

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE RESERVE FORCES POLICY BOARD

The Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB) is pleased to provide in the Secretary of Defense's Annual Defense Report a brief summary of the Board's major activities, observations, and recommendations. The Board, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, is the principal independent policy adviser to the Secretary of Defense on matters relating to the Reserve components.

The value and credibility of the Board rests in its civilian and military composition and the diversity of experience among its members. It is made up of 24 senior level representatives from the offices of the service secretaries, the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the active and reserve components. The Board provides timely and relevant policy advice to the Secretary of Defense and DoD leadership on issues affecting the Total Force. The Board also meets regularly with senior Department of Defense officials, members of Congress, administration officials and others who play a role in leading, shaping and managing our military forces. The Board solicits issues, listens to the needs of the services, and recommends policies to enhance our National Military Strategy. The Board's annual report, published separately and submitted under Title 10 USC, Section 113, presents an independent and comprehensive look at key issues and programs affecting all the Reserve components and includes detailed summaries of the Board's positions and recommendations on specific issues and programs.

BOARD ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the September 2000 outbrief to the Deputy Secretary of Defense the board recommended that the Secretary of Defense take action to initiate a separate review on the loss of the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA). The Board believes the deletion of NGREA will have an adverse impact on Guard and Reserve readiness. The board also recommended that the Office of the Secretary of Defense supervise an effort to accurately quantify the full resource requirements for the active and reserve components, then present this information to the incoming administration as a datum for their fiscal year planning purposes.

Other RFPB actions in recent years include: the establishment of positions for two reserve component advisors to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and ten reserve component advisors to the CINCs, Congressional action to raise the reserve chiefs to the rank of O-9, and the release of the Secretary of Defense's active/reserve integration memorandum. This historic memorandum has remained the seminal guidance for the Board's continuing efforts on behalf of all the Reserve components

TOTAL FORCE EDUCATION

In 1999, the Board felt that the lack of an adequate base of knowledge and understanding of the capabilities and resources of the Active, Guard, Reserve and Civilian components of our military forces was an impediment to Total Force integration. The Board noted that relevant information about all aspects of the reserve components should be embedded in the content of the course curriculum of all professional military education from basic training and pre-commissioning courses through the most senior level schools. At the direction of Secretary Cohen, the RFPB staff, in conjunction with the Army War College and National Defense University, conducted an education summit at the Army War College campus, Carlisle Barracks, PA, in early 1999. More than 70 senior flag and general officers and education experts from throughout the Department of Defense attended the three-day meeting to work the details necessary to submit a policy recommendation to the Secretary of Defense. The summit conclusions were presented in a report that included recommended actions that the board took to the Secretary of Defense in September 1999. Responding to the Board's recommended action, Secretary Cohen published a Total Force education memorandum in February 2000. Subsequently, OSD P&R directed a committee be convened, co-chaired by OSD Reserve Affairs and the RFPB Chairman, to implement Secretary Cohen's Education Memorandum. This effort is ongoing with Service and OSD participation.

Annually, the Board invites the service chiefs, the reserve component chiefs, representatives of the various associations that support the Guard and Reserve, and other well-qualified experts to brief Total Force status and issues. This year several themes and concerns were common to all components: recruiting and retention, modernization, readiness, operational and personnel tempo, and sustaining the force in the coming years. These concerns track closely with RFPB ad hoc committees already created to study and recommend policy actions on similar issues.

RECRUITING AND RETENTION

For the last several decades, people who joined the Guard or Reserve came predominately from active duty units and were fully trained and experienced. With a smaller active force, this recruiting pool has shrunk. A 400 percent increase in operations tempo over the last decade has also adversely impacted recruiting. The Board has observed that expectations of increased participation by Reservists, over and above the conditions of the contract under which they were recruited, have occurred without the benefit of national discussion or debate. This change evolved largely unnoticed as an evolutionary response to ongoing commitments required by the National Military Strategy, and has taken a toll on recruiting and retention. Conditions are exacerbated by a general lack of enthusiasm for military service among some of the most heavily recruited groups resulting in manpower level shortages.

