

RECORD VERSION

**STATEMENT BY
LTG JAMES R. HELMLY
CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**

**BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE
FIRST SESSION, 108TH CONGRESS**

MARCH 19, 2003

ARMY RESERVE OVERVIEW

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL
RELEASED BY THE SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT BY LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES R. HELMLY
CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE**

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, members of this distinguished subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity and the privilege to testify on behalf of the 205,000 soldiers; 11,150 civilian employees, both Department of the Army Civilians and Military Technicians; and all of their family members in the United States Army Reserve.

Currently, over 61,000 Army Reserve soldiers are mobilized in America's Global War on Terrorism, serving courageously and proudly around the world. These modern day patriots have willingly answered the call to duty to perform the missions they have trained for and to honor their commitment as part of a responsive and relevant force, an indispensable component of the world's finest ground force, the United States Army.

This committee, through its dedicated support of the men and women in the Army Reserve, has played a major part in maintaining the relevance and strengthening the readiness of the Army Reserve. Your concern for the reserve soldier and employee who dedicates a significant part of his or her life to defending our nation, in addition to honoring commitments to employers and families, is evidenced by your invitation to review the present state of the United States Army Reserve. I am honored by that opportunity.

The occasion to testify before this subcommittee comes at a time of profound importance and immense change in our nation's history, as well as an immense challenge in the international security environment. We

are engaged with a wily, determined enemy, intent on destroying our very way of life; confronting regional powers and potential use of weapons of mass destruction at home and abroad; and struggling with the challenges of how to secure our homeland while preserving our precious rights and freedoms. It is within this very challenging environment that the Army Reserve serves with excellence today. Excelling in current missions is not sufficient by itself. It is necessary that we concurrently confront today's challenges while preparing for tomorrow's. The Army must maintain its non-negotiable contract to fight and win the nation's wars as we concurrently transform to become more strategically responsive and dominant at every point on the spectrum of military operations. The concurrence of these dual challenges, transformation while fighting, winning, and preparing for other wars, is the crux of our challenge today - transforming while at war.

This is my first opportunity to address this subcommittee as the Chief, Army Reserve. I am humbled and sobered by the responsibility bestowed to me. The Army Reserve is an organization that demonstrates its ability to be a full and equal partner, along with the Active Component of the Army and the Army National Guard, in being the most responsive dominant ground force the world has seen.

The strength and goodness we bring to that partnership is drawn from unique characteristics within the Army Reserve. The Army Reserve is the most ethnically and gender diverse force of all the armed services. Overall, ninety-two percent of our force holds high school diplomas. Our force consists of individuals who are community and industry leaders, highly trained and educated professionals, experts in their chosen field who give of their time and expertise to serve our nation. As good as our people are, we are not without serious challenges.

The Army Reserve has been in a continuous state of mobilization since December of 1995. Prior to that, our contribution to Desert Shield/Desert Storm numbered over 84,000 soldiers. The Army Reserve also mobilized over 2,000 soldiers in support of Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti. Since 1996, the average number of soldiers mobilized has been 9,265 soldiers per year. Our soldiers are part of the rotational forces that are keeping the peace in Eastern Europe. Military police, medical and public affairs soldiers provide ongoing capabilities in Operation Joint Endeavor and Operation Joint Guardian in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The attacks of September 11th intensified the pace of operations. Within hours of those attacks, the Army Reserve alerted and mobilized a mortuary affairs company from Puerto Rico - a company that ten years earlier performed its mission with distinction in Desert Shield/Desert Storm – to deploy to the Pentagon to assist with searching and recovering the remains of the victims of the attack. They proved to be so invaluable to the recovery efforts that they did not return to their homes until September of 2002, after cataloging not only all of the personal effects of the dead but items from the Pentagon as well.

In downtown Manhattan, Army Reserve soldiers were also assisting with the recovery efforts after the attack on the World Trade Center. Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers were on site shortly after the attack to assist with rescue and later, recovery efforts. Army Reserve units provided equipment, Army Reserve center space and other logistical support throughout the days and months that followed.

This Global War on Terrorism is unique for Americans because its battlefronts include not only far-off places like Afghanistan and the Philippines but our own homeland. What was once a “force in reserve”

has become a full partner across the spectrum of operations to satisfy the demand and need for Army Reserve soldiers and units around the world. Wherever the Army committed forces in the world -- Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, the Philippines, Kuwait, and anywhere else -- Army Reservists are an integral part, providing critical support, force protection and augmentation.

