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Enabling NATO for 21st Century Operations: Fielding Agile, Responsive and Innovative Reserve Forces

by Howard Coombs
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POLICY PAPER

ENABLING NATO FOR 21ST CENTURY OPERATIONS: FIELDING AGILE, RESPONSIVE AND INNOVATIVE RESERVE FORCES

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► **Executive Summary**

Canada has built on the findings of the Netherlands' report, Lessons Learned from Commitment of Reservists in Operations (LLRO), and provided an overview of NATO ability for the international deployment of reservists by specifically examining the pre-deployment phase of operations. Through both national questionnaires and research, Canada has collected, analyzed and communicated key observations and lessons from NATO NRFC member and partner nations to address the institutional support and structures required to set the conditions for the force generation and successful deployment of capable, multi-purpose, integrated reserve forces. This has resulted in a comparative analysis of the triad of military, family and employer support that enhances the deployment of NATO reservists prior to operations.



As many nations increasingly make use of professional soldiers in their Regular Forces, whilst simultaneously reducing them in size, the need for Reservists will be even greater ... The availability of Reserves, whether for NATO missions, national commitments or for their periodic training, depends heavily upon national policy, legislation and socio-economic factors; such as the encouragement and assistance of the family; the community and the employer, whose support and assistance are all vital.¹

– Military Committee (MC) 441/2 – North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Framework Policy on Reserves, Jan. 19, 2012

The above observations on the need for effective national reserve forces and the factors that influence their force generation remain as relevant today as when they were penned in 2012. If anything, it is more necessary than ever to heed these ideas, particularly in an evolving security environment that poses increasingly complicated tests. While almost 70 years have passed since the formation of the Alliance, and the original threats that prompted NATO's establishment have diminished, others have risen to take their place. For the near future, interstate conflict is now considered exceptional, with the possibility of war between great powers and their allies having significantly diminished. This is largely due to the deterrence that nuclear weaponry poses, adherence to international agreements, and a desire by prosperous nations to avoid using violence to resolve disputes. However, intrastate conflict has increased – particularly in fragile, failing or failed states – and these wars often endure for lengthy periods. The causes of these wars include climate change, expanding populations and ethnic, religious or ideological violence. They will likely not lessen in the foreseeable future.² That complexity and the confrontations it poses are evidenced through recent and ongoing events like Russia's involvement in the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, a militarily ascendant China, the negative actions of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), terrorism, and the large-scale movement of displaced populations, among other destructive influences. These occurrences, alongside ongoing commitments to provide security to Alliance members through robust defence and deterrence of the North Atlantic region itself, and assisting with that core mandate by fighting terrorism and projecting stability in other regions, have created a pressing need for deployable NATO forces.³

The trials in generating these forces have remained consistent over the last decade. In the aftermath of the Cold War, with the perceived elimination of a conventional military threat from the former Soviet Union and her allies, most NATO members reduced the size of their active duty and reserve forces. The diminishment of military force size and capabilities was also linked to the elimination or reduction of national conscription programs.⁴ For example, in the

¹ Enclosure to NATO, North Atlantic Military Committee, Secretary General, "Military Decision on MC 441/2 NATO Framework Policy on Reserves," Jan. 19, 2012, paras. 3 and 4.

² "Special Report: The Future of War – The New Battlegrounds," *The Economist* 26, 9076, Jan. 27, 2018: 3.

³ NATO, Secretary General, "The Secretary General's Annual Report, 2017," March 15, 2018: 56. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_152797.html, accessed May 18, 2018.

⁴ "Send in the Reserves: Europe's Biggest Military Deficit is a Lack of Citizen Soldiers," *Armed Forces Journal*, Feb. 1, 2012. Available at <http://armedforcesjournal.com/send-in-the-reserves/>, accessed May 15, 2018.



International Institute for Strategic Studies' 1990 edition of *The Military Balance*, Germany had large reserve forces of more than 700,000, while Italy possessed 520,000 and Spain had more than 800,000.⁵ The 2017 version of *The Military Balance* puts Germany at 27,600 reserves, Italian reserve forces at 18,300 and Spanish reserves at 8,200. In contrast, Russia has 2.5 million. However, the number of potential Russian reserve personnel could be far higher, perhaps as large as 20 million, if one counts as a potential mobilization base those whose military service was more than five years ago.⁶ Also, existing NATO reserve forces are not always formed units but are sometimes individuals who can be mobilized and then must be integrated into units prior to utilization. Consequently, unless there is a high degree of unit and/or individual readiness, the pre-deployment preparation and training will lengthen the period of time before these reservists can be utilized.⁷

In recent years, most Alliance members have started to reconstruct their reserve forces as a cost-effective way to meet developing and ongoing security dilemmas. They wish to increase full-time capability with part-time forces.⁸ These expansions have in some cases been deliberate and incremental, as with Denmark, which in its revised defence policy, increased the number of conscripts from 4,200 to 4,700 annually. This yearly increase of 500 is a deliberate broadening of the mobilization base.⁹ For others, such as France, more pressing security concerns have created a much higher degree of reserve force growth. This is evidenced through the 2015 decision to potentially enlarge French reserves by 40,000 and study the implementation of a strategic reserve. While it has not yet come to fruition, it is expected that this latter initiative might be put into effect within the decade and the former proposal is in process at this time.¹⁰

Many NATO nations have issued similar directions to strengthen their reserve forces and increase their military readiness. In general, Alliance members and partners understand this strengthening of reserve forces as increasing physical numbers, refining deployable capabilities, and enhancing integration with active duty personnel and interoperability with allies. Accordingly, countries must deliver a strong incentive package to recruits to attract and retain them as reservists. This enticement needs to be accompanied by robust employer engagement programs and, if required, job protection. Over the course of their service, NATO reservists will be asked to endure increasingly frequent deployments and undergo significant professional education and training. The members of operationalized NATO reserve forces will be asked to be away from home for long periods of time and endure significant risk. Military administration, training and education are only a few aspects of the support services required to prepare reservists for deployment. If reservists cannot access an acceptable suite of benefits and community backing – which includes their civilian employers and families – to mitigate the stresses their commitment

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "List of Countries by Number of Military and Paramilitary Personnel," Wikipedia. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_number_of_military_and_paramilitary_personnel, accessed May 20, 2018.

⁷ "Send in the Reserves" ...

⁸ Guillaume Lasconjarias, "Send the Reserve! New Ways to Support NATO through Reserve Forces," NATO Defence College Research Paper 99, Nov. 15, 2013: 2. Available at <http://www.ndc.nato.int/news/news.php?icode=604>, accessed Jan. 15, 2018.

