

PREPARED STATEMENT
OF
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BEFORE THE

SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
MILITARY PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE

MARCH 14, 2012

Introduction

Chairman Webb, Ranking member Graham, and members of the subcommittee; I thank you for your invitation to participate in this hearing. I welcome the opportunity to give you an overview of the issues we are addressing in the Reserve Components (RC).

The FY 2013 budget supports the National Defense Strategy and will enable our Reserve Components to continue to fulfill their vital National Security role. The budget provides funding and programmatic support for the training, equipping, recruiting and retaining of the Guard and Reserve.

The Department's Ready Reserve totaling about 1.1 million members contributes 43% of total military end strength at a cost of 9% of the total base budget. The National Guard and Reserve provide trained, ready and cost-effective forces that can be employed on a regular operational basis, while also ensuring strategic depth for large-scale contingencies or other unanticipated national crises. Reserve Component forces can:

- Provide critical capabilities for meeting national defense objectives
- Enable mitigation of strategic risk at lower cost than a large standing full-time force
- Provide cost effective returns on significant DoD investment
- Reduce stress on the Total Force
- Provide the capability to rapidly "reverse" given a change in our National strategic objectives

Prior to 2001, the Reserve Components were primarily a strategic reserve with occasional operational missions as needed to augment active forces. Since 2001 RC units and individuals have been heavily employed across the full spectrum of military operations ranging from combat missions overseas, to homeland emergencies, to National Special Security Events and have demonstrated their readiness and utility. The current National Guard and Reserve is, arguably,

the most combat seasoned Reserve force ever, and the Department seeks to capitalize on this significant investment to provide needed military capacity during current austere economic times

To ensure the Reserve Component can continue to provide both operational and strategic forces, the Department included funding and programs in its FY 2013 budget request for their training, equipping, recruiting and retention.

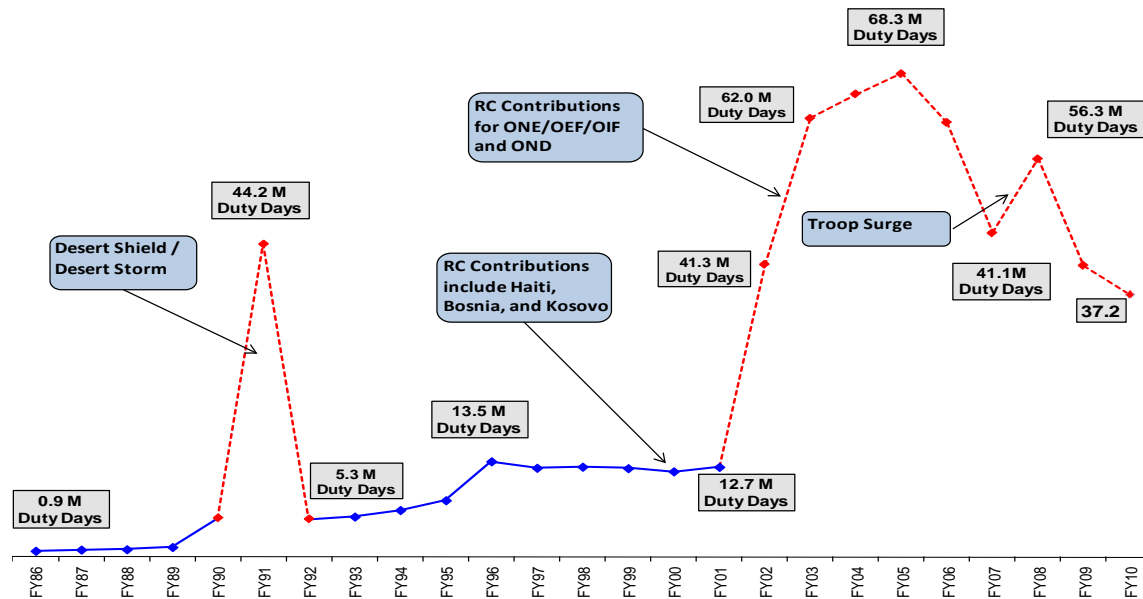
Training and Utilization Opportunities for the Military Departments

