



Landpower Essay

No. 04-5W
September 2004



An Institute of Land Warfare Publication

Army Reserve Expeditionary Forces

by

Mark Gerner

Expeditionary force: An armed force organized to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country.¹

Seldom in U.S. history has our Army been required to respond to the range of scenarios and missions like those posed by the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). In “Serving a Nation at War,” Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee and U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Peter Schoomaker in present a vision for a new force, as well as methods to achieve it, by seeking to organize forces temporally for this new operational environment.² The content and capability of the Army today was determined by previous strategic outlooks and constraints. So, the Army remains structured with relatively large formations built for large, mature theaters of war and an operational strategy of building up formations over time. Now, newly designed principles of modular force capabilities will aid leaders in making the Army the expeditionary force so necessary to fight the GWOT and future wars. The need to clarify mobilization timelines and policies prompted the Army Reserve to move from tiered readiness and linear deployment models toward smaller, capabilities-based deployable teams. The concept came to be called the Army Reserve Expeditionary Force (AREF), contributing to that part of the Army that will be *expeditionary*.

Consistent with our history and culture, military expeditions have served the national interest when world situations called for them. During much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Army provided most of the U.S. expeditionary forces for the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, the Boxer Rebellion, the Philippine Insurrection, the First World War and the post-World War interventions in Russia.³ The U.S. Army transformed into a force oriented for major wars during the Second World War, while the expeditionary aspect of American military operations shifted to the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.⁴ More recently, this expeditionary role has also belonged to the U.S. Air Force. Meanwhile, the U. S. Army has been relied upon principally for staying power and building campaign quality forces.⁵ Now, the Army must be reconfigured into

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smaller, more modular capabilities. Huba Wass de Czege and Richard Hart Sinnreich describe a multidimensional campaign with a central objective to “transform what otherwise would require a Normandy-style invasion into a strategic meeting engagement.” Deterrence, preclusion, decision and resolution are addressed as simultaneous activities.⁶ In part, the logic and vision of modularity flows from this concept.

In the early 1990s the Army Reserve began organizing forces into what might be termed “modules” to meet the changed rotational patterns presented by the strategy at that time called engagement and enlargement. Facing dramatic force reductions and with missions oriented principally around combat support and service support, the Army Reserve managed organizations and individual soldiers within Presidential Recall authorities with an eye toward optimizing its remaining organized forces. The object was to efficiently fill in day-to-day as well as meet long-term operational requirements, principally in predictable, smaller scale contingencies such as the operations in Bosnia and Kosovo and major training exercises in Europe and Korea. Headquarters for the Army Service Component Commands (ASCC) and Army Corps found force structure in the Army Reserve. To fill the headquarters and functional commands, management practices shifted into small, modular formations.⁷ By contrast, an expeditionary model organizes the force on a timeline to account for the dynamic relationship among mobilization policies, readiness and provision of capabilities to joint force commanders.

A New Doctrine: Modular, Expeditionary and N-Day:

In “The Modular Army,” John Bonin and Telford Crisco explain a new approach to building forces: “The Army seeks to solve the organizational design dilemma by retaining the advantages of relatively fixed structures as the basis for tailoring the force while furthering a commander’s ability to creatively reorganize it to meet specific tasks.”⁸ The demands imposed by operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom underscored the need for the Army Reserve to meet three critical tasks of force management:

- predictability for soldiers, families and employers;
- clear descriptions of capabilities provided to combatant commands; and
- ways to sustain a level of effort over time for continuing operations.

The Army’s Modular Task Force has arrayed forces into a framework as illustrated in Figure 1.⁹ The Expeditionary concept recognizes this framework and applies a discipline built around sets of force modules. Figure 2 illustrates the likely content of the maneuver enhancement modules of a force package. Each block contains modules associated with capabilities. Collections of modules from the different types of brigades comprise a force package, and the overall collection of logically grouped capabilities comprise an expeditionary force. Packages are organized in time sequences, enabling mutual support of operations when necessary. Units and soldiers of force packages are trained, equipped and organized to respond to a “Notification Day” or N-Day, a benchmark that defines the beginning of a “deployment window.” In the model that will drive this force management, units will be inside this window for periods of 270 days, the full authority of Presidential Reserve Call-up (PRC).¹⁰ The modules that make up the package are the building blocks of the force.

