



Army Drawdown and Restructuring: Background and Issues for Congress

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Summary

On January 26, 2012, senior DOD leadership unveiled a new defense strategy based on a review of potential future security challenges, current defense strategy, and budgetary constraints. This new strategy envisions a smaller, leaner Army that is agile, flexible, rapidly deployable, and technologically advanced. This strategy will rebalance the Army's global posture and presence, emphasizing where potential problems are likely to arise, such as the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East.

As part of the Administration's proposal, two armored brigade combat teams (ABCTs) in Europe will be eliminated out of a total of eight BCTs that will be cut from Active Army force structure. The Army has stated that it may cut more than eight BCTs from the Army's current 44 Active BCTs. Army endstrength will go from 570,000 in 2010 to 490,000 during the Future Year Defense Plan (FYDP) period. As part of this reduction, the Army would no longer be sized to conduct large-scale, protracted stability operations but would continue to be a full-spectrum force capable of addressing a wide range of national security challenges. The Army National Guard and Army Reserves were not targeted for significant cuts. Army leadership stated the impending decrease in Active Duty Army force structure would place an even greater reliance on the National Guard and Reserves.

There will likely be a human dimension of the Army's drawdown. Troops have received an unprecedented level of support from the American public, and those soldiers leaving the service—voluntarily and perhaps involuntarily—might have strong personal feelings about leaving the Army and their comrades after multiple deployments to combat zones. The Army drawdown will likely be achieved in large degree by controlling accessions (i.e., the number of people allowed to join the Army). If limiting accessions is not enough to achieve the desired endstrength targets, the Army can employ a variety of involuntary and voluntary drawdown tools authorized by Congress, such as Selective Early Retirement Boards (SERBs) and Reduction-in-Force (RIF). Voluntary tools that the Army might use include the Voluntary Retirement Incentive, the Voluntary Separation Incentive, Special Separation Bonuses, Temporary Early Retirement Authority, the Voluntary Early Release/Retirement Program, and Early Outs.

The Administration's proposals to drawdown and restructure the Army raise a number of potential issues for congressional consideration. With the possibility of sequestration and a continuing resolution for the remainder of FY2013, Army leadership has stated that readiness and maintenance will be negatively impacted, but nothing has been said about how these cuts could impact drawdown and restructuring initiatives. The Army plans to "regionally align" an unknown number of its units in both the Active and Reserve Components primarily by language and cultural training. Little is known about how the Army plans to accomplish this, how long it will take, how the Army will measure the effectiveness of regionalization, and how much this initiative will cost. The Army is emphasizing "engagement" as a means of better enabling our partners to address their regional security challenges. If the Army intends to focus much of its post-2014 efforts on engagement operations, should the Army posture the force more toward engagement and less towards state-on-state conflict? This report will be updated.

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Importance to Congress

The Administration's proposal to reduce the size of the Army as well as restructure units and headquarters has national security implications that Congress will need to consider as part of its oversight and authorizations and appropriations role. In terms of size of the force, Congress sets the endstrength for both the Active and Reserve components of the Army. Congress also authorizes and appropriates funds needed for Army restructuring, training exercises, equipment, basing, and infrastructure, as well as the various manpower management tools the Army could use to drawdown the force. Administration decisions about the structure of the Army can have a significant impact on Army bases in a Member's district or state that can also have economic ramifications for communities around or near affected bases. The Administration's downsizing and restructuring proposals also can have a significant impact on local and state defense-related industries. Lastly, soldiers and their families who might be affected by the Administration's decisions constitute a unique element of Members' constituencies.

The Administration's Decision to Drawdown and Restructure the Army

Most experts would agree the Administration's decision to reduce the size of the Army was an outgrowth of its decision to withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq by the end of 2011 and the stated intent of handing over security responsibilities for Afghanistan to the Afghan government and Afghan National Army by the end of 2014. The United States has routinely drawn down forces upon the completion of a major conflict, eschewing a "large standing army" during peacetime—although it can be argued that in a post-9/11 world, "peacetime" is a somewhat subjective term. A brief history of past Army drawdowns can be found at **Appendix B**.

Background

The foundation for the Army's drawdown and restructuring was laid in early 2011. A year later in January 2012, the Administration provided additional details on proposed force structure and global posture.

January 6, 2011, News Briefing with Secretary of Defense Gates and Chairman Admiral Mullen¹

On January 6, 2011, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen held a news briefing "announcing a number of decisions and measures that mark the next major step in this department's reform agenda." These decisions and measures, largely taken in response to fiscal pressures, involved a variety of cross-service actions, including consolidating and eliminating headquarters and organizations, modifying or eliminating weapon systems programs, and force reductions. Army force structure-specific actions included

¹ Information from this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, "DOD News Briefing with Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen from the Pentagon," January 6, 2011.

- reduce Active Army endstrength by 27,000 troops starting in 2015, and
- acknowledgement there was “excess” force structure in Europe but no action would be taken until 2015 or without consultation with allies.

Secretary Gates noted the Army was also in the process of divesting itself of an additional 22,000 troops who were temporarily authorized in 2010 and this temporary endstrength would be eliminated by 2013. Combined with the 27,000 Active permanent endstrength reductions that will start in 2015, this represents a reduction of 49,000 Active Duty troops from FY2011 levels.

January 26, 2012, Administration Major Budget Decision Briefing²

On January 26, 2012, senior DOD leaders unveiled a new defense strategy, based on a review of the current defense strategy and budgetary constraints. This new strategy envisions

- a smaller, leaner military that is agile, flexible, rapidly deployable, and technologically advanced;
- rebalancing global posture and presence, emphasizing where potential problems are likely to arise, such as the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East;
- maintaining presence elsewhere in the world (Europe, Africa, and Latin America), using innovative partnerships, strengthening key alliances, and developing new partnerships;
- being able to quickly confront and defeat aggression from any adversary anytime, anyplace; and
- protecting and prioritizing key investments in technology and new capabilities as well as the capacity to grow, adapt, mobilize, and surge when needed.

During this briefing, the following Army force structure decisions were highlighted:

- **Asia-Pacific/Middle East:** Sustain Army structure in the Pacific;
- **Europe and Global Partners:**
 - Adjust Our Posture in Europe:
 - Eliminate two forward-stationed Army heavy brigades;
 - Maintain NATO Article 5 commitments³ and ensure interoperability with allied forces by allocating a U.S.-based brigade to NATO Response Force;⁴ and

² Information in this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, “Major Budget Decisions Briefing from the Pentagon,” presented by Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin E. Dempsey, January 26, 2012; U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, “Major Budget Decisions Briefing from the Pentagon,” presented by Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral James A. Winnefeld Jr., January 26, 2012; and U.S. Department of Defense Publication, Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense, January 2012.

³ According to NATO, <http://www.nato.int/terrorism/five.htm>, Article 5 of the Washington Treaty is the basis of a fundamental principle of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It provides that if a NATO Ally is the victim of an armed attack, each and every other member of the Alliance will consider this act of violence as an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the Ally attacked. This is the principle of collective (continued...)

