

## CHAPTER 4

# READINESS

In today's demanding and volatile international security environment, the United States military must remain the best trained, equipped, and led force in the world. Recruiting, retaining, equipping, and training the military to fight and win the nation's wars is a demanding task, and is the number one priority of the Department of Defense. As the highest priority program, the Department's FY 2002 plan fully supports the critical readiness requirements. The FY 2002 plan continues the increases in pay and benefits for personnel, buys more spare parts for the weapons systems, increases expenditures on critical training enablers, and supports the necessary investment to acquire new weapon systems.

### **AMERICA'S FORCE IS READY**

#### **WORLDWIDE RESPONSE AND ENGAGEMENT**

The U.S. armed forces remain the most capable in the world and have demonstrated their readiness in meeting America's security obligations around the globe. In the past year, U.S. armed forces have successfully responded to numerous contingency operations worldwide. From patrolling the no-fly zones of Iraq in Operations Northern and Southern Watch to the continuing peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations in the Balkans, America's military continues to perform magnificently.

#### **HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS**

The U.S. armed forces successfully responded to numerous humanitarian crises around the globe and at home. Whether the mission was bringing relief supplies to the flooded lands of Africa, or fighting the wild fires rampant in the Western region of the United States, America's military responded with resounding success. Simultaneously, the U.S. armed forces have effectively maintained a forward presence around the world, in such places as Southwest Asia, Europe and the Pacific Rim.

#### **MEETING THE NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY**

In answering the call to respond to such wide a range of missions, the U.S. armed forces have consistently demonstrated their versatility and unmatched capability. Today's military is ready and capable of executing the National Military Strategy of fighting and winning two overlapping major theater wars. However, the risk factors for fighting and winning the first major theater war are assessed as moderate. The risk factors for the second major theater war are assessed as higher due to lower readiness levels of later-deploying forces, and capability shortfalls in lift and other critical support forces.

## **THE READINESS CHALLENGE**

Readiness is the foundation of U.S. military credibility as an instrument of national power. The need to maintain well-trained, combat-ready forces remains clear and unchanged. While the armed forces can meet the challenge, signs of stress are apparent in some readiness indicators and field reports. Challenges in recruiting and retaining quality people, maintaining aging equipment to a high readiness standard, and managing a demanding operating tempo have strained the force.

Working together, the Department of Defense and Congress have taken steps to alleviate these strains and keep the U.S. military at peak performance. The positive effects of the focused budget increases for readiness over the last three years are beginning to be seen in the field. As part of a continuing strong five-year plan, the FY 2002 plan calls for aggressive programs to further enhance the Department's current readiness posture, and begin to address the longer term readiness requirements of modernized forces.

Although the Department's plans will significantly enhance readiness, these enhancements will take time, effort, and continued leadership. The Department recognizes this challenge, and has a number of initiatives underway to ensure the U.S. armed forces are always ready.

## **CHALLENGE: PERSONNEL READINESS**

### **RECRUITING**

The U.S. armed forces recognize that attracting and retaining quality members is one of their most challenging tasks. Increasing threats to U.S. security and emerging technology make quality service members indispensable. The Department continues to address myriad challenges by surmounting barriers to meeting recruiting goals. As a result, the nation's brightest youth remain attracted to the opportunities offered by service in the military, but keeping those high quality youth on board presents an equally tough challenge. Unlike the recruiting shortfalls experienced in 1999, all Services met their active duty recruiting goals for FY 2000. Further, all active and reserve components will meet or exceed their recruit quality standards. Additionally, all active components will meet their overall officer commissioning goals. In order to keep pace with the recruiting challenge, the Department has significantly increased the recruiting and advertising budget.

### **RETENTION**

The Army, Navy, and Marine Corps show signs of success in meeting or exceeding FY 2000 retention goals. Although the Air Force missed its annual goal, it is postured better for FY 2001 and has implemented initiatives to address retention shortfalls. Moving toward recruiting and retention success has not occurred without costs; increased effort and enhanced enlistment incentives for all of the services have been greater than ever before. To maintain a skilled, capable, adequately manned force, the Services must also retain their key mid-career and senior leaders. Through careful management and incentive program expansions, retention problems have not significantly affected readiness, but shortages in certain skills and specialties, such as pilots, machinists, and information technology specialists, merit continued vigilance.

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## COMPENSATION

Continued strong congressional support enables the Department to address concerns and make military compensation more competitive with the private sector. The Fiscal Year 2001 Defense Authorization Act provided a 3.7 percent raise in basic pay and DoD must plan for similar raises in pay for the future in order to compete effectively with private sector wages. Private sector wages are expected to rise by 3.2 percent, as measured by the Employment Cost Index (ECI).

