

Army National Guard 4.0

A Transformation

by Major Roye Locklear, Jr., U.S. Army National Guard



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In Brief

- Established in the English tradition of militia service, the composition and role of the Army National Guard has evolved over the past 400 years.
- The transition to Guard 4.0 provides increased professional development and mobilization opportunities that are at the core of why Soldiers enlist.
- The Army National Guard will continue to position itself as the principal combat operational reserve of the U.S. Army.
- In support of the new *National Defense Strategy*, the Army National Guard will continue to play a significant role in establishing a framework that enables the joint force to prevail in an increasingly competitive environment.
- The Army National Guard seeks concurrent and proportional fielding of equipment as the Army navigates its *Modernization Strategy*.

Army National Guard 4.0: A Transformation

Introduction

In 2017, under the direction of Lieutenant General Timothy J. Kadavy, Director, Army National Guard, March 2015–March 2019, the Army National Guard began the most significant transformation of the force since the conclusion of the Vietnam conflict. This transformation, known as Guard 4.0, is intended to place the Army National Guard on a path to meet the nation’s security challenges as an integral part of the U.S. Army and the joint force. Today’s National Guard is built on roots established on 13 December 1636; the state militia of this initial era provided military or quasi-military forces as drilling volunteers to perform a range of military operations. From the beginning, this structure operated under a continual state of transition. According to Michael Doubler, author of *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War*, “The National Guard is an organization in transition and forever changing regarding its personnel, force structure, weapons, and training.”¹ This transformation and change provided the militia—later the Army National Guard—with flexibility and adaptability as foundations for its core competencies.

The Army National Guard, through its long history of transformation, possesses the institutional values to manage the adaptation to Guard 4.0. As Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, authors of *The Social Construction of Reality*, would say, the institutionalization of the Army National Guard allows for the fluid transition between the social realities of change.² The evolution of the Army National Guard from Guard 1.0 to Guard 3.0 built the foundation for continued transition. The transformation to Guard 4.0 will come with its own challenges; two significant difficulties will be the social implications of the new paradigm and maintaining parity, where required, with the Regular Army. These two areas pose the biggest risk to successful implementation because of their inherent importance to success and the level of uncertainty posed by changing social dynamics and government policy. While these challenges are daunting, the following research shows the resilience and flexibility of the Army National

Guard in adapting to and overcoming transformative events, emerging stronger and becoming more resilient.

This paper will highlight the transformation of the Army National Guard through its transition from Guard 1.0 (post-Vietnam) to Guard 3.0 (Global War on Terror). DoD defines military transformation as “a process that shapes the changing nature of military competition and cooperation through new combinations of concepts, capabilities, people, and organizations that exploit our nation’s advantages and protect against our asymmetric vulnerabilities.”³³ With that in mind, Part One provides an introduction and a historical overview of the National Guard, including a brief overview of the original militia from 1636 to 1903, focusing on transformational events. This period of time establishes the context of a transformational organization and the origin for many social and organizational norms found in the National Guard today. Part Two examines its structure and configuration in the early to mid-1900s. It provides a case study that looks at the initial transformation following the Dick Act and the implications of those changes on the dual mission of the National Guard. The study includes established social norms in the National Guard and the impacts of those norms both on the Soldiers and on the development of a social contract between the National Guard and citizen Soldiers. Part Three provides a second case study, specifically in the transition from Guard 1.0 through Guard 3.0 in the years following Vietnam and leading up through Iraq. This transformation of the National Guard had significant impacts on Soldiers, equipping and the individual states. Part Four looks at the transformation to Guard 4.0 and the implications of the vast changes to the operational reserve. Finally, Part Five provides a synthesis of the preceding sections, recommendations for continued implementation of Guard 4.0 and an overall conclusion.

Part I: Background of the Militia (1636–1903)

The first American colonial militia regiments date from 13 December 1636 in the Massachusetts Bay colony. These militia responded to the call of duty for both the colony and nation by executing the laws, suppressing insurrections and repelling invasions. In May 1792, Congress passed the Militia Act of 1792, requiring all free, able-bodied men ages 18–45 to serve in the enrolled militia and to provide their own weapons and equipment. No federal monies were authorized for pay, equipment, training or any other purpose. This act also provided for an adjutant general in every state under the authority of the local governor. Their responsibility was to train, discipline and administer the militia.