- Rotate U.S.-based Army units to Europe for training and exercises.
- **Forces No Longer Sized for Long-Term Stability Operations:**
 - Reduce Active Army endstrength. Army will go from about 570,000 in 2010 to 490,000 in the Future Year Defense Plan (FYDP); and
 - Preserve expertise in security force assistance and counterinsurgency.
- **Protecting the Potential for Future Adjustments:**
 - Retain a slightly more senior force in the Active Army to allow growth if needed;
 - Preserve Army organizational structure and training force to allow growth if needed; and
 - Retain a Ready and Capable Reserve Component;
 - Reduce Army National Guard endstrength slightly;
 - Sustain increased readiness prior to mobilization; and
 - Maintain key combat-support and combat service-support capabilities.

In addition to force structure and endstrength decisions, the Administration also made the following specific commitments:

- A significant land force presence would be maintained in Korea as well as an operationally responsive peacetime presence in the Middle East;
- In light of repositioning of forces overseas and eliminating force structure, the President would ask Congress to authorize the use of the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process;
- The new strategic guidelines will require the Army to return to full-spectrum training, develop a versatile mix of capabilities, formations, and equipment to succeed on land, including environments where access will be contested; and
- Align a brigade combat team (BCT) with each geographic combatant command.

(...continued)

defense.

⁴ According to NATO, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm, The NATO Response Force (NRF) is a highly ready and technologically advanced multinational force made up of land, air, maritime, and special forces components that the Alliance can deploy quickly to wherever it is needed. It is comprised of three parts: a command and control element from the NATO Command Structure; the Immediate Response Force, a joint force of about 13,000 high-readiness troops provided by Allies; and a Response Forces Pool, which can supplement the Immediate Response Force when necessary.

January 2012 Drawdown and Restructuring Proposals

Proposal to Reduce Endstrength⁵

On January 27, 2012, Army Chief of Staff General Odierno noted 90,000 soldiers were deployed in support of operations and another 96,000 soldiers forward-stationed overseas in nearly 150 countries. DOD announced the Army would reduce the size of the Active Army starting in 2012 from a post-9/11 peak in 2010 of about 570,000 soldiers to 490,000 soldiers by the end of 2017. DOD plans for only marginal reductions in the Army National Guard and none in the Army Reserve. Army leadership stated endstrength reductions would “follow a drawdown ramp that allows us to take care of soldiers and families while maintaining a ready and capable force.”⁶

Army leaders noted the 490,000-strong Army would have the following advantages over the 482,000-strong Army of 2001:

- a combat-seasoned force;
- increased investments in special operations forces and the cyber domain;
- drastically improved command and control capabilities, which significantly enhance mission command;
- modularized brigade combat teams (BCTs);
- increased aviation assets;
- an operational National Guard and Reserve affording increased depth and capacity; and
- lessons learned over 10 years of combat.⁷

Units to Be Eliminated⁸

During the January 27, 2012, briefing, DOD and Army leaders stated they planned to eliminate at least eight Active Duty BCTs from existing force structure. Army leaders also stated two armored BCTs⁹ (ABCTs) would be removed from Europe and these two ABCTs would not be re-stationed in the United States but instead eliminated from Army force structure. On February 16, 2012, the

⁵ Information in this section is taken from DOD White Paper “Defense Budget Priorities and Choices,” January 2012 and transcripts of Army Chief of Staff Raymond T. Odierno Army Briefing on the FY-13 Budget Request, January 27, 2012.

⁶ Transcripts of Army Chief of Staff Raymond T. Odierno, Army Briefing on the FY-13 Budget Request, January 27, 2012.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Armored BCTs were formerly known as Heavy BCTs (HBCTs).

Army issued an information paper to Congress¹⁰ that provided additional details. According to the paper:

- The Army's V Corps Headquarters will not return to Europe upon the completion of its deployment to Operation Enduring Freedom in late FY2013. The long-term future and location of the V Corps Headquarters will be addressed as part of the Total Army Analysis (TAA) process in which overall force structure and endstrength issues are evaluated.
- Two ABCTs will be inactivated (the 170th BCT in FY2013 and the 172nd BCT in FY2014).
- Additional Army enabler forces, potentially in the range of 2,500 soldiers, could be reduced from Europe as part of the TAA process.¹¹

Press reports suggest the Army might cut more than eight BCTs Army-wide.¹² These additional cuts would most likely result from a reorganization of the BCT's structure, which is presently being studied by the Army staff. It was also reported that it is highly likely that the Army will cut more ABCTs, as DOD has issued strategic guidance calling for a leaner and more rapidly deployable force. As already noted, the 170th ABCT stationed in Baumholder, Germany, and the 172nd ABCT stationed in Grafenwoehr, Germany, will be eliminated. The 170th ABCT was reportedly deactivated on October 9, 2012.¹³ In terms of cuts to forces in the Pacific, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Raymond T. Odierno, reportedly stated Army forces in the Pacific would remain at current levels, with plans to keep Stryker, infantry, and aviation units—about 10,300 soldiers—at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.¹⁴

Units to Be Realigned and Restructured¹⁵

In terms of realigning and restructuring the Active Army, DOD and the Army announced in January 2012 that

- active forces would no longer be sized to conduct large and protracted stability operations;
- Army force structure would be sustained in the Pacific, and a persistent presence would be maintained in the Middle East;
- Army forces will rotate through Europe and other regions on a more frequent basis;

¹⁰ Army Information Paper, "Subject: Army Force Structure in Europe," February 16, 2012.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Information in this section is taken from Sebastian Sprenger, "Odierno: Army May Cut More Than Eight Brigade Combat Teams," *InsideDefense.com*, January 27, 2012; Michelle Tan and Richard Sandza, "European Pullout: Plan to Move 2 BCTs and Up to 10,000 Soldiers Could Start in October," *Army Times*, January 23, 2012; and Michelle Tan, "Reduction to Include 8 BCTs," *Army Times*, February 6, 2012.

¹³ "USAREUR to Cut Civilian Jobs," *Army Times*, November 30, 2012.

¹⁴ William Cole, "Army Won't Shrink Force Level in Pacific Region, General Says," *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, January 18, 2012.

¹⁵ Information in this section is taken from DOD White Paper "Defense Budget Priorities and Choices," January 2012 and transcripts of Army Chief of Staff Raymond T. Odierno Army Briefing on the FY-13 Budget Request, January 27, 2012.

- a U.S.-based heavy brigade would be allocated to the NATO Response Force;
- a brigade combat team (BCT) would be aligned with each geographic combatant command to provide cultural and language training to support engagement operations; and
- BCTs and enabling units would be examined for optimum design, which could lead to further BCT reductions if the Army decides to increase the capability of BCTs.

