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Combat Brigades' Ability to Be Ready for War in 90 Days Is Uncertain





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This reports reviews the war-fighting readiness of Army National Guard combat brigades and their ability to deploy to any regional conflict within 90 days of mobilization. It contains recommendations to the Secretary of the Army.

We are sending copies of this report to the Chairmen of the House Committee on National Security; Senate Committee on Armed Services; House and Senate Committees on Appropriations; and Subcommittee on Readiness, Senate Committee on Armed Services. We are also sending copies to the Secretaries of Defense and the Army and will make copies available to others on request.

Please contact me at (202) 512-5140 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.

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Executive Summary

Purpose

The war-fighting readiness of Army National Guard combat brigades may be more critical today than ever before. Changing defense needs due to the end of the Cold War and budgetary constraints have increased reliance on Guard combat brigades and on their ability to deploy within 90 days of mobilization to any number of regional conflicts. However, deficiencies revealed during the brigades' mobilization for the Persian Gulf War raised questions about the training strategies used and the time required to be ready to deploy. Accordingly, the Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members of the Subcommittee on Military Readiness and the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, House Committee on National Security asked GAO to determine whether (1) the Bold Shift training strategy has enabled combat brigades to meet peacetime training goals, (2) the advisers assigned to the brigades are working effectively to improve training readiness, and (3) prospects of having the brigades ready for war within 90 days are likely.

Background

In 1990, the President authorized the mobilization of three National Guard combat brigades for the Persian Gulf War. These three brigades were participants in a war-planning concept, called "roundout" or "roundup," in which certain high-priority National Guard brigades had a preplanned wartime role as integral parts of active Army units. At that time, the brigades estimated that they would need 28 to 42 days of postmobilization training to be ready to deploy. However, the two brigades that completed training needed 91 and 106 days, and the Army estimated they would have required an additional 24 days of posttraining activities before deployment. None of the Guard brigades deployed to the Gulf; they remained in a training status until the war was over.

In 1991 the Army adopted a new training strategy—called Bold Shift—that refocused peacetime training goals on proficiency at the platoon level and below, rather than up through the brigade level, for mission-essential tasks and gunnery. The strategy also included efforts to improve individual job and leader training and implemented a congressionally mandated program that assigned active Army advisers to the brigades. In 1993, the Department of Defense (DOD) announced the concept of "enhanced brigades," which eliminated the roundout and roundup roles of the brigades. Under this concept, 15 National Guard combat brigades—including 7 former roundout/up brigades—are designated to augment and reinforce active duty units in the event that the active units cannot adequately respond to two major and nearly simultaneous regional conflicts. GAO's findings are based on the training proficiency of the seven

former roundout/up brigades, which should have been the best trained because of their higher priority for resources.

Results in Brief

For the most part, none of the seven former roundout/up brigades came close to achieving the training proficiency sought by the Bold Shift strategy during 1992 through 1994, the first 3 years the new strategy was tested. The brigades were unable to recruit and retain enough personnel to meet staffing goals, and many personnel were not sufficiently trained in their individual job and leadership skills. Even if the brigades had made improvements in individual training, their 23-percent personnel loss rate would quickly obliterate such gains. Collective training was also problematic. In 1993, combat platoons had mastered an average of just one-seventh of their mission-essential tasks, compared with a goal of 100 percent, and less than one-third of the battalions met gunnery goals. Although gunnery scores improved for four brigades in 1994, the brigades reported no marked improvement in the other key areas. Causes of the brigades' training problems in many instances date back at least to the Gulf War, and solutions are likely to be difficult and long term. Adjustments to the strategy are underway, but it will be years before their effectiveness has been proven.

The new adviser program's efforts to improve training readiness have been limited by factors such as (1) an ambiguous definition of the advisers' role; (2) poor communication between the active Army, advisers, brigades, and other National Guard officials, causing confusion and disagreement over training goals; and (3) difficult working relationships. The relationship between the active Army and the state-run Guard is characterized by an "us and them" environment that, if not improved, could undermine prospects for significant improvement in the brigades' ability to conduct successful combat operations.

It is highly uncertain whether the Guard's mechanized infantry and armor brigades can be ready to deploy 90 days after mobilization. Initial models estimated that the brigades would need between 68 and 110 days before being ready to deploy. However, these estimates assumed that the brigades' peacetime training proficiency would improve to levels near those envisioned by Bold Shift, thus shortening postmobilization training. One model, which included the possibility that the strategy's goals would not be met, estimated that as many as 154 days could be required to prepare the brigades to deploy. An Army contractor is developing a new

model, which estimates that two or three of the better trained brigades could be ready to deploy in 102 days.

Principal Findings

Brigades Have Not Met Peacetime Training Goals

During 1993 the brigades achieved fully trained status in about 14 percent of platoon-level mission-essential tasks. Four of the brigades' 13 battalions (31 percent) met the tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crew gunnery standards, and another three came within 4 percentage points of the goal. Although three of the seven brigades met the Army's goal of having 85 percent of the reserve soldiers fully trained, they fell far short of achieving leader training goals. An average of about 70 percent of the officers and 58 percent of the noncommissioned officers had completed the professional military education courses needed to lead and train soldiers, compared with a goal of 100 percent. The brigades were staffed at an average of 94 percent of their authorized personnel levels, compared with a goal of 125 percent. The brigades reported that 12 of 18 battalions (67 percent) met crew gunnery standards in 1994, but proficiency in the other goals was generally about the same as in 1993.

Even though brigade officials said that many problems interfered with their training proficiency, officials in six of the seven brigades pointed to confusion over which of the hundreds of mission-essential tasks and subtasks soldiers should train for during peacetime as one major cause of the problems. For example, during 1993, Army evaluators noted that about 21 percent of the combat companies tried to train for too many tasks or tasks that were less important to combat operations than others. Army doctrine recognizes that the units cannot train for all possible wartime tasks and requires commanders to select only those tasks that are critical to their mission.

The Army revised the Bold Shift strategy and goals in January 1995. Brigade task lists, which previously listed between 6 and 19 tasks, were reduced to 3—attack, defend, and movement to contact—and the definition of platoon proficiency was changed from fully trained in all critical tasks to fully or partially trained in at least 70 percent of the critical tasks. A minimum annual training attendance of at least 75 percent is now required before a unit can be evaluated at the fully or partially trained level. The revisions also included a mandate for a balanced program of

gunnery and critical task training. Soldier and leader training continue to be emphasized, but school attendance during annual training is restricted as a last resort for soldiers who must qualify for promotion.

Adviser Program Is Hampered by Numerous Problems

Chief among the many problems that have hampered active Army advisers' efforts to improve the brigades' training readiness is the advisers' unclear role. Army guidance is ambiguous regarding whether the advisers should identify and resolve training problems or only assist with training. As a result, some advisers aggressively identified training problems and sought corrective action, whereas others focused more on training processes, such as planning. When advisers did attempt to correct training problems, not all Guard units were responsive to their suggestions. Since Army National Guard units are commanded by their respective state governors until federalized by presidential order, they are not obliged to adopt advisers' suggestions. According to some active Army officials, the advisers' effectiveness is driven primarily by the quality of their working relationship with the brigades.

Poor communication was another major impediment to the effectiveness of the adviser program, causing considerable confusion over Bold Shift's goals. Officials in four of the seven brigades and one-half the active Army adviser teams GAO visited said that they either did not know Bold Shift's peacetime training goals or were uncertain about them. According to brigade officials, Bold Shift's goals were communicated only in broad, general terms, such as proficiency at the platoon level.

Once officials were made aware of the goals, many believed some were too high to achieve—particularly the fully trained goal for platoons—and some officials did not attempt to train to the goals. Brigade officials also believed the fully trained goal for platoons held them to a higher standard than the active Army. Officials in several active Army divisions confirmed that, in some cases, their objective was to reach only a partially trained status.

Officials in both the active Army and National Guard, including officials from five of the seven brigades, cited the need for more unified, better coordinated working relationships. During the Gulf War, some Guard personnel believed the Army used a double standard of readiness to keep Guard units from deploying to Iraq. The “us and them” environment has continued, with some Guard officials stating that the active Army does not understand the unique difficulties faced by their personnel, often expects

too much, and excludes them from decision-making. Active Army officials said that Guard personnel often do not understand Army training doctrine and need to be more objective in assessments of their training proficiency.

Prospects for the Brigades to Be Ready to Deploy 90 Days After Mobilization Are Uncertain

Mechanized infantry and armor brigades face some of the most complex training tasks in the Army. Postmobilization models for these brigades developed by the Director of Army Training, Army Inspector General, and Rand Corporation in 1991 and 1992 estimated the brigades would need 93 to 98, 68 to 110, and 96 to 154 days, respectively, before being ready to deploy. (GAO found no models for the Guard's light infantry brigades.) However, the more optimistic estimates by the Director of Army Training and Army Inspector General were based on the assumption that Army initiatives would be successful in improving the peacetime training proficiency of the brigades to levels near those envisioned by Bold Shift, thus shortening postmobilization training. The Rand model's 154-day estimate is based on the assumption that the strategy's goals would not be met.

The Army is studying a new postmobilization model being developed by Rand. The model, expected to be completed by the summer of 1995, estimates that two or three of the better trained brigades, at their current levels of proficiency, could be trained and ready to deploy in 102 days. The new model shortens the training time predicted by earlier models partly by assuming that training will be conducted at one site large enough to handle brigade-level exercises against an opposing force. Earlier models had assumed the brigades would perform some training at one site and then move to a second, larger site for brigade-level exercises. The model also assumes that 5,000 advisers, 2,800 Army trainers, and opposing forces for the brigades would be available to provide the training needed. (Only 2,000 advisers had been assigned as of September 1994; the remaining 3,000 are scheduled to be assigned by September 1997.) However, it is not clear whether a sufficient number of trainers and opposing force personnel and large-scale training sites would be available to ensure that all 15 brigades can be readied to deploy quickly.¹

Recommendations

GAO recommends that the Secretary of the Army, in consultation with National Guard leaders, (1) reassess the brigades' premobilization training goals to ensure that they are consistent with readiness requirements and achievable within available training time and resources; (2) reassess the

¹DOD's goal for the deployability of all 15 brigades is classified.

role of active Army advisers assigned to the brigades, clearly stipulate whether advisers are to identify and resolve training problems or only assist with training; and (3) establish and document an Army plan for preparing the brigades to be ready to deploy to war. Other GAO recommendations to the Secretary of the Army appear in chapters 3 and 4.

Agency Comments

DOD generally agreed with GAO's findings and recommendations and said that it had already begun actions to implement them (see app. I). Nevertheless, DOD said that GAO had based some of its conclusions on changing standards and emerging data and that it was too early in the implementation of post-Desert Storm initiatives to evaluate improvement in the Guard brigades' readiness.

Since the brigades have not yet had a full year to train under DOD's latest revision to the training strategy for the brigades, GAO agrees that it is uncertain whether the revisions will be more effective than earlier approaches. However, this situation does not diminish the importance of correcting deficiencies identified by GAO, many of which are management problems that are not likely to be corrected by a change in strategy. Other problems are long-standing and will be more difficult to solve. GAO disagrees that its conclusions are based on emerging data. This report covers Bold Shift data from the strategy's inception in 1991 to 1994, the most recent year for which data exists.

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Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office
METL	Mission Essential Task List
RTD	Resident Training Detachment

Introduction

Over the past 20 years, changing defense needs and budgetary pressures have led to an increased reliance on the Army National Guard and other reserve forces to defend the nation. In the early 1970s, the Department of Defense (DOD), faced with the end of the Vietnam War and budgetary pressures to reduce active duty personnel and other costs, introduced the Total Force Policy, which mandated the integration of active and reserve personnel into one homogenous fighting force. The policy placed maximum reliance on the Army National Guard when they could meet wartime deployment schedules. Army National Guard units are commanded by their respective state governors until federalized by presidential order. Guard members have only about 39 days each year to dedicate to training, although many devote considerably more time. However, administrative and other nontraining matters can use a considerable portion of the 39-day schedule.

In 1990, the end of the Cold War prompted a second major policy change. The focus of the nation's defense strategy shifted from deterrence of global war with the Soviet Union to the projection of forces quickly to major regional conflicts, such as aggressions against the Persian Gulf region. The strategy now includes operations other than war, such as the Somalia relief effort and counterdrug operations. This change in security strategy and continuing budgetary pressures prompted DOD to develop a plan that would reduce the Army by 25 percent by fiscal year 1995.

The role of the National Guard combat brigades has also been changing.¹ Since the early 1970s, some National Guard brigades were expected to deploy shortly after active Army units. These brigades, known as "roundout" or "roundup" brigades, had a predetermined wartime affiliation with active Army divisions, providing the last of three required brigades to round out the division or an extra brigade to round up the division. These brigades received higher priority for resources than other Guard brigades. In 1992, the Army Chief of Staff testified that the brigades were expected to be ready to deploy 60 to 90 days after call-up. In the early 1990s, 7 of the 44 Guard brigades were in roundout/up roles. (The seven brigades are listed in app. II).

In 1993, DOD introduced the concept of "enhanced brigades," which eliminated the Guard's roundout role. Under this concept, 15 Guard combat brigades—including the 7 former roundout/up brigades—would be responsible for reinforcing and augmenting active Army units if the active

¹Several platoons form a company. Two or more companies make up a battalion. Three or more battalions comprise a brigade.

units could not handle two nearly simultaneous regional conflicts, as set forth in the Secretary of Defense's Bottom-Up Review. The 15 brigades include mechanized infantry, armor, armored cavalry, and light infantry units.

These changes have resulted in continuing debate between Congress and DOD over the size and role of active and reserve forces. In 1991, the planned total force included 12 active duty divisions and 8 National Guard divisions. However, Congress was concerned that the Army was not assigning a large enough role to the reserves. Congress approved the Army's plans for reductions in the active force but did not approve all of the reductions in the reserves. The 1993 Bottom-Up Review called for 10 active duty divisions and the 15 enhanced brigades, the equivalent of 5 divisions. However, in May 1994 the House Armed Services Committee recommended that the force be reconfigured to eight fully manned active divisions and four roundout divisions that would be staffed by both active and Guard units. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995 calls for a reevaluation of force structure, including increased reliance on the reserves and an evaluation of an Army configured as 12 active duty divisions, a number of which would be rounded out with National Guard combat units.

