



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
RESERVE FORCES POLICY BOARD
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-7300

DEC 05 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Maximizing Reserve Component Effectiveness and Possible
Recommendations for the Transition Team

In compliance with our statutory responsibility to provide you with independent advice and report annually on reserve component matters, the Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB) met on October 28-29 to discuss items of significance that you may consider appropriate for consideration by the transition effort in support of the new Administration. This memorandum summarizes the Board's recommendations and how DoD Directive 1200.17, *Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force*, might be implemented to take full advantage of the unique features of the reserve components (RCs).

These recommendations fall into three specific areas and are of a character that you may consider them of interest during the Department's transition and to inform the initial policy development efforts of the new Administration. The areas are:

- a. Fully exploiting the cost effectiveness advantage of the RCs, given the significant combat experience these components will have for at least the next 20 years,
- b. Leveraging the RCs to make important improvements in the Nation's capabilities for homeland defense and civil support, and
- c. Better integrating reserve officers in senior positions in the Department where their expertise and experience are particularly relevant.

Relevant to this, your Board is extremely pleased with the DoD Directive you recently signed on the Operational Reserve establishing the principles and policies for the Reserve Components as an operational force. In light of this Directive, in compliance with our statutory role to advise you on reserve policy matters, and as a result of our review over the past 2 years of related matters, I offer you the following comments.

Background:

In our judgment, DoD Directive 1200.17 is an extremely important

pronouncement that captures and advances the remarkable evolution that has occurred within the RCs over the past six years. In particular, we concur with the concept that an operational reserve and continuum of service are mutually dependent. A fully functioning operational reserve will depend on the flexibility in management and access to manpower inherent in the continuum of service philosophy. The policies underlying the operational reserve have been enabled by involuntary mobilizations on a one in six schedule and a maximum use of volunteers; both being critical attributes which derive full effectiveness from an operational reserve. This new capability is not unnoticed within the active force, and future generations will value this predictability and flexibility as critical attributes of an effective policy that can manage both the active and reserve components. This Directive has taken a large step into that future and will enable a continuum of service heretofore unknown.

We also welcome the fact that the Directive provides the mandate to deliver necessary resources to support reserve forces. While there remain a number of major hurdles to overcome to reach this goal, one of the most difficult will be to provide necessary equipment. We suggest that it may be worth examining the idea of “just-in-time” equipping, at least for an initial period, as the force is fully recapitalized. This would not be in lieu of, but in addition to, current resourcing plans to fully equip the RC.

Most importantly, the Directive provides a clear and sustainable requirement to manage the reserve forces as an operational reserve. Inevitably, if current conflicts decline in intensity, proposals will emerge to shift the reserves back to their former strategic reserve role. In our opinion, that would be a strategic mistake as the Nation would lose the operational advantages that the RCs now offer. Indeed, as the Directive is implemented, important opportunities will become available to further capitalize on the features of the operational reserve as a reasonable and viable risk mitigation option. The sections that follow offer three particularly promising opportunities that work together to do so:

Specific Suggestions for Possible Consideration:

1. *More fully exploit the cost effectiveness advantages of the RCs.*

As budget imperatives inevitably press the Department, and as manpower costs continue to rise, there is a window of opportunity to rely more fully on a relatively less expensive component to meet our national security requirements. This opportunity exists because the RCs will be populated by all-volunteer service personnel with significant combat experience for the next 20 years. In the operational posture that has been achieved, the RCs provide an opportunity to perform additional missions and decrease or at least minimize an increase in the size of the active forces without significant risk. One especially important opportunity in achieving costs savings is likely to emerge in the near

term. The new administration may soon begin exploring options to increase the endstrength of the Army and Marine Corps. Relying on an expanded reserve component to help provide for these additional forces, rather than relying solely on more costly active component increases, could provide for immediate significant savings.

2. Leverage the RC's to help make important improvements in the Nation's capabilities for Homeland Defense (HD) and Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA).