Press reports offer additional details on how BCTS might be restructured.¹⁶ Prior to the 2003 decision to restructure the Army to a modular force, all combat brigades had three maneuver battalions (infantry, armor, or mechanized infantry). Under modularity, only Stryker battalions have three maneuver battalions, and infantry BCTs (IBCTs) and armored BCTs (ABCTs) have only two, based on a contested belief at the time that additional intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) units added to the BCT could substitute for the third maneuver battalion. Reportedly, Army leaders returning from Iraq and Afghanistan over the past few years have lobbied to add back the third maneuver battalion to IBCTs and ABCTs, as they argued this additional battalion could enable more successful combat, patrol, and site-security operations. In order to add this third battalion, it is likely it would be taken from existing BCTs, and these BCTs, after their two maneuver battalions are reassigned, would be eliminated from Army force structure.

Changes in Unit Basing¹⁷

On January 27, 2012, Secretary of Defense Panetta indicated that he would ask Congress to authorize a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process whereby bases in the United States can be realigned or closed. If Congress approves BRAC, it is likely some Army bases could be realigned or closed, which could require some Army units to move to other new or existing bases. With the reliance on an increased use of rotational forces under the Administration's new strategic guidelines, it is likely a number of smaller bases—some permanent but many temporary—might need to be established to accommodate these rotational forces. In terms of the two ABCTs eliminated from Europe, it is not known what will happen to the Army bases at Baumholder and Grafenwohr.

Impact on the National Guard and Reserve¹⁸

As previously noted, under the new strategic guidance DOD intends to

- retain a ready and capable reserve component;

¹⁶ Sebastian Sprenger, "Odierno: Army May Cut More Than Eight Brigade Combat Teams," *InsideDefense.com*, January 27, 2012.

¹⁷ Information in this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, "Major Budget Decisions Briefing from the Pentagon," presented by Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta and Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff General Martin E. Dempsey, January 26, 2012; U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, "Major Budget Decisions Briefing from the Pentagon," presented by Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral James A. Winnefeld Jr., January 26, 2012; and U.S. Department of Defense Publication, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, January 2012.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

- reduce National Guard endstrength slightly;
- sustain increased readiness prior to mobilization; and
- maintain key combat-support and combat service-support capabilities.

Like previous pronouncements, no specifics were provided regarding reductions in Reserve Component endstrength and how readiness and support capabilities would be maintained.

Chief of Staff of the Army General Raymond T. Odierno reportedly stated the Pentagon's decision to cut the active force by 80,000 soldiers will place greater reliance on the National Guard and Reserves, "particularly if the United States gets into two major long-term combat operations at the same time."¹⁹ The report further notes the United States will be required to keep its reserve forces at a higher state of readiness than it did before the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. General Odierno suggests if the Army had to fight two large, simultaneous, long-term wars, the United States would rely more heavily on allies and request a large-scale mobilization of the reserves. The reserves would also be used to "buy time to increase the size of the active component," and because of the requirement for higher readiness, a new readiness model would need to be developed to keep the National Guard and Reserves at a higher state of readiness.²⁰

President's FY2013 Budget Request

On February 13, 2012, DOD publically released the President's FY2013 DOD Budget Request. On the whole, the FY2013 budget request did not provide additional details on how the Army would reduce Active Duty endstrength and how many and which BCTs and other supporting units and headquarters would be eliminated. The FY2013 budget request did, however, reaffirm the Army's 490,000 Active endstrength, the elimination of a minimum of eight BCTs, and a commitment to study brigade structure.

Post-FY2013 Budget Request Developments

From February 2012 until present, Army and DOD leadership have conducted a series of news briefings and interviews that have helped add context to the January 2012 drawdown and restructuring proposal. These briefings and interviews have not provided definitive details associated with the impending drawdown and restructuring but have provided insights on future intentions. The following section summarizes some of these activities.

May 2012 Chief of Staff of the Army News Briefing

On May 16, 2012, General Odierno held a news briefing at the Pentagon.²¹ He covered a variety of topics, including the following:

¹⁹ Information in this section is taken from Lolita C. Baldor, "Army Chief Sees Greater Role for Guard and Reserves," *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, January 27, 2012.

²⁰ Transcripts of Army Chief of Staff Raymond T. Odierno, Army Briefing on the FY-13 Budget Request, January 27, 2012.

²¹ Information in this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, "DOD News Briefing with Gen. Odierno from the Pentagon," May 16, 2012.

- With operations in Iraq complete, transition ongoing in Afghanistan, and a rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region, the Army will implement a revised readiness model for Active and Reserve components intended to be more responsive to combatant commanders.
- In 2013, the Army will begin a regionally aligned force concept where geographic combatant commands and USOCOM will be allocated one or more BCTs. The first such alignment will be a BCT from the 10th Mountain Division in 2013, and this unit will be aligned with U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM). As part of this regional alignment, units will be trained up and be available for 9 to 12 months to participate in unit rotations, building partner capacity or to conduct security assistance operations, or participate in exercises. These dedicated units will train for specific tasks assigned by combatant commanders.
- In order to provide training, mentorship, and discipline to the five BCTs and additional supporting forces stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the Army will reactivate the 7th Infantry Division headquarters under the command of a major general.
- If sequestration under the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) occurs, the Army will be forced to cut an additional 80,000 to 100,000 Active Duty and Reserve soldiers over and above the current 80,000 soldier planned reductions.

Regional Alignment

It was later reported the Army had instead selected the 1st BCT from the 1st Infantry Division to be the first brigade to be regionally aligned to USAFRICOM.²² This armored BCT would remain based in the United States, and only those units involved in a specific task or mission would deploy to Africa. The unit's activities would support USAFRICOM's partnership-building activities, and deployments would be for weeks and months, as opposed to year-long or greater deployments. The BCT's first mission to Africa is expected in March 2013, and other missions are expected throughout the year.²³

In October 2012, the Deputy Commanding General of U.S. Army Pacific reportedly stated the Army would make I Corps headquarters, based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington, regionally aligned to the Pacific region.²⁴ According to Army officials, this alignment will add a dedicated three-star headquarters and supporting staff to the U.S. Pacific Command.

Army's Presence in Kuwait

According to a June 2012 Senate Foreign Relations Committee Report:

When U.S. troops departed Iraq at the end of 2011, Kuwait welcomed a more enduring American footprint. Currently, there are approximately 15,000 U.S. forces in Kuwait, but the number is likely to decrease to 13,500. Kuwaiti bases such as Camp Arifjan, Ali Al Salem

²² Ann Roosevelt, "Army Aligns First Regional Brigade to U.S. Africa Command," *Defense Daily*, June 15, 2012.

²³ Michelle Tan, "After Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. Army to Move Soldiers to Other Regions," *Defense News*, July 2, 2012.

²⁴ Paul McLeary, "State of the Army Westward Expansion," *Army Times*, October 29, 2012.