Along with adequate compensation, the Department is fully committed to supporting initiatives that improve military members' quality of life, which may influence them to stay in the military longer than a minimum enlistment. A major housing allowance initiative designed to eliminate service members' out-of-pocket costs for living off-post by increasing the basic housing allowance began this year. The Department is committed to cutting these out-of-pocket costs for the average service member to 15 percent in FY 2001, to 11.3 percent in FY 2002, and reducing them to zero by FY 2005. Members will also be able to participate in the recently authorized thrift savings program and mass transit subsidy benefit.

## CHALLENGE: TEMPO MANAGEMENT

While deployments are a necessary part of military life, the number and frequency of deployments have increased at a time when the size and permanent forward presence of the armed forces has declined. This increased tempo has affected all of the Services. Responding to more frequent contingencies continues to challenge the force, particularly for those specialized and limited assets consistently in demand, such as the airborne reconnaissance platforms. The Department recognizes that the more frequent deployments are causing military members to spend even more time away from home, placing greater stress on both the individual and family. A high rate of deployments can also place a greater strain on those personnel who remain at the home station because they must also cover ongoing duties normally performed by the deployed personnel. Unit commanders are challenged with managing and balancing military training requirements with the stability necessary for the long-term health of military families. Large numbers of commitments not only stress unit training and morale, but also recruiting and retention.

## INITIATIVES

The Department has aggressively worked the tempo management challenge. In concert with Congress, DoD is implementing common definitions, standards, and data collection methods to provide detailed reporting and management of tempo related issues. Starting in FY 2001, each Service will track and monitor days that a service member is deployed or performing duties that prevent the member from returning to his or her normal billeting area during off-duty periods. The Department is strongly committed to using this new personnel tempo management system to ensure service members are not driven from the military by frequent deployments. The Department is required to report personnel tempo in accordance with Section 923 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2000. (See Appendix N.)

## **CHALLENGE: MATERIEL READINESS**

### **AGING EQUIPMENT**

The Department is dealing with the particularly tough challenge of maintaining its weapon systems in a high state of readiness. Aging systems, spare parts shortages, and high operating tempo are placing increased pressure on the materiel readiness of the force. Keeping the aircraft mission capable rates within readiness goals presents a notable challenge. Ground equipment condition is better, but still requires close attention to keep systems at goal. The long-term sustainability of the Department's equipment is a continuing challenge, requiring remedies to effectively address equipment wear, excessive age, and the rising cost of spare parts. These factors increase maintenance costs, the total number of spare parts required, and the number of manhours needed to perform the maintenance.

### **INITIATIVES**

The Department has taken aggressive action to address these materiel readiness concerns. Over the last three years, almost \$2 billion were added to buy more spare parts and depot level repairs. Likewise, over \$300 million in Kosovo emergency supplemental funding was targeted to meet the most urgent requirements. These actions are beginning to have an effect on the material readiness of the units. For example, the Air Force has experienced a 58 percent reduction in parts backorders, and appears to have arrested the decline in mission capable rates.

To help address materiel readiness concerns, the Department spearheaded an ongoing analysis of the current spare parts, logistics, and sustainment standards of the armed forces. The analysis found that while each of the Services has maintained logistics sustainment standards for many years, these standards differ among the Services due to differences in mission, force structure, and employment concepts. While the Services do report some shortfalls in meeting their sustainment standards, these are not unexpected. The fielding of new weapons systems, real-world contingency operations such as those in Kosovo, and the introduction of new operational concepts, all affect the computation of sustainment requirements. Given these factors and the lead time needed for new procurement, this necessarily translates to some shortfall between current requirements and on-hand assets.

The Department has also increased the investment accounts to \$60 billion per year to replace or modernize these aging weapon systems. Modernizing the force is imperative to assuring long term readiness, reducing the maintenance burden on the troops, and providing the most modern and battle ready armed forces in the world.

## **CHALLENGE: TRAINING THE FORCE**

The Department's training objective continues to be one that ensures U.S. forces have the highest quality education and training, tailored to current and emerging requirements, and delivered whenever and wherever required. The emerging technology-based learning environment provides a broad range of options to meet individual and situational needs and the Department is building the foundation to take advantage of this environment. Options include institutional training establishments, distributed training and learning technologies, distributed simulation, embedded training capabilities, intelligent systems, and high-bandwidth communications. Innovative uses of information, computing, and network technologies

will provide the opportunities to make the learning process better, faster, and more efficient, while reducing personnel tempo and improving readiness.