After a decade of sustained engagement in combat operations, the Reserve Components of our Armed Forces continue to transform into a dependable operational force that provides full-spectrum capability to the Nation. As of 31 December 2011, 835,689 Reserve Component members (809,913 Selected Reserve and 25,776 Individual Ready Reserve) have served in support of contingency operations since September 11, 2001 and 80% of those servicemen and women have deployed in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. Today there are over 85,000 National Guard and Reserve men and women on active duty around the world and at home, serving in missions ranging from combat in Afghanistan to defending the air space here in Washington and our borders in the Southwest.

RC Utilization

The contribution of the Reserve Components has increased dramatically in the last two decades, and during that time the RC has become an integral part of the nation's military force participating in nearly every mission worldwide. The increased utilization of the RCs supports the recent Strategic Guidance, and the Department has managed the use of the RC to help mitigate the stress on the Total Force.

Reserve Component Contributions (through October 2010)



Today's Reserve Component is a force multiplier which provides access and flexibility at an incredible value allowing the Services to utilize full capabilities in an operational capacity while retaining strategic depth. An optimal AC/RC force mix will allow the department to not only preserve previous investments in readiness, capability, and capacity, but also protect the operational expertise of the force for future use while ensuring a rapidly expandable, trained and ready military.

Innovative Readiness Training

The Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) Program is an outstanding volunteer training opportunity for our National Guard and Reserve. IRT's focus is to provide a varied and challenging menu of training opportunities that exercise the Mission Essential Task List (METL) requirements of combat support and combat service support units and individuals. Each year,

new training opportunities are presented by federal, state or local government agencies or non-profit organizations to the Services for their selection. Military units are provided METL training in a realistic, hands-on setting while providing quality services to communities throughout the United States and U.S. territories.

Examples of IRT activities include infrastructure development, constructing rural roads and runways, small building and warehouse construction and providing medical and dental care to medically underserved communities. These opportunities result in interoperability and readiness training ensuring our Nation always has a fully capable National Guard and Reserve. Historically, this office's IRT program budgets for, and executes a \$20 million fiscal year training program.

Cyber Workforce

Operating effectively in Cyberspace is vital to DoD and the nation. "Cyber" as a Warfare Domain is newly organized and rapidly expanding. The need for personnel with cyber skills, the limited number of workers with those skills, and increasing competition within U.S. Government and the private sector for the same set of skills require a long term and robust cyber workforce strategy. The Secretary of Defense has stressed the need for a flexible approach to attract, develop, and retain Cyber, and specifically Cybersecurity, professionals along with endorsing innovative use of the RC for cyber missions.

Innovative use of the Reserve Component as proposed by the Secretary is well underway, with forces assigned to the National Security Agency, USCYBERCOM, the Defense Information Systems Agency and to each of the four service component commands supporting USCYBERCOM. There are multiple Air and Army Guard units engaged in the cyberspace

mission and Computer Network Defense teams are authorized in all 54 states and territories. The RC offers very highly qualified individuals from the private sectors whose civilian skills may be maximized when supporting DoD.

State Partnership Program (SPP)

The National Guard State Partnership Program mission is to establish and sustain enduring relationships with partner nations of strategic value in conjunction with the National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, Department of State and Combatant Command Theater Security Cooperation guidance to promote national objectives, stability, partner capacity, better understanding and trust.

Program partners engage in security cooperation activities to include homeland defense and security, disaster response/mitigation, consequence/crisis management, interagency cooperation, border/port/aviation security, combat medical, fellowship-style internships, and bilateral familiarization events that create training and exercise opportunities. SPP provides the ability to focus a part of the Department of Defense, a state's National Guard, with a single country or region in support of U.S. and partner country objectives. Currently, 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia are partnered with 63 countries around the world.

This program directly supports the Secretary's strategic goal of building innovative partnerships. The program has been funded at \$13.36 million for FY12 and the President's FY13 budget includes a request for \$16.5 million. Many of these partnerships have resulted in collaborative working relationships through police and military operational mentoring and liaison teams with our new NATO partners who are part of the effort in Afghanistan.

