- Integrate senior RC Army officers and NCOs into the Army Staff and open up more command positions for qualified Army Reserve officers, including three-star deputy AC command roles.
- Expand ways in which Guard and Reserve officers and NCOs can achieve Joint Qualified Officer status. For example, give them full credit for experience when assigned to the joint staff and create more options to fulfill their schooling requirements. US Army War College non-resident students should be able to augment their normal studies and achieve the Level II accreditation needed for JQO status, which they cannot now do. To ROA, the qualification apparatus of JQO operates as a "priesthood," excluding with needlessly difficult qualifications the meaningful participation of the Reserve Components. This exclusivity robs reservists of the opportunity to serve and it robs the nation of excellent joint warriors at a time of increasing need. In so doing, this elitism frustrates the intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.
- Increase possibilities for Regular Army officers to do tours with major Guard and Reserve commands, enhancing inter-component understanding and interoperability.
- Demand proof of full integration of USAR units into disaster response planning. This would ensure accountability and recognize the key role USAR units could provide in Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) operations. It is a mistake to think that in DSCA the two RC components would be in competition: their strengths are complementary. Undervaluing the considerable benefits that USAR units can supply communities in the event of a disaster means overlooking a valuable resource that can save lives and preserve communities.
- Create a new category of Reservist to embrace the "super subject matter expert" that may be needed by senior commanders. The notional name is not meant to connote an elite, but to identify the concept of extraordinary expertise not customarily resident in the force – which is not "grown" by the Army Military Operational Specialties and schooling system. Current laws and regulations provide some relief in this area but they should be reviewed and expanded to meet the needs of the Future Force.

CLOSING

ROA applauds the commission for its work in producing the final report and for its initiatives regarding the Army Reserves. Properly used, the Army's Reserve Components can contribute in training, education, and on the increasingly complex and diverse field of battle. The RC brings

essential capabilities to the Active Component, especially within combat service support units that are under-represented or do not exist in the Regular Army. These capabilities require resources, such as adequate full time support personnel to properly administer these complex systems.

America's Reserves are not the nation's free defense lunch. Adequately resourced, as they have since the Guard's advent in the 17th century, Citizen-Soldiers provide our nation a unique and affordable augmentation of its military capability.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement and to serve those who served us so well.