

April 1996

# PEACE OPERATIONS

## Reservists Have Volunteered When Needed







United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

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National Security and  
International Affairs Division

B-271401

April 26, 1996

The Honorable Dan Coats  
Chairman  
The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Personnel  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate

The Honorable Robert K. Dornan  
Chairman  
The Honorable Owen B. Pickett  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Military Personnel  
Committee on National Security  
House of Representatives

U.S. participation in peace operations has increased dramatically since the end of the Cold War in 1989. At the same time, the size of the active component has been reduced by nearly one-third, leaving fewer active forces to respond to these operations. With increased stress placed on some active forces, the role of the reserves is changing. The Department of Defense (DOD) expects the reserves to take a greater role in peace operations.<sup>1</sup> While authority to order reservists involuntarily to active duty has been available for recent operations in Haiti and Bosnia, DOD will likely have to rely on volunteers to meet some of its future needs.

Because of concern over peacetime access to reserve volunteers, we undertook this review to (1) determine whether qualified volunteers have been accessible for recent peace operations, (2) identify differences among the services in how much they rely on volunteers, (3) determine the factors that affect availability of volunteers, and (4) identify any actions being taken by DOD to ensure volunteers are accessible.

We performed this work under our basic legislative responsibilities and are sending this report to you because of your oversight responsibilities

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<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of this report, peace operations include everything from low-intensity peacekeeping missions, such as military observer duty, to high-intensity peace enforcement actions.

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for military personnel. We have recently issued two related reports on U.S. participation in peace operations.<sup>2</sup>

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## Background

Much of DOD's capability to support military operations resides in seven reserve components: Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve.<sup>3</sup> Reservists (a term that includes National Guard personnel) are called citizen-soldiers because most hold civilian jobs and perform their military duties on a part-time basis. As part of their service obligation, reservists must participate in prescribed training activities. In addition, reservists participate in a wide range of peacetime activities in support of the active component, such as counterdrug operations, disaster aid, and exercise support, but this report does not cover these types of activities. (App. I provides further background information on the reserve components.)

DOD has two ways of gaining access to reservists in peacetime. Under 10 U.S.C. 12304, the President may order reservists involuntarily to active duty for up to 270 days. This is known as Presidential Selected Reserve Call-Up (PSRC) authority. The other way of gaining access is volunteerism. Under 10 U.S.C. 12301(d), DOD can activate any reservist with the consent of the individual.<sup>4</sup> The preferred method for accessing reservists depends on the nature of the mission.

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## Results in Brief

Thousands of reservists have volunteered for recent peace operations when requested to assist active duty forces. Among the operations they have participated in are those in Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia. The volunteers chosen for peace operations generally have had the necessary skills and qualifications to perform their jobs and have performed well. However, past success in obtaining volunteers may not be indicative of the future.

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<sup>2</sup>Peace Operations: Heavy Use of Key Capabilities May Affect Response to Regional Conflicts (GAO/NSIAD-95-51, Mar. 8, 1995) and Peace Operations: Effect of Training, Equipment, and Other Factors on Unit Capability (GAO/NSIAD-96-14, Oct. 18, 1995).

<sup>3</sup>During wartime, the Coast Guard Reserve comes under the authority of the Navy, but it reports to the Secretary of Transportation in peacetime. We have excluded the Coast Guard Reserve from our review.

<sup>4</sup>Service by National Guard members within the United States requires the consent of the appropriate state authority.

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Reservists have volunteered when needed for peace operations, but the services' demand for volunteers has varied greatly. The Air Force has relied most heavily on volunteers and has been considered a model within DOD. The Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps have had less demand for volunteers, except for certain specialists.

Availability of funding has been a critical factor in whether reserve volunteers are used to support active component operations. In most cases, the expenses of volunteer support are funded by the active component. The Air Force budgets much more for these expenses than the other services. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs has been working through the DOD budgeting process to obtain more funds for reserve support of the active component. Other factors affecting the use of volunteers are the amount of lead time available before the volunteers are needed, the duration of the tour, and whether the requirements are for individuals or units. Army and Navy officials expressed concerns about the extent they can rely on volunteerism if large numbers of reservists or whole units are needed.

DOD has been able to obtain the reservists it needs through a combination of involuntary call-up authority and volunteerism. The demonstrated willingness of DOD to seek and the President to approve call-up authority has minimized the need to rely solely on volunteers to respond to peace operations. Further, DOD has taken some steps to ensure continued access to and use of reserves. Therefore, we are not making recommendations in this report.

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## Reservists Have Volunteered When Requested

Volunteer reservists have been used in most U.S. peace operations since the Persian Gulf War. Although comprehensive data is lacking, we determined that at least 18,000 volunteer reservists participated in peace operations during fiscal years 1992 through 1996.<sup>5</sup> Among the key capabilities provided have been airlift, aerial refueling, and special operations, such as civil affairs and psychological operations. (See table 1.)

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<sup>5</sup>We believe this figure understates the total number of volunteers who have participated in peace operations. In some cases, aggregate data provided by the reserve components focused on nonpersonnel aspects of the mission, such as sorties flown. As a result, we were unable to determine the exact number of personnel involved.