The period following the War of 1812 brought about a transformational shift in the militia. Up until this point, conscripted service in the militia was standard and problematic, but it was a well-established process throughout the country. By the 1850s, the volunteer militia was well rooted in the states, and it was producing better-trained militia men than the conscription-based militia of the past. This shift continued as the leadership in many state militias started to see the role of the militia as more than a policing agency. They saw the militia as a military force and, therefore, both an essential part of military operations and a combat reserve. The National Guard, as a combat reserve, came at a price to the autonomy of the state forces. The Regular Army wanted oversight, and so, upon troop mobilization, Regular Army officers would lead the units. In the 1890s, National Guard leadership understood that there must be some compromise between total federal oversight and complete autonomy. These visions for the future application of the National Guard and a multiple component army set the stage for radical transformation; it began to take shape in 1901, when then-Secretary of War Elihu Root presented

a methodology for reform to Congress in what became known as the 1903 Dick Act (1903 Efficiency of the Militia Act), implementing sweeping changes. National Guard leadership understood that the future of the Guard would be in its ability to meet the needs of the state governors. However, its best future was to become an indispensable adjunct of the Regular Army.

The 1903 Dick Act was the first significant lawful reorganization of the militia since the Militia Act of 1792. It started with the separation of the militia into two organizations. The National Guard, now recognized in Federal Law as a reserve of the Army, received allocated federal funding and equipment. This funding supported annual training, but not the required monthly drill periods. Training for the National Guard consisted of twenty-four drill periods (unpaid) and a minimum of five days of summer camp (annual training). Additionally, the National Guard was available for mobilization within the United States at the order of the president for up to nine months; states and guard units were no longer able to refuse to mobilize if ordered to federal service. The Dick Act was one of the most significant transformational events of the National Guard. Moving forward, the National Guard would receive funding, equipment, training and Regular Army officers, just like the Regular Army.

Army National Guard Following the Militia Act

In 1903, the total strength of the National Guard was 116,547; the Regular Army was 69,595. The forces, however, were significantly divergent from each other. The Dick Act provided a path for convergence, and the National Defense Act of 1916 provided for the establishment of the three-component-based structure of the Army. Transforming from a mostly state-funded entity to a federally funded military organization, the National Guard began its new path as a reserve of the Army. Emergent transformations in the Regular Army, such as professional education and general staffs, would equally apply to the National Guard, although in much less proportionality, as only a limited numbers of guard officers could attend these courses.

Part II: Configuration of the Army National Guard (1903–1955)

Role of the Army National Guard

When the United States declared war on Germany on 6 April 1917, there were already approximately 66,700 Guardsmen on active duty from the mobilization supporting the Mexican border conflict.⁴ Many of these Soldiers had deployed within the United States to protect critical infrastructure and transportation facilities. On 5 August, President Wilson drafted the entire National Guard into federal service as individuals.⁵ This action allowed Guardsmen to deploy outside of the United States without any concern for judicial rulings that would have limited expeditionary action. These Soldiers would be used primarily as an augmentation force, regardless of composition; they served across the spectrum of forces as needed.

In 1935, at the urging of Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur, Congress increased appropriations to grow the National Guard in response to unrest in the European theater. Numerically, the need for the National Guard was critical, as it was the largest component of the Army between 1922 and 1939. On 16 September 1940, federalization of Guard units began, with the 30th, 41st, 44th and 45th Infantry Divisions being part of the initial push.⁶ As the federalization process began to unfold, many other Guard units began to experience personnel shortages. These shortages required assistance from the Army to bring unit manning levels into alignment with requirements. To address the shortage, draftees initially filled gaps in National Guard Divisions. The federalization process itself was lengthy, often taking up to

12 months to complete. With their orders nearing completion, the War Department convinced Congress to extend National Guard units; this extension enabled General Marshall to conduct the great General Headquarters Maneuvers in the summer and fall of 1941.⁷

Following World War II, the Regular Army significantly reduced the size of the force, from 8.3 million Soldiers and Airmen to just over 550,000 in ten divisions. Initially, three undermanned divisions remained in Korea, but the Korean contingent soon dropped to two: the 6th and 7th Infantry Divisions. The Regular Army was too small to respond adequately to the North Korean invasion, and it needed options to build forces quickly. The Army's leadership recommended bringing some understrength National Guard divisions into federal service. On 10 August 1950, the president appropriated four Guard infantry divisions. Given the size of the Regular Army, this option was most viable; standing up new Regular Army units would take considerably more time than filling and training already organized National Guard units.⁸ The Army utilized individual rotations for limiting the time (one to two years) of individual deployment but kept units in place. Over 138,000 Guardsmen would go on to deploy in support of the Korean War effort. The experience of individual replacement mobilizations would also serve the National Guard well in Vietnam.