Unit of Employment Organization

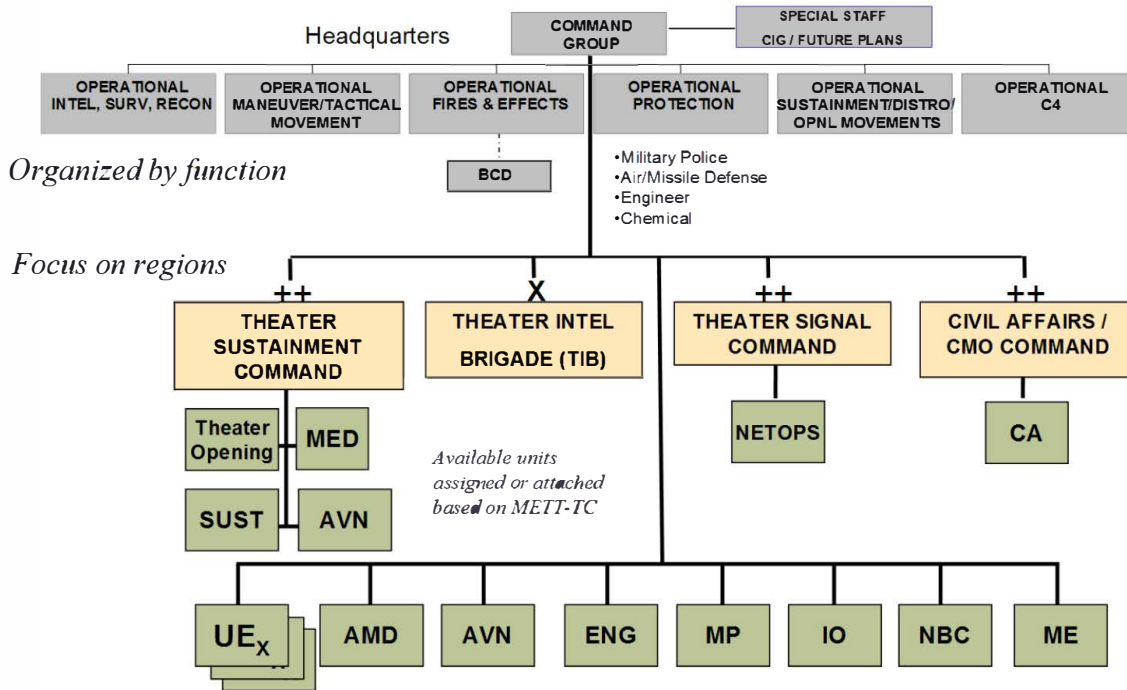


Figure 1

Illustration: Maneuver Enhancement Modules

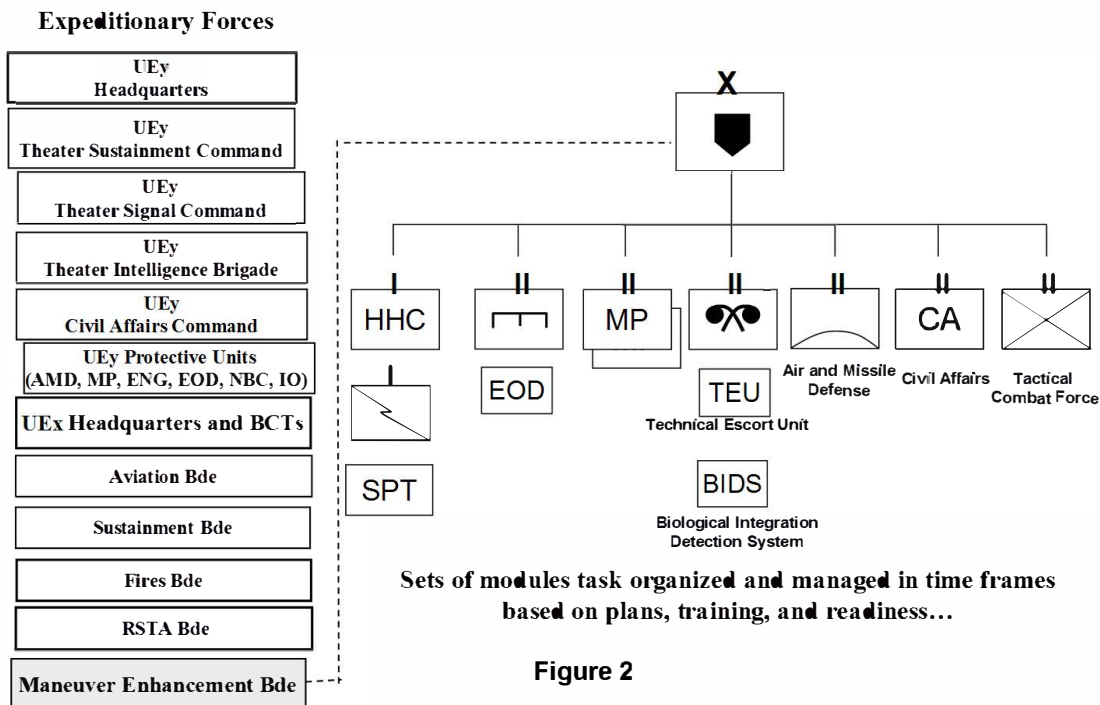


Figure 2

A doctrine of “Train-Alert-Deploy” guides the concept. The training strategy calls for units in each package to progressively advance in their mission-essential skill sets with the expectation that in a given time period the unit will be called upon to respond to worldwide requirements. Units will be expected to depart from home station on short notice, move into a “reception, staging, onward movement and integration” (RSOI) phase, then into a transfer of authority (TOA) phase and the mission. After a specified time, likely to be six months, the mission transfers to a relieving organization, and the units return home to begin a new cycle of “train-alert-deploy.”

The planning and programming doctrine to discipline this model and influence the content of the force has begun. It will likely continue iteratively until the Army achieves a level of force that will provide the standing state of the model, all while balancing both the predictable and actual operational force requirements. The doctrine of modularity lends itself to such force planning.

Today, approximately 20 percent of the Army Reserve can be made available for operational deployment, with the capability of surging to 40 percent. The remaining 60 percent of the force is in some stage of redeployment, reconstitution and reorganization. As Units of Employment (UEs) become clarified over time, organizations will take on the character of the new formations, and the collections of organizations will grow in both size and breadth of capabilities.

Federal Reserve Restructure Initiative (FRR)

Before the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, the Army Reserve took on a force management strategy known as the Federal Reserve Restructure Initiative (FRR). The FRR will underwrite operational strategies by showing ways to reengineer the mobilization process, transform command and control, and build a rotational force.¹¹ Initiatives for readiness include the creation of an Army Reserve Trainee, Transient, Holdover and Student (TTHS) account which will clarify readiness reporting for Army Reserve units because soldiers who are not yet qualified and trained for their positions will not be counted with reporting organizations. Instead, they will be counted in the higher headquarters management accounts. This is similar to the well-established process in the active Army.