Air Field, and Camp Buehring offer the United States major staging hubs, training ranges, and logistical support for regional operations. U.S. forces also operate Patriot missile batteries in Kuwait, which are vital to theater missile defense.²⁵

This report suggests there will be a continued U.S. military presence in Kuwait for the foreseeable future. Of the 13,500 military personnel, there will likely be a substantial U.S. Army presence, including both permanent party, but also rotational forces.

Brigade Structural Changes

During a November 2012 interview, General Odierno discussed his priorities as Chief of Staff of the Army. Regarding BCTs, he stated:

The one thing that is absolutely essential is that we must have a third maneuver battalion in each of our brigades. We did not quite have enough engineers inside of our brigades. We have to relook a little bit how we do our intelligence collection and provide fire support. All of those will be incorporated in the new brigade design when it comes out ... in the next several months.²⁶

As part of these changes, the Army intends to include organic horizontal and vertical construction capability to the BCTs.²⁷ Additional BCT engineering capabilities include enhanced clearing, route clearance, and gap-crossing capabilities intended to improve force protection, enhance mobility in complex and urban terrain, and enable capacity building.²⁸

The Army is also proposing changing Battlefield Surveillance Brigades to Reconnaissance and Surveillance Brigades.²⁹ The new Reconnaissance and Surveillance Brigade construct would include additional personnel and 120mm mortar sections, additional scout platoons, artillery, and mounted reconnaissance formations, which will give these units the ability to destroy enemy units as opposed to simply “finding” them.³⁰

Changes to the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) Readiness Model

The Army is reportedly changing its ARFORGEN cycle away from producing forces ready for Afghanistan and instead focusing on providing regionally aligned forces for combatant commanders.³¹ Under this revised ARFORGEN model, units ranging from platoon to brigade-

²⁵ “The Gulf Security Architecture: Partnership with the Gulf Co-Operation Council,” A Majority Staff Report prepared for the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, June 19, 2012, p. 12.

²⁶ Vago Muradian, “Odierno Pushes BCT Revamp, 4 Must-Have Programs,” *Army Times*, October 29, 2012.

²⁷ Sebastian Sprenger, “Draft Army Concept Backs, BCT, Reconnaissance Unit Reorganizations,” *InsideDefense.com*, October 5, 2012 and information from the author’s visit to the Army’s Maneuver Center of Excellence on October 10, 2012.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Sebastian Sprenger, “Plan for Added Firepower in Army Reconnaissance Units Taking Shape,” *InsideDefense.com*, July 13, 2012 and information from the author’s visit to the Army’s Maneuver Center of Excellence on October 10, 2012.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ann Roosevelt, “Army Takes Incremental Steps Toward the Future,” *Defense Daily*, November 2, 2012.

sized and representing a variety of combat and support capabilities will be staffed, equipped, and trained primarily to support regional engagement activities for the various geographic combatant commands.

As part of the ARFORGEN realignment, the time needed to move units through the “reset,” “train,” and “available” phases will reportedly be shortened from 36 to 24 months for the Active Army.³² A portion of the Reserve component will go through the training and reset phases but will not proceed to the available phase that qualifies them for deployment, and units in that category will be considered part of the “strategic reserve” which, according to Pentagon officials, will save money.³³ Other Reserve forces not in this pool will be placed in a separate 60-month cycle, which more closely mirrors the Active component. Also, unit training will supposedly become much more focused, whereas a unit designed to participate in homeland defense and civil support activities might not go through training needed for combat missions.³⁴

Regional Alignment of the National Guard and Reserves³⁵

In a January 2013 interview with the *Army Times*, Lieutenant General William Ingram, Director of the Army National Guard, and Lieutenant General Jeffery Talley, Chief of the Army Reserve, discussed the evolving role of the National Guard and Army Reserve. The Director of the Army National Guard indicated the National Guard will also transition to regionally aligned forces in a similar fashion as the Active component. In the opinion of the National Guard, this regional alignment “fits nicely” with the National Guard State Partnership Program,³⁶ a 20-year-old program that has resulted in partnerships with 65 nations around the world. While the Guard has presence in the USAFRICOM and USPACOM areas, it has expressed an interest in expanding the number of partners in these regions. In a similar manner, the Army Reserves plans to align its 38 regional commands with the Active Army’s corps and combatant commands. The Reserves would also establish Army Reserve Coordination Cells, which would coordinate Army Reserve forces which deploy into a theater of operations. The Chief of the Army Reserve noted he has about 3,500 soldiers supporting USPACOM, none supporting USAFRICOM, and would like to increase efforts in the USSOUTHCOM area of operations.

Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment³⁷

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (PL. 91-190) requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts as part of—inter alia—major organizational changes. In accordance with this law, the Army prepared a Programmatic Environmental Assessment

³² Sebastian Sprenger, “New Force-Generation Model Lays Ground Rules for Active, Reserve Use,” *InsideDefense.com*, November 6, 2012.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Michelle Tan, “Regional Alignment will Include Guard and Reserves,” *Army Times*, January 7, 2013.

³⁶ For detailed information on the National Guard State Partnership Program see CRS Report R41957, *The National Guard State Partnership Program: Background, Issues, and Options for Congress*, by Lawrence Kapp and Nina M. Serafino

³⁷ Information in this section is directly taken from Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment, U.S. Army Environmental Command, January 2013.

(PEA) to consider environmental effects to the Army’s installations and training areas that could result from proposed reorganization of the Army from FY2013 through FY2020. While this report did not examine specific force structure and basing changes, it did examine two alternatives:

1. **Inactivate Brigade Combat Teams and realign both Combat Support and Service Support Units between FY2013 and FY2020.** Under this alternative, Army installations would experience end-strength losses through unit inactivations and unit realignments. As a result of the implementation of Alternative 1, the Army would make decisions to inactivate a minimum of eight BCTs and other support units. The structure of BCTs would not change. Under this alternative, installation force reductions were projected as depicted in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. Alternative 1: Force Reductions

From Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment

Table 1. Alternative 1: Force Reduction			
Installation Name	Potential Population Loss to be Analyzed ¹	Fiscal Year 2011 Army Population ²	Potential Fiscal Year 2020 Army Population
Fort Benning, Georgia	7,100	39,243	32,143
Fort Knox, Kentucky	3,800	13,665	9,865
Fort Polk, Louisiana	5,300	10,877	5,577
Fort Wainwright, Alaska	4,900	7,430	2,530
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska	4,300	6,923	2,623
Fort Bliss, Texas	8,000	32,352	24,352
Fort Bragg, North Carolina	8,000	56,983	48,983
Fort Campbell, Kentucky	8,000	32,425	24,425
Fort Carson, Colorado	8,000	25,823	17,823
Fort Drum, New York	8,000	19,079	11,079
Fort Hood, Texas	8,000	47,437	39,437
Fort Riley, Kansas	8,000	20,009	12,009
Fort Stewart, Georgia	8,000	24,622	16,622
Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington	8,000	36,777	28,777
Schofield Barracks, Hawai'i	8,000	18,563	10,563
Fort Gordon, Georgia*	4,300	13,864	9,564
Fort Lee, Virginia*	2,400	16,257	13,857
Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri*	3,900	27,213	23,313
Fort Sill, Oklahoma*	4,700	22,444	17,744
Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia*	2,700	9,899	7,199
Fort Irwin, California*	2,400	5,539	3,139

* Non-BCT Installation
¹Rounded to the nearest 100. More precise numbers used to calculate 'Potential Fiscal Year 2020 Army Population' are in the PEA.
²Populations include: Army military, Army students, Army civilians (excludes other military service personnel, contractors, and transients). Population reduction numbers include full-time military and civilian projections only.
 Source of data is the Army Stationing Installation Plan (Feb, 2012).