Gulf War Call-Up Reveals Combat Brigade Deficiencies

Training and other related problems revealed during the activation of three National Guard roundout brigades for the Persian Gulf War—the first large scale call-up of reserve forces in more than 20 years—raised questions about the training strategies used and the time needed to be ready to deploy to areas of conflict.

The brigade commanders estimated that the three units would need 28 to 42 days of postmobilization training to prepare for mission-essential tasks. However, the two brigades that completed training needed 91 and 106 days, and the Army estimated that the third brigade would have needed 135 days. The Army also estimated that an additional 24 days of posttraining activities would have been needed before the brigades could have deployed. None of the brigades deployed to the Gulf; they remained in a training status until the war was over.

Reports issued by us and others found that the roundout brigades suffered from many complex and interrelated problems. These problems resulted in (1) the brigades being unable to achieve peacetime unit proficiency in critical wartime tasks, gunnery skills, individual soldier and leader skills,

and desired personnel staffing levels and (2) increased postmobilization training time. (See app. III for a list of key reports.)

The brigades' problems prompted us, the Army, and Congress to recommend improvements in training and readiness and new initiatives to implement them. For example, the Army Chief of Staff launched studies to identify the Army's training support and structure needs for the 21st century and fully accredit and integrate active Army and reserve schools providing individual training to soldiers and leaders. The National Guard implemented Project Standard Bearer to give priority for resources to the roundout/up brigades to help ensure that they would be ready to meet Army requirements when needed. In addition, Congress passed legislation that identified 18 different reforms designed to improve National Guard readiness, including the assignment of 5,000 active Army advisers to reserve units.

Bold Shift Strategy Refocused Training Efforts

In September 1991, the Army adopted a new training strategy—called Bold Shift—to respond to the recommendations and implement the adviser program and other key initiatives. The strategy's goals were to improve the reserve's peacetime training readiness, thereby shortening the amount of postmobilization training time needed to prepare the units to be ready to deploy, and the relationships between reserve and active Army units. The strategy included initiatives in seven primary areas: the restructuring and realignment of active and reserve units for the new defense environment, readiness assessments and exercises, unit training, soldier training, leader training, the involvement of affiliated active Army units in training, and the assignment of active Army advisers to the reserves. The Bold Shift initiatives extensively changed the way in which the Guard's brigades trained by

- refocusing training on proficiency at the platoon level and below in individual skills, gunnery, and mission-essential tasks, instead of proficiency at platoon, company, battalion, and brigade levels, and emphasizing proficiency for a given task before moving on to the next one rather than focusing on a large number of tasks;
- emphasizing the importance of individual soldier and leader training and providing priority for such courses to personnel in the Bold Shift program;
- authorizing, along with ongoing National Guard efforts, certain units to recruit over 100 percent of their wartime personnel requirements;² and

²The former roundout/up units were authorized to recruit up to 125 percent.

-
- increasing active Army and National Guard integration and training support by assigning active Army advisers to reserve units and implementing other initiatives.

The Army began testing the Bold Shift strategy on the seven former roundout/up brigades and other reserve units during fiscal year 1992. According to the Director of the Bold Shift task force, however, it may take 5 to 10 years before the impact of the strategy is clearly known.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

We reviewed the training results of the seven enhanced brigades that were former roundout/up brigades to determine whether (1) the Bold Shift training strategy has enabled combat brigades to meet peacetime training goals, (2) the advisers assigned to the brigades were working effectively to improve training readiness, and (3) prospects of having the brigades ready for war within 90 days are likely. At the time we selected the seven brigades for review, they comprised all of the Army's roundout/up brigades. Because of their higher priority for resources, these brigades should have been the best trained. Support units, such as artillery, military police, and engineering units, were not included in our work. Despite mobilization problems, many support units deployed on time and served effectively during the Gulf War.

Our work at the seven brigades covered five of the seven primary Bold Shift initiatives. We obtained data on the brigades' progress in meeting five key Bold Shift training goals in the areas of soldier, leader, and unit training and discussed the results with brigade officials and active Army advisers. These five training goals were platoons fully trained in mission-essential tasks; tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crews trained in gunnery; 85 percent of soldiers fully qualified for their assigned jobs; leaders fully trained in command, control, and coordination; and personnel strength at 125 percent of required wartime levels.

To understand the brigades' training policies and approaches, the training involvement of the affiliated active Army units, and the adviser program, we visited all seven brigades and held discussions with brigade commanders and other officials, adviser program team chiefs and personnel collocated with the brigades, and representatives from three affiliated active Army divisions. Adviser personnel attached to these teams represented about 15 percent of all advisers assigned to the program in fiscal year 1994. We conducted detailed case studies at four of the seven brigades, reviewing records and holding discussions with brigade

personnel down to the company level. We selected the four brigades, along with Army and National Guard officials, so that the various brigade types—light infantry, mechanized infantry, and armor—and various geographical areas would be represented in our study. We relied extensively on Army data for 1992 and collected data directly from the brigades for 1993 and 1994. However, 1994 data was limited to areas in which the brigades reported marked progress. We did not verify the accuracy of the Army's data.

To assess estimates of the amount of time the brigades would need to be ready for war, we compared estimates by the mechanized infantry and armor brigades with models prepared by the Director of Army Training, Army Inspector General, and Rand Corporation. We discussed the estimates with officials from each organization and three of the active Army sponsor divisions associated with the brigades. We found no models estimating the time needed for light infantry brigades to be ready for war.

We also met with officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, D.C.; State Area Reserve Commands in Georgia, Idaho, and South Carolina; the National Guard Bureau, Arlington, Virginia; the U.S. Army Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia; and the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia.

We conducted our review from August 1993 to December 1994 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. DOD provided written comments on a draft of this report. These comments are discussed and evaluated in chapters 2 through 4 and are reprinted in appendix I.

Brigades Have Not Met Peacetime Training Goals

For the most part, none of the seven former roundout/up brigades came close to meeting the Bold Shift training goals in 1992 through 1994. In 1993, the combat platoons were able to achieve fully trained status in an average of about 14 percent of their mission-essential tasks, compared with a goal of 100 percent. Tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crews in less than one-third of the battalions were able to meet gunnery goals. Although three of the brigades met the goal of having 85 percent of soldiers fully qualified in their assigned jobs, they fell far short of achieving leader training goals. About 70 percent of the officers and 58 percent of the noncommissioned officers had completed the military education courses needed to lead and train their soldiers, compared with a goal of 100 percent. The brigades were staffed at an average of 94 percent of their authorized personnel strength levels, compared with a goal of 125 percent.

Even if the brigades were able to meet professional education and staffing goals, their 23-percent personnel loss rate could quickly obliterate such gains. Gunnery scores improved in 1994, but the brigades told us that they did not make marked improvement in the other key areas.

Many training problems faced by the brigades were identified at least as far back as the Gulf War, and their solutions are likely to be difficult and long term. The Army revised the Bold Shift strategy and goals in January 1995 and has been studying additional training approaches. However, it will be years before the effectiveness of the revisions is known.

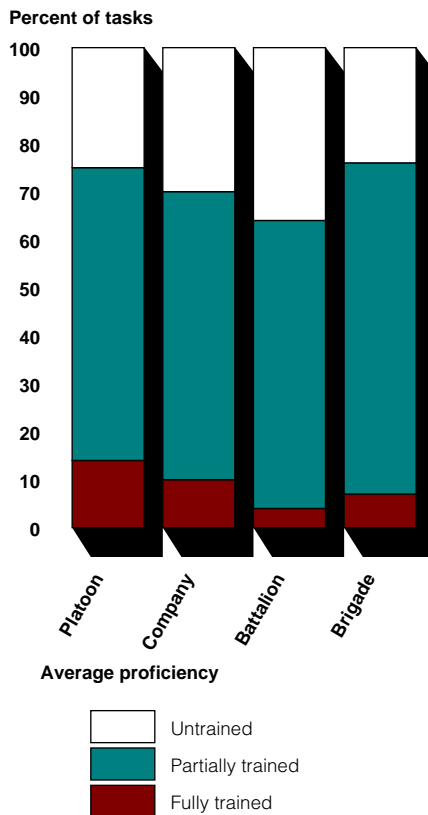
Brigades Were Trained in Few Mission-Essential Tasks

Army doctrine states that peacetime training is to be focused on the requirements of a unit's wartime mission. It also recognizes that units do not have sufficient time to train for all of the hundreds of potential wartime tasks that may be associated with that mission, such as maneuvering tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles to attack and defend, and preparing for nuclear attack. Accordingly, due to limited training time, unit commanders must identify and train only those combat tasks that are essential to their wartime mission. The Mission Essential Task List (METL) is the formal listing of those tasks. Unit commanders plan, execute, and assess training based on the tasks included on brigade-, battalion-, and company-level METLs and the supporting tasks identified for platoons and lower levels. If commanders determine that their unit cannot execute all the tasks on the unit's METL to standard, they must request an adjustment to their mission.

One of Bold Shift's peacetime training goals is for platoons to be fully trained in all tasks supporting the company-level METL.¹ Army data for 1992 and 1993 show that the brigades did not meet this goal in either year. Brigade officials said that they were also unable to meet the goal in 1994. As shown in figure 2.1, only about 14 percent of platoon tasks were rated as fully trained by unit commanders or active duty observers in 1993. About 25 percent of the tasks were untrained, and about 61 percent were partially trained. Figure 2.1 also illustrates that the percent of tasks rated as fully trained generally decreases at successively higher company, battalion, and brigade levels. This outcome should be expected in a strategy that focuses training at the platoon level and below.

¹The Army uses a system of different letters to assess training proficiency in METL tasks. An evaluation of T, or trained, means that the unit can successfully perform the tasks to the Army standard. P, or needs practice, evaluations mean that the unit can perform the task with some shortcomings that are not severe enough to require complete retraining. U, or untrained, evaluations mean that the unit cannot perform the task to the Army standard. Throughout this report, P ratings are referred to as "partially trained" to more clearly differentiate this rating from T, or fully trained, ratings.

Figure 2.1: Unit Proficiency Achieved on Mission-Essential Tasks



Note: Our analysis of mission-essential task proficiency included only combat elements at company level and below; support elements were not included. Data for companies and platoons is from 1993. Data for battalions and brigades is for 1993 and 1994.

METL task evaluations are not precisely defined and contain a measure of subjectivity. For example, according to Army officials, partially trained can mean that the unit can perform the task to 99 percent of standard or 1 percent of standard. We identified this problem in 1991 and recommended that the Army develop more definitive criteria for assessing unit proficiency.²

²Army Training: Evaluations of Units' Proficiency Are Not Always Reliable (GAO/NSIAD-91-72, Feb. 15, 1991).

Numerous Problems Hamper Achieving METL Proficiency

Brigade officials told us that many problems interfere with achieving METL proficiency. For example, time for collective training on METL tasks is often overshadowed by time needed for administrative and other nontraining requirements and attendance at individual training courses. Several brigades told us that they focused primarily on gunnery during the 1993 annual training period and devoted little time to training on METL tasks. METL training is further hampered by shortages of suitable local training areas, new equipment training, and organizational changes.

In six of the seven brigades, officials ranging from brigade to company commanders told us that a key problem was confusion over which of the hundreds of tasks and subtasks should be selected for training. The confusion was due to such factors as the lack of clear guidance from the active Army and Guard officials' inexperience. This problem undercut the efficient use of already scarce training time, as some units were training on tasks that were less important to combat proficiency and leaving more important tasks untrained.

During 1993, Army evaluations of the brigades' annual training found that about 21 percent of the combat companies, excluding those undergoing new equipment training, suffered from such METL-related problems. For example, an Army evaluator found that one company's task list included battalion- and brigade-level tasks, such as logistical planning and refueling on the move, which should not be a part of a company METL. The evaluator suggested that the company closely examine its platoon task list as well. The platoons were training for tasks, such as performing resupply operations and crossing chemically contaminated areas, but tasks that supported the company METL better, such as assaulting an enemy position and defending, were not trained.

Some of the METL-related problems date back to before the Gulf War. For example, in 1989 we reported that reserve commanders were not properly developing METLs either because they lacked experience or guidance from higher headquarters was vague.³ Also, some units were using comprehensive lists of combat tasks contained in Army training manuals rather than identifying only the essential tasks related to their wartime missions. About 2 years later, the Army Inspector General's review of the Gulf War mobilization concluded that the brigades could not meet training

³Army Training: Management Initiatives Needed to Enhance Reservists' Training (GAO/NSIAD-89-140, June 30, 1989).

standards in all the required tasks because they were trying to accomplish too much in the time allotted.⁴

Bold Shift Adjusted in 1995

In April 1994, the Department of the Army's Enhanced Brigade Task Force proposed several adjustments to the Bold Shift training strategy and recommended that the adjustments be tested in two or three of the brigades over a 3-year period. One proposal was to reduce the number of brigade-level tasks from the 6 to 19 tasks listed on the METLS we reviewed to 3: movement to contact, attack, and defend. According to Army officials, these three tasks comprise about 85 percent of the critical combat tasks that brigades and lower echelons must train. The remaining tasks are primarily those associated with specialized missions, which could be trained after mobilization, if needed. Under the task force's proposal, yearly training in the test brigades would focus on one of the three tasks so that training for all three would be completed in 3 years. According to Army officials, the training for each of the tasks would overlap and reinforce the other, so skills would be sustained over time, even though only one task would be trained each year.

A National Guard working group is developing the supporting tasks down through the platoon level for the three brigade tasks. As of January 1995, the group had identified a preliminary list of 39 critical tasks for mechanized infantry platoons and 38 for armor platoons. Work was still in process for the light infantry units. In contrast, during 1993 the number of tasks in the units we reviewed ranged from 6 to 37 in mechanized infantry platoons and 8 to 101 in the armor platoons. Several of the brigades we reviewed were already developing their own standardized METLS. Brigade officials said that standardized METLS helped eliminate confusion and wasted training time and created savings in the administrative time required to prepare METLS.

