

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

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Chairwoman Warren, Ranking Member Scott, and fellow distinguished Members of the Subcommittee on Personnel, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Army recruiting efforts. I am honored to represent the Army leadership, the military and civilian professionals, and the courageous men and women in uniform who serve our great Nation.

The U.S. Army has come a long way in the last year. Our Army is the greatest Army in the world, but to maintain a competitive edge over our adversaries, we must ensure that our Army has the people with the right skills and talents to accomplish our mission. To that end and based on guidance from the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army, we have begun a transformation of the Army's recruiting enterprise. We continue to follow the Secretary of the Army's directive to strategically adapt the way we recruit and retain our Nation's best talent to sustain the all-volunteer force. While in a volume fight, we are undergoing a historical transformation. We are building relationships with a new generation whose understanding and perception of what the military's role in society is different than previous generations.

We generated positive momentum from Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 initiatives including the Future Soldier Preparatory Course, Soldier Referral Program, and our refreshed advertising campaign: "Be All You Can Be." Our efforts center around one focus: re-introducing the Army to the American public and inspiring a renewed call to service to rebuild trust among influencer and more importantly our youth. To ensure the Army has the Soldiers necessary to meet the National Defense Strategy today and tomorrow, we have five recruiting enterprise transformation focus areas: Transforming how the Army Prospects, Transforming the Army's Recruiting Workforce, Creating an Experimentation Capability, Enhancing the Evidence Base for Recruiting Policy, and Aligning Leadership and Structure. Transformation activities will be executed across a span of several years in three phases: accomplish the FY 2024 Mission, near-term, and long-term transformation initiatives. Transformation will consist of a wholesale change in who, how, and with whom the Army recruits.

In line with the guidance from our Army senior leaders, I have established the following FY 2024 priorities for U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC).

- 1) Accomplish the Army's FY 2024 recruiting mission.
- 2) Transform the Army Recruiting Enterprise.
- 3) As part of the Transformation, Realign Recruiting Enterprise Structure.

Accomplish the FY24 Mission

As the Commander of USAREC, my number one priority is to accomplish the Army's FY 2024 recruiting mission. The competition for talent is fierce, and we must leverage the momentum we built in FY 2023 as we continue building in FY 2024. Recruiting will continue to focus on People, Mission, Training, Facilities, and Transformation. We are in a volume fight every day to accomplish our goal of 55 thousand accessions and to place five thousand contracts in our delayed-entry pool. FY 2024 will be challenging as we enter the FY with a Delayed Entry Pool that is 8.4% of our accession mission, well below the target of 25-35%. It's not just volume. It's the right volume. It's talent and precision to address the present global challenges with talented men and women to command our modernized systems capable of overmatch in a multi-domain environment worldwide.

To accomplish our FY 2024 mission, there are three lines of efforts: building a positive command climate, taking care of our people, and making history! The key is ***Driving Positive Change*** – we cannot be comfortable with the same industrial process of the past. We must adapt the way we recruit, structure the force, solicit workforce feedback, train the force, incentivize enlistments, provide behavioral health support, reduce out-of-pocket costs on the recruiting force (parking fees and tolls), and foster innovative initiatives.

In our geographically dispersed organization, our recruiters operate throughout the world, representing the Army and enlisting Future Soldiers. Military representation in

communities throughout the country is vital, but it means our Soldiers and their families are separated from the resources provided on military bases (military healthcare facilities, housing, childcare, etc.). Living in areas without a military presence can present challenges for recruiters and their families, and living in high cost of living area presents additional financial burdens. Our goal is to provide every Recruiter the same level of support our Soldiers receive on a military installation.

The Army continues to improve how we select, incentivize, and train our recruiters as well as introduce new technologies that give us the competitive edge on the war for talent. Recruiting Command has already started a new Recruiter Selection Initiative that will better incentivize and select Recruiters based on the following criteria: a Personality and Motivation Test, an Attentional & Interpersonal Style Inventory, and a Medical Screening.