**Table 1: Peace Operations Involving More Than 1,000 Volunteer Reservists (1992-96)**

<b>Operation</b>	<b>Military mission</b>	<b>Examples of reserve support</b>	<b>Number of volunteers<sup>a</sup></b>
Deny Flight/Provide Promise (Bosnia)	Support U.N. no-fly zone; provide humanitarian assistance.	Airlift, fighter support, air refueling, intelligence support, psychological operations, and logistics support.	7,534
Uphold Democracy (Haiti)	Secure conditions for the return of democracy.	Airlift, civil affairs, psychological operations, military police, medical support, and construction.	2,792
Provide Comfort (Northern Iraq)	Provide safe havens for population.	Airlift, fighter support, and psychological operations.	2,051
Provide Relief/Restore Hope/Continue Hope (Somalia)	Provide security and support for relief efforts.	Airlift, postal support, foreign military personnel training, and psychological operations.	1,920
Southern Watch (Southern Iraq)	Monitor repression of population.	Airlift, fighter support, rescue, psychological operations, and intelligence support.	1,610

<sup>a</sup>Due to data limitations, these numbers may be incomplete.

From December 1995 through February 1996, 958 volunteers from the reserve components of the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps provided a variety of support to Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. These volunteers represented 28 percent of reservists deployed to Bosnia and about 4 percent of total deployed U.S. military forces. The Army relied on ordering reservists to active duty under PSRC authority; however, some reservists volunteered to be mobilized under this authority. The Navy and the Marine Corps also used PSRC authority to activate some reservists.<sup>6</sup>

The reserve components have been able to meet nearly all requirements for volunteers, according to active component and reserve officials. Reservists, they said, are eager to volunteer for “real world” missions such as peace operations. Generally, the more publicity an operation receives, the greater the number of reservists who want to volunteer. A 1995 Air Force survey of its personnel showed that 90 percent of the respondents would be willing to volunteer for an overseas mission such as those in Bosnia or Somalia.

We identified isolated instances where volunteers could not be obtained or were difficult to obtain. The Bureau of Naval Personnel, for example, tasked the Naval Reserve to provide 148 volunteers in fiscal year 1995 for a

<sup>6</sup>As of February 1996, a total of 3,475 reservists had been activated under PSRC—3,348 from the Army, 115 from the Navy, and 12 from the Marine Corps.

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variety of peace operations. The Naval Reserve could not fill 11 (7 percent) of the requests. Army National Guard officials experienced difficulties keeping many of the personnel who initially volunteered for the Multinational Force and Observers operation in the Sinai and had to find replacements in a relatively short time before the deployment began. In the end, they were able to meet all the personnel requirements. Notwithstanding these experiences, the general consensus among the officials we spoke with was that volunteers have proven to be accessible for peace operations to the extent they have been needed.

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**Requirements Process  
Targets Qualified  
Volunteers**

The reserve components have established various formal and informal processes to help them identify, contact, and bring reserve volunteers on active duty for peace operations. While no uniform procedures exist, the reserve commands generally rely on requirements documents from the active component as a basis for the number and qualifications of reserve volunteers. Reserve officials said they often work with the active component to develop these requirements so that they can fully respond to the active component's needs. Generally, the reserve commands were able to provide volunteers with the appropriate qualifications.

The requirements documents we reviewed specified, at a minimum, the grade and military specialty of the reservists needed and the expected length of the deployment. Often the documents were more detailed. For instance, Naval Forces Central Command needed a volunteer to support intelligence analysis work for Operation Southern Watch. The requirements document stated that the individual had to be an enlisted male, grade E-4 or higher, with high-level security clearances and experience operating specific intelligence equipment. In some cases, the active component requested a reservist by name. For example, in June 1995, the Army Forces Command requested by name an Army Reserve major to serve as Chief Contracting Officer to support U.S. forces in Haiti as a volunteer for 179 days. This request stated that no qualified active duty personnel were available to fill this position and that this individual met the criteria due to his previous active duty experience.

According to service headquarters and major command officials, active component commands were satisfied with the general quality of volunteer support. Recent studies conducted for DOD have shown that the volunteer reservists who have participated in peace operations have been qualified for their assignments and performed well. The Institute for Defense Analyses conducted several case studies of reserve units that deployed for

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peace operations and gave high marks to their performance. The Army Research Institute studied a battalion comprised mostly of reservists that deployed to the Sinai for 6 months and found that qualified reservists were willing to volunteer and that the mission was performed successfully.

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## Future Volunteer Rate Is Uncertain

Past success in obtaining volunteers is not necessarily predictive of the future. The future availability of volunteers is of particular concern to the Air Force because it relies on them more extensively than the other services. The availability of volunteers is affected by a number of variables, including the nature of an operation, the advance notice provided before volunteers are needed, and the length of the deployment. (These issues are discussed later in this report.)