Involvement by the United States in Vietnam began as early as 1950 in French Indochina, with U.S. military advisors supporting the French war effort. There was little executive-level desire to utilize the National Guard in support of the conflict for several reasons. Primarily, the President of the United States envisioned the conflict as limited in duration and scope. Second, it was critical to maintaining support of the American public; as history would reveal, the public's ability to shift political and national support for war resulted in a strategic shift of policy in Vietnam.⁹ Additionally, President Johnson made an assessment that mobilizing the National Guard would signal intentions to the Soviets and to the Chinese that might influence their direct intervention in the war.¹⁰

Part III: From Vietnam to Iraq (1955–2017)

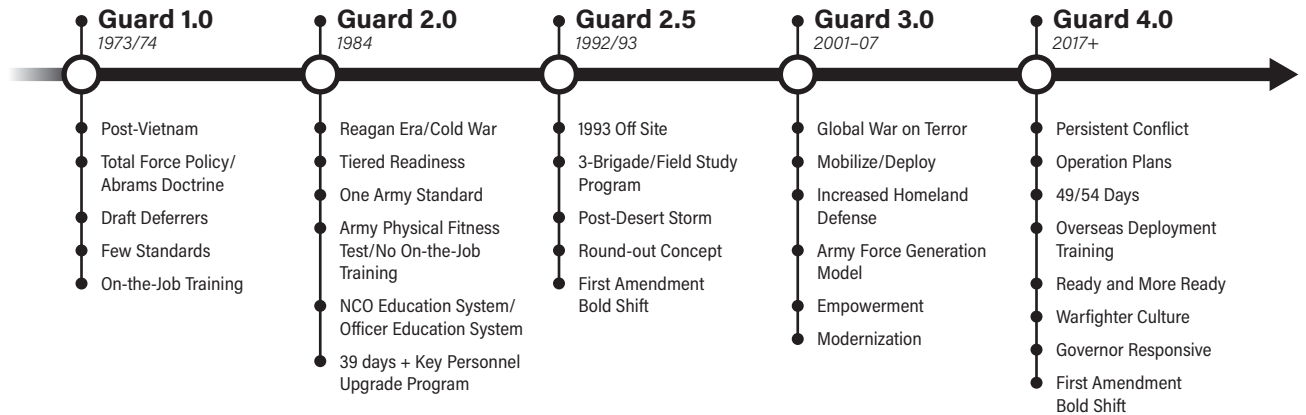
The previous examination of the Militia and Army National Guard from inception through Vietnam provided the building blocks for the subsequent transitions that became known as Guard 1.0 through Guard 3.0.

Concept of Army National Guard (ARNG) 1.0 Through 3.0

Guard 1.0, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0 and an emergent 4.0 provide the sequential phased numbering identifying transition points of the Army National Guard over time. The establishment of this lexicon started with the transition from a conscription force during Vietnam to an all-volunteer force in 1973. From this inflection point, there is a series of pivotal moments in time whereby global events triggered a requirement for a transformational change. Figure 1 provides the evolutionary timeline from Guard 1.0 through Guard 4.0, highlighting key events and dates for each inflection point. While each era falls within a timeline, national level events shape the starting points. These points begin at the end of Vietnam, then transition to the height of the Cold War, Desert Storm, the Global War on Terror and the future of a resurgent Russia and China. They represent a shift in personnel, equipping, training and core competencies within the organization. Central to each evolution is the role of the Army National Guard in defense of the nation, the corresponding homeland response, and the anticipated reliance on the reserve components during times of crisis.