FY 2024 mission achievement will set the conditions for a successful enterprise transformation. The Army is cognizant that transformation activities need to be thoughtfully calculated and executed to ensure implementation does not have any negative impact on the FY 2024 recruiting mission.

Army Recruiting Enterprise Transformation

Transform How the Army Prospects

We need to evaluate new methods, skills, messaging, tools/technology, and research to appeal to a broader swath of young Americans with the talents and skills the Army needs. We must take advantage of social media, text, and digital marketing tools to enhance our lead generation and conversion rates. We will work with industry and influencers to capitalize on technology and vehicles to drive awareness of and interest in the U.S. Army and the benefits of service. Initial areas we will address are impacts of our GoArmy website, advertising, and virtual recruiting operations.

Today's youth are far more likely to pursue education beyond high school. Currently, high school seniors and recent graduates account for more than 50% of our annual contracts. However, they only represent 15-20% of the labor market. We will transform our prospecting to expand into a greater representation of the labor market and enter the larger prospect pool. In addition to the high school market, we will target those with more than a high school diploma, this includes a college degree, some college, or a technical certification. By FY 2028, it is our goal for one third of new recruits to have more than a high school diploma.

We are growing our analytical capability to incentivize and position our recruiting force, tailor marketing based on segmentation, and place our recruiters in the right place with the right training, products, and tools. Our quarterly Industry Engagement Program allows us to identify new tools to improve operations across the enterprise.

As we transform how the Army prospects for talent, we will continue to innovate and leverage data analytics, artificial Intelligence (AI), and Machine Learning (ML) to quickly identify the right talent and provide tailored messaging to potential talent. We are expanding our presence on both social media and digital job boards to communicate the Army's Employee Value Proposition (EVP). Expanding our market is critical to accomplishing the mission today and in the future.

Transform the Army's Recruiting Workforce

To recruit the best, it takes the best. Recruiting is no easy task, especially given the competitive job market. Selecting the right talent is the first critical task to create a professional workforce that can convey the Army's value proposition and benefits of service. The talents required of our recruiters in the modern labor market are very specific - we need to find the Soldiers in our ranks who have those skills.

We are incentivizing volunteering to serve in the USAREC. Not only does our target market need a value proposition but so does our recruiting force. The Army is

introducing multiple initiatives to increase volunteer rates and make the assignment more career enhancing. Some of the incentives include:

- \$5 thousand incentive for any volunteer who completes the recruiting assessment program and Army Recruiting Course until February 2024
- Accelerated promotion for high-performing Recruiters (250 meritorious promotions per FY, up to Sergeant First Class)
- Promote Department of the Army Select Recruiters (DASRs) one grade who produce 24 accessions (“shippers”) in an FY
- Make company command positions multi-branch/branch immaterial to expand command opportunities to more officers.

In the long term, we will examine transitioning from a borrowed and generalist recruiting workforce (DASRs) to a permanent and specialized talent acquisition workforce.

Currently, enlisted personnel are selected from across the Army to complete a 3-year tour of recruiting duty as a DASR, during which they have the option to become a fulltime Recruiter (79R) or return to their previous Military Occupational Specialty upon completion of their recruiting tour. As part of our efforts to transform the workforce, we are undertaking a detailed review of how both our current and future recruiting force are identified and sourced to ensure we leverage the widest pool of talented Soldiers.

Our recruiting workforce is a valued participant in a larger Human Resources community of practice. Specific tasks include developing the process to select, train, educate, employ, and manage an enlisted talent acquisition specialist MOS (42T/Recruiter) and talent acquisition warrant officer (420T). We will also conduct research into the development of a more specialized officer workforce.

Initial areas of focus could also include modifying Army policy and practices to garner efficiencies and establishing partnerships with industry/associations/higher education organizations to establish best practices in career development, management, and curriculum. Our strategic focus is to enhance the culture, attract and retain top talent,

and make USAREC an organization to which every Soldier and Civilian wants to belong.

