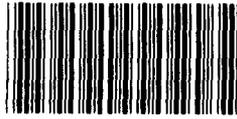


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STATEMENT OF

Mr. Henry W. Connor

Senior Associate Director (Army)

NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

ON

FULL-TIME MANNING IN THE ARMY'S

RESERVE COMPONENTS

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

We appreciate the opportunity to appear today to discuss the results of our Review of the Army's Full-Time Manning (FTM) Program for Reserve Components.

The FTM program resulted from a series of Department of Defense studies which determined that there was a need for an increased number of full-time personnel in units. Initial implementation of FTM was accomplished by voluntarily converting civilian technicians to an Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) status. Beginning in 1981, technician conversions were supplemented by appointing new AGR personnel and assigning them to unit positions. However, in 1983, Congress, reacting to concerns about costs and technician complaints, established a minimum strength level for the technician force and prohibited further conversion of civilian technician positions to AGR. This congressional prohibition was made pending determination of appropriate force mix of technicians and AGR personnel, considering readiness requirements.

Under the FTM program, Active Guard/Reserve personnel are assigned to Reserve units to enhance unit readiness and deployability through improved training, personnel administration, maintenance, supply, and operational activities. These objectives are to be accomplished by

- increasing the number of full-time personnel in units over the manning levels that have existed, almost unchanged, since the 1950's;
- establishing a cadre of Reservists on full-time active duty, with military skills and backgrounds comparable to their counterparts in Active Army units; and

--aligning full-time positions with specific military positions in units.

Total full-time strength in the Reserve Component structure at the end of fiscal year 1984 was 57,182 (31,704 civilian technicians and 25,478 AGR personnel). Approximately 70 percent of AGR personnel and about 30 percent of the civilian technicians are assigned to full-time positions in deployable units (National Guard Divisions, separate brigades and battalions, companies, and detachments.)

We reviewed the Army's FTM program because of its obvious importance as part of the Army's Full-Time Unit Support for the Reserve Components, congressional interest in program implementation, and the Army's plans to significantly expand FTM by increasing the number of AGR personnel assigned to units over the next 5 years. We provided a draft of our report to the Department of Defense in March, 1985.

During our review, which took place between April 1984 and January 1985, we visited 101 Army Reserve and National Guard units (ranging in size from company to brigade) and headquarters elements in the First, Fifth and Sixth Army areas. These units were a mix of combat, combat support, and combat service support units with different deployment priorities, manning levels, and geographic environments which enabled us to examine the FTM program under a variety of conditions.

Our overall conclusion was that the Army's FTM program is an approach to full-time support which has the potential to

enhance the capability of the Reserve Components. The majority of personnel in units we visited appeared to be well qualified. Our examination of military personnel records showed that AGR personnel in the units we visited met military occupational specialty requirements and many had active duty experience. The overall impression in the field was that as a result of FTM, "units were better and that they could do more things, quicker." We recognize that a major factor in this perception is that there are more people available to accomplish the required tasks and that it cannot be attributed solely to the presence of AGR personnel.

We believe the Army needs to intensively manage the FTM program to ensure that program goals and benefits are achieved, and that program costs are controlled. We identified problems concerning the force requirements determination process and model application in the field, program administration and management, and the mixed civilian (technician) and uniformed (AGR personnel) full-time support force in units. I would like to briefly discuss these three problem areas which hamper program effectiveness.

FTM FORCE REQUIREMENTS AND MODELS

Full-time manning models and staffing guides were initially developed by U.S. Army Forces Command and the National Guard Bureau for Army Reserve and Army Guard organizations, respectively. Significant differences existed in the manning requirements for the same type units, both in numbers and types of full-time positions. For example, there were 47 full-time

positions identified in an Army Reserve tank battalion, while a similar National Guard battalion had only 30 positions; Army Reserve companies had a position for a lieutenant, while the highest position in a National Guard company was an E-7. In order to resolve these differences, the Army issued a new staffing guide in September 1984, applicable to both Army Reserve and Army Guard units. This guide identifies the positions in units that are appropriate full-time positions and establishes an upper limit on the total number of full-time positions in units. The U.S. Army Forces Command and National Guard Bureau revised their unit manning models to conform to this staffing guide and are now using the revised guide to determine requirements for full-time personnel.

The Army's new FTM staffing guide provides more definitive guidance to be used in the development of FTM unit models; however, we do have reservations about an across-the-board application of these models which would provide the same level of manning to all units regardless of deployment priority. We believe that the requirements determination and authorization process must be closely controlled to ensure that full-time personnel are being effectively utilized.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

The second problem area I want to talk about is program management. Program management has been marked by a lack of clear direction or enforcement of regulations by the Department of the Army, National Guard Bureau, and U.S. Army Forces Command.

