

USAWOA 2008 ANNUAL REPORT
CW4 JANIE DIAMOND
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT ARMY RESERVE AFFAIRS

The good news up front is that, once again, we exceeded our Warrant Officer recruiting mission of 350. We had a whopping 368 for 105% mission accomplishment! Another bit of good news is that the Army Reserve celebrated its 100th birthday on April 23d of this year. We are very proud to be 100, it feels great!

Starting in 1908 with a small force of 160 civilian physicians, the Medical Reserve Corps was the first strategic reserve that could be ordered to active duty by the Secretary of War during a time of national emergency. Today, of the authorized 205,000 Army Reserve Soldiers, currently over 27,000 Warrior Citizens are serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and 18 other countries. These Soldiers are from communities and families across this great nation. Multi-skilled and highly trained by military and civilian resources, they are an all-volunteer force that made the choice and commitment to serve. They repeatedly leave their civilian jobs in jeopardy but more importantly, leave their Families without most of the support systems available to our Regular Army counterparts. The men and women of the Army Reserve hail from every corner of this nation. They are black (22 percent), white (60 percent), Hispanic (12 percent), and Asian and Pacific Islanders (4 percent). Seventy-seven percent are men, while 23 percent are women. They are young (46 percent are 17-29 years old) and they are mature (46 percent are aged 30-49). They don the uniform as enlisted Soldiers (81 percent), officers (18 percent), and warrant officers (1 percent).

31 January 2008, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves submitted its final report "Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st Century Operational Force" to Congress and the Secretary of Defense. In case you have not read the 448 page report, just below are some of the significant findings and the closing remarks;

1) The Army Reserve and Guard have, by default, become an operational force in response to current and projected needs for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and the associated force generation requirements.

2) Reserve Component personnel use has increased from 12.7 million duty days in fiscal year 2001 to 61.3 million in fiscal year 2006. Reservists have also been mobilized more than 597,000 times since September 11, 2001.

3) The Reserve Components are this nation's insurance policy against unexpected events, provide a daily connection between the military and their civilian communities, constitute a significant pool of pre-trained manpower, and are well-suited for a leading role in homeland response activities. Their value to the nation cannot be overstated.

5) "The reliance (on the Reserve Components) should grow, even after the demands for forces associated with current operations are reduced. Their service

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in the operational force will be required in peacetime, and they will continue to provide a cost-effective means of ensuring that strategic requirements to meet a large wartime threat are also available. ... Employing the Reserve in this fashion has proven necessary and effective, and they have been relied on in every major military operation since Operation Desert Storm; yet the structural foundations of Reserve Component organization have been changed little to facilitate this employment."

The independent Commission's work was informed by 17 days of public hearings involving 115 witnesses; 52 Commission meetings; more than 850 interviews with officials and subject matter experts; numerous site visits, forums, and panel discussions; and the analysis of thousands of documents supplied at the Commission's request.

Congress charged the Commission to report on the reserve components' roles and missions, compensation and benefits, career paths, training and readiness, equipment and personnel, and their overall organization, structure, and funding. The Commission met this charge with a report documenting the most comprehensive, independent review of the Guard and Reserve forces in 60 years – a review producing what Commissioners characterize as "overwhelming evidence of the need for change" in the face of continuing heavy use of these forces in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the homeland, and in light of growing threats to national security.

The Army Reserve was already in the process of major restructure and transformation to a more fully operational force prior to the release of the report. Some key imperatives of that transformation include:

- 1) To respond rapidly to combatant commander's needs, the mobilization process will be streamlined and time sensitive procedures automated.
- 2) Transform command and control to focus regional commands on training, leader development, unit readiness, and shorter mobilization timelines to provide trained, ready Soldiers and units when needed.
- 3) Deliver maximum value and utility for the resources expended by restructuring units into a flexible and adaptable force to meet anticipated mission requirements within the resource cap of 205,000 Soldiers. Divest structure that is irrelevant, habitually unready, or too costly to modernize.
- 4) Improve Human Resources staff, technologies and business practices to assist commanders and leaders at all levels to recruit, develop, train and care for Soldiers, families, civilians and contractors.
- 5) Build a rotational-based force so a Soldier will only deploy nine to 12 months every five to six years. Create additional depth in high demand capabilities.

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6) Improve individual support to combatant commanders by increasing the number of trained and ready Soldiers in critical military occupational specialties available for individual augmentation.

The Army Reserve is of course transforming in motion, building a plane while in flight, and meeting the ever increasing needs of our nation at war. I think we have done very well this first 100 years and look forward to the next 100.

With that said, this is my take on where we are and where we are going. This is my third annual report. In the first one I outlined the many changes the Army Reserve is experiencing, and used the phrase, "This is not your grandfather's Army Reserve." Last year I stressed the fact that the lines between the Regular Army and the Army Reserve were starting to blur due to the high rate of mobilization and deployments. Both those statements still fit, but I will add that today we are closer to a "one Army concept" than we have been in my entire career. Working as the Officer/Warrant Officer Manager at the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC), I manage assignments and personnel actions for around 670 officers. Only 115 of those are Army Reserve, the rest are Regular Army. In my two year tenure in this job, one constant remains - Soldiers are the same. USAREC positions are high stress, very competitive, and mission oriented. It is not for the faint of heart. We get officers who thrive in this atmosphere and do quite well; but we also get those who fail miserably a short time. There are few differences - they all put their boots on one at a time, and the few differences are for the most part, transparent. There are good and bad in both components. The cream rises in both, the failures are just as jarring, and are disappointing to leadership in both. There is no second and first class, walking down the hall, we all look alike. The biggest difference for me is whether to send the officer's action to HRC-Alexandria or HRC-St Louis. This will change shortly with the merger of the various personnel database systems into The Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) in March 2009. In addition, the merger of human resources commands into the Human Resources Center of Excellence at Fort Knox in 2011 will be the final step in making the transition to equality in support and services.

In closing, I offer this new statement - We are different, but the same, we all have Families and loved ones we protect and defend, while in service to the United States of America. That makes us vulnerable to attack but we also remain Army Strong.

Thank you for letting me serve as your Assistant Vice President of Army Reserve Affairs for the past three years. It has been a great experience and I value the opportunity to continue to be an active participant in the USAWOA in the future.