Figure 1

The Path to Guard 4.0



Guard 1.0 (1973–1984)

Guard 1.0 began during the post-Vietnam era in 1973 with the signing of a new law by President Nixon that ended the draft (1971–1973) and established the all-volunteer force. Additionally, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird championed the Total Force Policy (TFP), which integrated the Regular Army and the reserve components.¹¹ During this time, the TFP increased training opportunities between active duty and Guard units, resulting in increased proficiency and readiness. These two concepts were influenced by budgetary cuts to DoD and by the abolishment of conscription. Concurrently, then-Army Chief of Staff General Creighton Abrams developed the Abrams doctrine, incorporating the Army National Guard to serve as round-out units while reserve brigades would augment Regular Army brigades.¹²

Another critical factor in the Army National Guard during this time was the minimal enforcement of standards. This was an era of low morale, low recruiting and low retention rates—not to mention racial strife and pervasive drug use. All in all, it was a shallow point in history for both the active-duty military and for the Guard and Reserve.¹³ The transition from a conscription Army to the all-volunteer force, years of conflict and societal unrest created tremendous obstacles for the Guard to overcome.

Guard 2.0 and 2.5 (1984–2001)

From 1973 to 1984, the National Guard adapted to many obstacles while continuing to shift focus to the threat of the Soviet Union and the Cold War. During Guard 2.0/2.5, the Army National Guard, along with the Regular Army, began a rebuilding phase to bolster readiness and to modernize equipment across the force. Transformative shifts, ignited by emerging doctrine, would result in growth to the force in the form of two new divisions, one heavy and one light. The passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, aimed at attempting to fix problems caused by interservice rivalries, was also transformative during this period.

The Persian Gulf War began in August 1990, with over 62,000 Army National Guard Soldiers mobilized for deployment. Performance during training for various units was cause for concern. The notion that Army National Guard combat brigades were available for deployment

within weeks of mobilization proved not entirely accurate; a new understanding that the requirement was more in line with a 60–90-day post-mobilization training timeline developed. The lessons learned from the deployment of round-out brigades had showed the Department of the Army that National Guard combat brigades align better with non-rapid contingency operations forces. This improved understanding of mobilization, and the deployment of reserve forces, helped shape the future requirements for training. The National Guard would, going forward, train at the individual, crew, squad and platoon level to hone those basic skills required for combined arms collective training.

Guard 3.0 (2001–2017)

Guard 3.0 began, like most other transformations, during a time of crisis for the nation. The Army National Guard rapidly engaged in military and domestic response following 9/11. More than 50,000 Guard members were called up both by their states and by the federal government to provide security at home and to combat terrorism abroad.¹⁴ The transformation that followed in Iraq and Afghanistan helped to usher in Guard 3.0 and served as the foundation for a transition to an operational reserve—a move strengthened by The Quadrennial Defense Review of 2006. By September 2003, over 144,000 National Guardsmen and reservists were on active duty, with 28,000 of these mobilized for homeland security.¹⁵ Deployments lasted 15–24 months, with boots on the ground lasting no more than 12 months. These lengthy deployment timelines were short lived; concerns began to mount from the American public regarding their extended durations. Ultimately, in response to these concerns, the deployment timelines for Guard units were shortened. Over time, the continued use and quality of the Army National Guard, both for homeland security and forward-deployed missions, built trust in the total force concept.

Part IV: Army National Guard 4.0 (2017–present)

Trajectory of ARNG under Guard 4.0

The transition to Guard 4.0, as a concept, started in 2016 with the approval of the Army National Guard’s Decision Point 58.3, enhanced readiness guidance published in 2017.¹⁶ Guard 4.0 was designed to quickly and effectively meet the security challenges of the 21st century. Its goal is to maximize resources, to prioritize capabilities and to enhance readiness with the Army Total Force.¹⁷ The foundational principle of Guard 4.0 is the availability of National Guard units on a predictable and rotational basis. Readiness both in personnel and in training proficiency is the key to the success of the Army National Guard’s transformation. States must recruit and retain qualified and medically-ready Soldiers to fill formations; must instruct these Soldiers in relevant and demanding individual and collective training events; and must maintain operational tempo and respond to the dual mission of domestic operations across the nation.