Some reserve officials expressed concern that repeated use of volunteers eventually could lead to retention problems. In particular, Air Force Guard and Reserve officials were concerned about overuse of their aircrew personnel. The chiefs of the two air reserve components stated that based on recent experience, it is reasonable to expect aircrew members to devote 110 days a year to military duty, including 60 days away from their home station. Fiscal year 1994 data showed that Guard and Reserve aircrews for several types of aircraft had exceeded the 60-day mark. For instance, Guard personnel manning KC-135 tankers averaged 86 days away from their home station that year. The Air Force Reserve has recognized that the increased active duty commitments placed on their members could have an impact on attitudes toward military service. To keep abreast of these attitudes, the Reserve surveyed its members in 1995. Among other things, the survey showed that none of the respondents had definite plans to leave the reserves and less than 5 percent thought they “probably” would not remain or “lean toward” not remaining.

The primary concern of reserve officials is the impact increased military duty may have on the reservists’ relationship with their civilian employers. They worry that as the military places more demands on reservists, employers will become less supportive of their need to take time off from work. If reservists come to feel they must choose between their civilian jobs and their reserve jobs, many may leave the military. To date, however, there is little hard evidence that employer support is waning. According to the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve,<sup>7</sup> the level of complaints from reservists and their employers peaked during

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<sup>7</sup>The National Committee is a DOD organization chartered to promote understanding of the Guard and Reserve and to gain employer and community support. One of its key functions is to help resolve employer/employee problems and misunderstandings that result from reserve duties.



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the Persian Gulf War but has diminished and remained stable since then. A National Committee official said that although the Air Force uses volunteers for active duty missions far more than the other services, the two air reserve components do not generate the greatest share of complaints. He attributed this to an aggressive Air Force effort to seek employer support. However, this official and others we spoke with said employers prefer that reservists be involuntarily ordered to duty because of concern that reservists could abuse their reemployment rights.<sup>8</sup> The Air Force Reserve has initiated a survey of civilian employers. According to Reserve officials, the information from this survey will enable them to improve employer support programs without jeopardizing retention.

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## Air Force Has Had Greatest Reliance on Volunteers

We found differences among the services in their use of volunteers. The Air Force prefers to use volunteers whenever it can to support a peace operation. DOD Reserve Affairs officials have called the Air Force a “model” in its use of volunteers. The Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps have used volunteers in relatively small numbers.

The Air Force has relied extensively on volunteers to support peace operations. As discussed earlier, for instance, 880 volunteers from the Guard and Reserve were participating in Operation Joint Endeavor as of February 1996, and no reservists had been involuntarily ordered to active duty under PSRC authority. Of the more than 18,000 volunteer reservists we identified, about 80 percent were from the Air Force. Several thousand volunteers have supported Provide Promise and Deny Flight (Bosnia), Provide Comfort and Southern Watch (Iraq), Provide Relief/Restore Hope (Somalia), and Uphold Democracy (Haiti). The Air Reserve and Air Guard have provided considerable airlift and aerial refueling to these operations, and their fighter units have taken regular rotations with active component forces.

In explaining the Air Force’s extensive use of volunteers, active and reserve component officials said the service has supported a policy in which the reserve components are routinely included in the execution of missions. However, reserve officials said they must constantly educate their active duty counterparts on the capabilities and limits of the reserve components. Active component officials also pointed out that the Air Force mission is conducive to using volunteers because they usually do

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<sup>8</sup>Under 38 U.S.C. 4312, a reservist has reemployment rights after completing military service. DOD applies this statute to volunteers as well as to reservists ordered to active duty involuntarily.

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not deploy in large units and can fly into and out of the theater of operations.

In the past 2 to 3 years, the Naval Reserve has emphasized its role of providing day-to-day support to the active component. Available data, however, indicates that reservists have not been used extensively to support peace operations. A May 1995 Navy-wide snapshot report on reserve support to the active component showed that 200 reservists (both volunteers and those serving involuntarily) were participating in 6 peace operations, including 105 deployed to Haiti. Atlantic Fleet officials said more reservists were used in Haiti and Cuba than in previous peace operations.

The Army's practice is to use active component personnel whenever possible, but it has made some use of reserve volunteers. Three notable uses of volunteers have been (1) a 49-member Army Reserve postal company that deployed to Somalia; (2) 3 Army National Guard military police companies—400 personnel—that backfilled for active duty units deployed to Haiti; and (3) an infantry battalion comprising 446 Guard and Reserve personnel (80 percent of the total force) that deployed to the Multinational Force and Observers mission in the Sinai.

To date, the Marine Corps has not used volunteers to a great extent for peace operations. The most notable use of volunteers was the deployment of three volunteer rifle companies—473 personnel—to guard refugee camps in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Prior to July 1995, the Marine Corps Reserve focused on supporting the active component in wartime. In July 1995, the Marine Corps added peacetime support as a reserve mission, and Marine Corps officials expect to use volunteers more in the future.