Equipping the Reserve Components

Equipment Procurement

There currently is no specific appropriation that provides equipment directly to the Reserve Components. The RC relies on the Active procurement account to meet equipment requirements and provide adequate capabilities. Congress has been generous in providing additional support through the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) (\$1 billion for FY12), which provides funding for RC equipment modernization and critical dual-use equipment.

P-1R

We thank Congress for their continued generous support of the Guard and Reserve equipping (P1R FY12 - \$4.6 billion / FY13 - \$3 billion). The current challenge is that the P-1R has historically been treated as a non-binding projected subset of the Procurement Programs (P-1). In my view it is time to make the National Guard and Reserve equipment a sub-line within the P-1 and eliminate the P-1R. This will better ensure that Guard and Reserve Component equipment is part of the Service plans throughout the entire procurement process.

Resetting

Currently, funding for reset of equipment returning from theatre for the Guard and Reserve comes from overseas contingency operations (OCO) appropriations. As we prepare to move away from reliance on these supplemental funds, it is important to have a continued source of funding built into the base budget for RC equipment reset. It is critical that the Guard and

Reserves are able to continue to train on high quality equipment for which funds have already been allocated.

RC Equipment Transparency

Full transparency and accountability can only be achieved through a full life cycle, enterprise approach to Reserve equipping. The life cycle includes requirements determination, budget requests, appropriation, purchase, and delivery of hundreds of thousands of pieces of equipment. The importance of transparency doesn't stop when an item is delivered to a RC unit; the value of transparency in the life cycle approach to equipping continues beyond delivery. Plans to return borrowed RC equipment are included as key deliverables in this process.

Military Construction

The FY 2013 RC budget includes \$1.02 billion, \$21 million less than FY2012, for military construction which will meet both current and new mission requirements for RC operations, readiness, and training facilities. The budget also funds sustainment, which is essential to maintaining facilities at a level that supports readiness and preserves the substantial investment the country has made in infrastructure. However, with urgent RC facilities deficiencies and funding constraints, we must work to exploit opportunities to utilize existing DoD facilities and continue to pursue the efficiencies of joint use construction opportunities. The benefits of doing this go far beyond cost savings by promoting cooperation, building trust, and providing opportunities for joint training.

Regional Integrated Training Environment (RITE)

The Regional Integrated Training Environment concept is a joint effort that identifies and matches Services' training requirements to a vast network of local training facilities and resources. The purpose of the RITE initiative is to help sustain the total force readiness posture and surge capability as determined by service rotational readiness models while reducing overhead training costs through innovative management of facilities, training assets, advance simulators and Joint Live Virtual and Constructive capability, pooled, shared equipment, and coordinated through a web-based scheduling/visibility program. As the concept matures, collaboration will expand with key internal and external DoD stakeholders.

Recruiting and Retaining the RC Force

In approximate numbers, as of December 31, 2011, the Ready Reserve currently consists of the following end-strengths:

- Selected Reserve: 844,400
- Individual Ready Reserve: 220,000
- Inactive National Guard: 3,700

Continuum of Service, End Strength and Readiness Management

Meeting Reserve Component end strength objectives is a priority of the Department. The following table depicts the current prescribed and actual end strengths for the Reserve Components as of December 2011. The Department's Continuum of Service efforts have contributed to all six DoD Reserve Components remaining within the variance allowed for their Congressionally-mandated end strength objective. The Services have implemented recruiting, retention, and force shaping policies and programs to achieve end strengths for FY 2012. We appreciate the Congressional support of the FY 2012 end strength levels and the legislative

initiatives that assist in recruiting and retaining Reserve Component service members. FY 2013 end strength levels will provide the Reserve Components with the forces necessary to meet strategic and operational demands while maintaining a dwell consistent with Departmental policy.