This transformation of the Army National Guard is a shift in its paradigm. Historically, as the strategic reserve of the Army, the Guard’s preparation for mobilization consisted of lengthy stretches of time designed to meet Cold War threats from large nation-states.¹⁸ Units routinely spent 90–180 days at a mobilization station, preparing for mission-specific training and mandatory Department of the Army-directed training. The shift in paradigm to Guard 4.0 leverages rapid Army National Guard units that can deploy. This is happening through improving training readiness (originally in the implementation of the Sustainable Readiness Model, now the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model—ReARMM), increasing the number

of Combat Training Center (CTC) rotations and adding training days for select units. Also, the Guard must build increased readiness in select units, such as Armored Brigade Combat Teams and Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, by continuing to integrate Guard units with Regular Army units and by rebalancing the force to maximize total endstrength.

Recruitment for Readiness

Readiness within the Army National Guard is a holistic enterprise which includes aspects of personnel, equipment, training and facility readiness. A unique challenge for Guard units is personnel endstrength, as individual states and units are responsible for recruiting to fill vacancies. In contrast, the Army utilizes a centralized Human Resources Command and centralized recruiting force to recruit and grow the Army. Guard units within each state have centralized recruiting commands, but individual recruiters are sometimes allocated to separate commands within a state to provide more control at the unit level for recruiting. In many states, individual unit commanders become responsible for the endstrength of their units. In his strategy research project for the Army War College, Colonel Donald K. Takami elaborated on this unique challenge in that the National Guard, unlike the active component, puts unit strength management on the shoulders of its commanders and senior NCOs. Consequently, many young company grade officers across the Guard often find themselves beset with recruiting challenges.

Medical Readiness

Medical readiness is essential to the Guard's ability to deploy and conduct its missions. Considerable effort has been made toward achieving elevated levels of medical readiness across the force—and even more effort to sustain those levels once achieved. Many states augment their military providers with local contract support to increase throughput during Periodic Health Assessments. Also, states provide local dental treatment to solve minor dental issues which would otherwise make a Soldier non-deployable. In recent years, states have begun the practice of restricting Soldiers from attending drill if their medical readiness classification indicates that they are not medically ready or deployable. Through these methods, implemented over the past 10 years, the Army National Guard has achieved historical levels of Soldier readiness.

Equipment Modernization and Readiness

The National Guard is an operational force that consistently deploys in support of overseas combat operations, performing the same missions as its active-duty counterparts, and it provides domestic emergency response. Yet, it is not equipped in the same manner. Equipment parity is a primary line of effort for Guard leadership. National Guard units must receive equipment in a concurrent and proportional rate to their active-duty counterparts. This means that, once new equipment and weapon platforms are procured by DoD, they must be fielded immediately and proportionally to the National Guard.

As previously established, the Guard is not simply a “reserve force”; it is an operational force that is the principal combat reserve of the Army and consistently deploys in overseas combat missions alongside the active component. Concurrent and proportional fielding of equipment must allow for both components to deploy together safely, efficiently and lethally. Overall, the *National Defense Strategy* demands a Total Force effort, and National Guard servicemembers require the equipment to align toward great-power competition with Russia and China. While there are examples of concurrent and proportional fielding to the National Guard,

including the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle and F-35 programs, they are still a long way from being the norm.

Before 2001, equipment procurement and readiness budgets were often the first accounts restricted during budget cuts, resulting in reduced equipment readiness and outdated equipment across the Army National Guard. A Government Accountability Office Report in 2005 identified a widespread practice within the National Guard of transferring both personnel and equipment between units to meet operational demands. This lateral transferring of equipment resulted from shortages in full capitalization of units' documented equipment per their Modified Table of Organizational Equipment or Table of Distributions and Allowances. While this was a significant readiness concern in recent history, equipment procurement and refit initiatives have increased equipment on hand from 77 percent in 2011 to over 93 percent in 2014. Also, the congressionally appropriated funding allocated as part of the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) provides another avenue for the Army National Guard to procure equipment. NGREA funding levels for the National Guard in 2021 topped \$285 million.

Facility Readiness

The final strategic focus item for Guard readiness is in its facilities, which includes both training facilities and armories. In the early 1950s, Congress appropriated funds to construct armory readiness centers across the nation to support a Cold War-sized National Guard. During the early years of the Cold War, units changed force structure—a change which brought new weapons and equipment. Local Guard units rented or borrowed facilities in the local community to serve as their armories. Before World War II, single-unit armories or readiness centers simply did not exist. An armor unit in Americus, Georgia, for example, was meeting at the Sumter County Courthouse in 1948; some units even drilled in high school gymnasiums.¹⁹ Construction of new armories was designed with functionality in mind; they included office space, drill halls and maintenance bays. Many armories built before the 1950s were elegant architecturally, built within large towns or cities. They became centers for civil defense, disaster relief and command centers for monitoring and evaluating crisis situations, collection and distribution centers for food and water, embarkation points for troops, trucks and other heavy equipment being dispatched to help people in need, and shelters for those driven from their homes. National Guard armory locations increased exponentially from the 1950s, helping to create the moniker “The Hometown Guard.” Soldiers enlisted in their hometowns and would often stay in the same unit for many years or even their entire career.