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## Funding Is Most Important Factor Affecting the Use of Volunteers

The availability of funding from the active component is the key factor determining the extent that reserve volunteers are used to support the active component. Air Force officials we interviewed were satisfied with the level of funding available to pay for volunteers, but Army, Navy, and Marine Corps officials said volunteer support was constrained by current funding levels. We were also told, however, that contingency operations have high priority and that funding budgeted for other purposes can be redirected to these operations. In addition to funding availability, the use of volunteers is also affected by (1) the amount of notice provided before the start of the mission, (2) the length of the deployment, and (3) whether the requirements are for units or individuals.

**Funding Constraints Limit Use of Volunteers**

When reservists go on active duty, they generate additional costs to the military for pay and allowances, travel, and equipment use, with pay and allowances constituting the greatest expense. Generally, these volunteer costs are covered by the active component. All four services draw from their account used to fund active component personnel—the military personnel appropriations account—to cover the pay and allowances of reserve volunteers. As shown in table 2, the Air Force has budgeted the largest amount of funding for reserve support in its military personnel appropriations account.

**Table 2: Military Personnel Appropriations Budgeted for Reserve Support (fiscal years 1992-96)**

Dollars in millions				
Fiscal year	Army	Air Force	Navy	Marine Corps
1992	\$3.7	\$39.5	\$12.1	
1993	2.9	73.2	11.3	\$4.2
1994	5.3	78.3	11.6	2.1
1995	7.6 <sup>b</sup>	105.7	11.8	3.8
1996	14.6	121.3	17.0	1.9

Note: In addition to military personnel appropriations, reserve personnel funds are often used to pay for training activities that benefit the active component. For instance, Army units have performed work for the U.S. Southern Command in Central America as part of their annual training. The Navy also uses training funds extensively to support the active component.

<sup>a</sup>Data not available.

<sup>b</sup>Additional military personnel funds were made available during fiscal year 1995 for reserve support. Specifically, \$15.1 million was provided for the Sinai mission and \$9.5 million was provided to prepare equipment for return from Germany to the United States.

As table 2 shows, the Air Force has budgeted significantly more military personnel funding for reserve support than have the other services. In the budgeting process, the Air Force determines how much will be needed by active component commands to pay for reserve support and then designates these funds in its military personnel budget. In contrast, Army officials said funding availability depends on whether the Army’s active component end strength falls below its authorized end strength for a given year. If so, funds are available for reserve volunteer support. The Navy does not budget enough reserve support funds in its military personnel appropriations to meet all the requirements of the active component, according to Navy officials. Marine Corps officials said their service would have to increase its military personnel funding levels if more reserve support is required. However, a 1995 Navy and Marine Corps internal report stated that funding increases alone were not the solution. Other

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solutions addressed the need to establish a plan for submitting and tracking requests for reserve support and the need to develop a process to evaluate the benefits and savings provided by reserves.

DOD is making additional funding available for reserve support under a program initiated in 1995. The program is aimed at increasing reserve support to the active component for operational missions, thereby relieving the stress on the active forces. DOD officials hope that this program, by demonstrating the merits of using reservists, will encourage the services, particularly the Army and the Navy, to budget more funds for reserve support beginning in fiscal year 1998.

The Rand Corporation, in a 1995 study for DOD, identified resource constraints as an impediment to using reservists in operations other than war, which include peace operations. It recommended that funds be earmarked for reserve support in the military personnel appropriations accounts. However, Rand cautioned that increased funding alone would not increase reserve support because DOD would also need to tackle operational and institutional factors limiting the use of reserves, such as a lack of adequate planning and different service philosophies on the purpose and use of the reserves.

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## Advance Notice Enhances Ability to Use Reserves

The ability of the reserve components to provide volunteers for a peace operation is enhanced when advance notice of the requirement is given, but the amount of notice needed depends on the mission. Reserve officials said their personnel need time to arrange for extended absences from work and family. The more notice reserve officials are given by active commands, the greater their chances of finding volunteers. While they will make every effort to meet a short-notice requirement, Air Force Reserve officials said the reserves are ill-suited to be a quick reaction force and are better suited to perform missions for which they can more adequately plan.

Because many variables may affect the amount of lead time necessary to obtain volunteers, it would be difficult to establish a standard. The DOD Task Force on Quality of Life, recently reported that the need for lead time limited the use of the reserves.<sup>9</sup> The task force advocated better planning and a minimum advance notice of 6 months to 1 year. Army National Guard officials indicated that a major deployment, such as the Sinai

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<sup>9</sup>Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology (Oct. 1995).