This has resulted in:

- (1) A lack of uniformity in Army Reserve and National Guard practices affecting appointments, retentions, and terminations of AGR personnel.
- (2) Overgraded personnel in FTM positions. In August, 1984, 750 out of 6300 AGR enlisted personnel in Army Reserve units were overgrade for their position.
- (3) Confusion over the proper role of civilian technicians in the Reserve Component structure. There were no plans to deal with existing civilian technicians for whom conversion to AGR status was not a possible option. In addition, the National Guard Bureau and the U.S. Army Forces Command had conflicting views on the ultimate role of civilian technician.
- (4) Double slotting, or the assignment of two persons to the same authorized position, exists in some form in nearly every unit we visited even though the U.S. Army Forces Command and the National Guard Bureau directed that the practice cease in 1983.
- (5) Concerns about AGR career viability. A key aspect of the ultimate effectiveness of using AGR personnel in the FTM role is the establishment of a career AGR cadre. However, actions by State Adjutant Generals, such as establishing tour lengths of only 6 months, undermine the establishment of a career cadre. Shortened tour lengths and uncertainties about

retention beyond initial tours led many participants to question the desirability of continuing in the AGR force.

Although the Army's proposed revisions to regulations governing AGR personnel and the FTM program (AR 135-2 and AR 135-18) should eliminate many of the problems encountered, we believe it is important that the Department of the Army and the National Guard Bureau ensure that the provisions of the regulations are properly implemented. We also believe adherence to established AGR grade structures is a critical aspect of program cost effectiveness and is necessary to prevent a continuation of the current overgrading problems in the force.

MIXED FULL-TIME FORCE

The third and final problem I want to address is the problem with mixing AGR and civilian technicians in deployable units. The full-time force in most units is comprised of a mix of civilian technicians, AGR personnel, and, in some cases, Active Army personnel. The composition varies from unit to unit and depends on factors such as the number of civilian technicians actually in place in 1983, when the Congress established a minimum strength level for civilian technicians and prohibited further technician conversions. Another consideration for unit composition is the relative deployment priority of the unit.

Currently, the full-time force in some units consists primarily of AGR personnel, while in other units it is primarily civilian technician personnel. This condition even exists

within the companies of a battalion and causes significant management problems in administering two different work forces (civilian and military), both of which could be doing essentially the same job.

As a result, lines of authority for day-to-day supervision are vague, violate military/civilian rank comparability, or informal dual systems exist. In addition, job and position responsibilities often overlap or are ill defined, and there is a continuing source of friction between technicians and AGR personnel regarding pay, benefits, and leave inequities.

The question of "who's in charge" in the mixed full-time force is one of the more serious problems of the FTM program. It is less of a problem in the National Guard than in the Army Reserve since the National Guard Bureau policy is quite explicit. The supervisor is the person with the senior military rank.

In Army Reserve units, the designation of the day-to-day supervisor is left to the discretion of the unit commander. We found instances where the full-time supervisor was lower in military rank than those being supervised, or had no military rank, or supervisory authority was divided between military and civilian full-time personnel. This situation creates confusion among subordinates who must often cope with conflicting instructions and priorities from multiple bosses.

As FTM positions in units are filled, there are immediate impacts on the duties and responsibilities previously assigned

to civilian technician personnel. Technician job descriptions are standardized, and generally cover the entire range of duties in units, including duties associated with FTM positions.

Civilian technician and AGR personnel are attempting to work together in many units. However, some underlying frictions exist because of pay and benefit disparities in the two systems. AGR personnel receive more pay and have better leave and medical benefits.

It was generally the opinion of commanders and full-time personnel in the units we visited, that mixing technicians and AGR personnel in the same unit hampers the units' effectiveness.

We agree that mixing civilian technicians and AGR personnel in deployable troop units detracts from effectiveness. Under the present civilian grade and pay structure, the all-civilian technician force would be a less costly alternative than an all-AGR force. However, we believe that the all-AGR force in deployable units is the preferred choice for the following reasons:

First, it offers a solution to the problem of civilian technicians being unable to deploy with their units.

Second, military pay and benefits, which are higher than comparable civilian pay and benefits are positive factors in the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel.

Third, it eliminates management problems associated with a mixed force in troop units.

We believe that a technician support structure, protecting the rights of current technicians, can be developed along the lines of the National Guard Bureau's plan. This plan removes technician positions from deployable units and realigns them in headquarters, maintenance support elements, and other non-deployable organizations. Such a plan should also be adaptable to the Army Reserve. Following the development of such a plan, the Army should request that Congressional restrictions, cited earlier, affecting the movement of technician positions be removed, to implement the phase-in of an all-AGR full-time force in deployable troop units.

In April 1985 we received the official Department of Defense comments on a draft of our report. DOD concurred with all our findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The Army has initiated actions, which if effectively implemented should correct many of the problems we noted during our review. Specifically, the Department of Defense has advised us that the Army is revising current, and preparing new, full-time support regulations which provide more definitive guidance on matters such as appointment and promotion criteria, military educational requirements, and AGR career programs. They are establishing procedures to monitor regulation compliance in the field and are preparing a proposal to implement an all-AGR force in deployable units.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.