⁹ Piotr Szymański, "Overstretched? Denmark's Security Policy and Armed Forces in Light of the New Defence Agreement," Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), April 27, 2018. Available at <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2018-04-27/overstretched-denmarks-security-policy-and-armed-forces-light>, accessed May 20, 2018.

¹⁰ NATO, NRFC, "Summer Meeting, Calgary, Canada," July 11-12, Minutes, 6-7.



produces, the force generation of NATO reserves for operations will not be successful. Canada is moving quickly to rapidly employable and deployable part-time reserve forces that contribute to creating full-time operational capacity. Canada's 2017 defence policy stresses the need to establish "full-time capability through part-time service" and provides for initiatives to increase reserve force roles and skills. The goal of operationalizing this concept is to "... allow Reservists to balance a vibrant civilian life and occupation with meaningful, part-time military service while enhancing the overall Canadian Armed Forces effectiveness."¹¹

The NRFC has been active in examining these issues. In June 2016, the Netherlands published the study, Lessons Learned from Commitment of Reservists in Operations (LLRO). This work was conducted under the auspices of the NRFC committee and was a broad examination of NATO capacity for international deployment of reservists. The study was prompted by NATO views of a deteriorating global security situation. All of this has forced the Alliance to review and update its strategic objectives and policies. NATO operational contingency planning gave this review further impetus. These options, in some of the force planning scenarios, will require significant forces to sustain NATO-generated crisis response formations. From this, Canada proposed the next step for the LLRO study, which was to specify the shared practices and factors that occur prior to deployment which affect the force generation of NATO reserve forces. Work on this latest phase of the LLRO project commenced in July 2017 with the distribution of questionnaires seeking information on the military, family and employer support structures that NATO nations use to facilitate their reservists' operational deployment.¹²

Resurgence of NATO Reserve Forces

It goes without saying that the significance of reserve forces and their added value for our security and defence are growing.

- Former minister of Defence and current permanent representative of the Czech Republic to NATO Jiří Šedivý (2012)

Many NATO countries desire to increase security capability and capacity through the reinvigoration of their reserve forces. In his 2012 remarks to the Confédération Interalliée des Officiers de Réserve (CIOR), Šedivý laid out the commonly accepted major arguments for strengthening NATO reserve forces. He observed that the benefits of increasing them are three-fold. First, reservists provide an "economy of force". They can augment or replace security capabilities previously imbued within active forces, but which, due to reduced or re-allocated defence spending priorities, are no longer at past levels. Also, many European militaries have replaced wholesale national conscription with various systems, from a limited draft to completely volunteer forces. In these cases, many would consider part-time reserve service but not full-time active duty. Thus, national reserve forces allow one to serve without

¹¹ Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*, 2017: 67-69. Available at <http://dgpapp.forces.gc.ca/en/canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>, accessed May 31, 2018.

¹² See NATO, NRFC, the Netherlands, "Lessons Learned from Commitments of Reservists in Operations," June 6, 2016.



having to commit to full-time service. Second, in an increasingly sophisticated technical environment, reservists act as a liaison between civilian innovation and exploration, particularly in areas such as information technology and communications, and military needs. Tech-savvy reservists can provide cutting-edge niche capabilities for areas of growing concern, such as cyber-defence. Last, reservists provide a much-needed bridge between their professional militaries and the societies from which they come. They facilitate an informed national military that reflects its country's concerns and, at the same time through their civilian contacts, increase the general population's awareness of defence and security.¹³

In recent years, all of this has resulted in the creation of more robust national reserve structures which range from those having some degree of conscription to those that are entirely voluntary. These reserve forces have varying structures and degrees of liability to serve; however, all can be mobilized by their governments for extreme occurrences like war. In 2007, Bulgaria discontinued conscription and increased reliance on its reserve. A revised reserve policy was subsequently introduced in 2012. This directive catered to reserve recruitment based on both voluntary and compulsory reserve components. Those who sign voluntary contracts train periodically within units. The mandatory reserve consists of those who are of an age applicable to military service, have military experience or other skills, and who will be activated for military service if needed. In both cases, reservists can be mobilized for domestic or international deployments, as individual reinforcements, individuals put in active duty units or the nucleus of new units. The Bulgarian reserve force is now about 3,000 personnel. Another NATO member, Slovenia, also has a small voluntary reserve of about 1,700, but uses it differently. This reserve force cannot be deployed outside the country, but will form the wartime mobilization base of two mechanized brigades.¹⁴

On the other hand, Norway has a limited form of conscription. Of an annual pool of 60,000 possible conscripts, 12,000 are selected for compulsory service, which can be on active or reserve duty. Former active-duty personnel can also join the reserve, which can be mobilized in times of war. During peace, Norway's reserve forces have mandatory military training and can be activated for domestic operations, but international deployments are voluntary. Reserves can be deployed as individuals or units.¹⁵ Denmark has also maintained conscription, albeit of a short duration, normally four months. Some conscripts can be offered reserve contracts after their mandatory service. The other source of recruits is former active-duty members who choose to join the reserves. A portion of reserve officers is recruited and trained directly through the reserve officer school system. Like Norway, Denmark's personnel can be deployed individually or as reserve units. Requirements for deployment and annual training are expressed through specific

¹³ "On War, On Peace: NATO and Reserve Forces: A Czech View," based on a speech given by former minister of defence of the Czech Republic and current ambassador to NATO Jiří Šedivý, CIOR Summer Congress, Brno, Czech Republic, Aug. 1, 2013. Available at <http://www.onwar.eu/2013/09/25/nato-and-reserve-forces-a-czech-view/>, accessed May 19, 2018. Lasconjarias mirrors the substance of these ideas regarding the evolving roles of reservists.

¹⁴ Reserve numbers come from "The Military Balance 2017," Wikipedia ...; NATO, NRFC, Bulgaria, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Feb. 5, 2018: 1-2; and "Military: Slovenia – Military Personnel," GlobalSecurity.org. Available at <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/si-personnel.htm>, accessed May 26, 2018.

¹⁵ NATO, NRFC, Norway, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," May 19, 2018: 2-3.



contracts.¹⁶ Canada's reserve forces are entirely voluntary, with no element of conscription, and consist of both part- and full-time reservists. Part-time reservists train regularly. Members of the Canadian reserves do not have to be previous active-duty, although one can transfer from active duty to the reserve. In the event of conflict or extreme national emergency, Canadian reservists can be mobilized, but in all other instances they must provide consent to serve either for domestic or international operations. They are normally used for individual augmentation, but units or smaller organizations can be created and deployed if sufficient training and preparation time are provided.¹⁷ In part, these examples capture the diverse spectrum of structural choices for NATO reserve forces.