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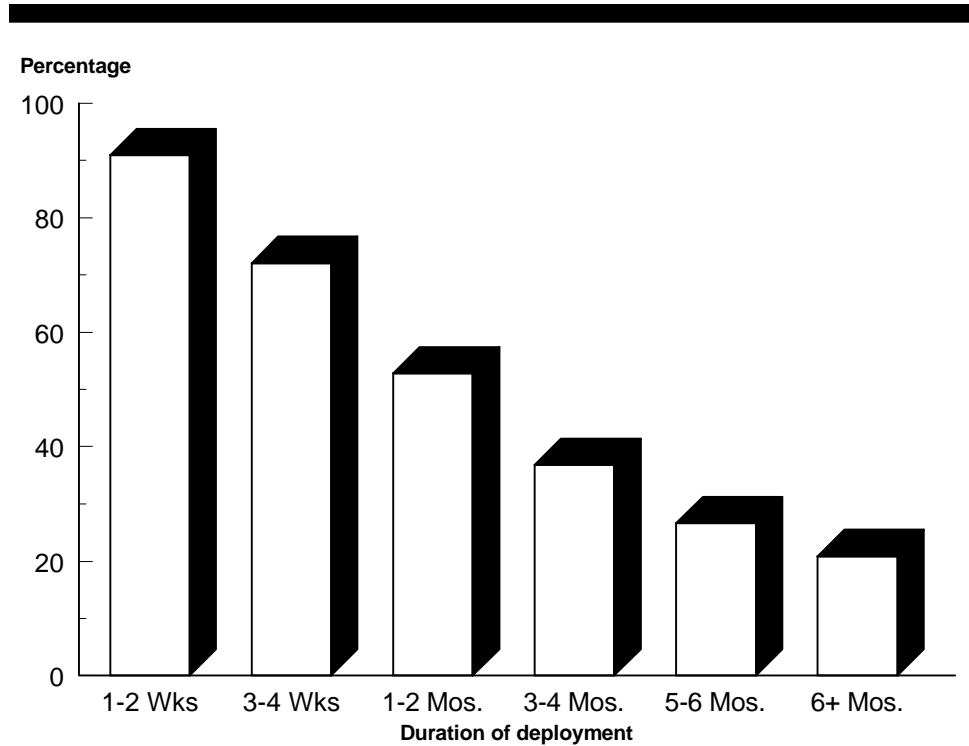
mission, would require lead time of more than 1 year. On the other hand, some requirements for reserve support can be filled very quickly. An Air National Guard official in the medical readiness directorate, for example, said 2 weeks advance notice was generally sufficient for a contingency operation. In 1995, the Air Force held its first annual scheduling conference to plan out support to ongoing peace operations. Both the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard participated. As a result, Air Force Reserve officials told us that they are able to give reservists 6 to 9 months notice prior to the start of a deployment.

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**Tour Length Affects  
Availability**

The length of the tour is another factor affecting the availability of volunteers. Air Force and Navy officials said it is easier to obtain volunteers for shorter tours—30 days or less—because the reservists do not have to spend long periods of time away from their family and work. According to the 1995 Air Force Reserve Survey, the percentage of respondents willing to volunteer for an overseas mission dropped as the duration of deployment increased. (See fig. 1.)

**Figure 1: Percentage of Air Force Reservists Willing to Volunteer for an Overseas Mission**



Source: Air Force Reserve.

Air Force officials told us that flexibility in rotating volunteers can help meet the requirements for long missions. They believe that most active component commanders have come to understand the need for this flexibility and are willing to provide it. For example, the Air National Guard provides fighter support to Operation Provide Comfort for a 3-month period each year. The Guard assigns three units 1 month each, and the units schedule their volunteers to cover their assigned period.

Army and Special Operations officials said short rotations are often not feasible for their missions. For instance, a Special Operations official said it takes time for civil affairs and psychological operations personnel to win the support of host-country civilians as well as their own active component commanders. Short rotations would not allow time for effective interactions to develop. Army officials also said that the Air

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Force has the advantage of being able to fly their personnel easily into and out of the theater of operations. It takes a more intense logistical effort to move Army personnel and their equipment, they said.

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### Requirements for Units Are More Difficult to Meet

Large units are more difficult to obtain on a voluntary basis than individuals or small units because each unit member must consent to volunteer for a mission. This has not been a major problem in the Air Force and the Navy, which tend to deploy volunteers as individuals or as part of small units. The Army has attempted to deploy units of 50 volunteers and more, but has found that forming these size units requires “intensive, more complex work-arounds.”

Army officials were particularly dissatisfied with the formation of an Army Reserve postal company that deployed to Somalia in 1992. Although they initially had hoped to draw all 49 members from a single reserve unit, they ultimately had to find volunteers from several postal units to fill all the slots. In addition, the Army National Guard had hoped to draw from a single division to fill about 400 positions in the battalion that deployed to the Sinai. However, many of the Guard personnel who initially volunteered dropped out, and the Guard had to find replacements from other units. The Army National Guard has experimented with a volunteer program, called Project Standard Bearer, to designate units that would be available to support a humanitarian mission. Under this program, unit members agree to volunteer for a 45-day period when needed. The program was first used when 3 military police companies averaging about 135 members each backfilled for active forces deployed to Haiti. There were mixed opinions on the success of this effort.

Army Reserve officials oppose taking volunteers out of their home units to create a new unit because they are concerned that the readiness of home units will suffer. If individuals are required, they should come from the pool of reservists who are not assigned to units, these officials said, and if entire units are required, the President should use PSRC authority. The Army relied more heavily on PSRC authority in Haiti and Bosnia than the other services. Navy officials also said there were limits in how far they could rely on volunteerism. If large numbers of individuals or units are needed to support an operation, PSRC authority is a necessity, they said.

