

## Why GAO Did This Study

Dual-status military technicians (“military technicians”) are a unique type of federal employee who are required by law to maintain military status in one of the Army or Air Force Reserve Components as a condition of their civilian employment.

Nonpermanent military technicians—whose services typically range from 1 year to up to 6 years—usually fill vacancies created when permanent military technicians deploy, are in training, or are on other military assignments.

Senate Report 116-236, accompanying a bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, includes a provision for GAO to report on the military technician workforce. This GAO report examines, among other things, (1) the circumstances under which the Army and Air Force Reserve Components use nonpermanent military technicians and (2) the extent to which these Components track military technician data.

GAO surveyed the adjutants general of the 54 U.S. states, territories, and the District of Columbia; analyzed DOD civilian personnel data; conducted small group discussions with military technicians; reviewed relevant policies and guidance; and interviewed National Guard and Reserve Component officials, among others.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO is making two recommendations, including that DOD develop guidance and a common definition for extracting military technician data to ensure consistency in reporting such workforce data. DOD concurred with the recommendations.

View [GAO-22-104484](#). For more information, contact Brenda S. Farrell at (202) 512-3604 or [FarrellB@gao.gov](mailto:FarrellB@gao.gov).

# MILITARY PERSONNEL

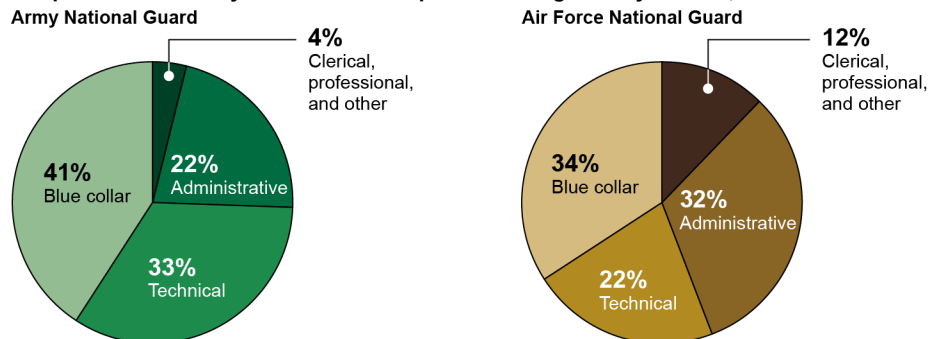
## Actions Needed to Improve Workforce Data for Technicians Supporting Mission Readiness

### What GAO Found

The Army and Air Force Reserve Components—which consist of the Army and Air National Guard and Reserve—use nonpermanent military technicians to fill vacancies created when permanent military technicians deploy or are fulfilling military training requirements or completing education and schooling. Nonpermanent military technicians are also used to fill critical needs vacancies created by attrition and for other staffing needs, such as emerging missions created by COVID-19. Officials reported that their ability to hire nonpermanent military technicians enhances readiness. For example, these military technicians may be used to maintain equipment during unit deployments and can be hired quickly to fill critical voids. Additionally, nonpermanent military technicians who accept such positions benefit from gaining the experience they need to qualify for permanent military technician positions.

In fiscal year 2020, the Army and Air Force Reserve Components employed approximately 11,000 nonpermanent military technicians, the majority of which (approximately 10,500) worked for the Army or Air National Guard. Nonpermanent military technicians work in all occupational job categories, with the highest percentages employed in blue collar (e.g., mechanic), technical, and administrative occupations (see figure).

**Nonpermanent Military Technician Occupational Categories by Service, 2017-2020**



Source: GAO analysis of Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service and Defense Manpower Data Center matching data. | GAO-22-104484

The Department of Defense (DOD) collects and tracks military technician workforce data used to determine funding, but does not have guidance or a common definition of military technicians for which to extract and report such data. GAO found that DOD officials inconsistently report such data for internal and external uses. Specifically, Army and Air Force Reserve Component and Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service data are inconsistent, when extracted from the same reporting system and for the same time period. Without guidance and a common definition for extracting and reporting military technician data, DOD may continue to report inconsistent data, which may affect the funding needed to hire permanent and nonpermanent military technicians to support their missions.