


ARFORGEN:

Maturing the Model, Refining the Process

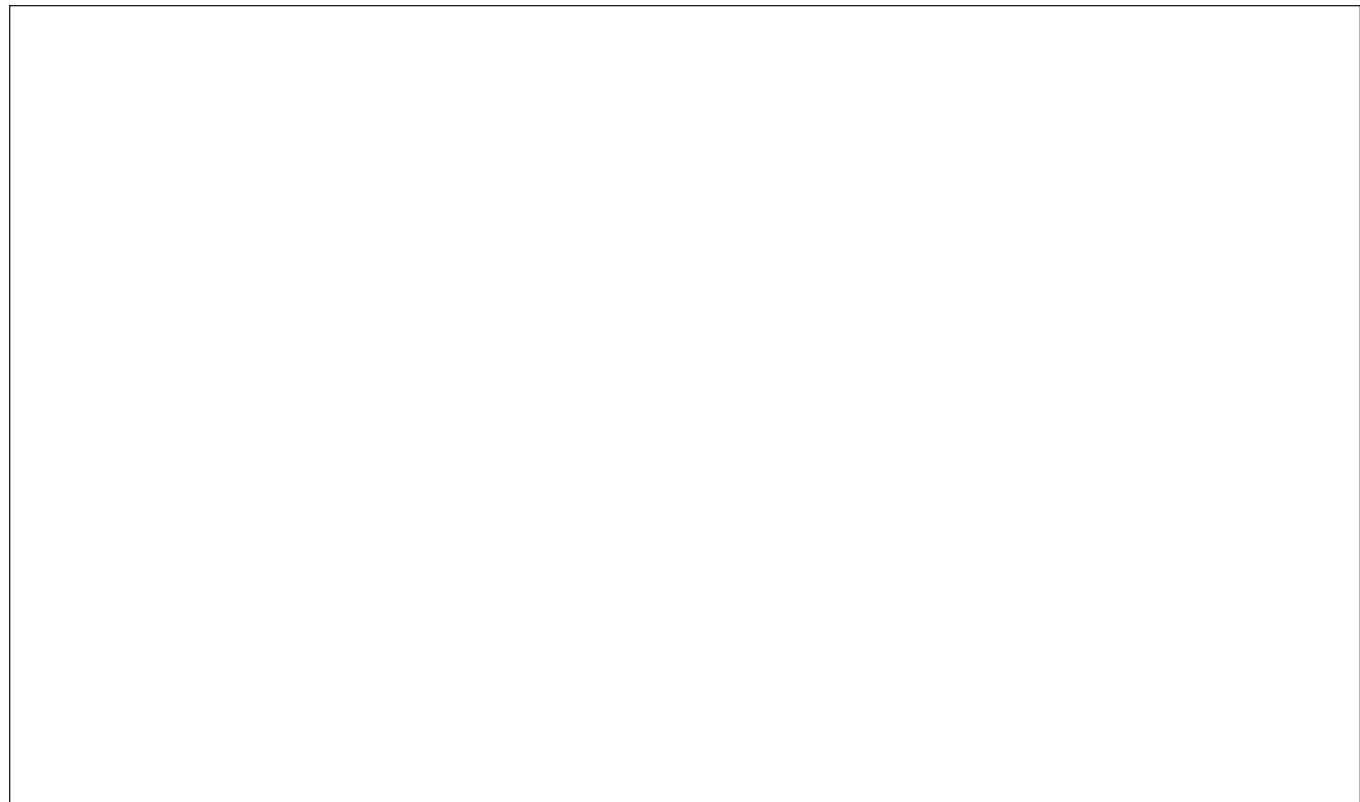
By GEN Charles C. Campbell

In less than three years, the Army has successfully implemented the greatest transformation to its force-generating system since the beginning of the Cold War. The impetus for this change was primarily driven by the complex nature of today's threat, the reality of preparing forces on compressed time lines for extended deployments and the imperative to preserve the all-volunteer force.

While we are in an era of persistent conflict, we continue to generate forces as the global demand for land forces exceeds the available supply. Despite this, our nation and the combatant commanders expect the Army to produce a sustained supply of trained and ready forces—and, since 2003, we



Homeward-bound U.S. soldiers wait to board a C-17 Globemaster III at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. To meet the demand for a sustained supply of trained and ready forces, the Army initiated the rotational Army force generation in 2006.



have met those expectations. This demand for forces, along with the conversion to modular formations and our use of the reserve components as an operational force on a recurring basis, required the Army to adapt its force generation model. In 2006, we replaced the Cold War-era linear model based on tiered readiness and sequential deployment with a 21st-century rotational model based on progressive readiness and capable of cyclical deployments. We call this force generation model and process Army force generation (ARFORGEN), and it applies to both active and reserve component units.

The Need for a New Approach

The demands of conducting continuous operations over the past eight years have changed how the Department of Defense and the Joint Staff plan and manage the global commitment of forces. Early in 2002, partially in recognition of the protracted nature of today's contingency operations, the Secretary of Defense opted to depart from the Joint Operations Planning and Execution System—the Army's legacy system optimized for sequential deployment as part of a one-time flow of forces overseas. After several years of sourcing units for global deployment in an improvisational manner, the Joint Staff adopted a system that is now formalized as the Global Force Management Allocation Process.