We compared the preliminary list of critical tasks identified by the working group with the 1993 assessment results for the brigades' armor and mechanized infantry platoons and found that they were only slightly more proficient in the critical tasks than the full universe of tasks assessed. For example, about 17 percent of the armor and mechanized infantry critical tasks were rated as fully trained compared with an average of 14 percent of all tasks. About 22 percent of the critical tasks were rated untrained compared with 25 percent of all tasks on the platoon

⁴Special Assessment: National Guard Brigades' Mobilization, Department of the Army Inspector General, June 1991.

lists. Sixty-one percent of the tasks in both categories were rated as partially trained.

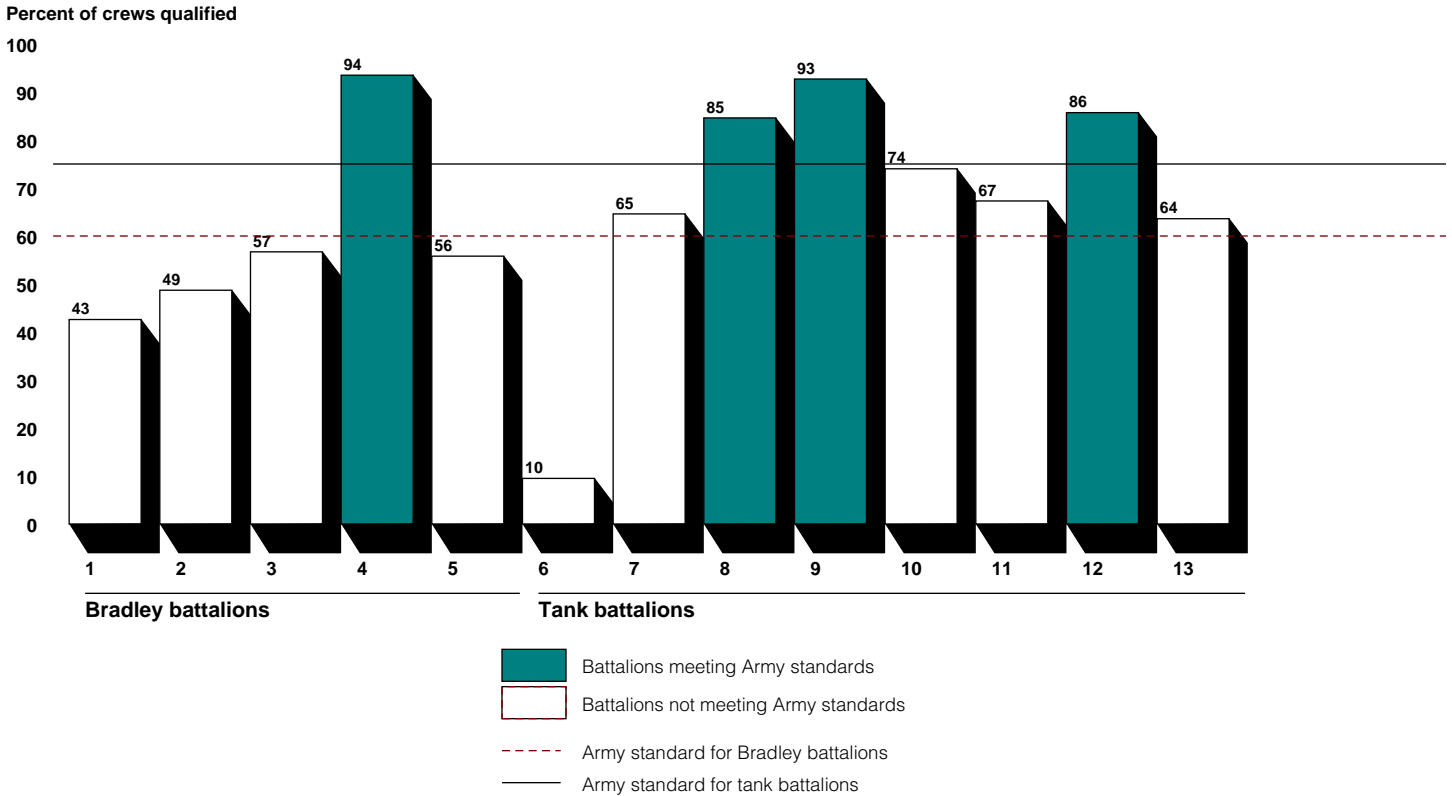
The Army announced revisions to the Bold Shift strategy and goals on January 30, 1995. The revisions included focusing unit METLs on the missions of attack, defend, and movement to contact and defining platoon proficiency as at least 70 percent of the critical tasks rated as fully or partially trained. A minimum annual training attendance of at least 75 percent is now required before a unit can be evaluated at the fully or partially trained level. Basic principles were retained, such as focusing collective training at the small unit level and emphasizing achieving proficiency on a given task before progressing to higher level training.

Few Units Met Gunnery Standards

A second Bold Shift goal was to qualify between 60 and 66 percent of Bradley Fighting Vehicle crews, depending on the vehicle model, at the gunnery table VIII level.⁵ Tank battalions were expected to qualify 75 percent of their assigned crews. According to the Bold Shift Director, the goal was initially 100 percent, but Bold Shift officials lowered this goal once they realized that a high degree of personnel turnover made the goal difficult to meet. In 1992 only three of the brigades attempted to qualify at the table VIII level, with 37 percent of assigned crews qualifying. In 1993, 4 of 13 battalions met the Bold Shift strategy's gunnery goal, and three other battalions came within 4 percentage points of the goals, as shown in figure 2.2. All six brigades with Bradley vehicles or tanks attempted to qualify at least some units, with about 64 percent of the total assigned crews qualifying.

⁵The Army structures 12 gunnery tables to develop and test proficiency in a progressive manner. For example, table I requires individual crews to engage stationary targets with a stationary tank or fighting vehicle. Table VIII requires individual crews to demonstrate proficiency against single, multiple, and simultaneous targets while the crews are stationary and moving.

Figure 2.2: Battalion Proficiency in Bradley and Tank Gunnery



Note: Our analysis excludes five battalions in new equipment training and one light infantry brigade that has neither tanks nor Bradley vehicles.

The brigades faced a number of difficulties in seeking to meet the goal. For example, in 1993 units were able to assemble only about 79 percent of their assigned crews for firing qualification. According to brigade officials, many of the personnel were excused to take individual training courses in their assigned jobs. Army policy gives individual training priority over collective training. Consequently, in 1993 about 71 percent of the brigade personnel in our four case study units attended annual training, at which attempts to qualify in gunnery often take place. Also, personnel turnover, which includes personnel leaving the unit and changing jobs within a unit, makes it difficult to have stable crews who have worked together long

enough to develop a high level of proficiency. Finally, brigade officials said that a shortage of suitable local training areas was a key factor inhibiting their proficiency in gunnery. Some brigades must travel to training areas 150 miles away or more for weekend training.

Officials in four brigades told us that gunnery results had improved in 1994, raising the total to 12 of 18 battalions qualifying at the table VIII level. However, this improvement may have been at the expense of combat maneuver skills, as some brigades have had difficulty balancing gunnery and METL training. The Army's Enhanced Brigade Task Force found that the brigades were spending most of their time on gunnery training and little time on practicing combat maneuvers with tanks and Bradley vehicles. Similarly, three of the brigades with improved 1994 gunnery scores told us that their heavy focus on gunnery left little time for maneuver training. Another brigade focused so heavily on METL training during 1994 that its crews did not even attempt to qualify at the table VIII level. As part of its recommendations for adjustments to the Bold Shift strategy, the task force suggested that the brigades balance training in gunnery with the maneuver tasks on unit METLs. The Army's January 1995 revisions to Bold Shift adopted the task force's recommendation.

Most Units Did Not Meet Goals for Soldier and Leader Training

Soldier and leader training are critical to successful unit training in METL tasks, gunnery, and other areas. Soldiers must be trained in their assigned jobs, such as infantryman or master gunner, before units can function well collectively. Leaders, in turn, must also be trained so that they may train their soldiers and be tactically proficient on the battlefield.

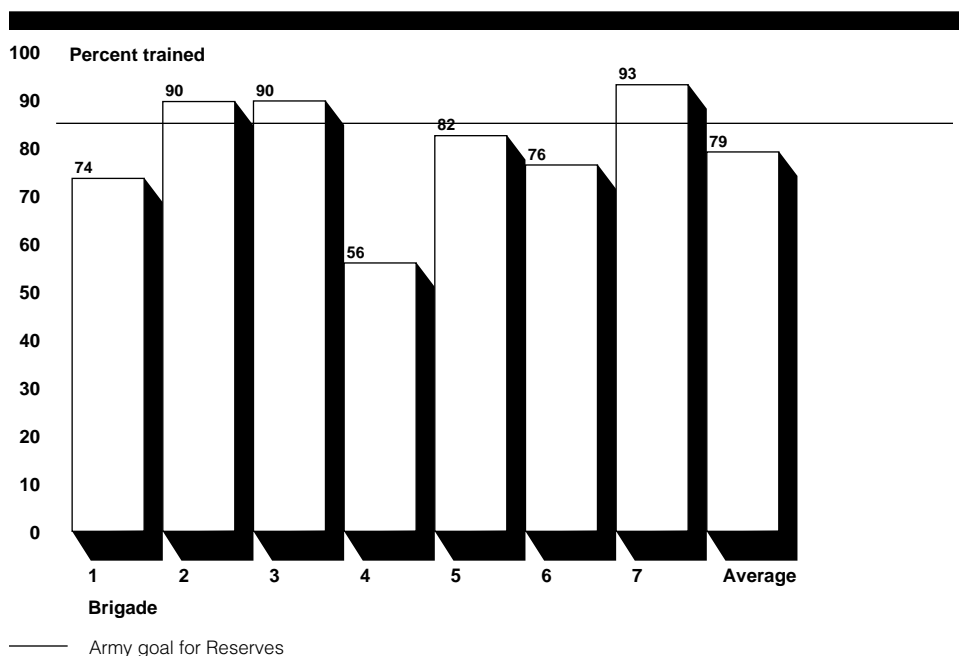
The Army's goal is to have 85 percent of reserve unit soldiers, excluding those who have not completed basic and advanced individual training, fully trained in their assigned job.⁶ Even though it does not specify a percentage goal, the Bold Shift strategy's goal was to raise the percentage of brigade soldiers fully trained for their assigned jobs to about the same level as active Army soldiers. In 1992, we reported that about 90 to 97 percent of the soldiers in the active Army units that replaced the Guard combat brigades during the Gulf War mobilization were fully trained in their assigned jobs compared with about 75 to 85 percent in the Guard

⁶Although this standard was established in 1988, it has never been formalized into regulation. Thus, many of the brigades did not maintain historical data on the number of soldiers in or awaiting training, which is necessary to calculate the qualification rate. Consequently, officials had to estimate the number of soldiers in training for one brigade.

brigades.⁷ Program officials agreed that the Army's overall goal of 85 percent was an appropriate substitute to use in our analysis.

As shown in figure 2.3, three brigades met the goal in 1993, and one other was within 3 percentage points of meeting the goal. On average, 79 percent of each brigade's soldiers were fully qualified for their jobs. If the soldiers who had not completed basic or advanced individual training were included in the calculation, the average qualified rate would drop to about 74 percent.

Figure 2.3: Soldier Proficiency in Assigned Jobs



According to Bold Shift officials, the goal for leader training was for all commissioned and noncommissioned officers to complete the training courses needed to lead their soldiers. Army National Guard commissioned officer leader training includes the Officer Basic Course, the Officer Advanced Course, and courses given at the Combined Arms and Service Staff School and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. The basic course prepares newly commissioned lieutenants for their first

⁷Army Training: Replacement Brigades Were More Proficient Than Guard Roundout Brigades (GAO/NSIAD-93-4, Nov. 4, 1992).

command and is required for promotion to first lieutenant. The advanced course prepares captains to command at the company level. The Combined Arms and Service Staff School trains majors to function as staff officers at battalion levels and above. The Command and General Staff College prepares lieutenant colonels to function as staff officers and field grade commanders.⁸

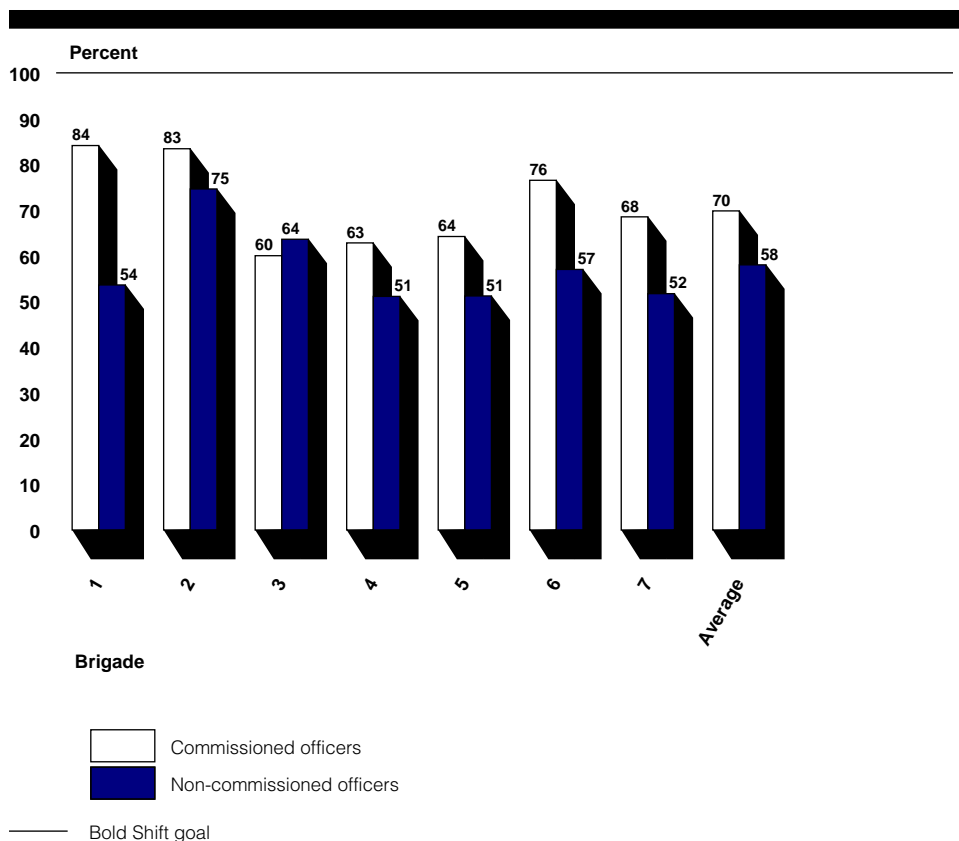
Noncommissioned officers have primary responsibility for teaching soldiers subjects ranging from basic survival skills to specific job skills. Therefore, they also need to complete a series of leadership courses. The Primary Leadership Development Course is required for promotion to sergeant, the Basic Non-commissioned Officer Course for promotion to staff sergeant, the Advanced Non-commissioned Officer Course for promotion to sergeant first class, and the Sergeants Major Course for promotion to sergeant major.

