

TESTIMONY OF
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Before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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I. Introduction

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am honored to testify and report on the success the U.S. Army has had in its endeavors to recruit the force. We have enjoyed many successes that have directly contributed to recruiting the youth of America to be soldiers for her defense. One of the most significant results has been the focus of the entire Army on supporting our recruiting efforts.

Where the media would have us focus our attention on failure, I am proud to report to you that last year we recruited 108,717 great young Americans into the Army. Combined with strong retention rates, we did, in fact, meet the Army's end strength goals. Since then, we have been able to implement numerous new business practices that will sustain and enhance our recruiting success. Briefly stated here and detailed later within the testimony are the process improvements we established in this last year:

- Total REQUEST System Visibility – this innovation removed management controls and restrictions within our automated enlistment reservation system and now allows unrestricted job visibility for our guidance counselors.**
- Greater emphasis on the Home Town Recruiter Assistance Program (HRAP) that brings hometown soldiers back into their community to tell the Army story to their peers from their perspective.**
- Corporal recruiters bring an infusion of new energy and youth into the recruiting force, as well as a better connection with America's youth.**

- **Shifted our advertising and marketing strategies to accommodate market changes and focus more toward work force and college-oriented prospects.**
- **We initiated advertising procedures (for example, Internet direct marketing, "cyber" recruiting, shift from national media to more regional and local markets, new emphasis on growing minority markets) to reconnect with America's youth and influencers.**
- **GED Plus – The Army's High School Completion Pilot Program enables applicants who do not have an education credential to be sponsored by the Army, to participate in a GED program that raises the applicant to the Army's enlistment standards, and qualifies them for enlistment. This option will build higher self-esteem in the applicants, enabling them to become better soldiers and citizens.**
- **Administration of the Assessment of Individual Motivation (AIM), a 30-minute pen and paper test administered to help determine an applicant's drive, discipline, maturity, stress tolerance, and trainability. This assessment is an important part of the GED Plus Program. Participants in the GED Plus must take the AIM test and must score a 46 or higher on the test.**
- **College First Test Program sponsors a high school diploma graduate who scores in the top half of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) to attend two-year post-secondary education before serving in the Army. While enrolled in their two-year post -secondary education program, the applicant is either in the DEP or part of the USAR in a drilling Troop Program Unit (TPU).**

- **Repositioning the recruiting force to reconnect with America by breaking up large mega-recruiting stations in urban locations and migrating them to suburban and rural America, and providing recruiters with automation for improved efficiencies and communication.**

My testimony today highlights where we are going with our initiatives and reemphasizes our commitment to succeed. Part of our success is evident:

- **In our achieving the Regular Army accession mission seven out of eight months (July 1999-January 2000) and exceeding cumulative accession requirements in the last two quarters (4th quarter FY 99 and 1st quarter FY 00).**
- **In our maintaining the highest fill rate (22 percent) in female accessions, which is over 2 percent higher than last year's fill rate;**
- **And in our continued progress in improving our U.S. Army Reserve recruiting. (In the first quarter of this fiscal year, we sustained a 6.8 percent production improvement rate over last year's accomplishments.) Filling vacant Reserve recruiter positions will greatly enhance our ability to achieve Reserve enlistment requirements.**

I remain extremely optimistic and encouraged by the efforts made by the Army's finest -- our recruiters. I would like to discuss where we are today in recruiting privates to professionals.

II. Building the Force

The market dynamics facing recruiters today are extremely challenging. The factors recruiting must overcome are these:

- **Today, more youth (51 percent) say they definitely won't enter the military than in the history of the All-Volunteer Force.**
- **The longest sustained economic growth in 30 years offers significant opportunity and employment choices to youth. Youth unemployment (9.9 percent) is now the lowest in the history of the All-Volunteer Force.**
- **The college continuation rate remains high (66 percent).**
- **There are 2 million fewer veterans today than in 1990.**
- **There are approximately 1.4 million 17- to 21-year-old, qualified and available males in the prime market. Of those young men, all other uniformed services compete to meet Department of Defense requirements of 345,000 accessions.**

Youth today continue to have seemingly endless opportunities in both industry and college. A market with low propensity for military service compounds these tough market factors, and youth trends today indicate that most applicants seek the Army for personal benefit, not for service-based reasons. However, we intend to capitalize on the strong economy and high employment rates by marketing opportunities to current employees who are "underemployed" or dissatisfied. We look to expand our efforts in the college dropout market. Although 66 percent of high school seniors continue on to college, there is a 30-percent attrition at four-year colleges and a 50-percent attrition at two-year colleges, which presents a market expansion opportunity for Army recruiters.