In the time that has followed those days, our military has been engaged in fighting the Global War on Terrorism around the world. Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan seriously impaired Al Qaeda's ability to continue to spread terror and ousted the Taliban. While it would have been easy for the nation to walk away after ousting the Taliban, it chose to stay and help the nation rebuild itself. Civil Affairs units consisting of Army Reserve soldiers who possess civilian acquired and sustained skills in the fields of engineering, city planning, and education were deployed to the region to assist in these efforts. Numerous new schools were built and medical aid offered to the Afghanistan people. These soldiers represent the goodwill of the American people with every ailment they cure, every classroom they build and every contact they make with the native population. And they are doing an incredible job.

Currently, over 61,000 Army Reserve soldiers and more than 500 units have been mobilized and are serving on active duty in support of both Operation NOBLE EAGLE, the mission to defend the homeland and recover from the terrorist attacks, and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, the mission of taking the war to the terrorists. The depth of the current mobilization reflects a higher percentage of the force since Desert Shield/Desert Storm and still our soldiers are raising their hands to re-enlist in the Army Reserve, making our enlisted troop retention rates the best they have been since 1992.

Clearly our priorities have changed. We must and will win the war on Terrorism. But the nature of this very war dictates that major changes are required to practices, procedures and policies relating to use of our force. We are discovering that the processes and policies in place were designed for a different time and a different type of war than we are engaged in today. As a result, we have been challenged about our ability to respond early in a contingency operation, sustaining continuous mobilization and continually attracting quality young men and women such as the ones we currently have with the knowledge that almost for certain, they will be mobilized at some point in their service.

The Army Reserve is currently reviewing mobilization processes that no longer match the realities we face. We are restructuring how we train and grow leaders within the Army Reserve by establishing a Trainee, Transient, Holdee, and Student (TTHS) Account, much like the Active Army, to manage our force more effectively. We are addressing the continuum of service concept that would allow ease of movement between Army components as dictated not only by the needs of the Army but also by what is best for the soldier developmentally and educationally.

Civilian Acquired Skills

Our Civil Affairs units are filled with soldiers that possess skills acquired in their civilian occupations or as we refer to them, civilian acquired skills. Civil Affairs units perform such functions as public works administrators, power plant operators, and public health specialists. Their expertise and experience is gleaned from their civilian occupations then willingly used when these professionals are called to perform their military duties. The very citizens that keep our cities lit and our water potable volunteer to do the same, as soldiers, when mobilized.

In the Army, 96% of all Civil Affairs units are in the Army Reserve. This force is designed to take advantage of civilian skills that would be difficult to train and sustain in the active component. Civil Affairs units are perfect examples of how the reserve component creates a link to the American People for the Army. Civil Affairs is but one example of a central premise that the Army Reserve has capabilities that draw from the civilian experience of our soldiers. This concept is a cost effective way for the Army to maintain skills needed for a variety of missions extending from humanitarian and peacekeeping missions to homeland security to wartime operations. It makes good business sense to employ soldiers in Army Reserve Civil Affairs units with Doctorate Degrees in Curriculum Development to assist countries in rebuilding educational systems within a country in order to use highly skilled soldiers when needed. Employing the civilian acquired skills of our citizen soldiers is a cost effective way to accomplish support, humanitarian, and peacekeeping missions.

MOBILIZATION ISSUES

The nation's existing mobilization process is designed to support the linear, gradual build-up of trained forces, equipment and expansion of the industrial base over time. It follows a construct of war plans for various threat-based scenarios. It was designed for a world that no longer exists. In actuality today, our current multiple, limited scale mobilization and new vision for agile, swift, and decisive combat power, forward presence and smaller scale contingency operations, demand a fundamentally different approach to the design, use and rotation of the Army Reserve. Rather than a force in reserve it has become and serves more as a force of both individuals and unique building blocks for teams and units of capabilities all essential to force generation and sustainment. The authority, administration, and notification to employ these forces must

be streamlined, flexible, and responsive to the Army's needs yet support the soldier, family and employer.

As I stated before, the Army Reserve has been in a continuous state of mobilization since December 1995. Rotations in Bosnia and Kosovo, participation in East Timor and since September 11, 2001, mobilizations and deployments as part of Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom have all become part of what it means to serve in the Army Reserve. These recurring deployments have given our units a great deal of experience in being able to mobilize quickly and effectively.