These options are to various degrees mirrored by NRFC observer countries. Australia and New Zealand, for example, have voluntary reserves, recruit from various sources, and neither uses any form of conscription. These reserves train regularly and are used extensively on operations. Reservists can deploy individually, either as reinforcements or augmentation to regular units, or as formed units. As with most NATO countries, while reservists from these two nations can be mobilized under extreme conditions, most deployments are voluntary.¹⁸

Due to its longstanding and uneasy ceasefire with North Korea, the Republic of Korea has a very large reserve of about 7.5 million personnel. The reserve forces are divided into Mobilization and the Homeland Reserve forces, which are akin to a home guard. All have a two-year mandatory service in the Republic of Korea Armed Forces. Once that obligatory active-duty service is completed, all are involuntarily transferred to the Mobilization Reserve forces and must serve for four years there, followed by another four years in the Homeland Reserve. However, that only applies to enlisted sailors, soldiers and air personnel. Retired officers and non-commissioned officers remain in the reserve until reaching the retirement age for their ranks. Korean nationals between 18 and 60 years of age, who are members of the reserve forces, can request to join the Homeland Reserve. In times of conflict, five divisions from the Mobilization Reserve could be immediately deployed to the operational area while the Homeland Reserve deals with other threats. These reserve forces receive only a few days of training annually, and do not train as units.¹⁹

In comparison to these initiatives, Switzerland (which is neither a NATO member nor an NRFC observer country) relies on national conscription to fill its reserve. All receive 18 or 21 weeks of basic training and annual training, remaining part of the reserve until mandated retirement based

¹⁶ "Military Service – Denmark," Wikipedia. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_service#Denmark, accessed May 21, 2018; and NATO, NRFC, Denmark, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," May 4, 2018: 2-4.

¹⁷ NATO, NRFC, Canada, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Feb. 28, 2018: 1-9.

¹⁸ NATO, NRFC, the Netherlands, "Lessons Learned" ... 21-22; and NATO, NRFC, New Zealand, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Jan. 4, 2018: 1-3.

¹⁹ "Republic of Korea Reserve Forces," Wikipedia. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_Korea_Reserve_Forces, accessed May 26, 2018; and "Homeland Reserve Force South Korea," GlobalSecurity.Org. Available at <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/rok/hrf.htm>, accessed May 26, 2018. The number of reservists comes from the 2017 edition of "The Military Balance," Wikipedia ...



on rank – senior ranks remain in military service longer than more junior-ranking members. The focus of Swiss reservists is their national defence and security.²⁰

Enhancing Reserve Readiness

*Reservists are needed for Bundeswehr operations at home and abroad.*²¹

- Germany: Bundeswehr Reserve Concept (2012)

Germany has further delineated the role of its reserve forces within NATO by stating that they are used to contribute to collective defence. Germany uses reserve forces to augment Bundeswehr forces that are sent to participate in rapid and multinational threat responses of short duration. Over time, such contributions may demand the use of the entire peacetime military, both active and reserve. Also, in the unlikely event of major conflict involving the Alliance, the reserve will form the nucleus of the Bundeswehr build-up. Furthermore, Bundeswehr reservists will contribute to international stability by participating in a gamut of activities designed to assist in that goal. These initiatives include observer missions, crisis prevention, crisis management, counterterrorism and peace enforcement. One can argue that many NATO countries share this Bundeswehr reserve perspective, qualified by national caveats.²²

Key to achieving these objectives is readiness. Reservists must be able to transition from civilian to military roles in highly complex environments with relative ease. They must be able to participate in a myriad of operations, from humanitarian assistance to war. The components of mobilization readiness from a solely military viewpoint involve (1) efficiently recruiting, training and retaining reservists, and (2) understanding potential threats and preparing reserve forces for their roles within this changing security setting. Of course, this is only one nexus of a discursive systemic approach that must also include employer and family support.²³ These last two will be addressed later in this report.

During the Cold War, the United States found that reserve units which were activated for operations did not usually meet the requirements of immediate international deployments. Rather, these units often required six months or more of pre-deployment training to make them operationally ready. This is similar to the amount of time it would take to train raw recruits and did not meet the needs of a “come as you are” war.²⁴ Following from that, the requirements of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq created unsustainable demands on the active-duty component of the American military. However, the U.S. military’s long-term commitment enabled advance planning for reserve and National Guard unit and formation rotations, along with the necessary

²⁰ “Military Service – Switzerland,” Wikipedia. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_service#Switzerland, accessed May 21, 2018; and “Conscription in Switzerland,” Wikipedia. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conscription_in_Switzerland, accessed May 21, 2018.

²¹ Germany, Ministry of Defence, “The Bundeswehr Reserve Concept,” Berlin: Armed Forces Staff Branch, Feb. 1, 2012, para. 312.

²² Ibid., paras. 3.2.1- 3.2.2.

²³ Lasconjarias, 3; and see “Send in the Reserves”...

²⁴ NATO, CIOR, Denmark, “The Reserve Forces Monitor,” 2015: s.6.1.



and lengthy pre-deployment training.²⁵ Although this would not be a solution for imminent security threats, it speaks to the difficulty of maintaining immediate readiness in reserve forces. It also suggests that reserve forces are generally best utilized to provide follow-on forces during longer term commitments. This gives predictability and allows programming activities to increase readiness in deploying reservists. This predictability may also mitigate the negative impact of multiple deployments for sustained operations.²⁶

The U.S. military provides an interesting study of reserve force readiness. More than 850,000 personnel are in the reserve, which is controlled federally, and the National Guard, which is normally under state authority but can be ordered to federal duty. The reserve component includes naval, army, marine, air force and coast guard elements, while the National Guard includes army and air forces. Both the reserve and National Guard are divided into three reserve categories: the ready reserve, the stand-by reserve and the retired ready reserve. These categories are further subdivided to reflect varying degrees of readiness. The U.S. does not use conscription; membership in the reserves is voluntary. Reservists can be mobilized or volunteer for both domestic or overseas deployments, either as individuals or part of units and formations. The National Guard is more focused on domestic deployment in support of its respective states, although it has been used extensively in Afghanistan and Iraq.²⁷

Turkey has retained compulsory military service for males between the ages of 20 and 41; the country also has a large reserve of about 375,000 personnel. For the most part, conscripts serve for 12 months in active forces and are then transferred to the reserve where they may serve until the age of 60. Turkey uses a tiered force structure. The highest tier of reserve readiness is based upon the former active-duty conscripts, who are in their first year of reserve service. The next tier of reserve readiness starts the second year after release from active duty until those former conscripts are 41 years old, and then the lowest tier of military readiness are reservists aged 42 to 60. Turkish reservists can normally be activated until age 46 and deployed domestically or internationally. These reserve forces receive annual mobilization training for that possible eventuality.²⁸

The Canadian Army Reserve generates units on short notice that allow for a degree of high readiness. Units are known as Territorial Battalion Groups (TBGs). Sub-units are called Domestic Response Companies (DRC), with Arctic Response Company Groups (ARCG) designed for Arctic and northern operations. With little warning, these units are raised from part-time reserve forces for domestic operations. These organizations provide a force generation and employment framework that allows the Canadian Army Reserve to create a domestic response capability within

²⁵ Richard J. Dunn III, "America's Reserve and National Guard Components: Key Contributors to US Military Strength," The Heritage Foundation: Essays, 2016: 68-69. Available at <https://index.heritage.org/military/2016/essays/americas-reserve-and-national-guard-components/>, accessed May 26, 2018; and NATO, NRFC, United States, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Jan. 3, 2018: 1-2.