We have expanded our recruiting efforts by placing recruiters on campus in many of the colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Opportunities are made available for those in school through Army Reserve enlistment options. For those with a four-year degree, we can offer officer opportunities such as the Officer Candidate School or warrant officer flight training. In partnership with the Cadet Command, our recruiters are also making referrals to the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Additionally, we are establishing strategic partnerships with industry where youth will first serve their country in the Army, then transfer their experience and Army-learned values to industry jobs and the Army Reserve.

III. Mission Accomplishment FY 99

Overall production results for FY 99 indicated we attained 91.6 percent (68,208) of our required mission of 74,500 regular Army accessions. The average age of those volunteering for Regular Army service was 20.2 years. We achieved 76.9 percent (35,035) of our Army Reserve accession mission of 45,584. The average age of those joining the Army Reserve was 24.4 years.

Our Army medical recruiting production for Regular Army officers was 90 percent. In recruiting Army medical Reserve officers, we achieved 111 percent (1,116) of the required 1,010, the best we have ever done.

Our Special Missions recruiting produced the following:

- Officer Special Forces mission 300; achieved 301 (100.3 percent).**
- Enlisted Special Forces mission 1,500; achieved 1,512 (100.8 percent).**

- **USAR Chaplains mission 90; achieved 59 (65.6 percent), a 7 percent increase from the previous year. USAR Chaplain Candidate mission 70; achieved 72 (102.9 percent).**
- **Warrant Officer Flight Training In Service mission 303; achieved 303 (100 percent).**
- **Warrant Office Flight Out of Service mission 103; achieved 103 (100 percent).**
- **Officer Candidate School mission 50; achieved 50 (100 percent).**
- **Technical Warrant Officer (RA) mission 428; achieved 423 (98.8 percent).**
- **Band mission 161; achieved 167 (103.7 percent).**

IV. Mission Projections for FY 00

Our Regular Army mission for FY 00 is 80,000, or 7 percent higher than last year. The USAR mission is 41,961 or 8 percent less than last year. Our Army medical mission and all of our special missions increased this year.

The key to achieving the RA mission rests in our ability to execute our recruiting plan. To support this plan, we will use the Hometown Recruiter Assistance Program to find and lead their hometown peers to our recruiters. Among the resources that we will use as market expanders to enhance recruiting are bonuses for those who can ship quickly to fill critical training seats and for those who meet specified high quality and education requirements. Other enhancements to our plan include an expansion of our Recruiting and Retention

School courses at Fort Jackson, S.C., to include computer and interpersonal skills; establishing distance learning will provide sustainment training for all recruiting personnel.

For the Army Reserve, we believe the successful accomplishment of the USAR mission rests upon our ability to fill USAR production recruiter positions and provide better advertising and enlistment incentives.

In September 1999, we conducted a Reserve Summit where we mutually agreed on issues and initiatives to improve our ability to accomplish the Reserve recruiting mission. Although we have accomplished much together, there still remain problems in finding and hiring Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) recruiters, a critical element in our overall success. We continue to work toward resolution of challenges in funding, improving Reserve enlistment incentives, training seat programming and allocation, improving our system for accessing and transferring prior service applicants, and managing the overall resources.

Part of our commitment to success in Reserve recruiting is to take a hard look at incentives and entitlements.

We conducted an Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Summit in December 1999 to coordinate the efforts of the Army Surgeon General, the Chief, Army Reserve, and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel to continue success in recruiting the healthcare professionals needed for wartime readiness and peacetime quality of life. We are working together to improve the loan repayment and scholarship programs to enhance participation in all components.