These facilities were what the Guard needed in the second half of the 20th century, but now, nearing 65 years or older, the products of this great building boom have run their course. At the beginning of the boom, the Guard designed many of its then-new facilities to last 55 years; consequently, they are past the end of their intended lifecycle.²⁰ The 2017 *Army National Guard Vision & Strategy* document identified installations as a critical area of focus. There are over 25,000 buildings and 3,000 sites that support Soldiers and Soldier training across the nation. In budget-constrained environments, funding reserved for maintenance and modernization becomes a bill payer for other more critical areas. The single-unit armories of the 1950s are no longer adequate to support the vast array of equipment and vehicles that these units now employ.²¹ Auxiliary locations such as Maneuver Area Training and Equipment Sites or Unit Training Equipment Sites help alleviate overcrowding of equipment at armory locations, but they do not solve the real problem. States continue to assess the need for new readiness centers across the force and to look for funding for new projects annually.

Rebalance of Force Structure and the End Strength and Force Structure Readiness Advisory Council of 2016

In concert with initiatives to improve readiness across the Guard, in late 2016 the National Guard Bureau (NGB) established the End Strength and Force Structure Readiness Advisory Council (ESFSRAC). The responsibilities of the council were to evaluate stationing of force structure across the states in relation to endstrength to determine if states and territories had balance. If states were out of balance, the council recommended to the Director, Army National Guard, the appropriate adjustments to balance the force. The recommendations proposed by the council were not without contention, as force structure within states is both a practical and political matter for governors and senior state leadership.

Lieutenant General Timothy Kadavy formed ESFSRAC with the goal of conducting a holistic review of endstrength to force structure across the National Guard. The council reviewed several metrics to determine which states should grow force structure and which states would take a hit. The essence of the metrics revolved around the ability of states to fill their force structure with deployable Soldiers at 100 percent endstrength. Force structure in states equals capability assets for governors during domestic response incidents, and the loss of even a minor capability becomes both a practical and a political issue.²² The National Guard is a capability controlled by the governor that can be utilized when local assets can no longer meet the needs of any given incident. Each state had its own reasons why it did or did not agree with the recommendations of ESFSRAC, but, regardless, the actions it recommended moved forward. The ultimate results and disposition of force structure reallocation are not relevant to Army National Guard 4.0 or the transformation to it. However, the process of analysis across the 54 states and territories is a fundamental point for holistic readiness. This decision denoted a point where the NGB departed from a functional management headquarters to a headquarters that leads the 54 states and territories together on a path to greater readiness and concerted actions. These actions are a significant milestone because of the legal and regulatory limits placed on the NGB as a bureau, not a mission command headquarters. The ability to build consensus and unified action within these bounds sets the stage for continued forward gains.

A significant factor in the discussion of reallocating or rebalancing force structure is the provision established in section 18238 of U.S. Code. This section stipulates that a unit of the Army National Guard may not be relocated or withdrawn without the consent of the Governor of the State. In years past, rebalancing force structure involved activating and deactivating units in different states as Total Army Analysis (TAA) changed the composition of structure in the National Guard. NGB could allocate new structure to states that demonstrated the ability to grow the structure while maintaining endstrength. States that were historically unable to maintain endstrength around 100 percent received no new force structure and often lost force structure by way of TAA divestment. This process worked efficiently, as some states would overdrive endstrength while others failed to maintain it. Together, the total endstrength of the Army National Guard balanced close to total endstrength authorizations. This changed upon implementation of Guard 4.0—because all units allocated to the National Guard are in the states to meet the demand for operational deployment.