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In recognition of the uneven, but continuous, global demand for capabilities, the Army made the decision to adapt its force generation construct into one optimized to deploy trained and ready forces on a rotational basis. In 2005, the Chief of Staff of the Army approved the ARFORGEN model for concept development. A year later, the Secretary of the Army approved the implementation of ARFORGEN. Since then, ARFORGEN has proved to be a flexible force generation construct. For instance, reinforcement of Multi-National Force-Iraq in early 2007 involved readying the five brigade combat teams, a combat aviation brigade, a complement of combat support units, and a division headquarters on a greatly accelerated time line that could not have been accomplished as effectively with the legacy system. Without ARFORGEN, we would have bulled our way forward, albeit more slowly, with greater friction and with less alacrity. The success of synchronizing the Army systems to accomplish this surge of forces while simultaneously sustaining already deployed forces is without parallel in the Army's recent history.

Maturing the Model, Refining the Process

ARFORGEN involves a structured progression that builds unit readiness over time, resulting in recurring periods of availability of trained, ready and cohesive modular units to meet both combatant command and Army requirements. ARFORGEN is both a model and a process. The Department of the Army views ARFORGEN as a "supply-based model" in order to inform a corporate approach to programmatics and as a methodology to communicate force generation requirements. Forces Command

(FORSCOM), however, views ARFORGEN as a “demand-based process” to systematically build unit readiness on requirements identified by both the combatant commanders and the Army. Neither the ARFORGEN model nor the process has remained static. Throughout the first three years of implementation, the Army has continually matured the model and refined the process.

Although adjustments to the ARFORGEN model have been incremental, there are several notable improvements since the approval of ARFORGEN. A significant maturation of the model occurred when the Chief of Staff of the Army directed that *re-*

set become a discrete element of ARFORGEN; FORSCOM—the Army’s manager for ARFORGEN—adjusted the force pools to designate *reset* as a stand-alone pool.

Today the model is composed of three force pools through which each unit progresses during its ARFORGEN cycle. These pools are: *reset*, a period in which the unit undergoes soldier-family reintegration, staffing and equipping regenera-

tion, and limited individual training, which provides a unit capable of performing civil support operations; *train/ready*, characterized by collective training and the progressive build-up of readiness to accomplish less complex missions while ultimately achieving a capability to conduct full spectrum operations; and *available*, a period during which the unit is at its highest state of readiness and is either deployed or is ready to deploy worldwide to conduct full spectrum operations.

To make the model operational and to convey ARFORGEN complexities, we refined our understanding of ARFORGEN in order to view the process more broadly as a “process of systems.” In other words, we use ARFORGEN to orchestrate the Army’s systems. The Army has a system for organizing, staffing, equipping, training, deploying, sustaining, modernizing and mobilizing—these systems are not, in themselves, self-synchronizing. Even within themselves, the components of the individual systems

are often not optimized to support ARFORGEN. Without the maturation of the model and the refinement of the process, we could not prepare and deploy formations at the pace at which today's global demand is driving the Army.

FORSCOM has refined the ARFORGEN process in a number of additional ways. As a result of efforts we undertook to rationalize transformed command-and-control relationships within the modular force, we formally recognized the central role of senior commanders on our installations with regard to ARFORGEN. As multiple, complex and time-sensitive ARFORGEN activities unfold on installations, senior commanders integrate and synchronize the outputs of the systems previously mentioned to achieve unit readiness.

Acknowledging the shortcomings of our initial synchronization methodology, which was generally episodic in execution, FORSCOM developed and adopted a continuous approach. Rather than consolidating requirements in batches twice a year, ARFORGEN is now orchestrated throughout the year to synchronize the Army systems for a two-year period—the first “execute” year and the second “verify” year. To do this and to more effectively account for unit feedback and the dynamic sourcing environment, FORSCOM established four forums: Global Conventional Force Requirements Sourcing Conference, a body that identifies units to source Joint and Army rotational force requirements; Training Support and Resourcing Conference, which adjusts unit training and resourcing plans; Synchronizing, semiannual conferences to update sourcing and to integrate new guidance; and Guiding, a general officer steering committee that resolves issues and approves outputs.

The ARFORGEN process has demonstrated that it is sufficiently capable of meeting the spectrum of combatant commander demand. Whether we produce trained and

ready forces at a rate that Army leadership considers sustainable, add forces to meet a spike in demand or undertake exceptional measures to meet an extreme circumstance, we can, given sufficient resources, accomplish the force generation required. Our experience of the last two years validates our vision of ARFORGEN as a model and process that is:

- Flexible—able to accommodate the full spectrum of demand.
- Agile—able to realign resources to meet changing requirements.
- Collaborative—inclusive, transparent and providing multiple opportunities for units to identify operational challenges for resolution.
- Continuous—able to make decisions in time to ensure resources are available as required to build unit readiness.

Progressively Building Readiness

ARFORGEN is a “supply-based model” and a “demand-based process,” but it is neither exclusively a “model,” nor only a “process.” It is the way the Army progressively builds readiness over time and includes every unit in the Army—active, Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve. Through ARFORGEN, the Army can provide a predictable number of brigade combat teams and supporting formations to the *available* pool that can either stand ready for contingencies or can deploy for a specified mission.

Finally, the Army has undertaken an enterprise approach by aligning effort to four core enterprises—readiness, human capital, materiel and services/infrastructure—that focus on functional support of the ARFORGEN process. Within this approach, Forces Command serves as a greater part of the Readiness Core Enterprise responsible for the aforementioned synchronization and integration. In partnership with

the Department of the Army and the other core enterprises, the Readiness Core Enterprise remains committed to improving ARFORGEN. Despite the fact that the model has proved sound, our processes have only enabled us to meet the combatant commanders' demand for forces effectively, without the sustainable efficiency required for persistent conflict. While ARFORGEN has enabled us to generate quality, ready forces on time, we have not always done so in the most affordable manner. To enable an enterprise approach, the entire Army—the generating force and operating force—must undertake the necessary institutional adaptations to generate forces more efficiently, making the best of available resources. ★