Based on the statutory changes to Title 10, United States Code, Section 12310, contained in the FY 00 Defense Authorization Act, we are working to

incorporate those changes into the management of our Active and Reserve Component recruiting force. We will build a seamless, integrated system whereby a single recruiter, regardless of his or her component, can recruit and process an applicant into either the Regular Army or the U.S. Army Reserve. This seamless integration will transform our professional sales force from recruiter of an individual component to one who fills market demand across components.

This change in “how” we sell service in the Army has tremendous implications for “what” we sell as well. This seamless integration of our recruiting force will require a transformation beyond current practices to move to an Army-wide system offering enlistment options and incentives that cross components between the Regular Army, the U.S. Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard.

V. Recruiting Environment

Recruiting success depends on a number of factors: the youth marketplace dynamics; Army market presence; a professionally trained recruiting force; effective, efficient recruiting support programs; and properly resourced strategies.

Our research indicates that the top four attributes for employment in order of importance for 17- to 21-year-old males is a job with good pay, prevention of sexual harassment, something to be proud of, and personal freedom. Also, today’s youth prefer multiple options and the freedom to move within the job market without getting tied down to long-term commitments or contracts, which implies that those shorter terms of enlistment may be more acceptable to today’s youth. Today, 20 of every 100 young men and women consider military service as one option among many, not as a first choice, but as a consideration.

VI. Attracting Through Advertising

Advertising is our primary means to motivate prospects and influencers to be more receptive and to seek more information about the Army. It is our link to promote a positive attitude about the Army, provide information about benefits, and maintain top-of-mind awareness.

Our overall objective is to strengthen the Army brand image as the place where quality people have positive experiences and gain the resources that help them realize their potential. We have devised new, research-based strategies to reach and influence that audience.

First, the strategies: This plan turns away from the one-size-fits-all approach to advertising we have taken in the past. Our prospect audience has differing interests and desires. To reach them in a meaningful way, we use market research to identify segments of the audience with like needs, characteristics and affiliations.

Our audience remains primarily men aged 18-24, but when these young men leave high school, they embark on different paths. As many as 67 percent are bound for college, but only half of these will actually stay in school and earn a degree within five years. We have shifted our focus on the post high school and college market. We've created a new message targeting the college-bound youth, emphasizing how one can continue their education while in the Army, how Army experience equips you for success in college, as well as helping you to defray the costs of college or to repay college loans.

A second segment emerges from high school interested primarily in pursuing a career. This segment often becomes disenchanted with the entry-

level employment offered to high school graduates and seeks the high-tech skills prized in the job market. For this segment, we've crafted a new advertisement focusing on the technology and skill training and experience offered through Army enlistment and its appeal to potential employers.

A third audience segment is characterized by its desire for adventure. For them, we lead with Army adventure, with a secondary message that proving yourself under the pressure of such adventures is in itself a recommendation to future employers.

A fourth audience segment with special needs and aspirations is the Hispanic audience. Hispanic prospects often watch television in a family setting and set great value on the opinions of their elders. For them, we have created a message that crosses generational divides in "I Have A Goal." This message is running in Spanish on Spanish-language television at twice the media weight ever put behind any Army message directed toward this audience.

Our over-arching message is still "Be All You Can Be," but tailored to what different youth want to become. We call this campaign our "Opportunities" campaign.

We support the "Opportunities" campaign with a campaign directed to the parents of prospects. All recruiter testimony for the past year has emphasized that this audience is the most difficult to sell on the real, life-long benefits of Army enlistment. Parents today often pose the largest obstacle to a youth's enlistment decision. To this audience, we have directed a creative message called "Values," emphasizing the enduring values inculcated by Army service.

We've based the new segmentation strategy on the best market research available, such as the Youth Attitude Tracking Study, Teen Research Unlimited, Yankelovich, and our own New Recruit Survey, but we haven't stopped there. We have deployed around this campaign a powerful array of market research tools to provide us the knowledge to refine and adjust our creative messages, to measure effectiveness and to extend and increase our influence within identified market segments.

The Rand Corporation has just launched a candidate segmentation study to refine our psycho-demographic approach. Nielsen Media Research has just completed the first wave of an ongoing, brand health-tracking device to give us quarterly readings of our progress. Ongoing tracking of advertising exposures, calls and web site visits, and leads generated and their rate of conversion to enlisted accessions will validate all this analysis.