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## DOD Has Taken Steps to Improve Access to Reserves

In 1994, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs expressed concerns about how much DOD could rely on volunteers.<sup>10</sup> She subsequently formed a working group to address accessibility concerns. Since that time, DOD officials have taken some steps to ensure that reserves will be accessible for the range of peace operations they are likely to confront in the future. Some of these actions focus on volunteerism, while others affect reservists activated involuntarily.

For example, DOD issued a new policy in July 1995 emphasizing the use of volunteers for lesser regional contingencies. This policy is intended to clarify when war planners should anticipate using volunteers and when they can expect PSRC authority to be available. The policy states that while authority to involuntarily order reservists to active duty should be assumed for major regional conflicts, the military is to give maximum consideration to using volunteers for lesser regional contingencies before seeking involuntary access.

At about the same time, DOD initiated a pilot program to encourage active commands to identify opportunities for using reservists during peacetime. This initiative is intended to reduce the personnel tempo of the active duty forces, while providing real world experience to reservists. As discussed earlier, this program is also aimed at making more funds available for using reservists in support of the active component. The pilot is expected to continue through fiscal year 1997 and then be incorporated into DOD's annual programming and budgeting process.

To assist reservists activated involuntarily, DOD proposed a mobilization income insurance program. This program is intended to protect reservists from financial hardships resulting from involuntary call-up. It was approved as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996 (P.L. 104-106) and shall take effect on September 30, 1996.

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## Agency Comments

DOD agreed with this report's findings and conclusions. The comments dealt primarily with technical accuracy and clarification. We have changed the report, as appropriate, to respond to these comments. DOD's comments are shown in appendix III.

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<sup>10</sup>Deborah R. Lee, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Accessibility of Reserve Component Forces (Mar. 3, 1994).



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Our scope and methodology are discussed in appendix II.

We are sending copies of this report to other interested congressional committees; the Secretaries of Defense, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force; the Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. Copies will also be made available to others on request.

If you or your staff have any questions on this report, please call me on (202) 512-4588. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark E. Gebicke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" and "G".

Mark Gebicke  
Director, Military Operations  
and Capabilities Issues

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## Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
PSRC	Presidential Selected Reserve Call-Up

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# Reserve Components

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## Structure of the Reserves

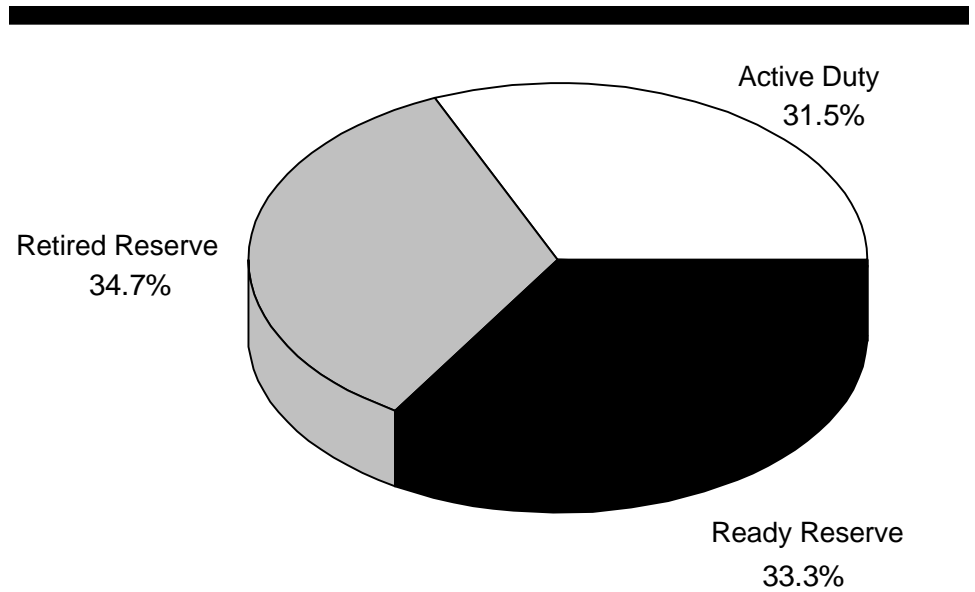
The U.S. armed forces have seven reserve components:

- Army Reserve,
- Army National Guard,
- Air Force Reserve,
- Air National Guard,
- Naval Reserve,
- Marine Corps Reserve, and
- Coast Guard Reserve.

The Army, the Air Force, the Naval, and the Marine Corps Reserves report to their respective service secretaries. In peacetime, the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard report to the state governors, and the Coast Guard Reserve reports to the Secretary of Transportation. During wartime, the Coast Guard Reserve comes under the authority of the Secretary of the Navy and the Army and the Air National Guards come under the authority of the Army and the Air Force Secretaries.