There is an ongoing debate concerning the wisdom of reliance on the nation's reserve components both for operations of a smaller scale nature, such as the Balkans rotations and early reliance in the opening phases of a contingency operation. As of March 5, 2003, only thirty percent of the Army Reserve troop strength is currently mobilized. But raw troop strength numbers are not an accurate indication. Often Army Reserve capabilities in Civil Affairs and Medical support are cited as examples of over reliance on the reserve components. There are specific types of units that have been used more than others. The demand for certain type units to meet the mission requirements of the Global War on Terrorism is higher in some more than others. Military Police, Civil Affairs, Military Intelligence, Transportation and Biological Detection and Surveillance capabilities are the highest in utilization. As an example, the Biological Detection and Surveillance units consist of one active component unit and one Army Reserve unit. The Army Reserve unit has mobilized five times since 1997 and is currently in their second year of mobilization. A second Army Reserve unit will be organized in September of 2003 and there are future plans for additional units in both the Army Reserve and the active component. This is just one example of a high demand, low density unit. Currently, 313 Standard Requirements Codes

(types of units) are exclusively in the Army Reserve. The Army Reserve has been able to meet the challenges to date with this structure but clearly the structure requires changing to meet the continuing demand of these capabilities – we will do this.

Transformation

The Army Reserve has been transforming its force since 1993 when it reorganized to produce a smaller, more efficient infrastructure. Our overall strength was reduced by 114,000 soldiers, or thirty-six percent, leaving us with 205,000 soldiers today. In our transformation from a Legacy Force Army Reserve (or a Cold War Force) to an Interim Force, we are poised to put changes in place that will keep us moving on the path of transformation to the Objective Force. In the 1990s, we cut the number of our Army Reserve Commands by more than half and re-invested that structure into capabilities such as medical and garrison support units as well as Joint Reserve Units. We reduced the number of our training formations by 41 percent and streamlined our training divisions to better meet the needs of the Army and its soldiers. Our transformation journey actually began ten years ago and is accelerating today.

The response to the September 11th attacks in the form of the Global War on Terrorism has exposed our mobilization process as one that is more suited for yesterday's requirements and war in a different time. The luxury of time when mobilizing for Desert Shield/Desert Storm does not exist for current operations. The relatively slow build-up of forces over a five-month period for the 1991 liberation of Kuwait is a thing of the past. The mass over time concept no longer applies. Instead, in its place, is a new standard of mobilizing that is slowed and restricted by processes and policies that have not changed with the rest of our force. In order for

the Army Reserve to provide campaign quality units, we must change our mobilization processes.

Changing the way we mobilize starts with changing the way we prepare for mobilization. The current process is to alert a unit for mobilization, conduct the administrative readiness portion at home station and then send the unit to the mobilization station to train for deployment. This process, mobilize-train-deploy, while successful in Desert Shield/Desert Storm, today inhibits responsiveness. By changing to train, mobilize and deploy, we will reduce the time needed to bring a unit to a campaign quality level needed for operations.

The Army Reserve is the nation's repository of experience, expertise and vision regarding soldier and unit mobilization. We do have forces capable of mobilizing in twenty-four hours and moving to the mobilization station within forty-eight hours, as we did in response to September 11th. This demonstration of quick and precise mobilization ability will become institutionalized in the processes and systems of the future and give our forces the ability to mobilize as rapidly as possible. We will overcome challenges posed by units manned with untrained soldiers through initiatives that strengthen soldier readiness and leader development.

One such initiative is the creation of an individuals account: Transient, Trainee, Holdee and Student (TTHS). The TTHS account will enable our units to be ready before they are mobilized. The intent is for the Trainee, Transient, Holdees and Students (TTHS) Account to be the management tool to account for all officers, enlisted, and warrant officers in resident training (over 139 days), currently in troop program units (TPU) but unqualified, or in transition to fill Selected Reserve (SELRES) authorized positions. The concept of training soldiers without impacting

end strength authorization or unit readiness is the standard in the active component. Our soldiers need to be Military Occupational Specialty Qualified (MOSQ) before occupying an authorized space. Our junior leaders require dedicated time to develop leadership skills and we can no longer afford to do this in an environment constrained by current practices of balancing untrained soldiers and leaders against unit readiness.

The Army Reserve will reduce over-structure and provide for a TTHS/Individuals Account within the current Selected Reserve end strength. Members of the Selected Reserve who are not qualified for duty in a unit, or who are enrolled in professional development education courses, or might in a few cases be non-ready due to temporary medical holds, transition, or similar statuses will be assigned to the Individuals Account. This will increase the readiness of the Army Reserve, and the TTHS account will give a true picture of military readiness and manpower by using the same methods as the active Army.