MODERNIZATION

Modernization and force interoperability issues continue to impact senior leaders and policy makers on Capitol Hill and in the Department of Defense. Current policy calls for active and reserve components to be equally equipped and trained, and fully integrated. Aging equipment continues to impact interoperability and readiness with all the Service Chiefs citing this as one of their primary concerns. The Deputy Secretary of Defense has identified this problem to the Board as an important readiness issue. The Board, in turn, strongly believes that Reserve component readiness is driven by interoperability and the age of our equipment, and that overall readiness hinges on how the Reserve components fare in the modernization accounts and funding process. Additionally, commanders in chief in all the theaters expect

their reserve forces to be transparent with active duty units when they arrive in country. This requires up to date and completely interoperable equipment. However, funding to upgrade and modernize equipment still does not always reach down to the Guard and Reserve. The gradual erosion of the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account has impeded plans to upgrade and modernize Guard and reserve equipment. The story is the same in each of the services: Reserve component equipment upgrades lag behind that of the active forces because of a lack of sufficient dedicated funding. With the significant reduction of overall U. S. military forces in the last decade, the nation cannot afford to allow the Reserve components to degrade to the inferior equipment levels of the past. The RFPB recognizes the danger inherent in this reality and has adopted the position that a continued decline in NGREA funding will adversely affect Guard and Reserve readiness. This issue was briefed to the Deputy Secretary of Defense during the September 2000 Board meeting.

REVIEW

Education, equity increases in pay and benefits, enhanced recruiting and retention, full-time support personnel, funding necessary to upgrade and maintain weapon systems, and a clear view of the road ahead for the Guard and Reserve of the 21st century should be the overarching goals of a healthy and integrated Guard and Reserve force. We are fortunate to live in a participatory democracy where anyone so inclined can play an active role in our government. We should be equally proud of the men and women who choose to volunteer their time, energies and sometimes their very lives to be part of the finest, most capable military force in history. We owe it to them to give them the tools they need to get the job done and the rewards they deserve when their mission is completed.

FIELD TRIPS TO COMMANDERS IN CHIEF

UNITED STATES PACIFIC COMMAND

As part of the tasking to assist in the implementation of the Secretary of Defense's memorandum on Total Force integration released in 1997, the Board scheduled visits to various commanders in chief to discuss Reserve component issues and facilitate solutions. Several members of the Board visited United States Pacific Command's area of responsibility during the past year. During the trip the Board members visited Japan, Korea, and Thailand. While in Japan, Board members visited the headquarters of U.S. Forces Japan, U.S. Army Japan, 5th Air force, and met with the United States Ambassador. During the Korea stop, Board members visited the Headquarters U.S. Forces Korea, Eighth Army, 7th Air Force, Special Operations Command Korea, and the 501st Military Intelligence Brigade. In Thailand, they visited the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group Thailand, the Royal Thai Supreme Command Headquarters, and met with the United States Ambassador.

Common themes found throughout the trip were:

- Commanders increasingly are using drilling Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMAs) to make up staff shortages.
- Reserve component members provide continuity for major exercises.

- There is a direct correlation between having personnel on J/C/G-1 staffs who are knowledgeable of the Guard and Reserve and a command's ability to access Reserve component members.
- Commands are increasingly dependent on Reserve component units to provide a broad spectrum of support and expertise.

UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

The Board, at the invitation of the US Coast Guard Reserve, traveled to Florida to meet with Coast Guard representatives and discuss their missions. The Board received briefings at the Coast Guard 7th District Headquarters, the Coast Guard Integrated Support Command, and at the headquarters of Coast Guard Group, Miami. Board members visited Coast Guard facilities, talked to Coast Guard personnel, and inspected equipment used on a daily basis. The Board then traveled to U.S. Southern Command Headquarters and met with senior staff to discuss issues, and the command's interface with Guard and Reserve units. Board members also traveled to Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) East where they were briefed by the Director of JIATF on the challenges faced by his command. This command is very interested in additional Reserve component participation in current missions. Board members toured the operations center and discussed issues and barriers the JIATF staff feels are important to the success of their mission, particularly in the Caribbean basin. The Board traveled to Coast Guard Group, Key West for an up-close look at real world operations and to see first hand the effort required to put plans into operation. While in Key West members visited with individual Coast Guard members to discuss their concerns and issues and to brief RFPB activities.