Within the reserve components, reservists may belong to one of three management categories: the Ready Reserve, the Retired Reserve, or the Standby Reserve. As shown in figure I.1, of the approximately five million personnel serving in the military at the end of fiscal year 1995, about one-third belonged to the active component, one-third to the Ready Reserve, and one-third to the Retired Reserve.

Figure I.1: Total Military Personnel  
(fiscal year 1995)

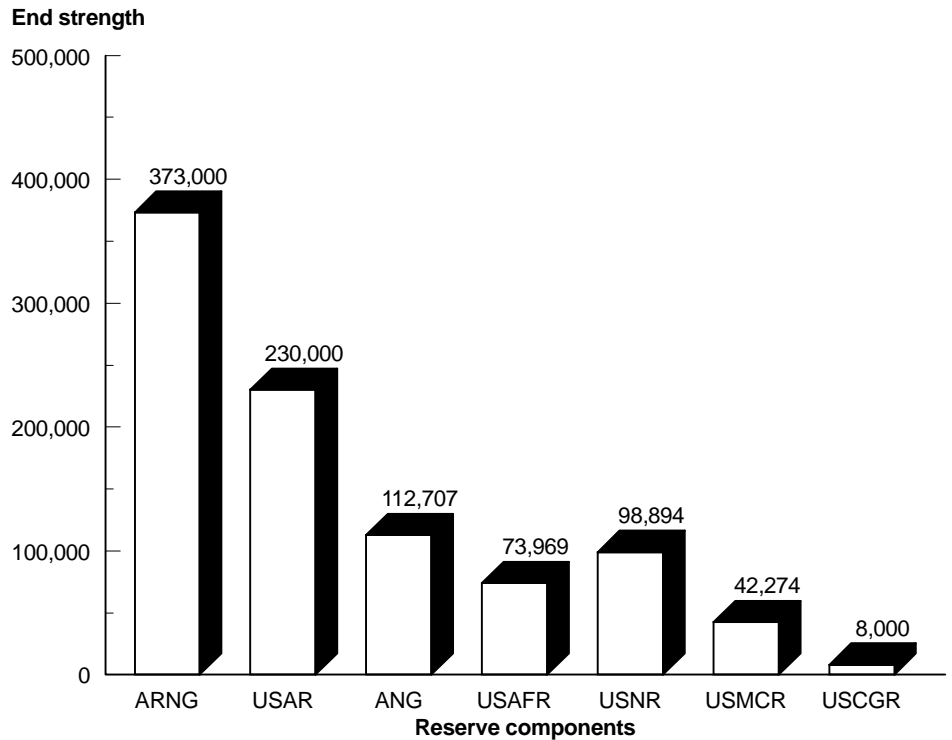


Note: Standby Reserve constitutes less than 1 percent of total military manpower.

Source: Reserve Forces Policy Board.

The Ready Reserve is further subdivided into three groups—the Selected Reserve, the Individual Ready Reserve, and Inactive National Guard. The Selected Reserve has priority over all other reserve groups because it is considered essential to initial wartime missions. The Selected Reserve includes drilling reservists assigned to reserve units, full-time support personnel, and individual mobilization augmentees assigned to active component commands. In peacetime, these reservists may volunteer for active duty missions or they may be involuntarily activated under Presidential Selected Reserve Call-Up (PSRC) authority. The authorized end-strength of the Selected Reserve for fiscal year 1996 is about 940,000. As shown in figure I.2, the Army National Guard and Army Reserve had the greatest share of total personnel in the Selected Reserve.

Figure I.2: End Strength of Selected Reserve, by Reserve Component (fiscal year 1996)



Legend

ARNG = Army National Guard  
USAR = U.S. Army Reserve  
ANG = Air National Guard  
USAFR = U.S. Air Force Reserve  
USMCR = U.S. Marine Corps Reserve  
USCGR = U.S. Coast Guard Reserve

Source: National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996.

The Individual Ready Reserve and Inactive National Guard is a pool of about 695,000 trained individuals who have previous active duty or Selected Reserve experience. These reservists generally have a remaining service obligation and are subject to mobilization. These reservists may volunteer for active duty missions, but may not be accessed under PSRC authority.

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The Standby Reserve is a small pool of designated key civilian employees who retain their military affiliation but do not belong to the Ready Reserve. The Standby Reservists are not required to train and are not assigned to units. These reservists could be mobilized to fill specific manpower requirements, but are not subject to PSRC.

The Retired Reserve is comprised of former military personnel who are receiving retirement pay or who are eligible for retirement pay at age 60, but have not reached that age. Retired members who have completed at least 20 years of active federal service, Regular or Reserve, may be ordered to active duty by the Secretary of the appropriate military department at any time.

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## Role of the Reserves

The reserve component forces are considered an integral part of the U.S. armed forces and essential to the implementation of U.S. defense strategy. Reductions in the size of the active force and increased U.S. participation in peace operations since the end of the Cold War have increased reliance on the reserve forces, as illustrated by the inclusion of reserve component units in warfighting contingency plans and peacetime operations.