While changing industrial age mobilization and personnel assignment policies is necessary, restricting our force so that we can implement predictable and sustainable rotation based upon depth in capabilities is also necessary. Predictable and sustainable utilization is a key factor for campaign quality support. One of the goals of transforming our force is to change policies that are harmful to soldiers and families. Predictable rotation schedules will allow the Army Reserve to continue to be a valued source for small contingency conflicts and follow-on operations. It will provide our units with operational experience; provide deployment relief for the active Army; impart a sense of predictability for our soldiers and evens out the work load across the force. We must begin now to implement new strategies in building a force with rotational capabilities.

This current period of mobilization has had some challenges of calling on soldiers to mobilize on short notice, on rare occasions with less than twenty-four hours notice. A rotational strategy for Operations and force planning policy would begin to overcome this challenge. For the short term, I have set in place a policy for the Army Reserve that no one moves with less than five days notice. This is basic soldiering – taking care of your people. Despite all of the challenges faced by our force during this mobilization period, everyone called to duty has shown up, ready to honor their commitment to our nation. That is what the Army Reserve is – great people bending over backwards to serve their country.

RECRUITING AND RETENTION

Recruiting and retention is an area of the highest importance to the Army Reserve and a volunteer force. Our responsibilities require the best soldiers America can provide. In this regard, we are most appreciative of the help your subcommittee has provided us. We would be remiss if we did not thank you for the attention you have paid to our recruiting needs in recent legislation. With your help we have met our recruiting mission for three straight years from 2000 to 2002. In FY 2003, however, we are 213 accessions short of expected year-to-date mission. While cause for concern, I am not alarmed over this.

Although generally successful in overall mission numbers, we continue to experience difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified individuals in certain critical wartime specialties, particularly within the Army Medical Department. Your continued support on behalf of recruiting and retention incentives, allowing for innovative readiness training and the funding of continuing health and educational opportunities will help us with this difficult task.

The Army Reserve, in partnership with the United States Army Accessions Command (USAAC), conducted a thorough review of Army Reserve recruiting. This review has helped us forge a stronger relationship with the Accessions Command and has streamlined our processes to support the symbiotic relationship between recruiting and retention. To that end, we will seek to ensure that all Army Reserve soldiers are involved in recruiting and retention activities - we all are a part of the Army's accessions efforts. We are removing mission distracters allowing the Accessions Command to focus on their core competency of recruiting non-prior service applicants; we are focusing on life cycle personnel management for all categories of Army Reserve soldiers and our retention program seeks to reduce attrition, thereby improving readiness and reducing recruiting missions.

During 2003, the responsibility for the entire prior service mission will transfer from the Accessions Command to the Army Reserve. Tenets of this transfer include: establishment of career crosswalk opportunities between recruiters and retention transition NCOs; localized recruiting, retention and transition support at Army Reserve units and increased commander awareness and involvement in recruiting and retention efforts.

To support recruiting and retention, the Army Reserve relies on non-prior service and prior service enlistment bonuses, the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) Kicker and the Student Loan Repayment Program in combinations that attract soldiers to fill critical MOS and priority unit shortages. The Army Reserve must be able to provide a variety of enlistment and retention incentives, for both officer and enlisted personnel, in order to attract and retain quality soldiers. Fully funded incentive programs must be made available to ensure success in attaining recruiting goals and maintaining critical shortages and skills.

Our retention program is a success. Faced with an enlisted attrition rate of 37.5 percent at the end of FY 1997, we adopted a corporate approach to retaining quality soldiers. Retention management was an internal staff responsibility before FY 1998. In a mostly mechanical approach to personnel management, strength managers simply calculated gains and losses and maintained volumes of statistical data. Unfortunately, this approach did nothing to focus commanders on their responsibility of retaining their most precious resource — our soldiers.

The Army Reserve developed the Commander's Retention Program to correct this shortcoming. A crucial tenet of this program places responsibility and accountability for retention with commanders at every level of the organization. Commanders now have a direct mission to retain their soldiers and must develop annual retention plans. Additionally, first line leaders must ensure all soldiers are sponsored, receive delivery on promises made to them, and are provided quality training. In this way, the Commander's Retention Program ensures accountability because it establishes methods and standards and provides a means to measure and evaluate every commander's performance. Since the introduction of the Commander's Retention Program, the Army Reserve has reduced enlisted Troop Program Unit attrition by nearly nine percentage points. The enlisted attrition rate in FY 2002 was 27 percent. Current projection for FY 2003 with an increase of 28.6 percent, due to demobilization, and a program to reduce the burden of non-participants and increased retirements.