The steps were taken so the Army Reserve would be in a strategic position to respond to changed operational concepts. The combined effect of the FRR practices now enables options about how to array the force into expeditionary formations. They also provide the predictability essential for the overall health of the force.

Generating forces to meet worldwide requirements

The basis of the force requirements in the packages is to meet the needs for both a major combat operation (MCO) and the expected smaller-scale contingency rotations. Initial building of these capabilities is based on the best combination of units the Army Reserve can call upon, given the constraints of recent mobilizations and ongoing operations. The package will change from today’s tactical, operational and theater level view into a view of modules and packages of UEs and Units of Action (UAs).

One question continues to haunt today's force programmers as it did those of the past: *What size and shape of the Army is necessary and sufficient to meet the needs of strategy?* Within that, the part of the Army that will be designed around expeditions as compared to the part designed around campaign staying power can be addressed through modular doctrine. For expeditionary forces, the Army must reach the depth and breadth of capabilities that meet the tenets of strategy while maintaining the unwritten contract with Soldiers that the load for each of them will be fair. Modular designs for expeditionary forces such as air and missile defense (AMD), biological and chemical, aviation, sustainment, engineer, nuclear, signal, fires and military police brigades will be integrated into the packages. The Army's UEs are the basis for sets of capabilities programmed into a force package. These packages are designed so that they readily fit into mission-allocated brigades while fulfilling the necessary functions performed at the UE level. As the Soldiers and organizations return from operational deployments and enter a reorganization phase of readiness, they will convert into the designs of the modular force.