As shown in figure 2.4, no brigade met the Army's leader training goal. On average, about 70 percent of commissioned officers and 58 percent of noncommissioned officers in each brigade had completed these required courses by 1993.⁹ Noncommissioned officer completion rates were relatively low for all four required courses. Commissioned officer completion rates were particularly low for the course given at the Combined Arms and Service Staff School: an average of only about 11 percent of the majors in the brigades had completed the course. Brigade officials believed this low rate was due to the fact that the course did not become a requirement for promotion to major until October 1994.

⁸The latter three were not required in 1993 before promotion to the rank indicated. However, National Guard Bureau officials told us that each rank should have had the course indicated to perform their duties effectively, and completion of 50 percent of the Command and General Staff College courses is required for promotion to lieutenant colonel. Beginning in October 1994, captains were required to have the Combined Arms and Service Staff School course before promotion to major.

⁹These figures include data from one brigade as of August 1994.

Figure 2.4: Percent of Leaders That Had Completed Professional Education Courses



Note: Brigade 1 figures exclude support units.

Brigade officials consistently rated soldier and leader training as major problems affecting overall training proficiency. Soldier and leader courses are often difficult to complete due to their length, which may conflict with home life; inadequate funding to attend the courses; and too few course openings. Attendance at individual training courses also competes with collective training for the scarce training time available, since the individual courses are often attended during the 2-week annual training period.

Soldier and leader training have been major problems for the Guard brigades since at least the Gulf War. The Army Inspector General's report on the Gulf War mobilization concluded that, of all the weaknesses

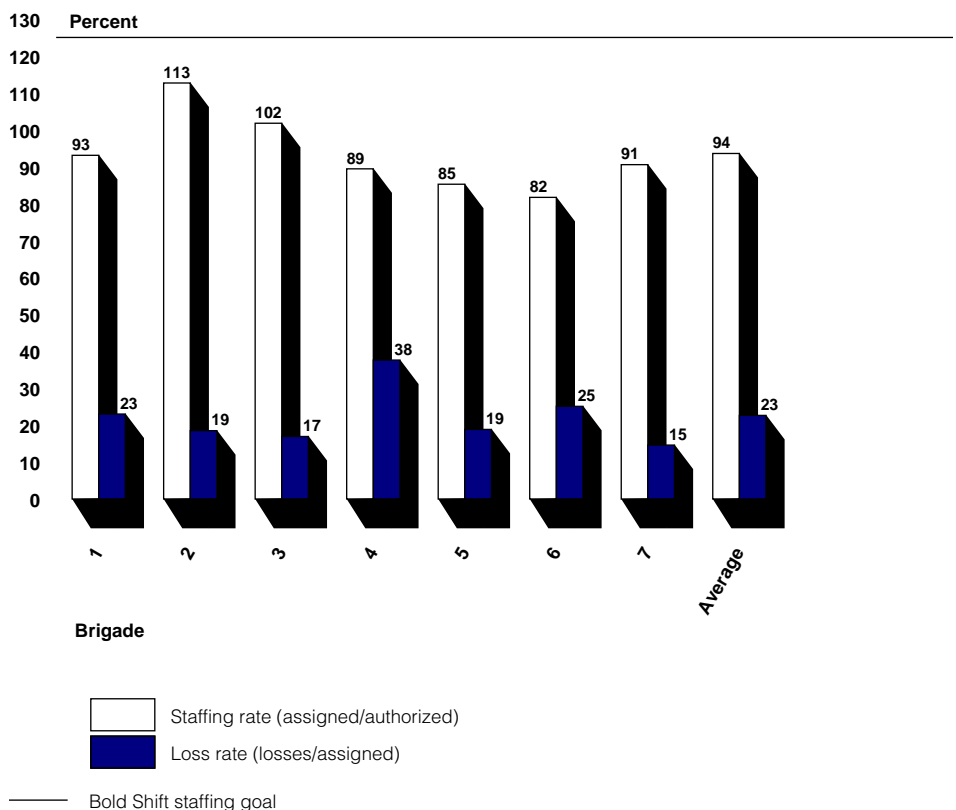
identified in the brigades, leadership problems—particularly in the noncommissioned officer and field grade officer ranks—were the most debilitating. According to the report, these leaders could not make routine operations happen routinely because they lacked the necessary leadership training and peacetime opportunities to practice.

One brigade reported marked progress in both soldier and leader training during 1994, but the remaining brigades reported proficiency levels about the same as in 1993. The Enhanced Brigade Task Force recommended that the Army authorize funding of additional paid days for brigade personnel to allow extended annual training periods and more leader training. The January 1995 revisions to Bold Shift continued to emphasize soldier and leader training, but school attendance during annual training is now restricted as a last resort for soldiers who must qualify for promotion. No numerical goals were specified.

Personnel Recruiting Goals Were Not Met

Brigade officials told us that one major solution to the individual and leader training problem was to allow the brigades to recruit over 100 percent of their authorized personnel strength. This action was expected to help the brigades compensate for personnel problems, such as low soldier qualification levels and turnover. The extra personnel could fill in when soldiers or leaders were away at training courses. In 1993, the brigades were authorized to recruit up to 125 percent of their authorized strength. However, as shown in figure 2.5, staffing averaged about 94 percent, and only two brigades were staffed at levels higher than 100 percent.

Figure 2.5: Brigade Personnel Strength



To exacerbate the staffing problem, the number of personnel leaving the brigades in 1993 averaged about 23 percent, ranging from about 15 to 38 percent. Such losses not only make personnel staffing a never-ending problem, but they can also make gains in individual training quickly disappear and further lengthen the time required to be ready to deploy. According to National Guard Bureau data, turnover is highest among the soldiers below the sergeant level.

Brigade officials told us that efforts to increase personnel strength are often affected by problems such as inadequate recruiting and retention bonuses and demographic changes. Moving units to respond to shifting populations may improve the recruiting base but slows training in the near term. One brigade reported raising its personnel strength from 85 percent in 1993 to 92 percent in 1994, but the remaining brigades reported strength

levels about the same or lower than in 1993. One unit that had been able to increase its strength to about 102 percent reported a drop-off to the mid-90-percent level. According to brigade officials, this decline was due to (1) economic downsizing in the area; (2) a perception among employers that a strong military was no longer needed, which resulted in their increased reluctance to allow employees time off to train; and (3) overworking Guard personnel to compensate for the high personnel loss rate.

The Army Inspector General's report on the Gulf War mobilization also found that personnel strength and turnover problems, which were due to inadequate recruiting and retention incentives, were major impediments to rapid training of the brigades. Because personnel strength was too low in the brigades that had been mobilized, personnel from other units had to be brought in to fill critical vacancies. The personnel problems lengthened the training time needed to prepare the brigades to deploy.

The Enhanced Brigade Task Force recommended that the brigades continue to be authorized to recruit over 100 percent of their authorized strength, possibly at 105 to 108 percent. According to one brigade official, recruiting high levels of personnel is expensive, particularly at levels as high as 125 percent. The task force also recommended that the brigades' personnel priority group be raised to authorize recruiting and retention bonuses. Guard officials told us that they had been funding such bonuses, in certain cases, on their own for some time. However, they were forced to suspend them in the spring of 1994 due to funding shortages. The new Bold Shift training strategy does not address specific goals for personnel strength, but the current National Guard program authorizes the brigades to recruit to approximately 104 to 108 percent of their authorized strength in certain positions.

Conclusions

We believe the Army's decision to focus platoon training on three METL tasks is a step in the right direction, since it may help to reduce the amount of postmobilization training time the brigades will need to be ready to deploy. However, due to this and other recent strategy changes, it will not be known until nearly the end of the decade whether the brigades' peacetime training proficiency can be markedly improved. Solutions to problems in areas such as soldier and leader training and personnel recruiting and retention appear difficult and long term.

The recent changes to Bold Shift attempt to balance competing and interrelated problems in peacetime training in maneuver and gunnery, individual training, and personnel staffing with the goal of having the brigades ready to deploy 90 days after mobilization. The changes appear reasonable, but they are unproven. For example, reducing authorized personnel levels while mandating an increase in attendance at annual training could increase problems in individual training and personnel retention, as soldiers face the choice of reducing their time at home by attending military training courses or being less competitive for promotion. In addition, the changes are susceptible to other influences, such as funding shortages, which could upset the balance that is sought.

Chapters 3 and 4 discuss additional issues and recommendations that the Secretary of the Army should consider along with the recent adjustments to the Bold Shift strategy.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

A draft of this report contained a recommendation that the Chief of Staff of the Army identify and focus training on the combat tasks considered critical to fulfilling the enhanced brigades' missions. In view of the Army's recent modification to the brigades' training strategy that will focus training on three critical missions, we have deleted the recommendation from this report. Also, we have revised this report to reflect other revisions to the strategy and premobilization goals.

In commenting on platoon proficiency in METL tasks, DOD said that its analysis of figure 2.1 showed a combined 74-percent fully and partially trained level, and it concluded that this level would be a successful outcome under the new goals. However, we believe that indiscriminately combining partially trained tasks with fully trained tasks could lead to an overly optimistic view of training proficiency. As pointed out earlier, a partially trained rating could indicate proficiency ranging from 1 to 99 percent of a task.

Adviser Program Is Hampered by Numerous Problems

The new adviser program's efforts to improve training readiness have been limited by factors such as an ambiguous definition of the advisers' role; poor communication between the active Army, advisers, brigades, and Guard leadership, which caused confusion and disagreement over Bold Shift's goals; and difficult working relationships. The role of active Army advisers in the state-run brigade operations has not been clearly defined by the Army. Consequently, some advisers were focused less on identifying and resolving training problems and more on assisting in planning and other training processes. Since advisers have no formal authority, their effectiveness is determined primarily by the quality of their personal relationships with the brigades. In many instances, advisers were not effective in resolving some major training problems, such as confusion over mission-essential task priorities.

Poor communication was another major impediment to the effectiveness of the adviser program, causing considerable confusion over Bold Shift's goals. Many advisers and brigade officials said that they either did not know Bold Shift's goals or were uncertain about them. Once they were made aware of the goals, many brigade and active Army officials, including the advisers, believed that some goals were unrealistically high and could not be achieved. As a result of the confusion and disagreement, some brigades did not attempt to train to the proficiency level sought by the strategy.

The Bold Shift program was begun in an environment of strained organizational relationships between the active Army and Guard. This problem has existed since at least the Gulf War, when some Guard personnel believed a double standard of readiness was used to keep Guard units from deploying to the Gulf. The resulting "us and them" environment provided fertile ground for the confusion and disagreement over the advisers' role and the Bold Shift strategy's goals. The potential effectiveness of other initiatives begun in the early 1990s to better integrate the active Army and Guard and strengthen training support and oversight of Guard operations is unclear due to the changes brought about by the enhanced brigade concept.

Adviser Program Was Mandated by Congress

To improve integration between the active Army and Guard, Congress mandated in 1991 that the active Army assign 2,000 full-time advisers to high-priority Guard and reserve units beginning in 1992.¹ This program was intended to increase substantially the number of active advisers to the

¹Public Law 102-190, section 414, December 5, 1991.

reserves, improve readiness, and provide a basis for determining the most effective mix of reserve and active personnel in administering and training reserve units. Army personnel assigned to the program have no formal authority over the reserves. Congress amended the legislation in 1992 to provide an additional 3,000 advisers after September 1994.²

About 700 of the first group of 2,000 advisers are in Resident Training Detachments (RTD), which are dedicated to and collocated with specific reserve units. About 300 RTDs are located at the Guard combat brigades. These RTDs generally report to active Army divisions assigned training associations with the enhanced brigades. Most of the remaining 1,300 advisers are organized regionally and provide general training assistance and assessments of the operational readiness of Guard and reserve units located in their region.

During 1993 and 1994, the RTD teams had a total of 45 to 49 advisers serving each brigade. These teams are generally structured with one major, four captains, one warrant officer, and two sergeants to service the four to five companies in each battalion. The RTD teams are physically collocated at battalion armories, and they periodically make visits to the companies in the surrounding cities and towns. The Army's original plan was to locate about 70 advisers at each brigade, including about 20 sergeants at the company level. However, the company-level advisers were never assigned. According to an Army adviser program official, the Army concluded that clustering a larger number of advisers at the battalion level was more conducive to team cohesion and command and control than having small groups of advisers dispersed throughout each state.

Role of Advisers Has Not Been Clearly Defined

A number of the advisers expressed uncertainty over their role, that is, whether they are to advise or support. The legislation establishing the program termed the active Army personnel assigned "advisers," and the 1992 Army Memorandum of Instruction on the program stated that the RTD staff would focus on assessing training (identifying and resolving problems) as well as assisting in training. However, a 1993 Army assessment stated that the program was set up specifically as a training support, not an adviser, program. According to the assessment, the advisers' duties centered around training, training support, and training management. The assessment also stated that the personnel assigned provided advice when appropriate, even though they were not intended to be advisors in the historic and usual sense.