A Changing Social Contract

The Army National Guard has provided operational forces and strategic depth throughout much of its existence; however, the relationship between the National Guard and society

has evolved. Since shortly after the beginning of the Global War on Terror, policymakers, uniformed leaders and historians have often referred to the “operational reserve” when discussing the contemporary reserves. Of growing concern over the past 20 years is a challenge to the social contract between the military and society concerning reserve component Soldiers. The Army National Guard is both an operational force and a strategic reserve that is essential to national defense. The operational evolution creates friction between the need for available and trained forces and the social expectation of a part-time Army. Service in the reserve component—and how it looks for an operational force providing strategic depth—must be redefined. Regarding the social contract, we must adopt changes in how we care for servicemembers and their families, what we provide to employers, and how we communicate the message.

Guard 4.0 changes the social contract with Soldiers currently serving and expects the Soldiers of the future to accept this new paradigm. While not all Soldiers and all units will initially fall into an enhanced readiness posture, the future disposition of units will require sustained readiness at higher levels than currently required. Brigade combat teams (BCTs) and elements that support maneuver formations could see requirements in support of ReARMM at approximately 60 days of inactive duty training and 30 days of annual training. The previous social contract of 39 days of obligatory training moved to 90 days, representing a 131 percent increase. The potential exists that the increased time commitment for Soldiers will lead to increased attrition, lower enlistments in priority units and the possibility of complete transformation of unit leadership in the short-term. The ultimate realization of the core concept of Guard 4.0 will prove essential to the successful continuation of the operational reserve.

Part V: Recommendations

Former Chief of NGB, General Joseph L. Lengyel, recently published an article highlighting how he sees the National Guard transitioning into the future. He writes that, while the underlying principles of the original minuteman remain constant—i.e., being ready to defend the immediate community and the nation—the minutemen of the 21st century make up a premier force that is a key component of the joint force.²³ This demonstrates that Guard 4.0 and the continued transformation to an operational reserve, capable of providing operational forces and able to quickly perform a myriad of missions, is rooted in strong ideology.

Social Implications

In the September 2017 *National Guard Magazine*, Lieutenant General Kadavy discussed the social implications of the next generation of young, enlisted Soldiers. He highlighted that Guard 4.0 provides increased professional development, increased opportunities for mobilization and other factors that are at the core of what young Soldiers enlist to do.²⁴ The successful implementation of Guard 4.0 requires buy-in both from servicemembers who are currently serving and from the next generation. The prevailing consensus at NGB is that a shift in expectations of what membership in the Army National Guard requires will become accepted and will establish itself as the new norm. Kadavy highlights that the counterbalance to increased training days and mobilizations is predictability. This predictability allows Soldiers, families and employers to prepare for increased requirements for National Guard duty, thereby easing the transition and stabilizing the training and mobilization cycle. Historically, however, reintegration and transition of National Guard Soldiers is often shortsighted and rapid. From entire mobilizations and disbandment of the National Guard during the World Wars to rapid demobilization practices during the last decade-plus of war, reintegration of National Guard forces poses a continued

concern. The federal government, individual state governments and NGB continue to push for programs to improve reintegration.²⁵ As a geographically dispersed organization, the National Guard faces the difficult task of providing the same level of post-deployment services to its Soldiers as those condensed on Regular Army posts. Funding and status (Title X or Title XXXII) make that provision extremely difficult, if not impossible. Increasing predictability but failing to provide parity in service benefits and resources may ultimately lead to reduced retention and fewer enlistments over time. Increasing requirements comes with an expectation that there is a commensurate increase in services (pay, benefits, training or opportunities). Kadavy addresses most of these types of services in his vision of Guard 4.0. However, regardless of the incentives and protections proposed, a rapid and sweeping implementation of foundational services must precede the bulk of transformation. As discussed, most transformations occur immediately preceding or immediately following major Army deployments or initiatives. NGB labels Guard 4.0 as an evolutionary response to an uncertain, changing operational environment, but includes aspects of a declining Regular Army force (size) and an increase in global mission requirements for the Army. These forces drive transformation in the Army National Guard to sustain the role of an operational reserve of the Army.

The Army National Guard, over time, will adapt to the changing environment, and Soldiers will transition out while new Soldiers enlist and commission. In the current social dynamic of change, transitions to a new norm are no longer seen as a change but rather as a fixed reality. There are, however, constants that will not change with a new understanding of the National Guard. These constants are the basic tenets that the National Guard is still a part-time profession for most of its Soldiers. Increased training and predictable mobilizations will not sustain the force if Soldiers are unable to find flexible civilian employment or are unable to receive proper medical care after returning to drilling status. Building the foundation must come first; this requires additional funding. New facilities, new medical programs, new employer benefits, new equipment, new recruiting methods and incentives—the list goes on. These things are all foundational, not secondary.