Table 1. FY12 Reserve Component End Strength Objectives

























Service	FY12 Objective	Actual as of December 2011	FY13 Request
Army National Guard	358,200	359,410	358,200
Army Reserve	205,000	204,949	205,000
Navy Reserve	66,200	63,971	62,500
Marine Corps Reserve	39,600	40,013	39,600
Air National Guard	106,700	104,832	101,600
Air Force Reserve	71,400	71,273	70,500

Of the end strength figures outlined above, there are Service members in the training pipeline for the Reserve Components who are not immediately available for mobilization.

Recruit Operational Ready Reserve Strength

Thus far, for 2012, Reserve recruiting efforts show continued success. Through January, five of the six Reserve Services are within tolerance for recruit quantity objectives. Also, all Reserve Components have met recruit quality objectives. The Reserve Components continue to exceed the DoD Benchmark of 90% of new recruits being High School Diploma Graduates, with 97% of Reserve Component recruits holding that credential.

Table 2. Reserve Component Enlisted YTD Accessions (through JAN 2012)

Reserve Enlisted Recruiting Through Jan FY 2012	Quantity			Quality						
	Goal	Accessions	Percent of Goal	% High School Diploma Graduate (HSDG); <i>DoD Benchmark ≥ 90 percent</i>	% Scoring at / above 50th Percentile on Armed Forces Qualification; <i>DoD Benchmark ≥ 60 percent</i>	% Scoring at / below 30th Percentile on Armed Forces Qualification; <i>DoD Benchmark ≤ 4 percent</i>				
ARNG	16,596	15,548	94%		96%		70%		0%	
USAR	8,624	9,865	114%		98%		63%		0%	
USNR	2,427	2,427	100%		97%		87%		0%	
USMCR	2,880	3,149	109%		100%		76%		0%	
ANG	2,671	2,591	97%		100%		100%		0%	
USAFR	2,854	2,854	100%		99%		83%		0%	
DoD Total	36,052	36,434	101%		97%		72%		1%	

It is important that we have a military that reflects the society it defends, both in the enlisted ranks and our commissioned officers. This is particularly important as less than 1% of the American public serves in uniform.

We continually review our recruiting programs to align funding and policies with current realities. Each of the Services has made significant adjustments to recruiting programs in light of our austere fiscal environment and draw-downs, and continues to look for additional cost savings but we must be cautious and resist the temptation to cut too deeply and too fast. Stable adequate investments in recruiting resources are necessary to maintain long term success. Although

enlistment incentives can be adjusted quickly to meet market fluctuations and force management needs, history has shown that the time required to redeploy advertising/marketing campaigns and/or qualified recruiters is significant.

Acknowledging and understanding these factors and the need to expand our recruiting areas for the Reserve Components, we continue to enhance DoD influence in underserved communities by working with local school administrators, specifically from Title I school districts, and implementing programs like the DoD STARBASE Program that have potential long-term impacts on students' on-time high school graduation; college enrollment; and interest in learning science, technology, engineering and mathematics. DoD STARBASE is an outreach and educational program that focuses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). STARBASE provides students underrepresented in the STEM areas of study and careers with 25 hours of instruction through an inquiry-based curriculum with “hands-on, minds-on” experiential activities and exposing them to military’s technological environment to solidify their attachment to and engagement with learning. The program’s influence has resulted in former DoD STARBASE students being invited to attend and participate in the White House Science Fairs for the last two years.

My staff and I have been working with the Office of Management and Budget to challenge states, industries and non-profits to invest in intervention programs like the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. I am also working with General McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, to provide oversight and management of the Program by collaborating with Governors to eliminate state resident issues; and to ensure every qualified high school dropout has an opportunity to attend the program. The Challenge program is currently operating in 27 states and Puerto Rico. Its goal is to improve the education, life skills and employment potential

of America's high school dropouts. We provide quasi-military based training, supervised work experience to advance the program's core components. The core components include obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent, developing leadership, citizenship, life coping and job skills and improving physical fitness, health and hygiene. Since the program's inception over 100,000 students have successfully graduated from the program. The average cost per Challenge student is approximately \$16,000. The FY13 budget will support increasing annual enrollment and/or start up new programs in states that have the fiscal resources to match the cost-share funding requirements and to sustain the program's viability in states that have budget limitations.