As an integral part of the Total Force,<sup>1</sup> the Reserves and the Guard provide a broad range of capabilities to the active component. Army National Guard and Army Reserve units provide combat, combat support, and combat service support capability to the active Army. The Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve perform a broad range of combat and combat support missions, including strategic airlift, tactical airlift, aerial refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and special operations. Naval Reserve units participate in most mission areas of the Navy, including maritime patrol, carrier and helicopter wings, intelligence units, and medical support units. The Marine Corps Reserve provides combat, combat support, and combat service support. The reserve components also participate in a wide range of peacetime support activities, including counterdrug operations, disaster aid, and host-nation assistance. In addition to their federal missions, the Army and the Air National Guards also respond to domestic emergencies such as natural disasters and domestic unrest.

Reservists have traditionally provided a broad range of support to the active component during peacetime, often supplementing active forces in

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<sup>1</sup>The Total Force policy was instituted in 1973 to more closely integrate the active and reserve components of the armed forces.

nation-building and humanitarian assistance operations during annual training periods. Increased participation in peace operations has placed new demands on the reserve forces. Peace operations typically require more support forces than combat operations. In these operations, more emphasis is placed on tasks such as handling refugees, coordinating and distributing humanitarian aid, serving as a liaison with local officials, and augmenting command staffs for civil-military matters. Many of these capabilities, such as civil affairs and psychological operations, reside predominantly in the reserve component.

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## Training of the Reserves

As part of their service obligation, most reservists are required to participate in prescribed training activities. Selected Reservists are required to participate in training to maintain their readiness and proficiency. Each year they must participate in at least 48 4-hour inactive duty training periods—the equivalent of 24 8-hour days, or 12 weekends a year. Selected Reservists must also participate in annual training periods of about 2 weeks. Annual training is generally performed during one consecutive period. However, some reservists, particularly those in the Air Force and the Navy components, often fulfill the annual training requirement during several shorter periods.

The Department of Defense (DOD) authorizes extra inactive duty training periods for those units and individuals who need to meet additional training requirements, for aircrew qualification training, and for unit management activities. DOD also authorizes active duty training for full-time attendance at training activities that primarily benefit the individual, such as specialized skill training, refresher and proficiency training, and professional development education programs.

Members of the Individual Ready Reserve and Inactive National Guard are not required to meet the same training requirements as Selected Reservists. However, they are required to serve 1 day of duty each year to accomplish screening requirements and may participate voluntarily in inactive duty training. Members of the Retired Reserve are not subject to mandatory training. However, they are encouraged to participate voluntarily in order to maintain their readiness.



# Scope and Methodology

To evaluate the accessibility of volunteers, we interviewed officials at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, service headquarters, selected major commands, reserve component commands, and other DOD commands and offices. We discussed past experiences with obtaining volunteers for peace operations and obtained their views on factors affecting accessibility. We obtained DOD and service policies on the use of volunteers, procedures for accessing them, and historical funding data.

We also sought to obtain data on the use of volunteers for peace operations between fiscal years 1992 and 1995. Although we obtained some data, comprehensive data showing the number of reservists deployed, their military specialties, the length of deployment, and the total cost was not readily available from any of the services.

During our review, we identified relevant studies prepared for DOD. These included studies conducted by the Rand Corporation, the Institute for Defense Analyses, and the Army Research Institute. We met with or contacted the individuals responsible for these studies and obtained documents they prepared for DOD. Also, we obtained documents prepared by staff working for the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces concerning peace operations and the reserve components.

We obtained information from the following Washington, D.C., area, offices:

- Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs; Director for Operational Plans and Interoperability, Joint Staff; and the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve;
- Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans and the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel;
- Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Reserve Affairs, the Office of Air Force Reserve, the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, and the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations;
- Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and the Bureau of Naval Personnel;
- Reserve Affairs Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; and
- National Guard Bureau, the Air National Guard Readiness Center, and the Army National Guard Readiness Center.

We visited the following commands: U.S. Army Reserve Command, Atlanta, Georgia; Air Force Reserve, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia;

Naval Reserve Command and Marine Reserve Force, New Orleans, Louisiana.; and U.S. Special Operations Command, Tampa, Florida. In addition, we contacted the following commands: U.S. Army Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia; U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois; and U.S. Atlantic Command and the Navy's Atlantic Fleet, Norfolk, Virginia.

Finally, we met with officials of the National Guard Association of the United States, the Reserve Officers Association, and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard.

We performed our work between April 1995 and March 1996 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

# Comments From the Department of Defense



RESERVE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1500

03 APR 1996

Mr. Mark E. Gebicke  
Director, Military Operations and  
Capabilities Issues  
National Security and International  
Affairs Division  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Gebicke:

This letter constitutes the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report, "*PEACE OPERATIONS: Reservists Have Volunteered When Needed*," dated March 15, 1996 (GAO Code 703097/OSD Case 1113). The Department has reviewed the draft report and generally concurs. A number of minor technical corrections were previously forwarded directly to the GAO staff for consideration.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Goodbary".

Robert A. Goodbary  
Major General, USA

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
Reserve Affairs (Readiness, Training, & Mobilization)

# Major Contributors to This Report

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