²⁶ Ibid., 9; NATO, CIOR, Denmark, "The Reserve Forces Monitor" ... and *ibid.*, ss. 7.3 and 7.4.

²⁷ Number of United States reserve and guard personnel comes from "The Military Balance 2017," ... ; Dunn, 68-69; and NATO, NRFC, U.S., "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 1-4.

²⁸ Turkish reserve force numbers contained in "The Military Balance 2017," Wikipedia ... ; NATO, NRFC, Turkey, "National Reserve Force Status," 2004: 1-2. Available at <https://www.nato.int/nrhc/database/turkey.pdf>, accessed May 27, 2018; and "Military: Turkey – Military Personnel," GlobalSecurity.org, 2017. Available at <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/tu-personnel.htm>, accessed May 27, 2018.



96 hours, augmenting or replacing active-duty forces that may have been the first responders. If no active-duty forces have been involved, then these forces will provide the primary response to a domestic need. While somewhat ad hoc in nature, being produced from those reservists who are available when needed, this capability is exercised regularly and provides a reserve domestic response.²⁹

In contrast to the U.S., Turkey and Canada, as of 2017 Hungary had about 5,300 volunteer reservists, with plans to incrementally increase these numbers regionally. The objective was to eventually create a volunteer reserve unit in all 197 national districts, thereby enhancing homeland defence. Current reserve forces deploy as individuals under multinational command. They come forward and are selected for deployment based on pre-existing functional skills and receive pre-deployment training focused on refreshing individual military skills for up to five weeks prior to departure.³⁰

Reserve force military readiness can be enhanced through preparation for predictable deployments. The dilemma then becomes maintaining a reasonable level of readiness for immediate deployments. The frequency of training for military readiness depends upon the level of skill complexity of military tasks and the acknowledgment that “skill fade” can occur within one year. Accordingly, one can maintain military competency through recurrent training, through a focus on training reserves during the pre-deployment period, or by using a combination of the two. This last option is the most prevalent. For instance, members of the U.S. reserve component train two weeks a year plus one weekend a month for a minimum of 39 days to maintain readiness, with the provision of additional pre-deployment training. Other nations, like Turkey, rely on annual mobilization training to create individual and military readiness for deployment. Individual training is mandated as between nine and 12 days, and collective training up to 45 days. Hungary, on the other hand, selects reservists for individual deployment based on existing skills and provides a military skills refresher prior to deployment. In general, unless reservists are using civilian or other current skills, some level of recurrent training is needed to maintain both military proficiency and a degree of immediate operational readiness. Alternatively, Italy aligns civil with military occupations. The Italian reserves allow for certain staff specialties, civil military affairs detachments, medical field detachments and the military mail service to consist of reservists whose civilian specialties are in those areas. Another method to increase readiness is the use of e-learning. The Netherlands is experimenting with this method in order to increase training capability during time-constrained pre-deployment cycles.³¹

²⁹ NATO, NRFC, Canada, “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,” ... 8; Email, Canadian Military Representative to NATO dated June 5, 2018 (in author’s possession); and Paul Bury, “Canada’s Reserve Force: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Reservists – Force Generation & Readiness,” presentation at NRFC summer meeting, Stockholm, June 27, 2018.

³⁰ Hungary, Ministry of Defence, “The Hungarian Defence Forces Must be Made a Major Military Force in the Region by 2026,” Feb. 16, 2017. Available at <https://dailynewshungary.com/hungarian-military-decisive-force-region-says-defence-minister/>, accessed May 27, 2018; and NATO, NRFC, Netherlands, “Lessons Learned” ... 51-53.

³¹ See NATO, CIOR, Denmark, “The Reserve Forces Monitor” ... s. 6.1, for more discussion of specific studies into the areas of training frequency and skill fade; NATO, NRFC, U.S., “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire” ... 5; NATO, NRFC, Turkey, “National Reserve Force Status,” 2004: 2. Available at <https://www.nato.int/nrfc/database/turkey.pdf>, accessed May 27, 2018; NATO, NRFC, Netherlands, “Lessons Learned,” ... 51-53, 63; and NATO, NRFC, Italy, “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,” Nov. 17, 2017: 3.



Medical, dental and physical fitness bear more study as aspects of military deployment. Obviously, these areas require a minimum level; however, that level and how it is implemented varies from country to country, seemingly according to the employment of that reservist. For instance, Poland's policy of full medical and dental care while reservists are on full-time military duty seems to be the norm in these circumstances. While many countries have physical fitness standards that reservists are expected to achieve, many part-time reserve forces do not seem to account for minimum medical and dental levels. One way to mitigate lower dental or medical fitness levels, and perhaps to some degree physical fitness, is to address these issues prior to deployment. Also, mental and psychological readiness can be strengthened with adequate warning and a deliberate and structured pre-deployment period. In that case, a warning of three to six months for predicted operations would be of great assistance with these and other preparations.³²

Equipment is another component of readiness, although it is increasingly discussed in the context of active-duty forces. The level of readiness and quantities of mission-related equipment in reserve units do not always meet immediate deployment needs. While acknowledging that it is not always practical to fully equip reserve forces, or that those forces do not always have the time or expertise to properly service the equipment they have, a number of initiatives would address this issue. First, integrating or partnering active and reserve forces would address equipment shortcomings and help with personal readiness issues. Second, more active-duty augmentation, or larger numbers of full-time reservists in reserve units, would assist with addressing equipment serviceability and allow for reservists to focus on training as opposed to maintenance. Also, care needs to be taken to ensure that reservists have the requisite personal equipment prior to deployment, which unfortunately is not always the case.³³

Support to Reserve Families

Reservists and their families make an additional contribution over and above other members of society. Defence seeks the commitment of reservists to deliver essential security roles by attending training, building skills and being available for operations; in return we are revitalising the challenge and quality of the reservist experience. We will ensure that the reservist is appropriately recognised and supported and that the impact of reserve service on the reservist's family is adequately addressed.³⁴

– United Kingdom, *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued* (2013)

³² Observations taken from NATO, CIOR, Denmark, "The Reserve Forces Monitor," ... ss. 6.4 and 6.5; NATO, NFRC, Netherlands, "Lessons Learned," ... 8-9; NATO, NRFC, Poland, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire" ... 3; and see Defence Research and Development Canada, "DRDC – RDDC – 2017 - L407 Impact of Perceived Readiness for Deployment on Adverse Deployment: Related Experiences in CAF Army Reservists," DRDC Research Centre, December 2017. The Canadian report stresses the impact of equipment on personal perceptions of readiness prior to deployment. Having access to training on the equipment to be used on operations plus a full suite of personal equipment greatly enhances individual perceptions of readiness.