These two successful DoD youth outreach programs provide the Department a unique connection to the American public and working with our most valued resource – our young people.

The Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) has been a cornerstone of our military recruiting efforts since 1985, and a major contributor to the success of the All-Volunteer Force. The new Post-9/11 GI Bill appears to enhance our recruiting efforts even more especially after signing the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010 - providing additional benefit options that include the eligibility of National Guard and Reserve members who were inadvertently omitted from the original Bill, vocational and other non-college degree training, and living stipends for those enrolled in distance learning programs.

Individual Readiness

We understand that maintaining the highest level of individual readiness for our military manpower and civilian employees is a requirement for continuing to be utilized as a viable part of the operational force. Employing the Reserve Components as operational forces requires modifications to training schedules and funding requirements. Ancillary training must be properly managed and prioritized in order to allow our members to focus on training for the skills that will be required of them when deployed or activated. Before DoD operationalized the RC, the normal minimum training profiles consisted of training two days per month plus 14-15 days of active duty for training annually. While that training profile remains in-place for some types of units, current Department policy states that for those with planned deployments, training days prior to mobilization increases. This training profile, with more training pre-deployment and less post-deployment, minimizes mobilized time away from families and civilian. Increasing individual readiness by modifying training profiles with resources and policies is a major focus area that will allow the Guard and Reserve to capitalize on the gains made during the last decade and enable the continued use of the RC as an operational force.

Individual Medical Readiness

The Individual Medical Readiness of the National Guard and Reserve continues to be a priority for the Department to ensure availability of Ready Reserve component members for deployment. As of the fourth quarter of FY 2011, the RC has increased its Fully and Partially Medically Ready rate 5% over first quarter FY 2011 rates, and reduced the Indeterminate population by 6%. Most notably, the Marine Corps Reserves improved their Fully Medically Ready status by 16% and reduced the Partially Medical Ready rate by 14%, over half of the FY11Q1 rates. The U.S. Coast Guard Reserve also made great improvements increasing their

Fully Medically Ready rate by 9%, and reducing their Indeterminate and Not Medically Ready population by 4% and 6% respectively. While we continue to face challenges with Dental Readiness, all Services are over the 75% goal except Army Reserve and Army National Guard which are at 71% and 73% respectively. My office is working within P&R and across the Services to improve access to medical and dental services for RC members. For example, the Army Reserve now budgets additional medical and dental services into their readiness accounts for RC members.

TRICARE for the Reserve Components

The Department offers various health and dental coverage options to eligible members of the Reserve Components and their families. Members of the Selected Reserve (SELRES) who actively participate in the Reserve Component may purchase individual or family TRICARE Standard/Extra coverage under TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). Members pay premiums that reflect 28% of the total cost of the coverage and incur cost shares after meeting an annual deductible (a government subsidy covers 72% of premium cost).

For Reserve component members who have been activated in support of a contingency operation, premium-free TRICARE coverage may begin up to 180 days before the member is activated (Early Identification (EID)) and continues for 180 days after the member is deactivated (Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP)) for the member and his/her family. After this period, qualified SELRES members may re-enroll and purchase TRS coverage again if desired. As of December 2011, there were a total of 81,465 TRS plans in effect: 29,204 TRS member-only plans and 52,261 TRS member and family plans with a total of 215,545 beneficiaries covered by TRS. Additionally, the Continued Health Care Benefit Program

(CHCBP) is a premium-based health care program that offers temporary transitional health coverage for 18-36 months after TRICARE eligibility ends. CHCBP acts as a bridge between military health benefits and civilian health plans. Qualified members may purchase CHCBP within 60 days of loss of eligibility for either regular TRICARE or TAMP coverage.

TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR) is a full cost (no government subsidy) premium-based, worldwide health plan that qualified retired Reserve members and survivors may purchase. TRR offers comprehensive health coverage from any TRICARE-authorized network or non-network provider. TRR members may receive care in military treatment facilities on a space-available basis. TRICARE Young Adult is a premium-based health care plan that qualified dependents may purchase. TRICARE Young Adult provides medical and pharmacy benefits, but dental coverage is excluded. TRICARE Young Adult allows dependent adult children to purchase TRICARE coverage after eligibility for "regular" TRICARE coverage ends at age 21 (or 23 if enrolled in a full course of study at an approved institution of higher learning) and are not yet age 26.