Source: Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment, January 2013, p. 3.

2. Reorganize BCTs: Implement Alternative 1; Inactivate Additional BCTs; and Restructure BCTs to include adding a 3rd Combat Maneuver Battalion between FY2013 and FY2020.

Under Alternative 2, the Army would implement force reductions and realignments discussed as part of the implementation of Alternative 1. In addition, the Army would reduce further the total number of BCTs to provide the additional troops that would be added to the remaining BCT force structure. The implementation of Alternative 2 would result in the inactivation of more BCTs across the Army. The exact number of inactivations would depend on the final force structure designs, number of soldiers added to each BCT, and number of BCTs that would eventually implement the new force structure design concept. The Army also would restructure BCTs by taking combat maneuver battalions of inactivating ABCTs and IBCTs and adding them to existing ABCTs and IBCTs either at the same location or at other installations. Each realigned combat maneuver battalion would add approximately 700 additional soldiers per BCT. The addition of a combat maneuver battalion to the SBCT is not being considered, since the SBCT already has three combat maneuver battalions. As part of this alternative, the Army would also restructure its engineering units to add a Brigade Engineer Battalion to each ABCT, IBCT, and SBCT, which would add several hundred more soldiers to the BCT. There may be other augmentations, such as additional indirect fires units, reconnaissance elements, and other combat support unit changes between now and 2020 based on the need to establish the optimum configuration for the BCT and its supporting elements. Under this alternative, installation force gains were projected as depicted in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. Alternative 2: Installation Gains

From Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment

Table 2. Alternative 2: Installation Gains

Installation Name	Potential Population Gain to be Analyzed	Fiscal Year 2011 Army Population ¹	Potential Fiscal Year 2020 Army Population
Fort Knox, Kentucky	1,000	13,665	14,665
Fort Polk, Louisiana	1,000	10,877	11,877
Fort Wainwright, Alaska*	1,000	7,430	8,430
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska	1,000	6,923	7,923
Fort Bliss, Texas	3,000	32,352	35,352
Fort Campbell, Kentucky	3,000	32,425	35,425
Fort Carson, Colorado	3,000	25,823	28,823
Fort Drum, New York	3,000	19,079	22,079
Fort Hood, Texas	3,000	47,437	50,437
Fort Riley, Kansas	3,000	20,009	23,009
Fort Stewart, Georgia	3,000	24,622	27,622
Schofield Barracks, Hawai'i*	1,500	18,563	20,063

*Stryker Brigade Combat Team

¹Populations include: Army military, Army students, Army civilians (Excludes other military service personnel, contractors, and transients); Population reduction numbers include full-time military and civilian projections only; Source of data is the *Army Stationing Installation Plan* (Feb, 2012).

Source: Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment, January 2013, p. 4.

While these two alternatives from the Army’s Environmental Assessment do not address specific force structure changes (which particular unit) and basing decisions (what specific unit is added to an installation), they do provide a degree of insight into what the Army intends to do if, in fact, it does add a third maneuver battalion to IBCTs and ABCTs. Furthermore, in an aggregate sense, they also suggest how U.S. installations might be impacted in terms of potential personnel losses or growth.

Possible Impact of Sequestration and a FY2013 Continuing Resolution (CR)

In early February 2013, the Army released a memorandum titled “Army Talking Points for Operating Under Fiscal Uncertainty,” which discusses the potential impact on Army Active Component Operational and Maintenance (OMA) funding in the event of a sequestration and a potential FY2013 CR. The memorandum addresses the following training and readiness impacts:

- “Shortfalls of this size, this far into the year, when some of our budget is already spent, will potentially impact 90% of remaining OMA funds, immediately eroding readiness, leaving the Army with fully trained units only for OEF [Operation Enduring Freedom], rotations to Korea and the Global Response Force Brigade Combat Team (BCT).”

- “With the exception of one BCT, all non-deploying or non-forward stationed units (78% of all Brigade Combat Teams) will incur several months delay for required training to meet COCOM requirements. Shortfalls in Professional Military Education/Training means soldiers will join units without requisite training and preparation. These lost capabilities require years to reinstate and some cannot be reversed. The strategic impact is a rapid atrophy of unit combat skills with a failure to meet demands of the National Military Strategy by the end of this year.”
- “Funding levels allow readiness focus on forces in Afghanistan, those units next-to-deploy, and the Division Ready Brigade. Diminished available resources drive collective training for all remaining units to squad or platoon level proficiency. Inadequate funding through FY13 will leave our units in a degraded readiness posture and inhibit the progressive build of unit capability to meet early FY14 missions, emergent requirements, and timelines associated with Combatant Command Operational and Contingency Plans.”
 - “Will cancel four of six brigade and battalion level collective combat training events at Fort Irwin, California and Fort Polk, Louisiana for non-deploying units.”
 - “Will reduced support to Combatant Command Exercises and Building Partnership Capacity events; erodes critical partnerships in a complex strategic environment.”
- “Cancellations in Individual Military Training would produce a backlog carried into FY14 and beyond. Army will fall short 513 aviators, ~4,000 Critical Military Intelligence trained soldiers and will cancel fifteen (15) Field Artillery Training courses. Loss of training is not recoverable and leads to untrained soldiers assigned to units – a negative impact to near term readiness. Impact to the Army is a capability shortfall in Combat Aviation Brigades and other formations.”³⁸

However, this memorandum makes no mention of sequestration or CR impacts on planned Army restructuring efforts that would likely require some level of OMA funding. This omission seemingly raises three possibilities: (1) the Army does not know how much OMA funding Active Component restructuring will require in the near to mid- term and therefore it is not included; (2) the Army has chosen to “protect” OMA funding for Active Component restructuring and instead had chosen to cut funding for training, readiness, and maintenance; or (3) OMA funding needed for Active Component restructuring is relatively negligible and, therefore, cuts are warranted. Given these possibilities, Congress might wish to further explore how sequestration or a CR could impact Active Component restructuring OMA funding requirements.

DOD Announces U.S. Army in Europe Force Structure Changes

On March 1, 2013, DOD announced a series of force structure changes for the U.S. Army in Europe from the period 2013 through 2016. The text of the news release is as follows:³⁹

³⁸ Taken directly from “Army Talking Points for Operating Under Fiscal Uncertainty” undated, obtained by CRS from the Army.