Parity

Over the past 20 years, the National Guard's parity with the Regular Army has increasingly narrowed in equipping and benefits but in little else. Some recent strides in training availability have helped to close the training gap, but there is a need for more training opportunities to build and maintain proficiency. NGB leadership must continue to advocate for more CTC rotations (including enablers and non-BCT formations), funding for large-scale National Guard training areas, ranges, individual training dollars and resident schools' funding. These large-scale training opportunities conducted on a reoccurring basis can provide significant readiness and assessment to Guard formations. By continuing to rotate National Guard units through these training exercises, risk to mobilizational readiness will be reduced and potentially delayed mobilizations will be avoided.²⁶ In 2011, the Office of the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs published the *Comprehensive Review of the Future Role of the Reserve Component*, further identifying the need for joint regional state-of-the-art training facilities, advanced simulators, equipment and appropriate training ranges in order to maintain the readiness gains of the last decade. The Regular Army conducts CTC rotations and trains in these state-of-the-art facilities often; the Guard should increase their repetitions to meet the objectives of Guard 4.0 and to provide enhanced capabilities to the Army more quickly.

The Regular Army spends hundreds of millions to billions of dollars every year to improve training facilities, housing and other Soldier support facilities. The National Guard spends a fraction of this, and it shows. Armories across the 54 states and territories are outdated and inadequate for current weapon systems and vehicles. An operational force with increased demands deserves facilities capable of supporting those requirements. Every year, states compete to fund one or two projects, which often take many years to complete, and the result is the continued degradation of facilities.²⁷ There are additional constraints on the Army National Guard when it comes to building or renovating new facilities but, most often, funding is the top constraint. The building boom of the 1950s is an example of the possibilities which exist to improve facilities across the force rapidly and efficiently. While many aspects have changed, many opportunities present themselves, and fixing the current state of the facility crisis must be a top priority. To address the issue of parity, NGB may need to address the 25 percent requirement for states to fund construction of new facilities. Some states are in a better financial position than others; this requirement could unjustly place the more financially constrained states at a disadvantage. Additionally, while a 25 percent cost sharing may be adequate for a strategic reserve, shifting requirements for an operational reserve may call for percentage rebalance. To bring parity to the force, all legacy systems and processes are subject to review and transformation.

Conclusion

The Army National Guard will continue to transform as it has throughout history, emerging ever present and ready to respond to the needs of the state and nation. History proves the relevance and enduring advantage that the National Guard provides; Guard 4.0 is but another step in progress and adaptation. While the momentum is positive, the collective leadership across the Army National Guard must remember that Guard forces are not the Regular Army and that Soldiers who serve in the Guard serve for distinct and different reasons from their active-duty counterparts. Understanding that there is a difference does not diminish service in the Army National Guard; it only recognizes the difference in the service motivations, expectations and desires of the Soldiers who choose the Army National Guard over the Regular Army. Senior leadership must never forget that this choice is a critical aspect of why Soldiers serve. Making the Army National Guard mirror the Regular Army in more ways gives recruits fewer reasons to choose the Army National Guard over the Regular Army. The Guard provides citizen-Soldiers immense opportunities to serve while attending college, contributing to the workforce, engaging as members of their hometown communities and numerous other benefits. This essay identified periods of inflection in which transformation improved and strengthened the National Guard; the current point of inflection can do the same. However, there is a concern that, in the transformation from Guard 3.0 to Guard 4.0, the Guard may be overworked.

There is little argument that Guard 4.0 is a needed and, for most, a desirable transformation. The increase in relevant missions, training, funding and opportunities fits the current state of the Guard. While there are challenges, there are also many opportunities. A critical aspect of transformation is understanding the totality of change. Leaders must ask themselves what paradigms have changed and what paradigms are stagnant. The Army National Guard cannot only address the paradigm of training and mobilizations but must evaluate its entire organizational system. Transformation in the realm of training and mobilizations change the complex and adaptive system of the Army National Guard, and the impacts of the inevitable and currently unknown delayed results have yet to take effect.

Notes

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