

**DD Form 214: Issue to Reserve Component Servicemembers upon Career Milestones**

***ROA urges Congress to direct all members in the reserve component to receive a DD Form 214 at career milestones or, if already retired, upon request by the service member, family or legally recognized entity. (Title 10 U.S.C. §1168)***

With the global demand not abating for Reserve Component (Reserves and National Guard) members, more and more citizen warriors are called to duty. Since the Reserve Components are part of the a “Total Force” it is important that all members, past and present, be treated equally with the DD 214. This, however, is not the case when it is issued to the RC member.

Currently not all Reserve Component (RC) members receive a DD 214 or National Guard Bureau (NGB) Form 22 when they are separated, discharged, or retired from military service. This is a problem for RC members because the VA and other federal and state government agencies normally require veterans to provide a copy of the DD 214 to qualify for veteran benefits.

Complicating this issue was the fire in 1973 at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) that destroyed 16-18 million military personnel records where the DD 214 is filed.

**The Fire:**

Shortly after midnight, on July 12, 1973, a fire was reported at the NPRC's military personnel records building at 9700 Page Boulevard in St. Louis, MO. Firefighters arrived on the scene only 4 minutes and 20 seconds after the first alarm sounded and entered the building. While they were able to reach the burning sixth floor, the heat and the smoke forced the firefighters to withdraw at 3:15am. In order to combat and contain the flames, firefighters were forced to pour great quantities of water onto the exterior of the building and inside through broken windows. The fire burned out of control for 22 hours; it took two days before firefighters were able to re-enter the building. The blaze was so intense that local Overland residents had to remain indoors, due to the heavy acrid smoke. It was not until July 16, nearly four and a half days after the first reports, that the local fire department called the fire officially out.

**The Loss:**

Army	Personnel discharged November 1, 1912 to January 1, 1960	80%
Air Force	Personnel discharged September 25, 1947 to January 1, 1964 (with names alphabetically after Hubbard, James E.)	75%

According to VA Pamphlet 26-7, “There is no one form used by the Reserves or National Guard that is similar to a DD Form 214...” that meets “Proof of Service Requirements” (Chapter 2). By streamlining the DD 214 for RC members they will receive credit for their entire service.

Proposed change to Title 10 U.S.C. §1168 would provide a DD Form 214 at the same career milestones as active duty. This would ensure predictable 214’s that reflect a National Guard and Reserve member’s entire career. It would also help servicemembers and their families obtain state and federal veteran benefits.

Supported by *DD Form 214 Issued upon Separation from the Reserve Component*, ROA Resolution No. 17-04.