³³ NATO, CIOR, Denmark, "The Reserve Forces Monitor," ... ss. 6.3; see Joseph Adams et al., "Sharing the Burden and Risk: An Operational Assessment of the Reserve Components in Operation Iraqi Freedom," Institute for Defense Analyses, October 2016; see NATO, NFRC, Netherlands, "Lessons Learned" ...; and see also, NATO, NRFC, Canada, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ...

³⁴ United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence, "Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued," July 2013:13. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210470/Cm8655-web_FINAL.pdf, accessed May 22, 2018.



It is not only members of the Alliance, like the U.K., who recognize the necessity of supporting reserve families; others, such as Croatia, do so as well. While support to reserve families during deployments is normally the focus of many efforts, NATO understands that family support is necessary over the entire course of a reservist's service, and therefore encourages national reserve policy to reflect this need. This long-term view helps to mitigate the impact of the demands of a reservist's military commitment on his or her family.³⁵

Unsurprisingly, an Australian study regarding support to reserve families observed that the frequent provision of comprehensible information was the most important aspect of family support. Other countries reflect this sentiment in varying degrees. In some cases, like the U.S., there are comprehensive national structures. Others, such as Bulgaria, leave it as a unit responsibility.³⁶ Prior to deployments, information should be disseminated as soon as practicable and should include key dates, the details of relevant military points of contact, and information pertaining to any potential sources of assistance or support. The media for this information can take many forms, from direct contact to newspapers and websites, or other materials and methods. On a related note, families' ability to communicate with reservists when they are away from home provides a degree of continuity to the reservists' ability to maintain family roles and relationships.³⁷

Those nations that have been in continuous operations since the end of the 20th century have refined their family support mechanisms. Likely the most complete example is that of the U.S.. It has a national-level policy regarding active and reserve forces military family support along with the corresponding establishment of a national family readiness system in the Military Community and Family Programs (MC&FP) office of the Department of Defense. The MC&FP office co-ordinates the myriad of military and other organizations that assist military families. This office also provides information concerning the availability of support resources by using committees and working groups, along with social media. Tied into this national system is the Office for Reserve Integration, located within the bureau of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. This group is focused on the family support needs of the reserve and National Guard. The Office for Reserve Integration ensures access to these support resources for reserve force families, and that reserve and National Guard interests are represented to the MC&FP. It also co-ordinates family support issues among reserve and guard elements and regions, as well as the provision of reserve/guard forces training for family support. Finally, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Integration provides further oversight to ensure that the reserve and the National Guard have access to these programs, equitable to that of their active-duty comrades-in-arms. Thus, the U.S. has a co-ordinated national policy for all

³⁵ Croatia acknowledges this necessity in its defence development plan. Croatia, Ministry of Defence, "The Croatian Armed Forces Long Term Development Plan, 2006 -2015," 2006: 39. Available at https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/154936/Croatia_English-2006-2015.pdf, accessed May 27, 2018; and Military Decision on MC 441/2 NATO Framework Policy on Reserves ... paras. 4 and 20.

³⁶ All respondents to the national questionnaire, less two, highlighted the need to keep families informed. The first exception was Poland, which did not respond to that question. The other was Greece, which indicated that no system for informing families was mandated, but also noted that reservists are not normally used for domestic or international operations. NATO, NRFC, Greece, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," March 28, 2018: 4-5.

³⁷ Geoffrey J. Orme and E. James Kehoe, "Left Behind but Not Left Out?: Perceptions of Support for Family Members of Deployed Reservists," *Australian Defence Force Journal*, no. 185, July/August 2011: 29-31. Available at http://www.defence.gov.au/adf/adfj/Documents/issue_185/185_2011_Jul_Aug.pdf, accessed May 25, 2018.



military families and involves reserve-specific organizations to represent and facilitate those interests, and, finally, reserve oversight of these important family support programs.³⁸

Germany, which does not have the same scale of reserve forces, has also created an overarching network of family support centres and family support points which provide links for deployed and absent military members who are away from home for extended periods. During deployments, these centres facilitate information for families and contact with deployed members. They also give access to a host of services, from military chaplains through social workers and psychologists. The centres have toll-free hotlines, which are staffed 24/7, in order to provide assistance when required. Last, information about Bundeswehr activities is available on public media channels. Canada also uses a national system for supporting military families, both active and reserve. In all these cases, large percentages of their reserve forces are committed to operations.³⁹

The Netherlands stressed that active-duty and reserve families have equal access to support services and highlighted the role of unit commanders in informing families through personal contact, unit activities and defence journals. Hungary and France also put the onus on unit commanders. In fact, while most agreed on its importance, many countries lean toward empowering the unit to deal with issues involving reserve families in a fashion determined by individual unit commanders.⁴⁰

Based on these examples, there are two models of family support. The first has national direction and oversight and promotes centralized co-ordination and collaboration along with decentralized execution. The second advocates for a model of decentralized control and execution of family support. The choice of model may in part be determined by the percentage of the reserve forces deploying and the operational tempo. Larger numbers of reserve forces used and higher rates of operational deployments may result in a need for a more integrated national approach in supporting reserve families.

Creating Employer Support

*Twice the citizen – twice the employer.*⁴¹

- Sgt. Jody A. Hudec, Canadian Forces Liaison Council (2005)

Hudec, in a *Canadian Military Journal* article, reprised Winston Churchill's famous quote that a reservist was twice a citizen. Hudec suggested that employers who support reservists are "twice the employer" by recognizing that citizen soldiers need time to undergo military training and act on behalf of their nation in the provision of national security. Hudec also suggests that employers

³⁸ NATO, NRFC, U.S., "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 6-7.

³⁹ NATO, NRFC, Germany, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Feb. 18, 2018: 4; and NATO, NRFC, Canada, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,"... 11-12.