We've also changed our media strategy. We've shifted from network television to more targeted cable and doubled our radio weight. We've increased direct response television to generate more leads for recruiters. We've increased media presence in those markets with the greatest potential for increased enlistments. Most important, our Internet presence is more than doubled (as has the response) through banner advertising, live recruiter chat rooms, 3-D images, and Internet direct mail. This is especially important because all our tracking shows that Internet leads convert to enlistments at a greater rate than those of any other medium.

All these developments and research do not apply just to the active Army message but to the Army Reserve message also. We use similar research and segmentation approaches to address Reserve prospects with a variety of communications. "Simultaneous Benefits" is the name of the Reserve campaign.

It targets two specific audiences, the workforce and the college population, showing how Army Reserve experience improves your potential for success in civilian employment and in higher education.

A vastly increased local promotions program supports advertising, exploiting the Army's championship parachute unit, The Golden Knights, the Army Marksmanship Unit, the Olympic athletes of the Army's World Class Athlete program, and all other Army assets through the Total Army Involvement in Recruiting. These Army assets host events in schools and communities everywhere, displaying the skills and benefits, tangible and intangible, gained through Army service. We extend the local impact of these Army promotional events through partnerships with civilian organizations seeking similar positive impact on America's youth, like the Golden Gloves, and corporate employers through the Partnership for Youth Success program.

Finally, we are changing the way we devise strategy and execute it, in acting on two recommendations of the McKinsey Company. The first creates a strategic marketing cell at DA to advise on strategy, to be staffed by the best private-sector qualified civilian talent. Second, we are resoliciting our advertising contract to make our contract performance-based and to allow maximum flexibility in addressing our advertising needs.

With better research, better targeted messages and media, improved metrics for measuring success, and contracts tied to performance, we are positioning Army recruiting for continued success.

Now let me tell you about some other initiatives.

VII. Operational Initiatives

We are working with our parent organization, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), to capitalize on the collective efforts of the entire Army to support recruiting. TRADOC has provided support to help us better define our recruiting doctrine, as well as leveraging our presence in the college market through combined efforts with the Cadet Command. Other initiatives include the following.

Corporal Recruiters: This initiative provides youthfulness to the recruiting force. Last year, the average age of a detailed recruiter was 33; this program will significantly reduce the age difference between recruiter and applicant. Additionally, it will describe the Army life from a younger perspective and enhance recruiter credibility.

Leading Edge Recruiting Station: Two locations are currently testing this initiative. The objectives of the test are:

- Validate operational and training doctrine and leader tasks, along with identifying the tactics, techniques, and procedures that work in today's competitive marketplace.
- Collect lessons learned and establish a center for recruiting lessons learned.
- Test prescreening procedures for the recruiter selection process.

Research and Studies: In addition to several studies in progress, we are also performing research in a number of areas.

- We are studying what new incentives should be tied to specific jobs to ensure fill in critical jobs.
- We are benchmarking with other services, industry, and academia to ensure we understand and can apply the most recent innovations in marketing research.

Training and Operational Doctrine: This initiative completely redesigns how we train to meet the changing recruiting environment, especially how we leverage automation and emerging technology to support the Army recruiter. We are completing efforts to standardize all training; we have finalized our core training competencies and established the baseline mission essential task list (METL) for the recruiter. Efforts continue to use distance learning as a cost-effective training multiplier.

Outsourcing:

- **USAR AMEDD Contract Healthcare Recruiters --** This two-year pilot program has the objective to demonstrate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of using non-uniformed recruiters to replace the USAREC USAR recruiting force. In October 1999, the contractor established offices separate from the USAREC AMEDD Recruiting Offices, in four locations where they recruit, screen, and process the applications of healthcare professionals for officer commissions and USAR affiliation.