U. S. ARMY III CORPS, FORT HOOD

Members of the Board traveled to Fort Hood, Texas, to observe the integration of the active duty and Reserve components within III Corps. The Board met with the Commanding General of Fort Hood and received a series of briefings from the staff. During these meetings the Board had a unique opportunity to speak via video teleconference with the commanding general of the 49th Division Texas Army National Guard, who was deployed with his unit to Bosnia. Also, joining in the VTC was the commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, deployed with the 49th Division in Bosnia. Both of these leaders attributed the 49th's operational success in Bosnia to the high caliber of personnel in their organizations, pre-deployment training, and integration and teaming. The 1st Cavalry Division's assistance to the 49th AD was instrumental in the successful execution of the 49th's lead role in the SFOR7 mission in Bosnia. During the visit it was apparent that morale was high. Additionally, the cooperation and professional respect among the members of all three Army components was a model of successful integration. Members of the III Corps team are making great strides toward making full integration a reality.

Several other briefings presented the following common themes:

- Cooperation and teaming between III Corps units and the Army National Guard and Army Reserve are outstanding.
- Active and Reserve component commanders indicated a need for additional full-time support personnel particularly at Division Headquarters.

- Commanders stressed the need for commonality of equipment to achieve interoperability between the active and reserve components. For example, Bradley Fighting Vehicles in the Guard are not equipped with the more modern fire control systems of Active duty brigades.

BOARD MEETINGS

In accordance with Department of Defense Directive 5120.2, the Board meets four times annually and at the call of the Chairman when required. Board affairs are conducted independently of members' service affiliations, but with due regard to statutory responsibilities for the conduct and operation of the active and reserve components. Quarterly Board meetings were held throughout the year along with staff and Board offsites. Legal research into the Board's Congressional mandate has resulted in the Board voting to recommend to Congress changes in Title 10 language dealing with the Board. The Board concluded a busy year with the Annual Alumni Meeting in September 2000.

ANNUAL ALUMNI MEETING, SEPTEMBER 2000

The annual meeting of the Reserve Forces Policy Board and the RFPB alumni was held on 19-20 September 2000, at the Army Navy Country Club, Arlington, Virginia. The Board, alumni, and executive committee members of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NCESGR) heard comments by several members of the House of Representatives; the chiefs of all the Services; the Reserve component chiefs and directors; the leadership of several military associations; and the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. The Chief of Naval Operations also addressed the Board and guests at a dinner that evening. Highlights of the meeting included briefings from the national security advisors for both presidential candidates.

The reserve chiefs and directors commented on issues of recruiting and retention, modernization, readiness, full time support, operational tempo, and sustaining the force in future years. Also discussed was the impact on the Reserve components of reduced or lost NGREA funding. They agreed NGREA was very successful when funded at levels equal to Reserve component needs. It was noted that the primary forces being used for peacekeeping and operations other than war often have the lowest priority for resource requirements.

The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs stated that the Reserve components, the RFPB, and OSD/RA form a synergistic team. He considers family readiness, improved personnel systems, employer support, and a review of Guard and Reserve training/deployments requirements to be important considerations for the next administration. He observed that the nation's contract with Guardsmen and Reservists has changed without national debate to something much larger than one weekend a month and two weeks a year. He asked that the Board focus on macro policy issues to include utilization of Reserve components; examining changes to the reserve contract; duration of call-ups; continuity of health care; family readiness; and employer support.

Subsequent to the briefings, there was discussion regarding the proposed DoD Common Access Card (CAC). Since first directed by Secretary Perry, the RFPB has strongly supported the development of Smart Card technology. The Board's long-standing position is that this technology is necessary to facilitate access to Reservists, enhance Active duty and Reserve integration, reduce infrastructure (cost savings), improve readiness, and enhance quality of life.