⁴⁰ NATO, NRFC, the Netherlands, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Dec. 19, 2017: 6; NATO, NRFC, Hungary, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," May 28, 2018: 5; and NATO, NRFC, France, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," Jan. 19, 2018: 4.

⁴¹ Jody A. Hudec, "Views and Opinions: Twice the Citizen – Twice the Employer," *Canadian Military Journal* 6, no. 3, Autumn 2005: 84-85.



who do support reserve employees gain many benefits. Military training gives employers skilled employees who are capable of working under pressure, who communicate well, and who are adaptable and capable of assimilating new knowledge relatively easily. These reserve employees possess many attributes useful to employers, like a desire for teamwork, loyalty and a service-oriented ethos. Those who deploy often return to the employer with qualities that positively influence the workplace. These include self-esteem, confidence and integrity. The added value that reservists provide to the employer needs to be used to strengthen employer partnerships, particularly in areas where civilian skills are used within the military commitment and vice versa. Cyber-defence, as previously mentioned, is one potential area for such co-operation.⁴²

Another motivation to establish strong employer support networks is to assure part-time reservists availability for military training, particularly when a national economy is in a downswing and unemployment is high. In these cases, potential reservists and reserve employees have little suasion with employers and may be forced to review their reserve participation in the context of potential absences from work. This is particularly true if the employer is a small business fighting to survive in a weak economy. Then it is particularly difficult for those employees to be reservists. The converse is also true. When the economy is strong, possible reservists and reserve employees are better able to participate in reserve activities. Establishing strong employer support will assist with maintaining reserve readiness, and likely reserve retention in both good and bad economic times.⁴³

There are international and national groups that encourage employers to support reservists. The International Conference on Employer Support for the Reserves (ICESR) is an informal grouping of nations with aligned interests concerning the military and national potential of reserve forces. The conference has been held bi-annually since the mid-1990s, with hosting responsibility shared among member nations and alternating on each occasion. Most of the participating countries are NRFC members. The last meeting was held in Stockholm, Sweden from Oct. 9-11, 2017 and focused on “Employer Engagement – Benefit for Civilian Partners and Defence Forces”. It provided a number of international perspectives concerning this realm.⁴⁴

The outcomes for this meeting suggested that there would be great benefit in using the employer military support programs of multinational corporations, to extend and establish those programs in other countries. For instance, IBM Corporation is an American multinational technology company that supports its reserve force employees in the U.S. and Sweden. The programs IBM offered in the U.S. can then be potentially negotiated in Sweden where IBM has reserve force support agreements. An example of this could be the IBM (U.S.) policy regarding reserve force employees’ salaries, which enables a salary supplement for American employees while they are doing reserve service. This augmentation is with the objective of preventing income loss while employees fulfil their reserve commitment. Because Sweden has a military support program with

⁴² Hudec, 85; Lasconjarias; and see “Key Findings 2/5” in ICESR 2017, Oct. 9-11, Stockholm: Summary and Key Findings,” (in author’s possession).

⁴³ Paul Earnshaw and John Price, “Employer Support for Reserves: Some International Comparisons of Reserve Capabilities,” *Australian Defence Force Journal*, no. 185, July/August 2011: 48. Available at http://www.defence.gov.au/adf/adfj/Documents/issue_185/185_2011_Jul_Aug.pdf , accessed May 26, 2018.

⁴⁴ ICESR 2017 ... Available at <https://www.soldatkarriar.se/icesr-9-11-okt-stockholm/> , accessed May 26, 2018; and Earnshaw and Price, 45.



IBM, it could potentially negotiate a similar compensation package for IBM (Sweden) reservists. Also, if multinational businesses support reserve employees in one country, the existence of those formal support agreements can then potentially be used in other nations where the same corporation has business interests, but no similar policy, to create corporate reserve force employee support programs.⁴⁵

ICESR also stressed the participation of national political authorities and, in countries with a monarchy, royalty could help to create legitimacy for military employer support initiatives and enhance employers' desire to establish this partnership with reserve forces. Consistent communications are a vital part of maintaining these partnerships. Many countries are in the process of forming, or have already established, employer support organizations to assist in making these connections and providing information to employers.⁴⁶

Norway established an employer support program 10 years ago that is part of Veterans Affairs. This program is still evolving and becoming more involved with supporting Norwegian reservists, in addition to active-duty personnel. Denmark established an employers' support program about two decades ago in response to the increasing need for reservists in the Danish military and the growing number of international deployments. Canada has established the Canadian Forces Liaison Council, which is supported by the Department of National Defence and provides outreach to employers regarding the benefits of supporting reservists. The U.S. has the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve that is a Department of Defense program and which promotes understanding and support of the reserve and guard forces with employers. France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland all have governmental and military engagement with employers. Hungary is developing policy, while Bulgaria uses non-governmental national organizations that represent reservists to engage employers. Greece, which does not normally deploy reservists, does not have an employer support program. Evidently, employer support obtained in one fashion or another is a necessary adjunct to an active NATO reserve force.⁴⁷

Similarly, NRFC partner New Zealand has a Defence Employer Support Council consisting of civilian business leaders who provide advice on establishing and maintaining relationships with employers. Interestingly, New Zealand is trialling an initiative for businesses to share reserve employees and has engaged employers to support reservists.⁴⁸

Related to this is employer recognition. This can take many forms and provides reinforcement for companies to support reservists. Those companies so thanked can utilize that acknowledgment for positive advertisement. Thales France, which received a national award in 2014 for the support

⁴⁵ See "Key Findings 1/5" in ICESR 2017, Oct. 9-11, Stockholm: Summary and Key Findings," (in author's possession).

⁴⁶ See "Key Findings 2/5," "Key Findings 3/5" and "Key Findings 4/5" in ICESR 2017, Oct. 9-11, Stockholm: Summary and Key Findings," (in author's possession).

⁴⁷ NATO, NRFC, Norway, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 5; NATO, NRFC, Denmark, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 5; NATO, NRFC, Canada, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 12; NATO, NRFC, U.S., "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 7-9; NATO, NRFC, France, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 4-5; NATO, NRFC, Germany, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 5; NATO, NRFC, Italy, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 6; NATO, NRFC, Netherlands, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 7; NATO, NRFC, Poland, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 4; NATO, NRFC, Hungary, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 5; NATO, NRFC, Bulgaria, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 7; and NATO, NRFC, Greece, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 5.

