

Duty Status: Reduce the Number of Duty Status

ROA urges Congress to reduce the 30+ duty statuses to six or fewer statuses to eliminate barriers to completion of service.

On January 29, 2015, the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission completed their study with a final recommendation:

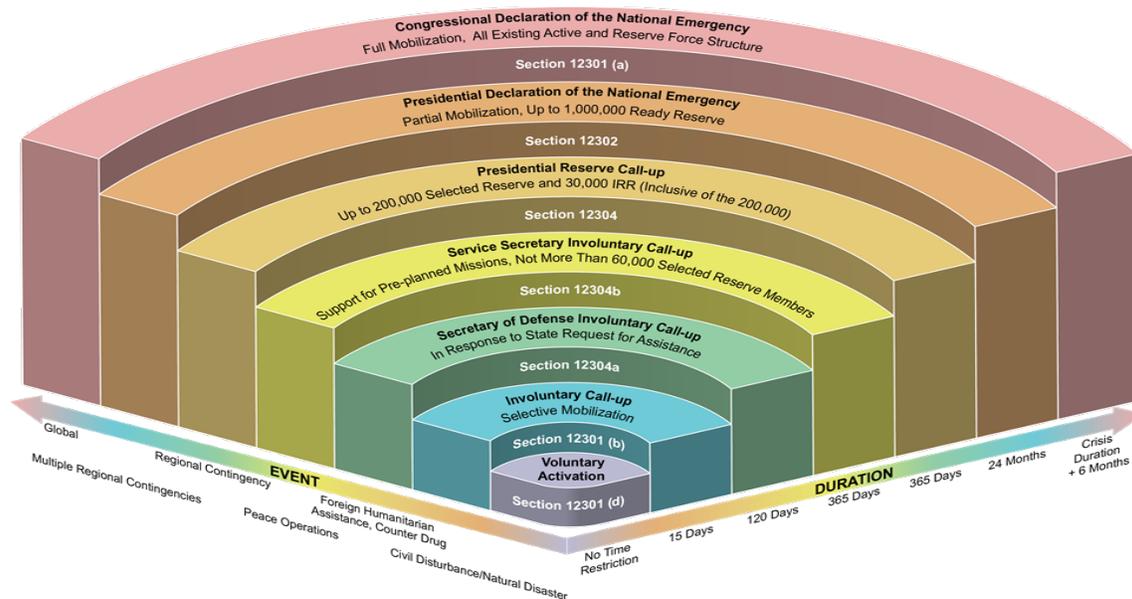
Recommendation 4: Increase efficiency within the Reserve Component by consolidating 30 Reserve Component duty statuses into 6 broader statuses

Per the report, *“Although Active Component members have a single duty status—active duty—Reserve Component (RC) members serve under a variety of duty statuses.”*

Additionally, the Office of Secretary of Defense, Reserve Affairs stated, *“Indeed, the current RC status system is complex, aligns poorly to current training and mission support requirements, fosters inconsistencies in compensation and complicates rather than supports effective budgeting.”*

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.

This myriad of duty statuses creates confusion for members of the Reserve and National Guard. For example, recently Marine Corps Reservists were deployed to South America in 10 USC 12304b status. It was not until after they returned that servicemembers learned they would not be receiving the same compensation as their prior mobilizations (which were under different involuntary statuses).



Source: U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve

Another problem is that for one active duty tour a servicemember can often transition between duty statuses because of availability of different funding levels. One effect of this constant change is a gap in medical coverage for the member and their family.

The current situation also forces employment gaps upon RC members when they wait for orders because duty statuses change. This interruption in continuity can delay pay and there is a risk that credit toward retirement can be lost.

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

While ROA supports reducing the number of duty statuses and needed orders to perform service we suggest there could be three Title 10 duty statuses: voluntary active duty, involuntary active duty, and inactive duty (for monthly training and administration).

This degree of reduction to statuses would greatly reduce the problems currently experienced with disruption in pay and benefits as well as health care coverage.