The Army Reserve is experiencing a 4,200 company grade officer shortfall. Retention goals focus commanders and first line leaders on junior officers. The establishment of a sound leader development program is a cornerstone of Army Reserve Transformation. Providing young leaders the opportunity for school training and practiced leadership will

retain these officers. A transformed assignment policy will enhance promotion and leader development. Increased Army Reserve involvement in transitioning officers from active duty directly into Army Reserve units will keep young officers interested in continuing their army career. Allowing them managed flexibility during their transition to civilian life will be a win for the Army.

Overall, the Army Reserve successfully accomplished the FY 2002 recruiting mission while achieving the Department of the Army and Department of Defense quality marks. This year our enlisted recruiting mission will stabilize at approximately 20,000 non-prior service due to the success of our retention efforts. The accomplishment of the recruiting mission will demand a large investment in time on the part of our commander's, our retention NCOs, and our recruiters as they are personally involved in attracting the young people in their communities to their units.

However, the same environmental pressures that make non-prior service recruiting and retention difficult affect prior service accessions. With the defense drawdown we have seen a corresponding decrease in the available prior service market in the IRR. This impacts Army training costs, due to the increased reliance on the non-prior service market, and an overall loss of knowledge and experience when soldiers are not transitioned to the Army Reserve. Consequently, the Army Reserve's future ability to recruit and retain quality soldiers will continue to be critically dependent on maintaining competitive compensation and benefits.

Special attention needs to be placed on the recruiting budget, for advertising, to meet our requirements in the next several years. Young people of today need to be made aware of the unique opportunities

available in the different military components. The best way to get this message out is to advertise through the mass media. Funding our critical advertising needs is imperative if we are to be honestly expected to meet our recruiting goals. Your continued support of our efforts to recruit and retain quality soldiers is essential if we are to be successful.

INDIVIDUAL AUGMENTEE PROGRAM

Under the current Army posture, there is a growing need to establish a capability-based pool of individuals across a range of specialties who are readily available, organized, and trained for mobilization and deployment as Individual Augmentees. In spite of numerous force structure initiatives designed to man early deploying Active Army and Reserve Component units at the highest possible levels, a requirement remains for individual fillers for contingencies, operations, and exercises. Therefore, I have authorized the establishment of an Individual Augmentee Program within the Selected Reserve to meet these needs.

The purpose of the Individual Augmentee Program is to meet real-world combatant commander requirements as validated in the Worldwide Individual Augmentation System (WIAS). Additionally, this program will preclude the deployment of individual capabilities from active or reserve component units adversely impacting their readiness, cohesion, and future employment possibilities. It will allow soldiers to participate at several levels of commitment and supports the Office of the Secretary of Defense proposal for a continuum of service.

Continuum of service offers the Army flexibility in accessing and managing personnel. Soldiers can serve through a lifetime in different ways from active duty to troop program unit to individual augmentee to

retiree. The ability to move seamlessly through components and statuses can only benefit the Army and the soldier. Matching the right soldier in the right status at the right time makes sense. The Army Reserve will lead the way in making a reality of the phrase “Once a Soldier, Always a Soldier”.

Our initiatives concerning the management of individuals in the Army Reserve are the catalyst of Army Reserve Transformation – The Federal Reserve Restructuring Initiative (FRRRI). We developed these programs to meet the FRRRI objectives: add operational depth to the Army through unit readiness and relevance, sustain mobilization to execute the Global War on Terrorism, relieve Army operational tempo through rotational force initiatives and transform the Army Reserve to the Objective Force. The Chief of Staff, Army has stated that what will really transform the Army will be people. Our Army Reserve transformation plan will directly impact our ability to recruit, train, sustain, and deploy a ready and capable Federal Reserve Force. Your awareness of and Congressional support of our efforts is invaluable.

Summary

In our current military environment, the Army Reserve has many challenges that we accept without hesitation. These challenges are imbedded the current wisdom of early reliance on the reserve component in early contingency operations and the wisdom of the use of the reserve components in scheduled operational rotations such as Bosnia and Kosovo. Historically our nation has placed great reliance on the reserve components of soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, to expand the armed forces for operations during time of war. The nature of warfare has changed drastically and we must also change. This Global War on Terrorism, as our President has described, is a long-term campaign of

inestimable duration, fought in many different places around the planet. The issues we have brought to you today – changing how we recruit, prepare, maintain, and resource our force recognizes the Commander-in-Chief's intent, to prepare for future wars of unknown duration in places we have yet to fight.

We are grateful to the Congress and the Nation for supporting the Army Reserve and our most valuable resource, our soldiers – the sons and daughters of America.

I cannot adequately express how proud I am of our soldiers. They are in the hearts and prayers of a grateful nation and will continue to stay there until we finish the job at hand.

Thank you.