## **ADVANCED DISTRIBUTED LEARNING**

The Department's Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) initiative encompasses both education and training and is the Department's principal mechanism for creating the learning environment of the future. The Department collaborates with outside agencies on the ADL initiative, since the guidelines and standards, implementing technologies, and learning objectives that serve DoD's needs are common with those of other government agencies and the private sector.

The Department has developed a strategic plan and an implementation plan for ADL that describes the programs, resources, and milestones associated with creating the ADL environment. In addition, DoD has established an ADL lab as a focal point for collaborative research, development, and assessment of new tools, methodologies and distributed learning content. The Joint Staff also has initiated key ADL programs, such as the National Defense University's Joint Virtual Learning Environment, the Commander in Chief Joint Forces Command's ADL network, and the Joint Staff's Doctrine Networked Education and Training.

Service training commands have created major programs and are increasing their investments in advanced learning technologies to better facilitate the ways in which they provide individual and collective education and training. The National Guard has a major ADL initiative to extend education and training resources across the local, state, and federal communities. In addition, the standard output of the institutional training base is now measured as part of the DoD Readiness Reporting System, to ensure that active and reserve component units are supplied with qualified individuals.

## **UNIT TRAINING**

Unit training is key to building force readiness. During unit training, individuals and teams complete essential training tasks required for combat proficiency. The military departments continue to pursue unit training programs that place greater emphasis on achieving interoperability between Services and that extend unit-training opportunities to the Total Force. The Department has also made improvements in how unit training will be captured in DoD readiness reporting.

## **JOINT/INTEROPERABILITY TRAINING**

Joint training is the process by which forces of two or more Services, interacting with a combatant commander, and using joint doctrine or joint tactics, techniques, and procedures prepare themselves to act as joint forces for responding to strategic and operational requirements. The Joint Training System (JTS) shapes the way the armed forces train. Through the JTS, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff ensures that joint training requirements are met, with special emphasis on training the capabilities required to achieve the Chairman's *Joint Vision 2020*.

The Department is actively pursuing advances in modeling and simulation technology to augment joint training, improving warfighter readiness and combat effectiveness. The ability to link live, virtual, and constructive simulations will allow DoD to train in a realistic, fully integrated environment, capable of supporting the entire spectrum of training from individual to campaign-level mission rehearsal. From the

Army's individual marksmanship training with the Engagement Skills Trainers, to team training with the Navy's Battle Force Tactical Trainer and the Air Force's Distributed Mission Training, to staff level training with the Joint Simulation System (JSIMS), the Department is working aggressively toward developing interoperable systems. JSIMS is designed to provide a global, computer-assisted training environment, where forces in every theater around the world can simultaneously participate in multiple-level simulations of joint training exercises. This will allow both stateside and overseas forces to operate, interact, and train together in real time.

## **MODERNIZED TEST AND TRAINING RANGES**

Modern weapons and sensors allow longer engagements, thereby increasing the demand for testing and training space. At the same time, there is greater commercial and cultural pressure to limit space that is currently available. This includes increased urbanization around installations, environmental legislation, and the reallocation of certain electronic spectrum for commercial use. Partial relief can come from the increased flexibility of modern instrumentation, designed to electronically link training areas and facilitate worldwide applications of instrumented live training. This instrumentation will allow DoD to substitute modeling and simulation and/or threat emulators for costly live opposition forces and will increase the depth, breadth, affordability, and flexibility of the live-training environment. Instrumentation also maximizes the efficiency and effectiveness of live-training (operating) budgets. Increasing emphasis on common and interconnected instrumentation systems will facilitate interoperability training at the unit level.

In spite of these improvements in instrumentation, DoD continues to require large ranges for testing and training. Only through live, realistic testing and training can leaders be sure that their forces are prepared to meet the challenges of military action. Many examples, most notably the current situation concerning Vieques, Puerto Rico, serve to alert the Department to the increasing constraints on the Services' ability to conduct live training. In order to assure required access to these ranges, the Defense Test and Training Steering Group has analyzed range sustainability issues and is developing a comprehensive plan to address them. The plan will address issues such as airspace restrictions, designation of critical habitats, unexploded ordnance and munitions, noise, safety, public access, hazardous materials, air quality, and ground water quality. Furthermore, it will lay the foundation to ensure both near- and long-term testing and training range availability, a necessary element for achieving the highest possible level of readiness.

## **CHALLENGE: MEDICAL READINESS**

Medical readiness, the Military Health System's primary focus, encompasses protecting and sustaining the health of the force, medical operations in small-scale contingency operations, and medical support of the Department's role in domestic preparedness against weapons of mass destruction. Significant progress has been made in designing a joint health strategy for the 21st century and in implementing efforts to protect the health of the force. DoD developed the Joint Health Service Support Vision 2010—Full Spectrum Health, which supports *Joint Vision 2020* and has become the conceptual framework for developing and providing health services to support the warfighting mission into the 21st century. Medical research and development contributes to enhanced force and medical readiness on future battlefields through focused investment in the discovery and development of materiel and information products that prevent illness and injury, treat casualties, and sustain optimum operational effectiveness.