Forces Arrayed in Time

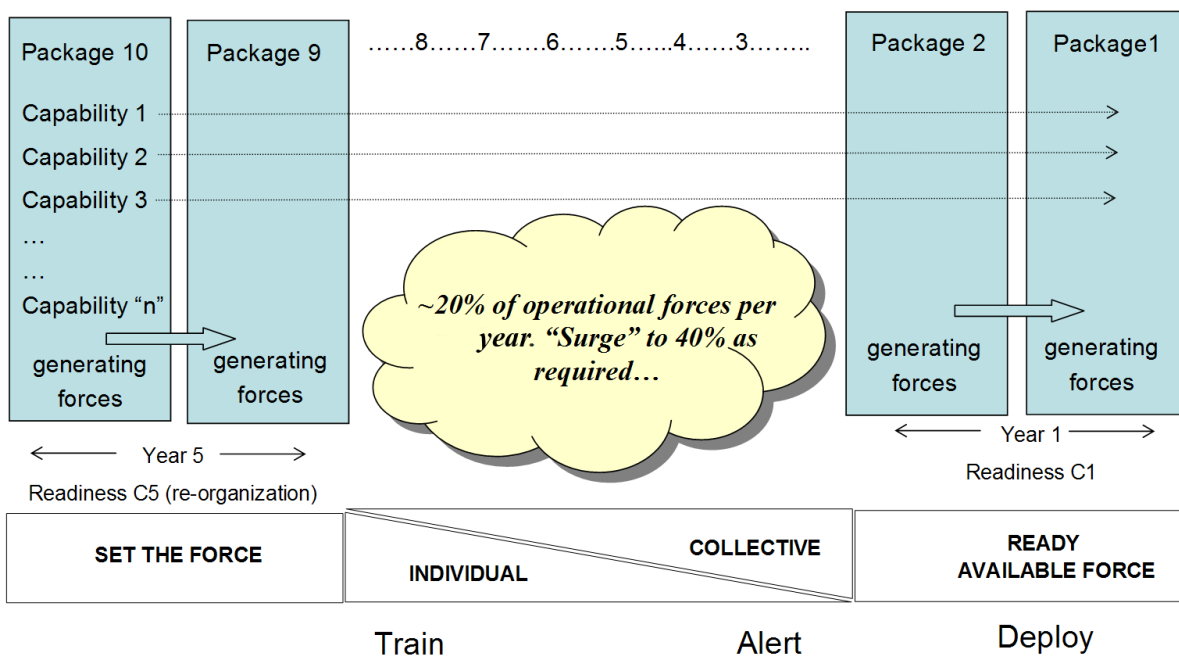


Figure 3

While a portion of UE capabilities are tied to the number of UAs, a baseline capability independent of the supported number of units and independent of particular threat profiles will remain. These would be akin to what today is called the functional formations of the Army, and estimates for this baseline can be codified. As the Army validates the numbers and types of UEs, the Joint Capabilities Integration Development System (JCIDS) process will receive these service requirements as supportive of either joint operational concepts or joint functional concepts, as well as selected Army capabilities that fit joint integration architectures.

In the past, reserve components were organized, funded and prioritized based on when they would be required for a given contingency. If a mission requirement carried on beyond a set number of days (usually 30) after the outbreak of hostilities, then the role could fall to a reserve component. This linear model was useful for some decision-making in a gross sense, but it no longer stands the scrutiny required for the needs of the GWOT. As described earlier, units now operate under the concept of an N-Day. As packages are validated and proven to answer worldwide needs, the Army's input to the JCIDS can drive different sets of force requirements.¹²

This changes the paradigm in fundamental ways. Whereas in the recent past, Army Reserve Soldiers and units were unlikely to deploy to operations short of war, the new concept adds the predictability that most organizations will deploy in a given time.

Expeditionary forces may pre-date recorded wars. When he wrote the record of the *Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides reminded readers that the story of expeditionary armies and navies was written "...not as an essay which is to win applause for the moment, but as a possession for all time..."¹³ It is a history of at least 50 expeditions,¹⁴ so even in Thucydides' time, the concept of expeditionary forces was long established. Similarly, the U.S. Army now must find ways to both add predictability for soldiers and provide capability for war in its several forms, new and old.

Endnotes

¹ *Joint Publication 1-02, DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. As amended through 23 March 2004. (Electronic Version).

² Les Brownlee and Peter J. Schoomaker, "Serving a Nation at War: A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities." *Parameters* (Summer 2004), 5.

³ Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, enlarged edition (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1984), 173-189, 295-394; Allan R. Millet & Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*, Revised and Expanded (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 144-157, 284-313, 346-376; and Edward M. Coffman, *The Regulars: The American Army 1898-1941* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁴ U.S. Marine Corps, "Expeditionary Units" <http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/websites.nsf/unitsexped>. The page reads "The Marine Corps is a maritime force and is expeditionary in nature. In fact, the Marine Corps' history and legacy is a landing force from the sea . . . The unit in the Marine Corps specifically groomed for the contingency battles of the future is the Marine Expeditionary Unit or MEU. A MEU is based on naval vessels and is normally built around a reinforced battalion, a composite aircraft squadron, and by a MEU Service Support group totaling about 2,000 personnel in all. Commanded by a colonel, the MEU is employed to fulfill routine forward deployments with fleets in the Mediterranean, the Western Pacific, and periodically, the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. . . The MEU is an expeditionary intervention force with the ability to rapidly organize for combat operations in virtually any environment."

⁵ The U.S. Air Force Air Expeditionary Force Center at Langley AFB, Va., command briefing reads in part, "The AEF CONOPS is how the Air Force organizes, trains, equips, and sustains itself by creating a mindset and cultural state that embraces the unique characteristics of air and space power—range, speed, flexibility, and precision—to meet the national security challenges of the 21st Century." The AEF provides Unified Combatant Commands with 270,000 of 360,000 Active Duty personnel and 140,000 of 170,000 Air Force Reserve Component personnel in 90,000 units.

⁶ Huba Wass De Czege and Richard Hart Sinnreich, *Conceptual Foundations of a Transformed Army*, Land Warfare Paper No. 40 (Arlington, Va.: The Institute of Land Warfare, Association of the United States Army, March 2002), pp. 13-15.

⁷ For a discussion and comparison of the Army component of combatant commands and joint task forces, see Field Manual 3-50, *Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations*, Second Draft, September 2000; and Department of the Army White Paper, "Unit of Employment Operations," Version 3.5, 16 July 2004. Each reference comprehensively describes the Army Forces (ARFOR) Headquarters, Joint Force Land Component Command (JFLCC) and Coalition Force Land Component Command (CFLCC) roles, missions and functions during full-spectrum operations. In the 1990s, the Army responded to requirements of Regional Combatant Commands by changing the 3d, 7th, and 8th U.S. Army headquarters into what became known as Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) with force requirements for service component, supporting force commands and operational commands, while recognizing valid service component roles (though smaller in size) for U.S. Southern Command and U.S. Pacific Command. The doctrine as described in this White Paper now addresses Units of Employment headquarters in a comprehensive manner.

⁸ John A. Bonin and Telford E. Crisco, Jr, "The Modular Army," *Military Review* (March-April 2004), 21.

⁹ Briefing, Training and Doctrine Command, "UE (x) Current Force Unit of Employment," 8 July 2004, Modular Task Force. The first chart of the briefing reads, "Create *modular* 'brigade-based' Army that is more responsive to regional combatant commanders' needs, better employs Joint capabilities, facilitates force packaging and rapid deployment, and fights as self contained units in non-linear, non-contiguous battle spaces."

¹⁰ Dana L. Smith, Editor, *Army Reserve 2004 Almanac*. (Falls Church, Va.: Uniformed Services Almanac, Inc.), 90. Under Title 10 of U.S. Code, Section 12304, Presidential Reserve Call-up, the Selected Reserve may be called up to a level of 200,000, of whom 30,000 may be members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), for a period of 270 days. Title 10 of the U.S. Code Section 12302 provides for Presidential authority to call up 1 million members of the Ready Reserve (Units, Individual Mobilization Augmentees, Army Guard and Reserve, IRR and Inactive National Guard). Under Title 10 U.S. Code, Section 12301(a) Congress has unlimited authority to call up the total reserve force.

¹¹ *Army Reserve Bridge to Transformation: Federal Reserve Restructuring Initiative*, AUSA Defense Report 03-04 (Arlington, Va.: The Institute of Land Warfare, Association of the United States Army, September 2003), 2.

¹² Joint Capabilities Integration Development System (JCIDS) CJCSI 3170.01C. The Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) approves requirements. Joint Operating Concepts, Joint Functional Concepts and Integrating Architectures drive the process for changing requirements.

¹³ Robert B. Strassler, Editor, *The Landmark Thucydides, A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War*, (New York: Touchstone Books, 1996). (1.22.4) 16.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 663-664.

(Mark H. Gerner, a principal at Calibre Systems, Inc., Alexandria, Virginia, retired from the U.S. Army as a colonel in 2000. His assignments included Chief of Force Development and Plans for Eighth U.S. Army, Korea, and Chief of Force Integration and Management, Headquarters, Department of the Army. He has managed a series of projects, including Force Requirements for Combatant Commands, Army Global Force Posture, and Strategic Planning for the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve.)