²Public Law 102-484, section 1132, October 23, 1992.

As a result of the ambiguous guidance, some RTD advisers attempted to evaluate and correct problems, whereas others focused more on assisting in training processes, such as planning. According to active Army and RTD personnel, the advisers' effectiveness is determined primarily by the quality of their personal relationships with the brigades. For example, RTD advisers in several brigades identified problems, including (1) inadequate METLS; (2) improper rifle sighting standards; and (3) weaknesses in training objectives, plans, and exercises. The advisers subsequently attempted to initiate corrective actions. Guard units were responsive to the advisers' suggestions in some cases, in others they were not. In one case, RTD advisers repeatedly made suggestions in writing for nearly 1 year for improvements in a unit's METL, but that unit did not respond.

Other RTD advisers said that their active Army division told them not to become involved in assessing or evaluating training readiness. As a result, the advisers focused more on training processes than training results. For example, these advisers told us they had helped prepare the training plans for the brigade but had not seen the training assessment reports from annual training. The advisers also said that, despite their good personal relationships with many officials throughout the brigade, Guard personnel were very sensitive to any criticism. For example, one of the adviser's suggestions for improvement was picked up by the active Army division to whom the RTDs report, and the division aggressively called on the brigade for corrective action. However, that instance set off a long period of bad feelings between the brigade and the advisers because the brigade believed the advisers had publicly criticized them.

Symbolic of the problems faced by some advisers, RTD advisers at one location were housed in trailers outside the armories, separate from the Guard personnel inside the armories. RTD personnel said that they had initially shared armory space with the Guard, but the state area reserve command believed it did not have adequate space to collocate them. RTD advisers told us that the physical separation from the daily conversation of the brigade made it much harder to identify problems and reinforced a separation between the brigade and the advisers. All other brigades we visited were able to collocate the adviser and Guard personnel.

In another brigade, RTD and Guard personnel enjoyed a particularly good relationship. In fact, unlike the other brigades, Guard personnel were allowed to provide formal written input to the RTD performance ratings, which is normally provided only by active Army personnel. Also, RTD personnel had been used to temporarily fill brigade positions, such as

executive officer. However, the RTD personnel had been so busy with their other duties that they had not focused on correcting METL problems. When we brought this situation to their attention, the advisers acknowledged that they needed to focus more on improving the unit's METL.

National Guard and active Army officials had varying opinions about the proper role for the advisers. Some active Army officials believed the RTD advisers could not be effective without some formal assessment, supervisory, or other clear line of authority over Guard operations. Army officials also told us, however, that the relationship was not strong enough between the Army and Guard to allow the RTDs to assess or evaluate the Guard units they live with, and the relationship would worsen if they did. Alternatively, Army officials told us that the active divisions affiliated with the brigades, or the regionally organized adviser teams, should perform assessments of the brigades, with the RTD advisers' role limited to training support functions only.

Some Guard officials stated that they valued the advice provided by the advisers and could accept that they had some assessment authority. However, other Guard officials stated that they did not need advice from active Army officers. Some brigade officials called for more RTD sergeants with technical expertise in gunnery, supply, and maintenance. Guard officials valued the up-to-date technical expertise and hands-on support provided by the sergeants. However, since the Army abandoned its original plan to locate about 20 RTD sergeants at the company level, the current organization provides five commissioned officers but only two sergeants and one warrant officer to provide such technical advice to the four or five combat companies in each battalion.

Brigades and Advisers Were Confused Over Training Goals

Officials in four of the seven brigades, as well as three of the six active Army adviser teams, told us they either did not know the Bold Shift strategy's peacetime training goals or were uncertain about them.³ Most of the confusion centered on the goal for platoon proficiency. For example, even though three brigade commanders understood the goal for platoon proficiency was that tasks needed to be fully trained, several commanders believed that platoon tasks needed to be only partially trained. Brigade and Army officials stated that the strategy's goals were communicated only in broad, general terms through a series of briefings from the Army to the National Guard Bureau and the brigades. A more specific

³One brigade was not assigned a team of advisers because it was considered for dissolution as part of the reduction of the military.

interpretation of the goals—such as platoons fully trained on all tasks that support the company’s METL—were not documented in training guidance or other documents provided to the brigades.⁴

When we reiterated the goals described by Bold Shift officials, many brigade, as well as advisers and other active Army officials, believed that some were too high to achieve during peacetime. These officials were particularly concerned with the platoon proficiency goal. According to these officials, this goal holds brigades to a higher standard than active Army units. Officials from several active Army divisions acknowledged that their goal was to train some tasks to the fully trained level and others to the partially trained level. The Director of the Bold Shift strategy acknowledged that there was, and still is, a great deal of disagreement over the goals.

As a result of the confusion and disagreement, brigade training goals were sometimes focused at lower levels of proficiency than the Bold Shift strategy’s goals. For example, several brigade commanders told us that they generally planned platoon training on METL tasks to reach only the partially trained level and avoid an untrained status in the tasks. Another commander told us that they could probably never get all their leaders fully trained because of high personnel losses and turnover. Even though some brigades did not know the goals, our analysis of 1993 data showed no marked difference in the training proficiency levels of those brigades and the brigades who knew the goals.

Relationship Between Active Army and Guard Is Strained

Advisers and other officials in both the active Army and Guard, including officials from five of the seven enhanced brigades we reviewed, cited the need for more unified, better integrated working relationships.

Working relationships between the active Army and Guard chains of command have been strained since at least the Gulf War mobilization. For example, a Congressional Research Service report on the mobilization found that considerable bitterness and recrimination existed over the Army’s decision not to deploy the Guard brigades that were mobilized for the war.⁵ According to the report, active Army brigades with the same

⁴We identified the specific goals by interviewing the Bold Shift Director and staff and Guard officials. We also traced the goals through a Bold Shift test directive, dated May 1992, and versions of U.S. Forces Command Regulation 220-3, dated July 1993 (draft) through April 1994. This regulation provides guidance to active Army units for assessing reserve unit training.

⁵The Army’s Roundout Concept After the Persian Gulf War, Congressional Research Service, October 1991.

resource and training status ratings as the three Guard brigades were allowed to deploy immediately, but the Guard units were required to undergo several months of postmobilization training. Some Guard officials believed the brigades were subjected to a double standard and that this was the reason for the brigades' lengthy postmobilization training period rather than any real readiness problems.

On the other hand, however, the Army Inspector General's report on the Gulf War mobilization found that the resource and training status ratings for the brigades overstated their actual level of training readiness. For example, most METL tasks were rated as fully or partially trained, but many units could not demonstrate proficiency in basic skills, such as sighting the weapons on their tanks.

During our review, National Guard and active Army officials repeatedly referred to the continuing "us and them" environment. For example, one brigade commander told us that, although he had good personal relationships with his active Army counterparts, he believed the Army's decision to eliminate the roundout/up role for the Guard was actually motivated to keep the Guard out of any combat role and thus preserve funding for the active Army. Other Guard officials told us that the active Army did not understand the unique difficulties faced by their personnel, often expected too much, and excluded them from decision-making. Active Army officials told us that Guard personnel did not understand Army training doctrine and needed to learn to be more objective in assessments of their training proficiency. According to these officials, the Guard cannot be as ready as active Army units because it has only 39 days of annual training compared with about 240 days for active units.

Enhanced Brigade Concept Confuses Potential Impact of Other Initiatives

The Army and Congress also introduced other initiatives in the early 1990s to better integrate the active Army and Guard and strengthen training support and oversight of Guard operations. However, the potential effectiveness of these initiatives is unclear primarily due to the changes brought about by the enhanced brigade concept. For example, at the time the initiatives were introduced, a wartime tie existed between the former roundout/up brigades and their active Army sponsor divisions. However, the enhanced brigade concept has severed this relationship.

One initiative was the attempt under Bold Shift to increase the training support provided by the active Army divisions with whom the brigades held a predetermined wartime affiliation. For example, Bold Shift

attempted to ensure that these active Army sponsor divisions were located near the brigades. Instead of just observing and assessing the brigades' conduct of their own training, Bold Shift made the sponsor divisions responsible for helping support the training of the brigades by setting up firing ranges and exercises and providing other direct assistance.

Some Guard officials raised concerns that severing the predetermined wartime ties with sponsor divisions under the enhanced brigade concept was a step backward from this Bold Shift initiative. This wartime interdependence provided a measure of shared accountability between the Guard brigades, active Army sponsor units, and advisers who reported to the sponsor units.

Although the brigades are continuing peacetime training associations with active Army sponsor units, brigade officials were concerned that the sponsors have no incentive to provide strong training support, since the brigades no longer round out or round up the divisions during wartime. According to several of the brigades, active Army support for such things as setting up firing ranges during annual training has already been reduced. Army officials told us that the Guard brigades would lose some of the routine support previously provided by the active Army sponsors. However, the sponsors will continue to provide support during annual training, although some support roles will now be taken over by the advisers. The enhanced brigade concept also lowered the priority of four of the seven former roundout/up brigades for resources, since that priority was linked to that of their active Army wartime sponsors.

Another initiative was to increase sponsor unit oversight of the brigades, under Congress' Army National Guard Combat Readiness Reform Act of 1992. According to this legislation, the associated active Army sponsor units became responsible in 1993 for agreeing or disagreeing with recommended promotions above the level of first lieutenant in the brigades. By 1995 the sponsor divisions were expected to be responsible for approving training programs, reviewing readiness reports, assessing resource requirements, and validating the compatibility of the Guard unit with active Army forces. According to officials at active Army sponsor units, the legislation formalizes informal reviews of training plans and readiness reports that some active units have been conducting for years as part of their sponsor role.

The weakening of incentives for shared accountability and the factors that influenced some advisers to avoid aggressive evaluation of brigade

problems could also hamper aggressive oversight by the sponsor units. For example, the Army Inspector General's report on the mobilization for the Gulf War found that sponsor units for the brigades were not challenging brigade Unit Status Reports that overstated their level of training readiness. According to sponsor unit officials, some units do take a critical look at the reports, but the criteria for assessing training readiness is so subjective that it is difficult to challenge inflated reports. Other units stated that they do not challenge the reports, even if they do appear inflated. Instead, they pass their own estimate up through channels along with the brigade's estimate. (See ch. 4 for more detail on this subject.)

Conclusions

Any significant improvement in the proficiency levels of National Guard combat brigades are not likely to be attained without a marked improvement in the relationship between the active Army and the Guard. The "us and them" environment must change if Guard combat brigades are to meet the expectations set out for them in the national defense strategy.

We believe that at least two critical elements are needed to achieve a smoother relationship between the active Army and the Guard. The first element is clear and reasonable peacetime training goals, which are fully supportive of military needs, accepted by all participants, and adequately communicated to all parties. Without goals that are mutually acceptable and effectively communicated, confusion over program direction will linger and foster continuing disagreement and misunderstanding of training readiness. The second element is a mutually acceptable role for advisers in Guard brigade operations that balances the right of National Guard command prerogative with the need to identify and correct training problems. In this regard, we do not believe the effectiveness of the adviser program should be determined primarily by an individual adviser's ability to succeed in interpersonal relations.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army, in consultation with National Guard leaders, direct the Chief of Staff of the Army to

- reassess premobilization training goals for the enhanced brigades to ensure that they are consistent with readiness requirements and achievable within available training time and resources;
- document the training goals in guidance provided to the brigades;
- reassess the role of advisers assigned to the enhanced brigades, clearly stipulate whether advisers are to identify and resolve training problems or

- only assist with training, ensure that advisers have the authority necessary to carry out their role, and document the advisers' role in memorandums of understanding with each state; and
- test additional steps to improve the integration of advisers assigned to the enhanced brigades by, for example, (1) providing the advisers with formal authority to review and agree or disagree with unit training plans and readiness reports, (2) including National Guard commanders as intermediate raters for all RTD advisers, (3) increasing enhanced brigade personnel authorizations to allow RTD active duty officers to augment key brigade positions such as executive officers and training and operations officers, and (4) restructuring or increasing the size of adviser teams assigned to the brigades to provide for additional master gunners or other noncommissioned technical experts.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

DOD agreed with our first three recommendations. It said that the Army planned to (1) establish the minimum essential premobilization training objectives that the brigades must meet in the areas of gunnery, platoon maneuver proficiency, and command and staff training; (2) document the goals in regulations; and (3) prepare detailed guidance that should eliminate confusion about the role of advisers.

DOD did not agree with our recommendation to test additional steps to improve the integration of advisers assigned to the enhanced brigades. It stated that it believed the recommendation would subvert the chain of command and place advisers in an untenable position. DOD explained that our report implied that state command of the Guard units removed the obligation to accept adviser recommendations, oversimplifying the fact that Guard units must meet Army standards in all activities to retain federal recognition. DOD further stated that advisers could not simultaneously play the role of adviser and evaluator.

We agree that the brigades must meet Army standards and that the brigade commander is ultimately responsible for resolving problems. However, the issue addressed in our report pertains to the question of what role advisers should play to ensure a proper balance between the Guard's command prerogative and the prompt identification and correction of training readiness problems.

We believe that advisers can simultaneously advise and evaluate the brigades without subverting the chain of command. Advisers are uniquely qualified to evaluate unit training and readiness by virtue of their daily

presence at the brigades. This role would also be consistent with the responsibility of the active Army unit associated with the brigades for approving training programs and reviewing readiness reports, since the advisers report to these active Army units.

The feasibility of active duty personnel assisting as well as evaluating reserve units has been demonstrated by the Marine Corps' Inspector-Instructor program. The mission of Inspector-Instructor personnel is not only to assist units in maintaining a continuous state of readiness but also to supervise and inspect the units. In this regard, Marine Inspector-Instructors have formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluating unit training and other readiness aspects. Although there are significant differences between the Marine Reserves and the Army National Guard, the former Chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Forces and Personnel, House of Representatives, testified in 1993 that he intended for the Army advisers to be used similar to the Marine Inspector-Instructors.⁶

⁶Hearings on the Link Between Force Structure and Manpower Requirements, Subcommittee on Military Forces and Personnel, House Armed Services Committee, Report 103-5, March 1993, pp. 48 and 188.