⁴⁸ NATO, NRFC, New Zealand, "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 5; and NATO, NRFC, the Netherlands, "Lessons Learned," ... 21.



provided to its reserve employees, has an explicit acknowledgment of such support on its corporate web page. It highlights Thales France's commitment as a responsible employer to French security and defence interests at home and abroad through its support to France's reserve forces. Consequently, this type of public recognition of employer support can pay dividends to both the employer and its reserve employees.⁴⁹

At the same time, recognition and engagement can take many forms, from national awards and political-level recognition to local expressions of appreciation and regional reserve familiarization. The U.S. has many levels of recognition and engagement, with a hierarchy of awards that entail commensurate emphasis, formal statements of support along with signing ceremonies, "boss lifts" during which employers are transported to military activities to view their employees training in a military context, and local outreach by units to employers. Other countries – although they do not necessarily have the overarching and centralized policy with various levels of integrated approach to corporations and businesses – do have variations of similar methods to create and reinforce employer support to reserve activities. The U.S.'s systemic approach highlights the shared need for consistently informing employers, providing advanced warning of training or operational commitments and using a foreseeable, scheduled approach to deployments that reservists' employers clearly understand.⁵⁰

Employment protection is another area related to supporting the employment of reservists. These legal policies normally have three general principles: (1) employers cannot treat a reserve force employee any differently than an employee who is not a reservist, (2) employers cannot impede their employees from reserve service and may be obligated to provide them with time off to fulfil reserve duties, and (3) once the reservist returns to work, they must be reinstated without loss of benefits or pay. Various countries have differing approaches that may or may not use a legal framework for the employment protection of reservists, depending on national circumstances and culture. The U.S. is a well-known example of a country with a wide-ranging legal framework under the *Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act*, which includes all these elements to protect reservists. However, many countries do not have this type of act.⁵¹

Compensation programs are also used to incentivize employers to support reserve employees, and encourage potential reservists to consider deploying. Support to employers can take the form of compensation while reservists are deployed. For instance, upon application from the employer, Norway pays €55 per day to employers when the reserve employee has been deployed over 30 days. This is to assist with covering any costs the employer may incur when one of their employees is on reserve military service. Germany is creating a similar policy that would not only cover any additional costs in hiring a replacement employee, but also cover the reserve employee's wages.

Canada provides compensation to employers of C\$425 per week, while the employee is deployed. Reservists who are self-employed can also collect this subsidy. However, not all countries have

⁴⁹ "Thales/Home/Global/Corporate Responsibility/Employees: Supporting France's Military Reserve." Available at <https://www.thalesgroup.com/en/global/corporate-responsibility/employees/supporting-frances-military-reserve>, accessed May 31, 2018.

⁵⁰ NATO, NRFC, U.S., "Pre-Deployment Questionnaire," ... 7-10.

⁵¹ Ibid., 9; and Lasconjarias, 4.



these types of programs. France uses enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses and benefits to encourage reservists to continue to actively serve. In addition, the French have legal guarantees to ensure the reservists have a number of days per year to engage in military service and that they suffer no loss of salary between civilian and military pay. The permutations in compensation for employers and reserve employees are, from all accounts, varied among contributing nations.⁵²

Promoting Quality Reserve Forces

*NATO recognises the importance of national Reserve Forces and the compelling requirement to better understand and exploit the inherent potential of reservists and Reserve Forces. This continuous improvement and innovation is vital to the future operations and strategic flexibility of the Alliance.*⁵³

- NATO News, NATO Supports Allied and Partner Reserve Forces (2018)

NATO has a vested interest in supporting the continuing growth of responsive, deployable reserve forces within the Alliance. It has various degrees of relationships with organizations mandated to assist with this goal in numerous fashions. These are the NRFC, CIOR and its partnered Confédération Interalliée des Officiers Médicaux de Reserve (CIOMR). All report annually to the MC concerning their activities.⁵⁴

The NRFC was founded in 1981 and has national representation from 24 countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the U.K. and the U.S.), as well as six observer countries (Australia, Austria, Georgia, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea and Sweden). It meets regularly, normally bi-annually, and includes liaison from other NATO military bodies like the International Military Staff, Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation. Its principal objectives are providing policy advice to the MC, giving a forum for NATO reserves to share information and best practices, and liaising with organizations involved in reserve affairs to maintain awareness and understanding of common activities and interests. The NRFC is mandated to provide an annual report to the MC on its work.⁵⁵

Independent from the NRFC is the CIOR, which campaigns on behalf of national reserve officer organizations. Created in 1948 and recognized by NATO in 1976, its advocacy is focused on promoting the capability and skills of reserve officers, providing advice to the MC on these matters and encouraging members to develop their national reserve forces. It also meets bi-annually and

⁵² NATO, NRFC, Norway, “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,” ... 6; NATO, NRFC, Germany, “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,” ... 5; NATO, NRFC, Canada, “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,” ... 12; and NATO, NRFC, France, “Pre-Deployment Questionnaire,” ... 4.

⁵³ NATO, “NATO Supports Allied and Partner Reserve Forces,” *NATO News*, Feb. 8, 2018. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/ua/natohq/news_151685.htm?selectedLocale=en, accessed May 24, 2018.

⁵⁴ NATO, “E-Library: Reserve Forces.” Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69345.htm, accessed May 26, 2018.

⁵⁵ Ibid.; and Enclosure to NATO, North Atlantic MC, Secretary General, “Final Decision on MC 0392/1 MC Directive for the National Reserve Forces Committee (NRFC),” July 27, 2012: 2.



has several standing subcommittees. These are: (1) Defence Attitudes and Security Issues Committee; (2) Civil Military Co-operation Committee; (3) Military Competitions Committee; (4) Legal Committee; (5) Partnership for Peace and Outreach Committee; (6) Language Academy Committee; (7) Seminar Committee; and (8) Young Reserve Officers Committee. While the NRFC is a NATO organization, the CIOR is NATO-affiliated and receives a fair degree of NATO support which includes permanent facilities at NATO HQ with the international military staff.⁵⁶

Connected to the CIOR is the CIOMR, which was founded in 1947. It represents medical officers within CIOR member reserve forces. Its role is to create closer professional relationships with the medical services of Alliance members, as well as better understanding and liaison with NATO active forces.⁵⁷ Another organization of note, that has no official relationship, is the Confédération Interalliée des Sous-Officiers de Réserve (CISOR), formed in 1963. It has a mandate to contribute to enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness of its member nations' non-commissioned officers. Its membership does include some NATO nations.⁵⁸

These organizations are invaluable in creating awareness of reserve issues and, primarily through the NRFC and CIOR, provision of advice to the MC. They also serve as necessary forums for sharing ideas that enhance reserve readiness. However, an area which could be re-examined with a view to increasing unity of effort with regards to their activities, particularly the respective capability of national reserve forces, is a review of the relationship between the NRFC and CIOR as articulated in NATO directive MC 0248/2. Currently, this instruction encourages, but is not prescriptive regarding co-operation between the NRFC and CIOR:

The NRFC and CIOR share a common interest in securing the quality of reserve forces in compliance with national policy on reserves. It would benefit each organization to maintain situational awareness of the other's activities in order to identify areas of mutual interest and potential co-operation.⁵⁹

The link between these two organizations, along with the CIOMR and CISOR, should be examined with a view to systemically strengthening the co-ordination of their activities, avoiding duplication of work, better focusing of policy advice to the MC, and thus achieving maximum positive impact on Alliance reserve force readiness.