The Directive notes that HD and DSCA are total force missions. In both missions, maintaining effective partnerships with civilian agencies is essential, both when DoD is the lead federal agency (e.g, for HD) and when DoD provides defense support to civilian authorities and non-DoD agencies responsible for homeland security (HS). Significant opportunities exist to further clarify the distinctions between HS and HD, and thereby help facilitate such partnerships, and to develop new strategies leveraging the role of the RCs in this environment. Additional progress towards that goal could be achieved by coordinating the work of the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review, thus ensuring that RCs resource requirements are fully considered.

The Board also suggests that the next administration reassess the NORAD/NORTHCOM relationship. There appear to be incongruities that occur in “dual hatting” a single Combatant Commander with responsibilities for both NORAD and NORTHCOM. NORAD imperatives lead toward selecting a commander with air experience instead of what may be more relevant experience for NORTHCOM’s critical mission of protecting the homeland in all venues. NORAD certainly provides some synergies in terms of its mission with that of NORTHCOM, but there appear to be as many and more difficulties that arise from the current relationship. A NORTHCOM separate from NORAD (which could be realigned with STRATCOM) would provide an improved focus on key HD/HS missions and integration with the various jurisdictional players.

3. Integrate reserve officers into senior staff positions throughout the Department where their expertise and experience will be more relevant.

Your Board recommends that to help fully implement the Directive, an additional senior military assistant -- a reserve officer – be assigned to the Secretary of Defense’s office to provide relevant perspective. Another longer term consideration would be to combine the offices of Reserve Affairs and Homeland Defense into a single organization headed by an Undersecretary who would both assist in providing RC perspective as well as provide a more senior official to assist NORTHCOM in its role of committing U.S. military forces within our borders. The latter suggestion needs additional clarification

and development before it could or should be implemented, but the combination of these adjustments would be a major step to improve the quality of advice that is available to you in the utilization of this major component of our military establishment.

The fastest way to ensure there is full appreciation of both the capabilities and the unique attributes of the RC is to increase the proportion of RC officers throughout the DoD hierarchy. This is particularly true in the case for the Services and the COCOM's, but also includes OSD and the JCS. For example, about one-half of the Army's endstrength lies in the RC, but only a small fraction of RC officers are staffed in the most senior positions. Restocking the staffs will ensure that decisions are made from a balanced perspective that considers total force options, capabilities, and limitations. Moreover, reserve officers should integrate horizontally across these staffs instead of a traditional and separate functional alignment. This will engender a rich and diverse culture of inclusion that drives decision makers to consider and value a total force perspective.

In a related fashion, the concept of sabbaticals and other non-traditional assignments are gaining credibility in active force manpower management. If these approaches are implemented (as an element of the Continuum of Service concept), consideration should be given to assigning the officers so designated to positions in reserve units in the locale they choose to spend this time so that they gain valuable experience with reserve units and in turn provide useful perspective to these units on active component perspectives.

Finally, to effect the suggestions above, the Department needs an aggressive effort to develop reserve officers capable of serving at the most senior ranks of the military. As the reserves assume an increased role in our Nation's defense, their leaders need similarly broadening assignments and educational opportunities relevant to their missions, as is provided in the active force. With the developing significance of the HD/HS missions for which the experience and career path of leaders in the RC's are particularly appropriate, providing a more effective structure to develop such leaders is critical.

In summary, we have rarely known such an opportunity to leverage this combat hardened reserve force. Shifting demographics and attributes of the current generation may provide the catalyst for expanding the continuum of service across a lifetime of service if value can be placed upon a total force culture. These recommendations will create the conditions to better position the Department for the reset and reconstitution work that lies ahead while simultaneously ensuring the continuing strong security posture of the Nation.

As always, it remains an honor for the Board to offer our advice and we look forward to assisting you in any way desired as the Department transitions to a new Administration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Kim Wincup". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and "K".

G. Kim Wincup
Chairman