Prospects for Achieving the 90-Day Deployment Goal Are Uncertain

It is highly uncertain whether the National Guard combat brigades can be ready to deploy 90 days after mobilization. Initial postmobilization models estimated that the brigades would need between 68 and 110 days before being ready to deploy. These estimates, however, assumed that the brigades' peacetime training proficiency would improve to levels near those envisioned by Bold Shift, thus shortening postmobilization training. One model, which included the possibility that the strategy's goals would not be met, estimated that as many as 154 days could be required to prepare the brigades to deploy.

An Army contractor is developing a new postmobilization model, which estimates that two to three brigades could be ready to deploy in 102 days. However, the Army has not endorsed the model, and there are a number of unanswered questions about the availability of the resources needed to mobilize all 15 enhanced brigades quickly. Although some brigades have reported that they could be ready to deploy in less than one-half the time predicted in the models, these reports omit key steps in the postmobilization training process.

Models Predict That Brigades Need Over 90 Days to Prepare to Deploy

Postmobilization models for mechanized infantry and armor brigades developed by the Director of Army Training, Army Inspector General, and Rand Corporation in 1991 and 1992 estimated that the brigades would need 93 to 98, 68 to 110, and 96 to 154 days, respectively, before being ready to deploy. However, the more optimistic estimates by the Director of Army Training and Army Inspector General were based on the assumption that the brigades would reach a higher level of proficiency during peacetime training than has been realized. The new postmobilization model shortens the training time predicted by earlier models, in part, by assuming that training would be conducted at one site large enough to handle brigade-level exercises against an opposing force instead of some training being performed at one site and then a second, larger site for brigade-level exercises. The Army has not stated whether it endorses these models or believes other plans for preparing the brigades are needed.

Initial Models Estimate 68 to 154 Days

In February 1992, the Army Chief of Staff testified before the House Committee on Armed Services that the Army could not have the Guard brigades ready to deploy with less than 60 to 90 days of postmobilization preparation time. The Chief of Staff attributed this to the brigades' difficulty in reaching a high enough level of peacetime training proficiency, in only 39 days of training, to be able to lower the postmobilization time

requirements. In 1993, the Secretary of Defense's Bottom-Up Review reiterated that the goal for the enhanced brigades was to have them ready to deploy in 90 days.

In 1991 and 1992, the Director of Army Training, Army Inspector General, and Rand Corporation, under contract to the Army, all produced models analyzing the training and other actions needed to prepare the mechanized infantry and armor brigades to be ready to deploy to a war zone.¹ (We found no models estimating the time needed for light infantry brigades to be ready to deploy.) The models generally included three basic steps: mobilization, collective training on combat skills, and training recovery and preparation to deploy. The particular content of each step may vary based on the particular needs of the mission, an analysis of enemy capabilities, the type of terrain, and the time available. The range of tasks and time required to train for them may also vary based on the level of proficiency sought and the premobilization training proficiency achieved.

The first step, mobilization, included such actions as assembling the troops, moving them to the mobilization or collective training stations, and preparing them to move overseas. Units would perform administrative and personnel processing at the mobilization and collective training sites. Soldiers would receive individual refresher training in common combat skills, such as map reading and weapons qualification, as well as their particular job duties. Wills and family care plans and other preparations for overseas movement would be completed, and personnel from other units would be assigned to fill any vacancies.

The second step, collective training, included a progression of training on the unit skills needed from the lowest to highest echelon. Two basic phases are involved in this step. First, individual tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crews, and the platoons they form when combined, would need to ready themselves to function as part of a larger group and correct any maintenance problems with their tanks and Bradleys. Since some crews may have new personnel, they might need to practice on simulators before moving to the gunnery ranges. The crews would then proceed through the sequence of gunnery tables up through platoon-level proficiency at table XII.

Second, the unit would move up to company-, battalion-, and brigade-level operations. Bradley and armor platoons would be integrated into company

¹90/365 Day Post Mobilization Training, Director of Army Training, April 1992. Special Assessment of the Mobilization of Army National Guard Combat Brigades, Army Inspector General, June 1991. Post-Mobilization Training of Army Reserve Component Combat Units, Rand Corporation, 1992.

teams to practice mission-essential tasks, such as attacking and defending. Multiple company teams would then come together to practice operations under a battalion task force headquarters. The battalion task forces might also come together to form a complete brigade and practice offensive and defensive battles against an opposing force. Because of the space requirements for such a large-scale action, the brigade would generally have to relocate from its collective training site to one of the few sites set up to handle brigade operations, such as the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California.

The third step, recovery and preparation to deploy, occurs after training is completed and the unit is back at its mobilization station. In this step, the unit would conduct maintenance on its equipment after its use in training and prepare to load the equipment for overseas shipment to the war zone.

The three models established new postmobilization training time estimates based on the innovations in training set forth by the Bold Shift strategy. As shown in table 4.1, the Director of Army Training and Army Inspector General estimates ranged as high as 8 and 20 days, respectively, over the goal of 90 days. However, the Rand Corporation estimated that as much as 154 days could be required to prepare the brigades to deploy. The estimates all assumed that large numbers of active Army personnel would be available to help the brigades conduct the training.

Table 4.1: Director of Army Training, Army Inspector General, and Rand Estimates of the Number of Days Required for Postmobilization Training

Figures in days			
Activity	Director of Army Training	Army Inspector General	Rand Corporation
Mobilization	7	7-12	11-15
Collective training	86-91	54-84	78-125 ^a
Recovery and preparation to deploy	0	7-14	7-14
Total	93-98	68-110	96-154

^aRand's baseline estimate was 79 to 128 days. However, the estimate assumed that collective training, including a brigade-level exercise, would be conducted at one site without having to move to the National Training Center. The time required to move a brigade and its equipment to and from the Training Center was estimated by Rand to add between 17 and 26 days. We added these days to Rand's base estimate for comparison with the other models.

The different estimates were a result of differences in the models' assumptions and approaches. For example, unlike the other estimates, the Director of Army Training model did not set aside a specific block of time

for recovery activities, generally estimated at 7 to 14 days. According to members of the team that developed the estimate, they believed enough flexibility was built into the overall schedule to allow the brigades to complete training, clean up their equipment, and move directly from the collective training site to the port of deployment.

The main reason for the differences, however, was that the Director of Army Training and Army Inspector General assumed that the brigades would generally meet the Bold Shift strategy's peacetime training goals, thereby shortening postmobilization training time. For example, both estimates assumed that brigade staffing would be about 110 percent of authorized strength, which would help the brigades to mobilize with fully trained leaders and about 85 percent of their soldiers fully trained in their duty specialties. However, as discussed in chapter 2, in 1993 the brigades averaged about 94 percent of authorized strength, and only about 70 percent of their officers and 58 percent of their noncommissioned officers were fully trained. The Director of Army Training and Inspector General estimates also assumed that platoons would achieve premobilization proficiency in METL tasks and that 70 to 100 percent of the tank and Bradley crews would be qualified at the gunnery table VIII level. However, in 1993 the platoons were fully trained in only about 14 percent of their METL tasks, and about 64 percent of the crews met table VIII standards.

The Rand Corporation included estimates for a range of outcomes resulting from the implementation of the Bold Shift strategy, including the possibility that the strategy's goals would not be met. This assumption increased the Rand estimate for collective training by 34 to 41 days over the Director of Army Training and Army Inspector General estimates. Under Rand's scenario, the units that had difficulty meeting the goals would suffer high personnel turnover. Attendance at annual collective training would be lowered by attendance at individual training courses, and most annual training would be devoted to gunnery. This would leave little time for maneuver training in METL tasks. Squad and platoon skills would be difficult to sustain because of the focus on gunnery, limited time for weekend training, and difficulties in gaining access to local training areas. Company-level training would require more time because the platoons needed more training time and repeat training.

summer of 1995. As of January 1995, the new model was predicting that the better enhanced brigades—for example, those who had qualified most of their crews at the gunnery table VIII level and had 75 percent of their soldiers trained in assigned jobs—could be ready to deploy about 102 days after mobilization. Army officials told us they were studying the model and various options for implementing it. However, there are a number of unresolved questions about the availability of the personnel, training facilities, and other resources needed to ensure that all 15 enhanced brigades can be trained and ready to deploy quickly.

The current version of the model is based on the same three steps as earlier models: mobilization, collective training, and recovery and preparation to deploy. As shown in table 4.2, the times allotted for mobilization and recovery are similar to the earlier models.

Table 4.2: Comparison of New Rand Postmobilization Model With Previous Models

Figures in days

Activity	Director of Army Training model	Army Inspector General model	Previous Rand model	New Rand model
Mobilization	7	7-12	11-15	12
Collective training	86-91	54-84	78-125	80
Recovery and preparation to deploy	0	7-14	7-14	10
Total	93-98	68-110	96-154	102

The largest difference between the former and current Rand models was in collective training. The 1992 Rand model estimated that as much as 125 days could be required in this step, whereas the new model included only 80 days. Both models include the progression from crew and platoon proficiency to company teams, battalion task forces, and brigade-level exercises against an opposing force. However, the new model cuts as much as 26 days off the time by starting collective training at a site large enough to handle brigade-level exercises without moving to a second site.

Under the earlier models, one scenario was for the units to conduct collective training through company and battalion levels at one training site and then move to the National Training Center or another site large enough to handle brigade-level exercises. However, the time for moving the equipment and soldiers to and from the new site was estimated at between 17 and 26 days.

Army officials told us that postmobilization training would also be shortened by improved planning for pre- and postmobilization training. According to these officials, Bold Shift provided clearer and better focused peacetime training expectations than the brigades had at the time of the Gulf War. In addition, the new postmobilization model is developing a plan that matches the brigades with the personnel, training facilities, and other resources needed to ensure efficient postmobilization training.

Army officials told us they were studying options to train two to three brigades at a time. However, under the model, training three brigades at a time could require about 300 days to prepare the seven armor and mechanized infantry brigades. It is not clear how much more time would be required to prepare the remaining eight light infantry and armored cavalry brigades. Options to shorten the time to prepare all 15 brigades for deployment appear limited. For example, according to Army officials, increasing the number of brigades in each training group to five and starting the second group's training before the first was finished would require about 10 sites suitable for brigade-level exercises, 6,800 trainers, 3,000 National Guard assist personnel, and 10 brigades to provide opposing forces.

It is also not clear how the Army will provide the large numbers of personnel and training sites needed to quickly prepare all 15 enhanced brigades to perform their wartime role. For example, during the Gulf War, nearly 9,000 active Army personnel were committed to help train the three Guard brigades that were mobilized. These Army personnel performed such functions as running gunnery ranges, helping with training exercises, and evaluating training proficiency, which freed the Guard brigades to focus on training. Active Army personnel also provided the opposing forces needed for brigade force-on-force exercises.

According to Army and Rand officials, the new model assumes that the 5,000 advisers plus an additional 2,800 active Army trainers from other programs would be available to provide the training needed. Under the model, each brigade would require about 1,000 support personnel: 680 active Army trainers and 300 National Guard personnel to assist them, as well as another 3,000 personnel to form the opposing force brigade. However, only 2,000 advisers had been assigned as of September 1994, with the remaining 3,000 scheduled to be assigned by September 1997.

In addition, Army officials told us that there are currently only two trained opposing forces in the United States and one in Germany. The officials

believed that National Guard personnel could be trained to perform as opposing forces in 1 to 2 years. According to the officials, a total of seven training sites are being considered to provide the space needed for brigade-level exercises. However, at least one of these sites has environmental constraints that could limit its use.

Brigade Estimates Were Subjective and Unrealistically Low

In recent years, all the brigades have reported that they could meet the 90-day deployment goal. Brigade estimates of collective training time reported in Unit Status Reports were, in some cases, less than half the 86 to 91 days estimated in the Director of Army Training model.²

According to brigade officials, postmobilization collective training estimates were based on current levels of proficiency in individual training, METL tasks, gunnery, and personnel staffing. However, the estimates did not assume that the brigades needed to meet the Bold Shift peacetime training goals to meet the 90-day postmobilization goal. The estimates also excluded brigade-level exercises against an opposing force at the National Training Center or other site with sufficient space for such exercises. These exercises, according to the Army Inspector General, could add as much as 38 days to training time. For example, one brigade reported that it could achieve full proficiency with only 60 days of postmobilization training, even though it had been reorganized, had two battalions in new equipment training that were unable to qualify in gunnery, and had not conducted a consolidated annual training period with all its units at the same site for 3 years. Another brigade estimated it would need only 37 days of training.

According to officials from active Army sponsor units, the brigades can be trained in less than 90 days by omitting such activities as brigade-level force-on-force exercises. However, these actions would increase the risk of a higher number of casualties. Similar comments were made by others during the Gulf War mobilization. For example, according to a Congressional Research Service report on the roundout brigades mobilization, one active Army division commander stated that Guard combat brigades could deploy and fight immediately but with enormously high risk and at the cost of many casualties. This commander believed that it would take about 120 days to get his Guard brigade fully trained.

²The Army requires commanders to complete Unit Status Reports, which assess the status of their personnel, equipment, and training in terms of five overall "C-levels." C-1, for example, indicates that the unit possesses the resources and training to undertake its full wartime mission. C-5 indicates that the unit is not prepared to undertake its wartime mission.

The Army has neither endorsed the deployment models nor included them in regulations and procedures guiding brigade estimates of postmobilization requirements.³ The Army also has no objective training performance measurement system to analyze peacetime training proficiency and link it to the number of postmobilization training days required for the brigades to be ready to deploy. According to brigade officials, the estimates in Unit Status Reports are subjective assessments of the time needed to train. Army guidance currently requires the brigades to estimate the training days required to achieve full proficiency in METL tasks based on subjective considerations of peacetime training proficiency, the status of personnel and equipment, the adequacy of nearby training areas, and the mission.