The Board is concerned that the original intent of the DoD smart card, to support the warfighting CINCs, has been lost with the new CAC. The CAC, in its initial configuration, does not support deployment processing, personnel readiness or PERSTEMPO tracking functions. These CINC supporting functions were the impetus for initial development of the Smart Card technology and remain just as valid today. The high priority for chip storage space for access and Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) requirements is to the possible exclusion of CINC requirements. The CAC's remaining capacity must be prioritized to support joint warfighting requirements.

Another issue of concern involves the failure of the CAC to record multiple DoD affiliations in the initial version. The CAC presents a unique opportunity to further Total Force integration by providing a truly common military ID card with no visual differentiation between Active and Reserve status. Selected reserve personnel reporting on active duty in excess of 30 days will be issued a second Active status ID card for the period of active duty. This policy administratively and financially penalizes those components with the highest levels of Reserve integration.

The Board met with the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and briefed him on Board activities and issues. The Deputy Secretary of Defense commented that culturally the active duty, Guard and Reserve should be the same. He also stated that the critical readiness issues center on modernization and how we work the modernization account and process. In his view, most readiness problems are driven by the age of our equipment while equipment age is the result of the high cost and time required to field replacements. The Deputy Secretary of Defense's comments reflected the views on modernization expressed by the service chiefs and shared by the Board.

The Chairman raised the Board's position on the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA). He stated that if the Congressionally added NGREA terminates at the end of the fiscal year, the board believes there will be an adverse impact on Guard and Reserve readiness. The Chairman indicated that the Board would review the success of integrating the NGREA account into the services' budgets and proposed to the Deputy Secretary of Defense that this would be a logical point in time for OSD to conduct an independent evaluation of the success the Services have had in allocating sufficient funds to Guard and reserve equipment needs. The demise of NGREA was intended to acknowledge maturation of the Total Force integration and funding equity, but the Board believes that the reality of meeting Guard and Reserve equipment needs has not been satisfied in existing corporate processes. The Board asked the Deputy Secretary of Defense to initiate a review of the impact of losing NGREA to ensure that Guard and Reserve interoperability and modernization will not be adversely impacted by the loss of this funding.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

During the year the Board voted to work the following strategic issues and to include all of them in their FY 2000 Annual Report on Reserve Component Programs submitted to the President and the Congress:

- National Guard and Reserve Equipment
- Personnel Reliability Program
- Fairness of Pay and Benefits

- Tax Incentives for Employers
- Recruiting and Retention
- Three-Star Issue for Reserve Component Chiefs and Directors

USE OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

The Board had extensive discussions on what constitutes an appropriate use of the Reserve components. While this represents a sign of successful integration to a total force, some members see potential problems for the future. There has been no recent national debate on what should be the proper role of the military in general and of the Reserve components in particular. Instead, the policy of increasing global commitments with declining forces has evolved incrementally over time. Board members recommended that this be a major issue to be examined in detail by the Board.

CONCLUSION

The Secretary of Defense has taken a positive and proactive approach to furthering Total Force integration through his Total Force Education initiative. OSD/P&R and OSD/RA have worked diligently to capitalize on Total Force integration initiatives with successful efforts to improve both pay and benefits. The constantly changing world political, economic, and strategic situation demand that this process continue to capture and utilize the full measure of military capability residing in the Guard and Reserve. As DoD is challenged by a changing world, the need for properly trained and equipped Reserve components becomes a fundamental tenet to meeting these challenges. While DoD has successfully prosecuted changing world requirements sought by National Command Authorities using first class Active, Guard and Reserve forces, the necessity of continuing this progress though adding new problems continues. Employer support, equity in pay and benefits for Guardsmen and Reservists who transit repeatedly from civilian life to worldwide military missions and back to civilian life, modern and interoperable equipment are essential ingredients to a successfully integrated combat force. The Board continues to work these core issues with the Reserve components, their associations, the Services, CINCs, OSD, and Congress to ensure continued success of the U. S. armed forces in the 21st century the Reserve Forces Policy Board's annual report, entitled *Reserve Component Programs Fiscal Year 2000*, is scheduled for publication in February 2001. This report provides detailed information on important Reserve component issues and programs, and has become one of the premier publications on the Reserve components.