Create Experimentation Capability

We will create an experimentation capability within USAREC to build a culture of innovation, generate evidence-based insights, and scale successes. We cannot expect the same success when relying on the same techniques and technology that bred success 10, 20, 30 plus years ago.

Our experimentation element will initially be focused on expanding the prospect market. The Secretary of the Army has directed Army Recruiting to devote additional effort to recruiting in the broader labor market. To reach these markets, one tool we will utilize is online job boards. With the experimentation capability, we will be able to test the effectiveness and efficiencies of new techniques, beginning with our prospecting operations. This operational element will comprise Recruiters who will continue to recruit while testing new technologies and methods. We will account for potential risks to normal production caused by experimentation—Recruiters performing 'off mission' may be missioned for fewer than their peers due to assumption of innovation-related risk.

The intent is for an 'off mission' talent / team who can test and prototype novel but unproven techniques, programs, methods, markets, technologies and incentives. The team can and will question the status quo while trying new innovative ideas without the fear of failure. They will embrace change that can be implemented by our 'on mission' recruiting force to improve success. This agile team will operate autonomously and will minimize impact on our Recruiters who are focused on driving and delivering volume fight for FY 2024 mission. One might say, this experimentation team can "fail fast and fail forward."

Enhance the Evidence Base for Recruiting Policy

Historically, the Army has reacted to recruiting challenges by implementing policies uniformly. This has largely precluded our ability to learn the precise effects of our policies. This initiative aims to solve this problem. It is critical to create an evidence-based learning and informed decision capability that will allow leadership to assess effectiveness of our accession efforts, including strategy, target markets, initiatives, and overall productivity using quantitative and qualitative data.

Army Senior Leaders have directed an evidence-based learning capability in Headquarters, Department of the Army to determine policy effectiveness. The goal is to establish in-house analytics capabilities to better see ourselves. Utilization of Operations Research and Systems Analysts (ORSAs), economists, data scientists, and think tanks will ensure accessions policies are implemented in a way that the Army can learn what does or does not work. Innovation efforts must be synchronized with enterprise learning, and we must have the ability to implement best practices.

Align Leadership and Structure

Our objective is to formulate an organization that achieves greater efficiencies and synergies to optimize our marketing and recruiting outcomes. The new recruiting structure will allow us to realize enhanced productivity and success. In addition, I want to ensure our leaders' focus is on prioritizing people and organizational fusion over process and structure, cultivating trust and respect. In the end, we must integrate and link our strategy, goals, and execution to deliver consistent outcomes.

The Recruiting mission is vital to the Army's mission readiness and is a top priority for Army Senior Leaders. To ensure strength in communication and support between the Army Recruiting Enterprise and Army Senior Leaders, USAREC will be aligned as a Direct Reporting Unit to the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army.

To align all Army accessions equities, U.S. Army Cadet Command and the Army Enterprise Marketing Office will be realigned under USAREC. This will enable a better synchronization of efforts to support Army Recruiting for both enlisted and officers.

Closing

50 Years of the All-Volunteer Force

Men and Women from all states and territories have joined our military out of conviction, not compulsion. The members of our All-Volunteer Force are motivated by patriotism, pride, and principle - by the desire to be a part of something bigger than themselves, and by their love for our exceptional nation.

Over the past 50 years, our Army has recruited and retained patriotic and talented personnel from all walks of life. Those who have chosen to serve, enhance their skills, develop resiliency, and grow into leaders in their communities. They hone their skills as Soldiers, but also as doctors, mechanics, teachers, data scientists, pilots, cyber warriors, astronauts, and Olympic athletes in our ranks. There are over 150 occupational specialties that provide opportunity to BE ALL YOU CAN BE! I encourage our youth to consider the Army and serve something greater than themselves. We also need your help – Members of Congress and your state and district staffs are among the influencers who can help us connect with young people in your communities, and share with them the value of service. No organization can bring out the best in people like the U.S. Army can. The strength of the Army is its people. I am proud of the commitment and proudly salute each American who selflessly raises their hand to serve our country and defend democracy.