Army guidance does not provide commanders with specific information to help guide their estimates of the number of training days the brigades would need. This information consists of (1) objective measures of peacetime training proficiency, such as the Bold Shift goals; (2) the general training steps, such as brigade-level force-on-force exercises, which should comprise postmobilization training; or (3) objective definitions of the relationship between various levels of peacetime training proficiency and postmobilization training requirements. The Army also has no system to provide centralized information on the status of training relative to the Bold Shift goals. For example, we had to query each brigade individually down to the company level to obtain information on proficiency in METL tasks and leader training.

Brigade and active Army officials told us that, under the current system, the brigades feel pressured to keep postmobilization training time estimates at 42 days or less because of that estimate's perceived linkage with the brigades' ability to perform their wartime mission. Army guidance equates the estimated days with the unit's training status, or "T-level." Estimates over 42 days are T-level 4. According to brigade officials, the T-level is equated with the unit's overall status relative to the training and resources needed to perform its wartime mission, or "C-level." For example, T-level 4 is equated to C-level 4, which indicates that the unit needs additional resources or training to undertake its wartime mission.

³These models could be included in Army Regulation 220-1, Unit Status Reporting, July 1993, and the U.S. Army Forces Command Mobilization and Deployment Planning System.

Difficulties with the subjective nature of the C-level rating system have been reported by the Army Inspector General and us for years.⁴ For example, 2 years before it reported inflated C-level ratings during the Gulf War mobilization, the Inspector General reported that guidance on the translation of required training days into C-levels might be too vague and that unit commanders had been first deciding what C-level their units should be and then looking up the associated number of training days and reporting that number. According to the Inspector General, the reports were clearly labeled as status reports, but unit commanders had perceived them as readiness reports. The reports were sent through active Army channels, but the commanders making the estimates were rarely challenged to show what and how they would train during the estimated days. As a result, C-levels did not reflect the true training proficiency levels in the units.

Conclusions

Given the current level of proficiency in the Bold Shift goals, the brigades would have difficulty meeting the Army's 90-day goal if mobilized today under existing modeling approaches. Also, the ability to meet this goal in the future rests largely on the success of untested adjustments to the training strategy and the availability of substantially greater resources than exist today.

Existing models make various assumptions regarding postmobilization training requirements and the supporting resources that will be necessary, such as trainers and training sites. However, the Army has not stated whether it endorses these models or believes other plans for preparing the brigades are needed. A credible estimate of the postmobilization days needed to prepare Guard brigades to deploy rests largely on answers to these questions. A more objective system for brigade commanders to assess peacetime training proficiency and postmobilization training times may help prevent unrealistic deployment estimates and higher expectations of training proficiency than may be warranted.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army, in consultation with National Guard leaders, direct the Chief of Staff of the Army to

- establish and document an Army plan for preparing the enhanced brigades to be ready to deploy to war that (1) is based on realistic assessments of

⁴Special Inspection Report: Readiness Reporting Systems, Department of the Army Inspector General, July 1989, and Army Training: Evaluations of Units' Proficiency Are Not Always Reliable (GAO/NSIAD-91-72, Feb. 15, 1991).

peacetime training proficiency and the resources available to support postmobilization training and (2) stipulates the training steps involved, including when brigade-level training against an opposing force is not required;

- estimate the timing of the brigades' availability for war based on the Army's plan; and
- establish a training performance measurement system to provide (1) objective measures of the enhanced brigade's peacetime training proficiency, (2) centralized oversight information about the status of training relative to those measures, and (3) criteria for commanders to follow when estimating postmobilization training time requirements.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

DOD agreed with our recommendations. It said that (1) ongoing improvements to the Army's premobilization training strategy, such as developing an alternate gunnery strategy, would provide the foundation needed for improved postmobilization planning and (2) ongoing improvements to the Army's training readiness reporting system would identify critical training events and resources, establish objective training proficiency measures, and enable commanders to correlate training readiness to predeployment time constraints. DOD also said that it expected these and other planned initiatives to be in place by fiscal year 1999 and that the brigades were expected to be ready to deploy within 90 days at that time. The Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan will provide specific deployment timelines.

Nevertheless, DOD said that our conclusion regarding prospects for the brigades' ability to deploy in 90 days was based on studies that did not completely reflect a thorough analysis of lessons learned from the Gulf War mobilizations or enhancements now being applied to the brigades. DOD further noted that our report did not include a 1992 study by the Institute for Defense Analysis, which indicated that units could reduce postmobilization training time 20 to 40 percent by better use of simulation technology.⁵ The studies that we used were the most detailed analyses of postmobilization training requirements made and were based on extensive analysis of the Gulf War mobilization. The Army Inspector General's study, for example, was specifically chartered to assess the mobilization of the Guard brigades. Moreover, the Institute for Defense Analysis used the Inspector General's study and Rand's 1992 study as the baseline for its analysis.

⁵Alternative Approaches to Organizing Training and Assessing Army and Marine Corps Units, Institute for Defense Analysis, November 1992.

We did not include a discussion of the Institute's findings because, according to the report, it represented only an initial effort to define new conceptual possibilities to improve brigade readiness. The report cautions that its 20- to 40-percent savings estimate should be taken only as demonstrating great promise rather than documenting proven potential.

Also, DOD said that during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Guard's 48th Brigade was certified as fully trained 91 days after its mobilization, despite the absence of preexisting postmobilization plans. We believe that citing this statistic is misleading. Although the brigade did complete mobilization and collective training in 91 days, it was not ready for deployment at that time. For example, the brigade and its equipment were still at the National Training Center; therefore, the brigade would have needed time to perform equipment maintenance and ready itself for deployment. Rand's current model estimates this time, generally referred to as recovery time, at 10 days.

As previously discussed, nearly 9,000 active Army personnel were used to help train the three Guard brigades that were mobilized. It is not clear how the Army will provide the required numbers of personnel and the training sites needed to quickly prepare the brigades for deployment. DOD said it recognized that these factors limited the number of combat units that could train simultaneously.

Comments From the Department of Defense



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

13 APR 1995

RESERVE AFFAIRS

Mr. Henry L. Hinton, Jr.
Assistant Comptroller General
National Security and
International Affairs Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Hinton:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report entitled, "ARMY NATIONAL GUARD: Combat Brigades' Ability to be Ready for War in 90 Days Is Uncertain," dated February 24, 1995 (GAO Code 703021), OSD Case 9871. The Department partially concurs with the report and has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, most of the recommendations.

The draft report explores many aspects of the Guard combat brigade mission readiness issue, but the Department believes the draft bases some conclusions upon both transitory standards and emerging data. This is primarily due to fact that the GAO conducted the review in the early stages of the Army's transition from Cold War to post Cold War formations and training strategies. The Department agrees with much of the report, but believes it is much too early in the implementation of post-Desert Storm initiatives to evaluate the improvement in the readiness of Guard brigades. The DoD is, however, evaluating the effectiveness of the various training approaches to getting Guard brigades ready within 90 days.

The Department is committed to having mission ready Army National Guard combat brigades that support the nation's security requirements. The DoD is convinced that the required number of brigades will be ready to deploy within 90 days after call up, once all of the programmed enhancements are applied to these organizations and the supporting system.

Detailed DoD comments on the draft report findings and recommendations are enclosed. The DoD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the GAO draft report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deborah R. Lee".
Deborah R. Lee

Enclosure
As Stated

GAO DRAFT REPORT—DATED FEBRUARY 24, 1995
(GAO CODE 703021) OSD CASE 9871

“ARMY NATIONAL GUARD: COMBAT BRIGADES’ ABILITY TO BE READY FOR
WAR IN 90 DAYS IS UNCERTAIN”

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

* * * *

FINDINGS

- **FINDING A: Brigades Have Not Met Peacetime Training Goals.** The GAO found that during 1993, the brigades achieved fully trained status in about 14 percent of platoon level mission essential tasks, and 4 of 13 battalions (31 percent) met the tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crew gunnery standards, while three other battalions came within four percentage points of the goal. The GAO noted that although three of the seven brigades met the Army's goal of having 85 percent of the reserve soldiers fully trained, they fell far short of achieving leader training goals. The GAO stated that an average of about 70 percent of the officers and 58 percent of the noncommissioned officers had completed the professional military education courses needed to lead and train soldiers, compared to a goal of 100 percent. The GAO pointed out that the brigades were staffed at an average of 94 percent of their authorized personnel levels, compared to a goal of 125 percent.

According to the GAO, brigade officials indicated that many problems interfere with their training proficiency. The GAO stated that officials in six of the seven brigades pointed to confusion over which of hundreds of mission essential tasks and subtasks soldiers should train for during peacetime as one major cause of their shortcomings. For example, the GAO reported that during 1993, Army evaluators noted that about 21 percent of the combat companies tried to train for too many tasks or tasks that were less important to combat operations than others. The GAO noted that the Army doctrine recognizes that the units cannot train for all possible wartime tasks and requires commanders to select only those tasks that are critical to their mission.

The GAO acknowledged that the Army is studying proposed adjustments to the Bold Shift training strategy. The GAO stated that one proposal identifies a core set of mission essential tasks to reduce and standardize the number of tasks to a level that is more consistent with the 39 days of available training annually. The GAO found brigade task lists, which listed between 6 and 19 tasks, would be reduced to 3 tasks—movement to contact, attack, and defend. The GAO also noted that platoon task lists, some of which currently contain as many as 101 tasks, would include about 40 critical tasks, based on current recommendations of a National Guard working group. The GAO analysis of platoon proficiency in the proposed task list revealed that the platoons were only slightly more proficient in those 40 critical tasks than all the tasks listed. (pp. 4-7, pp. 23-40/GAO Draft Report)

ENCLOSURE

Now on pp. 3-5 and
15-29.

DOD RESPONSE: Partially concur. The Department of Army Round Out Brigade Task Force, charged with correcting the shortcomings noted by various Desert Storm after action reports, identified the need to establish some level of personnel overstrength in the Combat Brigades to ensure required mobilization strength levels. The initial BOLD SHIFT concept briefings included a goal of 125 percent overstrength. During 1994, all agencies abandoned that goal as too high and too general in its application. The current National Guard Bureau (NGB) "Documented Overstructure" program identifies specific Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) to be overstrength in specific units (generally Enhanced Brigades and Contingency Force Pool units). The NGB documents the designated positions on unit Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTO&E) and selects them based upon criticality of the position, turnover rate, and length of schooling. The result is that the Enhanced Brigades now have an authorized overstructure, within certain MOSs, of approximately 104-108%.

The GAO assesses maneuver platoon collective training proficiency by using the original BOLD SHIFT tenet of "fully trained." The Army has since recognized that tenet is in error and contrary to doctrine. Practical application of FM 25-100/101 doctrine considers collective training successful when a unit avoids "Untrained" ratings in critical tasks. Thus, a mix of "Needs Practice" and "Trained" ratings is acceptable. An objective of 100 percent of tasks rated as "Trained" is unrealistic and wholly unnecessary for any Army unit, regardless of component. The Enhanced Brigade Training Guidance issued by the Forces Command (FORSCOM) Commanding General on January 30, 1995, more clearly and realistically states an acceptable level of pre-mobilization proficiency for platoons as attainment of at least 70 percent "Trained" and "Needs Practice" ratings in tasks critical to the company's Mission Essential Task List. The graph on page 25a of the draft report indicates a combined "Trained" and "Needs Practice" total of 74 percent, which is a successful training outcome. Page 26 of the draft report quotes Army officials as saying, "partially trained can mean that the unit can perform the task to 99 percent of the standard or one percent of the standard." There is no term "partially trained" in Army training doctrine. FORSCOM Regulation 220-3 defines a "Needs Practice" rating as "the unit can perform the task with some shortcomings. Not severe enough to require complete retraining. Refresher training needed."

The Army has long recognized the impact of low Annual Training attendance on tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crew qualification. That is due primarily to the conflicting requirements for school attendance to qualify soldiers in certain individual skills, and professional military education for leaders. The Army has implemented corrective actions, which will take time to produce measurable results. These actions include the "Select-Train-Promote-Assign" policy that improves the school selection process, and the FORSCOM 1995 Annual Training guidance that restricts school attendance in place of Annual Training as a last resort for soldiers who must qualify for promotion.

The DoD acknowledges that all leaders did not meet the unrealistic goal of 100 percent leader training completed. The FORSCOM and the NGB have instituted the "Select-Train-Promote-Assign" policy, in a letter from the Director, Army National Guard, dated October 30, 1994, which will facilitate achievement of a more realistic leader qualification level. The

policy provides for selection only of soldiers with promotion potential and the use of order of merit lists. Publication of National Guard Regulation (NGR) 600-200 by the end of FY 1995 will institutionalize the "Select-Train-Promote-Assign" policy. Current policy requires completion of the prerequisite Noncommissioned Officer Education System course prior to assignment to an appropriate position.

The evolving Enhanced Brigade training strategy is refining a pre-mobilization Mission Essential Task List (METL) development process more appropriate for the current National Military Strategy. The Army leadership will facilitate the METL development process through professional education, conferences and self development. The Resident Training Detachments will also continue to assist commanders in the METL development process.

- **FINDING B: The Adviser Program Is Hampered by Numerous Problems.** The GAO identified the unclear role of the active Army advisers as the chief problem that hampers efforts to improve the brigades' training readiness. The GAO stated that the Army guidance is ambiguous regarding whether the advisers should identify and resolve training problems or whether they should only assist with training. The GAO found that some advisers aggressively identified training problems and sought corrective action, while others focused more on training processes, such as planning. The GAO noted that when advisers did attempt to correct training problems, some Guard units were responsive to their suggestions and others were not. The GAO pointed out that since Army National Guard units are commanded by their respective State governors until federalized by Presidential order, they are not obliged to adopt the advisers' suggestions. According to the GAO, some active Army officials indicated the effectiveness of the advisers is driven primarily by the quality of their working relationship with the brigades.

The GAO also identified poor communications as another major impediment to the effectiveness of the adviser program, causing considerable confusion over the goals of Bold Shift. The GAO reported that officials in four of the seven brigades and one-half the active Army adviser teams, advised that they either did not know Bold Shift's peacetime training goals or were uncertain about them. According to the GAO, brigade officials indicated that Bold Shift's goals were communicated only in broad, general terms, such as proficiency at the platoon level.