³⁹ U.S. Department of Defense News Release, “DOD Announces U.S. Army in Europe Force Structure Changes,” No. 120-13, March 1, 2013.

DOD Announces U.S. Army in Europe Force Structure Changes

The Department of Defense announced today that Germany-based elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team will relocate within Germany and to Italy in summer 2013. A total of four battalions will be relocated. Two battalions will relocate from Germany to Italy; the brigade's headquarters and one infantry battalion will relocate from Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy, to the Army's new facility in Del Din (formerly known as Dal Molin) in Vicenza. The other two battalions will relocate from Schweinfurt and Bamberg, Germany, to Grafenwoehr, Germany. In addition to the previously announced inactivation of V Corps Headquarters and the 170th and 172nd Infantry Brigades, the disposition of 2,500 enabling forces are provided as follows:

In 2012:

170th Infantry Brigade, Smith Barracks, Baumholder, Germany – **Inactivated**

167th Medical Detachment (Optometry), Grafenwoehr, Germany – **Inactivated**

In 2013:

535th Engineer Company, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Inactivates**

12th Chemical Company, Conn Barracks, Schweinfurt, Germany – **Inactivates**

V Corps Headquarters, Clay Kaserne, Wiesbaden, Germany – **Inactivates**

172nd Infantry Brigade, Grafenwoehr, Germany – **Inactivates**

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 391st Combat Service Support Battalion, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Inactivates**

B Detachment, 106th Finance Company, Katterbach Kaserne, Ansbach, Germany – **Inactivates**

42nd Engineer Company, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Returns to the United States**

99th Movement Control Team, Aviano Air Base, Italy – **Returns to the United States**

In 2014:

Headquarters, 18th Engineer Brigade, Conn Barracks, Schweinfurt, Germany – **Inactivates**

243 Engineer Detachment, Conn Barracks, Schweinfurt, Germany – **Inactivates**

54th Engineer Battalion, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Inactivates**

370th Engineer Company, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Inactivates**

7th Signal Brigade, Ledward Barracks, Schweinfurt, Germany – **Inactivates**

72nd Signal Battalion, Ledward Barracks, Schweinfurt, Germany – **Inactivates**

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 95th Military Police Battalion, Sembach Kaserne, Kaiserslautern – **Inactivates**

630th Military Police Company, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Inactivates**

464th Military Police Platoon, Camp Ederle, Italy – **Inactivates**

511th Military Police Platoon, Livorno, Italy – **Inactivates**

541st Engineer Company, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany – **Returns to the United States**

In 2015:

230th Military Police Company, Sembach Barracks, Kaiserslautern, Germany – **Inactivates**

3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment (Airfield Operations Battalion), Storck Barracks, Illesheim, Germany – **Returns to the United States**

In 2016:

69th Signal Battalion, Grafenwoehr, Germany – **Inactivates**

525th Military Police Detachment (Military Working Dogs), Baumholder, Germany - **Returns to the United States**

1st Battalion, 214th General Support Aviation Regiment structure is reduced at Clay Kaserne, Wiesbaden, by 190 soldier spaces and at Landstuhl Heliport by 50 soldier spaces. Information on the disposition of other units in the closing U.S. military communities of Bamberg and Schweinfurt will be provided in the near future, as those force structure actions are determined. These actions are part of DOD's ongoing restructure of resources worldwide in line with our national defense strategy and in support of combatant commanders, NATO and our European allies.

Force Reduction and Force-Shaping Programs

Historically, military drawdowns have been rather blunt instruments of national policy. As noted in the earlier descriptions of the drawdowns at the conclusion of World War II and Vietnam, the focus was primarily on immediate reductions in accessions and separating/discharging others as soon as possible. The rapid and poorly planned demobilization of Army forces in the past had a deleterious impact on morale, terminated many aspiring military careers, and released significant numbers of military personnel with limited transition assistance.

The recent post-Cold War drawdown was substantially different. Congress still determined the endstrength levels but provided a number of voluntary and involuntary tools to shape each year group of the force—officer, warrant officer, and enlisted. Voluntary separations were emphasized, and some of the tools had robust financial incentives. Few skills were exempt from consideration, and every soldier was vulnerable for separation at some point during nearly a decade of drawdown. It was also the first time that resources were focused on transition assistance and stressed the importance of working with military alumni, even after their separation.

Title 10 Drawdown Authorities are discussed in greater detail in **Appendix A**.

The Human Dimension of a Force Drawdown

For the past decade, U.S. military forces have been engaged in combat operations on two fronts—Iraq and Afghanistan. The deployments to these austere environments have been long—typically 7 to 12 months for ground forces, sometimes involuntarily extended to support surge operations and requiring the use of “Stop Loss” policies.⁴⁰ Deployments have also been frequent, sometimes with less than a year between rotations resulting in reduced “dwell time” for both active and reserve component personnel. These conflicts have often been very stressful for servicemembers, spouses, and families as indicated by higher than normal divorce and suicide rates.⁴¹

Throughout this period, support from the American public and political leaders has been consistent. Many now refer to our servicemembers as “America’s Heroes” and honor the wounded as “Wounded Warriors.” They return home to welcome ceremonies and spontaneous outbreaks of applause in airports, and even those who may disagree with the war effort have been generally supportive of military personnel.

Soon the services will begin to transition from high-tempo combat operations to a more stable training and garrison environment, while simultaneously downsizing and reshaping the force. Those with multiple combat tours may feel that they have lost a common cause. Those with pride in the units that they fought with may now see those units eliminated or friends separated from the service either voluntarily or involuntarily. Those who have experienced a military focused on fighting insurgency on multiple fronts over the past decade will see a shift of emphasis to training for full-spectrum operations and individual professional development. The collective effect of these changes could result in a temporary degradation of individual morale and unit effectiveness. The key for leaders at all levels will be to refocus and minimize these potentially negative impacts. However, reducing accessions has its own implications.

Accessions

It is assumed that the post-Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) drawdown will focus primarily on reduced accessions, because a reduction in accessions significantly reduces the need for other voluntary and involuntary force shaping actions and their inherent negative implications.

The military acquires or procures new personnel annually—enlisted, warrant officer, and officer—through the enlisted recruiting process and officer accession programs. The number to be recruited or accessed is based on the congressionally established endstrength, which is published annually in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). With a known endstrength, the services can then project losses for the coming year, compare this to the endstrength target, and determine the number to be recruited and trained.

⁴⁰ For a complete description of the Stop Loss program, see CRS Report R40121, *U.S. Military Stop Loss Program: Key Questions and Answers*.

⁴¹ Military Review, “Saving Military Families,” by Captain (Navy) Gene Thomas Gomulka, January-February 2010.