- **USAR Contract Recruiters -- This two-year pilot test program will augment the current USAR recruiting force that was short 300 recruiters last year. These contractors are predominately retired recruiters, now in civilian clothes, doing the same outstanding job they accomplished while on active duty.**

Army Recruiting Information Support System (ARISS): One of the keys to our future success is in our ability to leverage technology to enhance our recruiter support. Our ARISS will reduce processing times and reports; modernize and automate the sales presentation; present a high-tech Army image to applicants; and improve sales sustainment training. We are in the fourth increment of an ambitious plan. This year we intend to:

- **Automate production/management reports, missioning, and recruiter awards calculations.**
- **Connect laptops to a dial-up system.**
- **Provide the sales force with new sales presentations.**

VIII. Joint Endeavors

In the last year we have expanded the concept of Joint Recruiting Support. We now provide to the Navy warehouse and distribution support for their recruiting publicity items from our modern facility at Fort Knox. The Air Force and Coast Guard are also considering the use of our facility. This joint support is in addition to the recruiting communications network we maintain for all the recruiting services linking them with Military Entrance Processing Stations

located nationwide. Additionally, we are looking at other ways to work jointly to provide increased efficiencies and cost savings for all services.

IX. New Incentives

We have implemented several new initiatives to posture us for success. We project several thousand additional accessions for both components (RA and USAR) that will be directly attributed to these initiatives and incentives.

Regular Army Incentives

- **Enlistment bonuses up to \$20,000.**
- **Ability to link an enlistment bonus with the Army College Fund (ACF).**
- **Ability to offer enlistment bonuses for two-year term of service enlistments.**
- **Accession bonus for Army Nurse Corps officers of \$5,000.**
- **Hi-Grad bonus ranging from \$4,000 to \$8,000, depending on attained education level.**

Army Reserve Incentives: (Required to maintain parity with industry and the National Guard.)

- **Up to \$8,000 in enlistment bonuses.**
- **Up to \$20,000 loan repayment for a six-year enlistment.**

- **Increased loan repayment dollars for AMEDD wartime critical shortage specialties from \$20,000 over three years to \$50,000 over three years.**

There are other proposed changes that will build upon the existing incentive packages to keep the Army's product competitive with its competitors in the marketplace. These changes would require congressional approval.

X. Recruiter Well-Being

The effects of happy soldiers and positive word-of-mouth advertising are a fundamental advantage to the recruiting and retention processes. We are working diligently to resolve the obstacles still facing our recruiters and their families. Taken individually, each and every quality of life issue can be explained away as too expensive or insignificant, but when combined -- family housing, TRICARE, child care, tough missions and long hours, out-of-pocket expenses, lack of installation support -- the U.S. Army recruiter and family experience a diminished quality of life compared to their peers living on military installations.

Most recruiters are geographically separated from military installations. As a result, they do not receive the same level of subsidized support normally available to other service members. Examples of such inequities are the lack of subsidized childcare and parking fees. We continue to recommend some type of remote duty allowance to compensate those recruiters who are not so fortunate to be assigned to or near a military installation.

XI. Recruiting Summary

The Army currently faces the toughest recruiting market and strongest economy since the inception of the All-Volunteer Force. Our recruiters are

committed to meeting the challenge by working hard. Your passing the Defense Authorization and Appropriations Bills for FY 00 made a tremendous impact on recognizing the needs of recruiting and our soldiers. The investment you have made in us will pay dividends to the Army and the Nation.

Based on your leadership and confidence in recruiting, our funding level for FY 00 for Active recruiting is \$345.8 million, while Reserve recruiting is \$58.1 million. We will need sustained funding in FY 01.

In conclusion, The Army is focused on recruiting. The new incentives and bonuses approved in legislation, combined with the heart and spirit of our recruiters, make us confident that we are positioned for success. We will continue to apply our strategies for the future while using every resource available to make our recruiters successful now. We are looking inward to make bold moves to be proactive in addressing market issues, to stay in step with today's changing demographics.

The jury is still out. The trends that make it difficult to recruit today will get worse. Recruiting difficulties will make implementing the National Military Strategy even more difficult, as institutions compete against each other for the same pool of quality youth.

We greatly appreciate your keen interest in this vital aspect of National Defense. Your leadership and support of our recruiting efforts have enabled us to make improvements to our processes and products that are necessary for us to remain competitive during these challenging times. In our efforts to attract America's youth to military service we will continue to need your help. High quality youth (our target market) are acutely aware of the need to maintain their competitive edge through advanced educational programs.