The GAO reported that once aware of the goals, many officials believed some were too high to achieve—particularly the fully trained goal for platoons, and some did not attempt to train to the goals. The GAO stated that brigade officials also indicated that the fully trained goal for platoons held them to a higher standard than the active Army. The GAO found officials in several active Army divisions that confirmed that in some cases their objective was to reach only a partially trained status.

The GAO reported that officials in both the active Army and Guard, including officials from five of the seven brigades, cited the need for more unified, better coordinated working relationships. According to the GAO, some Guard personnel believed that during the Gulf

Now on pp. 3, 5-6, and
30-38.

War the Army used a double standard of readiness to keep Guard units from deploying to Iraq. The GAO stated some Guard officials indicated that the "us and them" environment has continued, and that the active Army (1) does not understand the unique difficulties faced by their personnel, (2) often expects too much, and (3) excludes them from decision making. The GAO also found active Army officials that indicated Guard personnel often do not understand Army training doctrine and need to be more objective in assessments of their training proficiency. (p. 5, pp. 7-9, pp. 41-55/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The GAO reviewed the Resident Training Detachment (RTD) program at its earliest stages and made conclusions based upon a very immature program. Though admittedly inadequate, the Army did conduct some schooling before the RTD members went to their posts. The report appears to imply that State command of Army National Guard units removes an obligation to accept adviser recommendations. That view oversimplifies the fact that the ARNG units must meet Army standards in all activities in order to retain Federal recognition as reserve component units of the Army. It also contradicts years of very successful experience with the active component advisors in the Senior Army Advisor program and as members of Readiness Groups.

Because the Army accelerated initiation of the RTD program, start up problems are understandable. The FORSCOM issued initial guidance in FY 1992 as broad mission type statements. The statements included: (1) advise and assist the reserve component commanders to implement battle-focused training programs that maximize the use of limited time available to enhance pre-mobilization readiness and assist with post-mobilization training; (2) assist the reserve component commander to develop and conduct high quality soldier, leader, and battle staff training; (3) assist the reserve component leaders in integrating simulation devices based training and assist with conduct of training; (4) provide continuity of operations between training periods by coordinating reserve component training requirements with the reserve component assistance teams, the active component Directed Training Association units, parent divisions, wartime trace and other external support agencies; (5) assist the reserve component commander with preparing for and executing crew and platoon level collective training; and (6) areas for concentration are developing training sites, establishing lanes, coordinating ranges, and conducting leader rock drills. Such broad guidance facilitated mission execution by aggressive leaders until the FORSCOM issued more detailed guidance. A disadvantage however, was that new RTDs arrived at different times, in different units, with different chains of command, and in different states resulting in the development and execution of different plans for similar missions.

Reports delivered at the first FORSCOM RTD Team Chief Workshop in September 1994 indicates the program is proving to be very successful as it evolves. Integration and acceptance have improved since the program started. Dedicated RTD involvement can at least partially account for improved planning and preparation for training periods, better coordination and execution of training, and improved crew qualification rates.

A FORSCOM Memorandum of Instruction for the RTDs is currently under development. That memorandum will provide detailed guidance and eliminate residual confusion. The FORSCOM plans to publish the document by May 1995.

FINDING C: The Brigades' Ability To Be Ready For War 90 Days After Mobilization Is Uncertain. The GAO found that the mechanized infantry and armor brigades face some of the most complex training tasks in the Army. The GAO reported post-mobilization models for those brigades (no models were found for the Guard's light infantry brigades) developed by the Director of Army Training, the Army Inspector General, and the Rand Corporation in 1991 and 1992 estimated the brigades would need between 93 to 98, 68 to 110, and 96 to 154 days, respectively, before being ready to deploy. The GAO noted, however, the more optimistic estimates by the Director of Army Training and Army Inspector General were based on the assumption that Army initiatives would be successful in improving the peacetime training proficiency of the brigades to levels near those envisioned by Bold Shift, thereby shortening post-mobilization training. The GAO pointed out that the Rand model estimate of 154 days is based on the assumption that the strategy's goals would not be met.

The GAO reported that the Army is studying a new post-mobilization model being developed by Rand. The GAO stated that the model, to be completed by the summer of 1995, estimates that 2 to 3 of the better trained brigades, at their current levels of proficiency, could be trained and ready to deploy in 102 days. The GAO pointed out that the new model shortens the training time predicted by earlier models, in part by assuming that training will be conducted at one site large enough to handle brigade-level exercises against an opposing force. The GAO noted that earlier models had assumed the brigades would perform some training at one site and then move to a second, larger site for brigade-level exercises. The GAO also reported that the model assumes 5,000 advisers (only 2,000 advisers had been assigned as of September 1994, with the remaining 3,000 scheduled to be assigned by September 1997), an additional 2,800 Army trainers, and opposing forces for the brigades will be available to provide the training needed. The GAO stated, however, it is not clear whether a sufficient number of trainers and opposing force personnel and large-scale training sites will be available to ensure that all 15 brigades can be readied to deploy quickly. (pp. 5-6, pp. 9-10, pp. 56-71/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Partially concur. At the time of the GAO review, the Round Out and Round Up Brigades were in the midst of an unprecedented change in training strategy and restructuring. The GAO conclusion is based on post-mobilization models and assumptions from studies conducted in 1991 and 1992 by the Director of Army Training and the Army Inspector General; and an on-going Rand Corporation study. However, none of those studies completely reflects a thorough analysis of lessons learned from Gulf War mobilizations or considers any enhancements now being applied to the brigades. A 1992 report by the Institute for Defense Analysis, not included in the GAO report, indicates that units could reduce post-mobilization training time 20-40 percent through the effective use of simulations during pre-mobilization training. The Army was successful in certifying the 48th Brigade in 91 days during Desert Shield/Desert Storm, despite there being no deliberate system or

enhancements in place, and with changing Army standards during these 91 days. The DoD recognizes the factors of post-mobilization collective training sites, training infrastructure and opposing forces that limit the number of Army combat units that can train simultaneously.

Training enhancements and adjustments to BOLD SHIFT recommended by the GAO—which coincide with the Enhanced Brigade Task Force findings of April 1994—will provide the desired results. These enhancements include increased use of state of the art simulators, a three-mission pre-mobilization brigade METL, concentration on critical core skills, an alternate gunnery strategy to facilitate increased maneuver, and improved staff training. (See the DoD responses to the GAO Recommendations.)

* * * *

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **RECOMMENDATION 1:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in conjunction with the National Guard leadership, to identify and focus training on the combat tasks considered critical to fulfilling the enhanced brigades' missions. (p. 11, p. 40/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. In April 1994, the Army Enhanced Brigade (EB) Task Force identified a brigade level three mission foundation for the pre-mobilization EB training strategy. The missions of movement to contact, attack and defend will exercise and sustain proficiency in approximately 85 percent of core collective and individual tasks critical for successful mission accomplishment in a theater of war. Development of the overall training strategy continues under the lead of the FORSCOM. That process contributed to the issuance of the FORSCOM Enhanced Brigade Training Guidance in January, 1995, and the joint development of the implementing regulation, FORSCOM/ARNG Regulation 350-2, dated March 1, 1995. Development continues on additional implementation tools and on efficiencies in the areas of simulation, command and staff training, and alternate gunnery strategies as future enhancements. The FORSCOM/NGB will publish a Change 1 to their Regulation 350-2 in June 1995, that will further define the Enhanced Brigade pre-mobilization training strategy.

- **RECOMMENDATION 2:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to reassess pre-mobilization training goals for the enhanced brigades to ensure that they are consistent with readiness requirements and achievable within available training time and resources. (p. 11, p. 54/GAO Draft Report)

See p. 29.

Now on pp. 6 and 37.

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. In April 1994, the Army established a deployment goal of not more than 90 days after mobilization for the Enhanced Brigades. In addition, the January 1995 FORSCOM Enhanced Brigade Training Guidance and the FORSCOM/ARNG Regulation 350-2, with Change 1, to be published in June 1995, will outline the minimum essential pre-mobilization training objectives that the Enhanced Brigades must meet in the areas of gunnery, platoon maneuver proficiency, and command and staff training.

- **RECOMMENDATION 3:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to document the training goals in guidance provided to the brigades. (p. 11, p. 55/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. In April 1994, the Army Enhanced Brigade Task Force defined, and the Chief of Staff of the Army approved, training goals and objectives for Enhanced Brigades. The FORSCOM Training Guidance of January 30, 1995, further defines the goals. The guidance also charges the active component Division and Corps commanders with accountability for the strategy, in accordance with the mandate of Section 1131, Title XI. The FORSCOM and the NGB have jointly developed specific policies and procedures for executing the strategy. Change 1 to the FORSCOM/ARNG Regulation 350-2, to be published in June 1995, will definitively set the course for the new training strategy.

- **RECOMMENDATION 4:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to reassess the role of advisers assigned to the enhanced brigades, clearly stipulating whether advisers are to (1) identify and resolve training problems, or only assist with training, (2) ensure that advisers have the authority necessary to carry out their role, and (3) document the advisers' role in memorandums of understanding with each state. (p. 11, p. 55/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Partially concur. The value RTD members add is their tactical and technical expertise and ability to assist the Enhanced Brigade commanders in training to standard, to assist them in identifying problems and shortfalls, and to advise them on appropriate remedies. Solutions to problems and shortfalls remain a command function for resolution by the Enhanced Brigade commander and accounting by the associated active component commander. Although Enhanced Brigades are under state command in peacetime, all Army training standards and policies still apply to them. Publication of the FORSCOM RTD Memorandum of Instruction in May 1995, as discussed in the DoD response to Finding B, will clarify the RTD members' roles.

- **RECOMMENDATION 5:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to test

Now on pp. 7 and 37.

Now on pp. 7 and 37-38.

Now on pp. 7 and 38.

additional steps to improve the integration of advisers assigned to the enhanced brigades. The GAO suggested that such steps could include (1) providing the advisers with formal authority to review and agree or disagree with unit training plans and readiness reports; (2) including National Guard commanders as intermediate raters for all Resident Training Detachments (RTD) advisers; (3) increasing enhanced brigade personnel authorizations to allow RTD active duty officers to augment key brigade positions, such as executive officers and training and operations officers; and (4) restructuring or increasing the size of adviser teams assigned to the brigades to provide additional master gunners or other noncommissioned technical experts. (p. 11, p. 55/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Partially concur. Section 1131, Title XI, FY93 National Defense Authorization Act, provides for the associated active component unit commander to approve training plans, review unit readiness reports, assess adequacy of resources and validate at least annually the compatibility of the unit with active forces. The mandate allows for commander to commander mentoring and dialogue. The RTD members currently have the prerogative to provide feedback to both the reserve and active component commanders. However, issuance of “formal” authority to review and agree or disagree with readiness reports would subvert the chain of command and place the advisor in an untenable position. An advisor cannot simultaneously play the role of advisor and evaluator. Therefore, the DoD maintains that additional Army direction is not appropriate.

Now on pp. 7 and 48-49.

- **RECOMMENDATION 6:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to establish and document an Army plan for preparing the enhanced brigades to be ready to deploy to war, (1) basing the plan on realistic assessments of peacetime training proficiency and the resources available to support post-mobilization training and (2) stipulating the training steps involved--including when brigade-level training against an opposing force is not a required part of such training. (p. 11, p. 72/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The NGB and the FORSCOM have jointly developed the foundation of the pre-mobilization training strategy required for bringing the Enhanced Brigades to the required proficiency levels to enter post-mobilization training. The FORSCOM/ARNG Regulation 350-2, dated March 1, 1995, and its Change 1—due in June 1995, will document the strategy. Additionally, the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) supported the strategy by developing a core task list for the three brigade missions of movement to contact, attack and defend that will assist pre-mobilization METL development. The TRADOC has also prepared a model two-year training calendar and an alternate gunnery program for heavy brigades. A plan for review of the core task list, two-year calendar, and alternate gunnery strategy will be mutually developed by TRADOC, NGB, and FORSCOM. Simulation technologies are also under testing in selected brigades.

Now on pp. 7 and 49.

- **RECOMMENDATION 7:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to estimate the timing of the brigades' availability for war based on the Army plan. (p. 11, p. 72/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. All of the enhancements previously discussed, plus many others, should be in place by FY 1999. At that time, the Enhanced Brigades will be doctrinally employable, command and control compatible and logistically supportable by any U.S. Army Division or Corps. The Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan will apportion the Enhanced Brigades to the Warfighting Commanders In Chief and provide them with anticipated deployment timelines.

- **RECOMMENDATION 8:** The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army direct the Chief of Staff of the Army, in consultation with the National Guard leaders, to establish a training performance measurement system to provide (1) objective measures of the enhanced brigade's peacetime training proficiency; (2) centralized oversight information about the status of training relative to those measures; and (3) criteria for commanders to follow when estimating post-mobilization training time requirements. (p. 11, p. 72/ GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 7 and 49.

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The tools for establishing an enhanced system are contained in Field Manuals 25-100 and 25-101, the Unit Status Reporting System, and the Training Assessment Model. The process of integrating those tools for evaluating combat arms maneuver training is still evolving. The Army is developing improvements to its training readiness reporting system. The improvements will identify critical training events and resources, establish objective measures and algorithms, and enable commanders to correlate training readiness to pre-deployment time constraints. This will give the commander an objective analysis of the unit's mission readiness and an accurate estimate of post-mobilization training timelines to meet deployment requirements. The Army expects to incorporate its new system into the next update to the Army Regulation 220-1, Unit Status Reporting, scheduled for completion during FY 1995—subject to compatibility with ongoing Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff readiness evaluation initiatives.

National Guard Brigades Included in Our Review

27th Infantry Brigade (Light), Syracuse, New York¹
48th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Macon, Georgia¹
81st Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Seattle, Washington
116th Cavalry Brigade, Boise, Idaho¹
155th Armor Brigade, Tupelo, Mississippi¹
218th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Newberry, South Carolina
256th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Lafayette, Louisiana

¹These are our case study brigades.

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