During the years of OIF/OEF, the Army generally recruited approximately 75,000 to 80,000 enlisted soldiers a year, initially to sustain an endstrength of 482,000 and, later, to incrementally grow the force to its eventual target strength of 562,000. As announced in the FY2013 President's Budget,⁴² the Army will be required to draw down to an endstrength of 490,000 by FY2017, a reduction of 72,000.⁴³ With five years to accomplish, it appears that the accessions program could absorb a reduction of nearly 15,000 per year and still sustain the force over time, ensure the right mix of training and experience, and allow for reasonable promotion expectations.

Officer Accessions

In 2008, Congress authorized an increased enrollment at the U.S. Military Academy,⁴⁴ from 4,000 to 4,400, and the Army greatly expanded its Officer Candidate School (OCS) program at Fort Benning, GA, while also increasing the size of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. West Point and ROTC have four-year timelines associated with their programs, but the duration of the OCS program is measured in weeks rather than years. Therefore, to reduce officer accessions, OCS can be quickly ramped down with any additional decrements coming from the ROTC program and potentially reverting the service academies to their previous cap of 4,000 students.

Personnel-Related Congressional Testimony⁴⁵

In testimony to Congress, the Army stated in order to reach its FY2017 endstrength goals, approximately 24,000 enlisted soldiers and 5,000 officers would likely need to be involuntarily separated, in other words, forced out of the active Army. The Army noted "that we expect to lose combat seasoned soldiers and leaders, but our focus will be on retaining the best in the right grades and skills."⁴⁶ The Army also stated funding will either need to be realigned or reprogrammed to fund the various incentive authorities the Army can use to get soldiers to leave the Army voluntarily.⁴⁷ Congress might opt to examine these issues with the Army in greater detail before soldiers are involuntarily separated or offered inducements to leave the service to gain an in-depth understanding of the criteria that will be used to choose soldiers for involuntary separation, the process that will be followed, and what types of compensation and assistance will be provided to these soldiers to facilitate their transition to the civilian world.

⁴² Department of Defense, "Overview: Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request," Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), February 2012.

⁴³ The FY2013 Budget also announced a drawdown for the Marine Corps from its current strength of 202,100 to 182,100, also by FY2017.

⁴⁴ §540, P.L. 110-417, October 14, 2008. Congress expanded each of the service academy programs—U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Air Force Academy from 4,000 to 4,400 as determined for any year as of the day before the last day of the academic year.

⁴⁵ Information in this section is taken from a statement by Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, United States Army before the Military Personnel Subcommittee, Second Session, 112th Congress, March 6, 2012.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

More on Involuntary Separations⁴⁸

During an October 29, 2012, interview, Lieutenant General Howard W. Bromberg, the Army's Chief of Personnel, provided additional updated drawdown insights:

- The Army now plans to eliminate about 20,000 enlisted soldiers and 5,000 officers beginning in 2014 through 2017 through involuntary separation programs.
- Although Congress had reauthorized several voluntary separation programs, Army leaders have opted only to reinstate the Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA) for selected categories of soldiers with at least 15 but less than 20 years of active service.
- The Army would instead rely on retention boards, reduced promotion rates, and reduced accessions to draw down the Army.

Protecting the Institutional Army⁴⁹

In order to quickly reactivate mid-grade leaders in the event of a future ground war—the “retain a slightly more senior force in the Active Army to allow growth if needed” proposal from the January 2012 Drawdown and Restructuring Proposal—the Army plans to insulate from the drawdown about 90,000 soldiers from its institutional, non-operational portion of the service. Army service leaders reportedly will instead take an end strength cut of almost 80,000 soldiers from the operational Army. In order to retain mid-grade leaders needed to reactivate units, the Army had planned to put these personnel in units designed to mentor foreign security forces, but the Army is currently considering putting these individuals in Army educational institutions. If this does become policy, these mid-grade soldiers could replace Department of the Army Civilians and contractors presently serving in many of these billets.

Potential Impact on Major Army Weapon Systems Programs

Because DOD and the Army have yet to determine how many Active BCTs, headquarters, and supporting units will be cut and how BCTs and headquarters and other supporting units will be organized, it is difficult to assess the impact of these changes on major Army weapon systems programs. In the Army's FY2013 Budget Request, priorities for investment in ground systems are noted as⁵⁰

- The Network;⁵¹

⁴⁸ Jim Tice, “Cutting 25,000 Soldiers,” *Army Times*, October 29, 2012.

⁴⁹ Information in this section is taken from Sebastian Sprenger, “Leaders Envision Institutional Army as Buffer Against Loss of Talent,” *InsideDefense.com*, November 12, 2012.

⁵⁰ Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller), FY2013 President's Budget Highlights, February, 2012, p. 18.

⁵¹ According to the Army, “the Network will enable soldiers to access key information anytime, anyplace; share information to facilitate fire and maneuver, and survive in close combat; provide collaboration capability to aid in seizing and controlling key terrain; employ lethal and non-lethal capabilities, coupled with sensors, to effectively (continued...)”

- Ground Combat Vehicle (GCV);⁵²
- Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV);⁵³
- Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle;⁵⁴ and
- Paladin Integrated Management Program.⁵⁵

In addition to the aforementioned systems in various stages of development, the Army plans to continue modernizing its M-1 Abrams tanks, M-2 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles, and the Stryker fighting vehicle.⁵⁶

All of these systems are employed in the BCTs, with the GCV, Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle, Paladin, M-1 Abrams, and M-2 Bradley exclusive to the ABCTs. With the necessity of ABCTs being questioned and the strategic shift toward the Asia-Pacific region, it is possible the Army's 16 Active ABCTs could be cut further than the 2 ABCTs that are being eliminated from Europe. These reductions could have an appreciable impact on both systems in development, such as the GCV, and those legacy systems being modernized, such as the M-1 Abrams.

Potential Budgetary Implications

The Administration's plan to reduce Active Army endstrength and reorganize, restructure, and re-station units is intended, in part, to respond to current and anticipated defense budget cuts. Projected cost savings from fewer soldiers, fewer units, less equipment, and perhaps fewer Army bases have not been made public, but General Odierno reportedly stated Army program terminations over the next five years are expected to save \$4.7 billion.⁵⁷ When asked earlier about the potential savings from cutting eight or more BCTs, General Odierno reportedly suggested that these cuts were expected to save "substantial amounts of money" but declined to provide a precise figure "due to the very complex nature of the arithmetic involved."⁵⁸ These statements seem to suggest that the Army does have estimates for overall projected cost savings but these

(...continued)

engage targets at extended ranges; distinguish among friend, enemy, neutral and noncombatant; and integrate indirect fires." <http://www.bctmod.army.mil/>, accessed March 29, 2012.

⁵² For additional information on the GCV, see CRS Report R41597, *The Army's Ground Combat Vehicle (GCV) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

⁵³ For additional information on the JLTV, see CRS Report RS22942, *Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV): Background and Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

⁵⁴ The Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle is intended to replace Vietnam-era M-113 personnel carriers that are still in use with Army forces.