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The strategy of force health protection (FHP) continues to guide the Department's efforts to sustain and preserve the health of the force, during deployments and at home station. With the ongoing operations in the Balkans and Southwest Asia, the Department continues to focus on improved medical record keeping, disease and non-battle injury surveillance, pre- and post-deployment health assessments, environmental surveillance, combat/operational stress prevention and treatment, and suicide prevention and treatment. Service members receive briefings and training on how to remain healthy and safe while performing their missions under potentially hazardous environmental, chemical, low level radiological, and biological warfare conditions.

The Millennium Cohort Study is derived from lessons learned following the Gulf War. This is a probability-based study that will prospectively follow a cross-sectional sample of 100,000 U.S. military personnel. It is an integral part of the Department's strategy to preclude Gulf War Illnesses-type experiences in future deployments and to maintain troop morale, confidence, and effectiveness. In addition, DoD is working with the Department of Veterans Affairs and national and international experts to develop an evidence-based post-deployment health clinical evaluation program focused in the primary care setting. Evidence-based clinical practice guidelines are being developed to assist health care providers in screening, evaluating, and treating service members with health concerns post-deployment. Integral to the success of these major health initiatives has been the establishment in 1999 of DoD Research and Clinical Centers for Deployment Health. These centers use their expertise and capabilities in clinical care, surveillance, and research to identify trends in the health of deployed service members and to target areas for improvement.

The FHP strategy leverages technology to better monitor and protect the health of deployed forces. Information technology forms the linchpin of the Department's efforts to capture and analyze health and readiness information regarding service members, especially during deployments. In this regard, work continues on both the Personal Information Carrier and the Theater Medical Information Program.

The Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program (AVIP) remains a major focus of the Department. On July 17, 2000, the Department ordered a temporary slowdown in the AVIP to conserve the vaccine supply until the Food & Drug Administration approved the manufacturer's renovated vaccine-production facility. Due to continued delays in the availability of the FDA-released vaccine, the Department directed a further slowing of the AVIP on November 27, 2000. In this latest directive, the area of program execution is redefined from Southwest Asia and Korea to only Southwest Asia. All remaining DoD personnel defer future doses until sufficient anthrax vaccine supply is available. All continuing vaccinations will be provided consistent with the FDA-approved six-dose vaccination schedule. Multiple initiatives continue to support the AVIP, including a worldwide immunization tracking system, civilian review of reports of adverse events, and a customized health communication program.

Another important Department initiative was the establishment of a new position to advise the Secretary of Defense on the force health aspects of deployments, as a result of lessons learned from the Gulf War. The Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses, Medical Readiness and Military Deployments, will be accountable to the Secretary, veterans, and the American public on these issues. The Office of the Special Assistant will deal with the non-health-related matters for ongoing and future deployments, and be a strong voice on behalf of service members. It will also continue to work with veterans' and military service

organizations. The Office of the Special Assistant will also review force health-related deployment plans to identify opportunities to enhance force health protection of service members and civilian personnel.

Smaller-scale contingency operations and the Department's role in support of the consequence management aspect of domestic preparedness carry responsibilities for military medicine. Operations dedicated to humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peacekeeping frequently include or are solely supported by military medical personnel. These operations help to build international coalitions and promote U.S. interests, as well as to provide training experiences for medical personnel. The White House initiative to address the global AIDS pandemic—the Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic program—is a current example. When funded by Congress, DoD will have \$10 million, of the \$100 million identified, to share existing HIV/AIDS universal and targeted prevention programs with selected African militaries, share HIV/AIDS prevention programs for providers, and identify methods to protect the blood supply. With domestic preparedness, the Department works in close collaboration with other federal agencies to plan for and test a variety of possible medical responses in the event of a national disaster or an attack with weapons of mass destruction.

Medical readiness is an important facet of personnel readiness. Accessible and quality medical care for active duty members, retirees, and eligible dependents directly affects the Department's ability to attract and retain the quality men and women required to sustain the all-volunteer force.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Department's soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines continue to do a remarkable job managing the changes of the past decade. For the foreseeable future, the Department will be challenged to maintain high readiness levels in its forces. The Department's continuing initiatives, with strong congressional support, will build on the strong readiness foundation built over the past three budgets, and will lead to further readiness improvements throughout DoD. These efforts will set the stage for future readiness enhancements and ensure the United States will continue to have the best trained, equipped, and led forces in the world.