Conclusion

Part of being a truly 21st century Alliance is about speed: speed of awareness, speed of decision-making, speed of action, speed of reinforcement and speed of adaptation – what is sometimes

⁵⁶ NATO, "E-Library: Reserve Forces," ...; Enclosure to NATO, North Atlantic Military Committee, Secretary General, "Military Decision on MC 441/2" ... para. 18; and Enclosure to NATO, North Atlantic MC, Secretary General, "Final Decision on MC 0248/2 The Relationship Between NATO and the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR)," July 27, 2012: 4.

⁵⁷ NATO, "E-Library: Reserve Forces," ...

⁵⁸ See CISO. Available at CIOMR, accessed May 31, 2018; and Email from NRFC Secretariat dated June 18, 2018, in author's possession.

⁵⁹ Enclosure to NATO, North Atlantic MC, Secretary General, "Final Decision on MC 0248/2," ... 4.



called the “speed of relevance”. And a more agile, more responsive, more innovative NATO is a stronger and more effective NATO [emphasis added].⁶⁰

– NATO, The Secretary General’s Annual Report, 2017

Agile, responsive and innovative reserve forces provide capabilities that are unavailable or uneconomical to maintain in active-duty forces. Reservists have complementary skills related to their civilian employment and act as a bridge to evolving technology and competences. They provide augmentation, reinforcement, replacement and rotation for active-duty forces, as well as act as an expansion base for mobilization.⁶¹

National approaches to military readiness, family and employer support do not exist in isolation. They form a complex discursive package that influences all parties. A common thread is the need for consistent and informed communication between national and military authorities, the reservists, their families and employers. Of vital importance along with that were early warning of military activities and, when possible, predictive deployment schedules. While seemingly intuitive, these points were reinforced by all nations and must be heeded.

Many contributors noted the applicability of reservists to provide specialists on short notice, as well as the existence of national reserve forces suitable for immediate military requirements. Generally, nations observed that reserve forces are best used for long-term commitments. This predictability will allow for pre-deployment training that enhances military performance and outcomes. Notification of deployment can be given well in advance, preferably at least three to six months prior to departure. This will allow reservists to deal with personal readiness issues including medical, dental and physical fitness levels. A deliberate and structured preparation for operations will reduce the mental stress associated with a perceived lack of readiness.

For immediate use of reserve forces, some degree of annual training is required to maintain military readiness. Tiered force structures, dividing reserve forces into high-readiness to low-readiness organizations, are one manner of focusing readiness efforts. High-readiness reserve forces receive the requisite training needed for immediate usage, while lower tiered forces receive only the training necessary to meet those lower levels of readiness. E-learning may assist with preparing reservists in time-constrained pre-deployment cycles. Barring that, an alternative is to use reservists for missions and tasks in which they possess current civilian skills. From this, one could argue that the creation of reserve units based on analogous civilian skills and recruiting from those professions will not only increase readiness, but will provide focused capabilities to military forces. Higher degrees of immediate readiness, as well as equipment readiness, can be created through integrated active duty and reserve units, or a higher number of active duty or full-time personnel in reserve units to deal with routine tasks and allow reservists to focus on training. Reservists who are preparing for operations should receive access to mandatory personal equipment prior to deployment.

⁶⁰ NATO, Secretary General, “The Secretary General’s Annual Report, 2017,” March 15, 2018: 6. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_152797.htm#, accessed May 18, 2018.

⁶¹ Notes to slide 10, NATO, NRFC, “NRFC Briefing – Annex 1 to NRFC SOP,” March 12, 2015.



The provision of timely and accurate information concerning reserve activities, along with military and support organizations' points of contact, is critical to supporting reservists' families. Facilitating communication between reserve families and their absent members mitigates the impact of absences on family relationships. The method by which national direction determines how family support is dealt with is, in part, determined by the intensity of operations. The larger the reserve force commitment and the higher its operational tempo, the more likely an integrated approach with centralized co-ordination and decentralized execution will be necessary.

Reserve forces should reinforce a major message with employers: Employees who are reservists bring many benefits to a company. Intangible benefits are the positive personal qualities and strong work ethic that they bring to their place of employment, and more tangibly, the skills that the military teaches them and reinforces, from leadership to communications. This link between civilian and military employer is even more beneficial to both sides when military and civilian employment demand the same skills. These ideas must be consistently reinforced with employers and partnerships established to ensure reservists' and potential reservists' availability, as well as employer support for their activities regardless of the economic situation. Public recognition of employer support can prove a powerful incentive for employers to support reserve force employees and many methods of outreach from local to national can be used. Timely warning, predictability of deployment cycles and consistent communications are invaluable in maintaining employer support. Legal frameworks protecting reservists and compensation packages vary widely among Alliance members and partners. Therefore, the decision to use legislation, and the degree of such regulation, to support reserve force employees is tailored to the circumstances of individual contributing states.

Multinational corporations that support reserve employees in one country can be approached to give similar support in nations where they have offices but no similar agreement. By the same token, the policies of multinational corporations that benefit national reservists in one location can be requested for reservists of another country where a reserve force support agreement exists, but the same benefits do not.

The NRFC and CIOR are both connected, collaborative, forward-thinking bodies that are committed to strengthening the capability and usability of Alliance members', partners' and observers' reserve forces. There is a need to re-examine their relationship to ensure that their efforts are maximized, co-ordinated and mutually supportive. Along with that, the NRFC and CIOR, as well as the CIOMR, CISOR and ICESR, should update their NRFC connection. It may be timely to review the key documents, like MC 0441/2 NATO Framework Policy on Reserves, MC 0392/1 MC Directive for the National Reserve Forces Committee (NRFC) and MC 0248/2 The Relationship Between NATO and the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR).

This examination of the institutional support and structures required to set the conditions for force generation and successful deployment of capable, multi-purpose, integrated reserve forces found that while there were significant similarities between countries regarding their practices and the way they are implemented, there were also many differences. Despite this, there are many paths to the same destination. NATO must understand the commonalities and differences



between these national approaches to maximize force generation for 21st century Alliance operations.

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