Collectively, these options for health care coverage provide a comprehensive and affordable health care plan for RC Service members and their families. TRICARE insurance has provided Service members the opportunity to maintain their individual medical readiness requirements, increasing the overall readiness of our RC units.

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP)

The YRRP is a statutorily created, Joint effort to support the Services in providing National Guard and Reserve service members and their families with critical support, information, services, and referrals throughout the entire deployment cycle (pre, during, and post) to

maximize successful transitions as service members move between their military and civilian roles and to create strong, resilient military families. The YRRP is also responsible for providing Reserve Component members and those who support them with training in suicide prevention and community healing. In FY 2013, the YRRP will continue collaborating with suicide prevention experts to develop a strategic approach in identifying promising practices, strengths, challenges and gaps. We in Reserve Affairs continue to work with the Services as well as the newly created Defense Suicide Protection Office within the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness to address this important issue. The Services, along with Reserve Affairs, have taken current suicide rates very seriously and have committed resources to significantly reduce this trend.

Guard and Reserve, federal and state employees, volunteers and non-profit organizations have worked tirelessly to ensure our service members and those who support them have access to resources as they transition back into their communities. During the past three years, the YRRP has evolved into a successful, forward-leaning program providing essential readiness and resiliency training and resources to over 800,000 Service members and designees through direct-contact YRRP events. In FY 2011, the Services conducted a total of 2,151 YRRP events across the country, providing vital information and resources to 309,753 Service members, their families and/or designated representatives. To support the use of the Operational Reserve in the future, we need to work towards YRRP funding in the base budgets to ensure continuation of these important programs.

In FY 2011, Congress appropriated an additional \$16 million to the YRRP for enhanced outreach and reintegration activities which allowed the department to provide one-time support

to various State led initiatives. Our Center of Excellence is working to collect data and metrics from these various programs to ensure we are funding the most effective outreach.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve engagement has grown significantly in recent years. The vision is “to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees with ESGR as the principal advocate within DoD.” ESGR has a footprint in all 50 States, U.S. Territories, and DC with over 4,800 volunteers assisting employers and service members on a daily basis. The support of employers and families has never been more critical to our national defense. Through its network ESGR accomplished the following during the past year:

- Through *Employer Outreach*, ESGR volunteers briefed 153,062 employers regarding their rights and responsibilities in accordance with USERRA. Also, ESGR attained 45,140 Statements of Support. Employers signing a Statement of Support pledged support for their employees serving in the Guard and Reserve, while also focusing on opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists, and Veterans.
- Through *Military Outreach* efforts, ESGR volunteers briefed 473,891 service members regarding their rights and responsibilities under USERRA. In turn, service members recognized supportive employers with 4,049 nominations for the 2011 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award and acknowledged 16,559 supervisors with ESGR’s Patriot Award.
- ESGR’s *Ombudsman services* are supported by over 600 trained USERRA experts spread across the country and by a National Customer Service Center. Together, the Ombudsmen fielded 29,727 USERRA inquiries and handled 2,884 cases. ESGR Ombudsmen provided free, neutral mediation to resolve nearly 80% of all cases, in less than nine calendar days. For cases that cannot be resolved by the Ombudsman,

service members are informed of their option to file a complaint with the Department of Labor, where a formal investigation will be conducted as to the merits of the complaint.

Reserve Component Unemployment and Underemployment

The Department knows that civilian employment is an important piece of a RC service member's readiness, and the current high unemployment rate is a clear threat to the readiness of our force. The Bureau of Labor Statistics January 2012 report showed that the unemployment rate for all Veterans (including Guardsmen and Reservists who previously served on active duty) was 7.5% nationwide. The unemployment rate among Gulf War era II veterans (those serving since 9-11) was 9.1%. For Reservists and Guardsmen, the January 2011 Status of Forces Survey of RC Members shows a self-reported 23% unemployment rate among junior enlisted members in the grades of E-1 to E-4.

As a result of these unemployment rates, ESGR and YRRP launched an Employment Initiatives Program (EIP) in January 2011. Under the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (OASD (RA)) our ESGR volunteers increased their focused activities to address the unique unemployment needs of RC Service members. Our ESGR Committees, representing the 54 States, Territories and District, began focused efforts such as employment assistance workshops, job fairs, employment summits, and many other local community programs. ESGR conducted numerous workshops whereby service members were trained on how to create civilian resumes, undergo mock interviews, dress for success, and received career counseling.

Beginning in March 2011, ESGR volunteers assisted the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in the launch of their mega-hiring fairs around the country. As of the latest Chamber report, there have been 88 events, connecting more than 84,000 Veterans, RC members and military spouses, to

over 4,300 different employers. As a result of the combined effort, the National Chamber reports that more than 7,300 veterans, service members, military spouses and 50 wounded warriors have gained employment.

This past December 2011, our office launched a comprehensive, multi-faceted program called “Hero2Hired”, better known as H2H, using lessons learned from our own efforts this past year and from the United States Army Reserve Employer Partnership of the Armed Forces program, H2H was developed to address the gap in employment assistance services and support for RC Service members who are not considered veterans in law and so are ineligible for VA employment programs. H2H focuses on helping RC Service members connect to and find jobs with military-friendly companies that seek employees with specific training and skills. H2H is a powerful, comprehensive employment program with a powerful job search site (www.H2H.jobs) and online community that is made available at no cost to service members and employers. It contains all the tools a job seeker needs to find a job: job listings, career exploration tools, education and training resources, advice and tips, hiring events, virtual career fairs, mobile phone app, and networking opportunities. In 2012, H2H is sponsoring and participating with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 40 job fairs in high RC unemployment areas. H2H booths will be available and staffed by H2H, YRRP and ESGR State Committee volunteers.

Together, YRRP and ESGR are delivering meaningful services to assist RC Service members to transition and reintegrate into their civilian community through full spectrum assistance with employment and by promoting positive employer relations through USERRA education.

Individual and Family Support Policy (IFSP) is participating in DoD studies on Child Care Subsidy, Military Family Life Consultants, Effectiveness Tracking, Resilience Programs, Websites and Help-lines, State Liaisons, and Communication with Families. OSD Reserve

Affairs will continue to be an active partner in the DoD process to ensure that as family support resources are realigned, the 1.1 million National Guard and Reserve members and their families are considered in the decision making process and that family support functions at a level that sustains full mission readiness.

Conclusion

Secretary Panetta has recently testified on the need to maintain the tremendous expertise that has been developed in the Reserve Components during the last decade of sustained engagement. The Department's recently released strategic guidance highlights the need for our National Guard and Reserves' continued capabilities and contributions as an agile, flexible and ready force in our national security. It is wise to build on the success and capitalize on these investments as we continue to develop the Reserve Components to provide full-spectrum capability to the Nation. The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) directed Comprehensive Review of the Future Role of the Reserve Component, released last year, provides a foundation upon which to build a cohesive execution strategy that preserves current Total Force competencies, efficiently integrates multiple capabilities, and leverages Reserve Component value.

Additionally, the 2012 NDAA requires an assessment of Reserve Component force structure and end strengths in total force structure, and we are working within the Department to complete this requirement. These analyses and others that are ongoing will support the Department's strategic guidance to examine the mix of Active Component and Reserve Component elements best suited to support the strategy while maintaining a balance between the available resources and our security needs for the next decade.

The FY 2013 budget anticipates the Department will continue to use the Guard and Reserve as a vital part of the operational force, and where it makes sense, as a force of first choice. Today's Citizen Warriors have made a conscious decision to serve since 9/11, with full knowledge that their decisions mean periodic recalls to active duty under arduous and hazardous conditions. To keep faith with their commitment, we will need your continued support of the funding requested for their training, equipping, recruiting and retention. Thank you again for allowing me an opportunity to give you an overview of the issues we are addressing in the Reserve Components.