⁵⁵ The Paladin is a 155mm indirect fires weapon, and, according to the Army, "The M109A6 Paladin Integrated Management Program is designed to maintain this fleet, and upgrade 600 Paladin systems to the latest configuration. The new PIM M109A6 Paladin Integrated Management (PIM) howitzer enhances the combat-proven M109A6 Paladin Self-propelled howitzer's reliability, maintainability, performance, responsiveness and lethality and provides increased commonality with the Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV) of the Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT)."

⁵⁶ Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller), FY2013 President's Budget Highlights, February, 2012, p. 18.

⁵⁷ Sebastian Sprenger, Tony Bertuca, and Jen Judson, "Army Expects \$4.7 Billion in Savings from Axed Programs," *InsideDefense.com*, February 13, 2012.

⁵⁸ Sebastian Sprenger, "Odierno: Army May Cut More than Eight Brigade Combat Teams," *InsideDefense.com*, January 27, 2012.

figures have not been made public. In October 2012, Army leadership suggested changes in the Army's force structure would begin to manifest themselves in the FY2015 Program Objective Memorandum (POM) budget cycle.⁵⁹

While these changes will likely generate cost savings over time, there are costs associated with reducing manpower, eliminating and restructuring units, and possibly re-stationing units. Furthermore, as part of the Army's role in the Administration's new Asia-Pacific/Middle East-centric strategy, there might also be costs associated with the increased rotation of forces and increased engagement opportunities with allies and potential allies and other strategy-driven actions. When trying to assess the overall budgetary implications of the drawdown, restructuring brigades, and the Army's role under the new strategic guidelines, it is equally important that the costs associated with these endeavors are included in discussions on anticipated cost savings resulting from these actions.

Relevant Legislative Provisions

FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4310)⁶⁰

SEC. 403. ANNUAL LIMITATION ON END STRENGTH REDUCTIONS FOR REGULAR COMPONENT OF THE ARMY AND MARINE CORPS.

(a) ANNUAL LIMITATION ON ARMY END STRENGTH REDUCTIONS.—The end strength of the regular component of the Army shall not be reduced by more than 15,000 members during each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017 from the end strength of the regular component of the Army at the end of the preceding fiscal year.

(b) ANNUAL LIMITATION ON MARINE CORPS END STRENGTH REDUCTIONS.—The end strength of the regular component of the Marine Corps shall not be reduced by more than 5,000 members during each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017 from the end strength of the regular component of the Marine Corps at the end of the preceding fiscal year.

Army's Concerns with Section 403 Limitations⁶¹

During a May 16, 2012, news briefing, Chief of Staff of the Army General Raymond Odierno expressed his concerns with limitations proposed under Section 403. General Odierno noted that Section 403 caps Army endstrength at 552,000 through FY2013, which will hinder the Army as the Army currently plans to be at about a 543,000 soldier endstrength by the end of FY2013. If Army endstrength reductions through FY2013 are capped in accordance with Section 403, the Army contends it will not be able to use attrition as originally intended and more soldiers would be involuntarily separated (forced out) of the Army than intended. General Odierno noted that he has conveyed these concerns to the House and will continue to work toward an agreement with Congress.

⁵⁹ Tony Bertuca and Jen Judson, "Army General Weighs in on Force Structure Reductions, Vehicle Plans," *InsideDefense.com*, October 19, 2012.

⁶⁰ Report 112-705, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, Conference Report, December 18, 2012.

⁶¹ Information in this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript, "DOD News Briefing with Gen. Odierno from the Pentagon," May 16, 2012.

SEC. 1066. REPORT ON FORCE STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to Congress a report on the force structure of the Army.

(b) **ELEMENTS OF REPORT.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall include each of the following:

(1) A description of the planning assumptions and scenarios used to determine the size and force structure of the United States Army, including the reserve component, for the Future Years Defense Program for fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

(2) An evaluation of the adequacy of the proposed force structure for meeting the goals of the national military strategy of the United States.

(3) A description of any alternative force structures considered, including the assessed advantages and disadvantages of each and a brief explanation of why those not selected were rejected.

(4) The estimated resource requirements of each of the alternative force structures referred to in paragraph (3).

(5) An independent risk assessment of the proposed Army force structure, to be conducted by the Chief of Staff of the Army.

(6) Such other information as the Secretary of the Army determines is appropriate.

(c) **CLASSIFIED ANNEX.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall be in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

Potential Issues for Congress

There are a number of potential issues for Congress concerning reducing the size of the Active Army and potentially restructuring various Army formations and headquarters. These issues are further influenced by current budgetary concerns and the Administration's decision to strategically reorient the United States to the Asia-Pacific and Mid-East regions. Potential issues include, but are not limited to the following:

Potential Impacts of Sequestration and a Continuing Resolution (CR) on the Army's Plans to Restructure and Drawdown Forces

To date, much of the Army's and DOD's discussions about the potential impacts of sequestration and a possible CR for FY2013 has focused on how these cuts would have an adverse impact on readiness—largely attributed to reduced levels of unit training and decreased levels of weapon system and equipment maintenance. As previously noted, little has been said publically on how sequester and a FY2013 CR would impact the Army's restructuring plans as well as drawing down the Active Component. While funding from Personnel, Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E), Procurement, and Military Construction (MILCON) accounts would be required in varying degrees for the Army's restructuring and drawdown initiatives, Operational

and Maintenance (OMA) funding will be particularly important for restructuring BCTs and other Army units.

This omission seemingly raises three possibilities: (1) the Army does not know how much OMA funding Active Component restructuring will require in the near to mid term and therefore it is not included; (2) the Army has chosen to “protect” OMA funding for Active Component restructuring and instead had chosen to cut funding for training, readiness, and maintenance; or (3) OMA funding needed for Active Component restructuring is relatively negligible and, therefore, cuts are warranted. Given these possibilities, Congress might wish to further explore how sequestration or a CR could impact Active Component restructuring OMA funding requirements.

How Does the Army Plan to “Regionalize” Its Forces?

Army leadership has put a great deal of emphasis on establishing regionalized BCTs, and headquarters, not only in the Active Component but the Reserves as well. This “regionalization,” which, theoretically, could impact most operational units in the Army, is apparently viewed as a necessary step by Army leadership if the Army is to successfully conduct “engagement operations” on a world-wide basis. Other than the 1st BCT from the 1st Infantry Division being regionally aligned to USAFRICOM and making I Corps headquarters regionally aligned to the Pacific region, little is known about the Army’s plans to regionalize its forces.

Because of the potential scope and impact of these proposed changes, Congress might choose to examine the Army’s regionalization plans in greater detail. Possible issues for examination could include:

- What current unit-specific shortcomings will regionalization address? How did these shortcomings in the past negatively impact the Army’s ability to operate in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other regions of the world?
- How will this regionalization be accomplished? Will all soldiers, non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and officers receive extensive language and cultural training over their careers? Where and when will this training occur over time and how does the Army plan to sustain this training?
- What types of forces will the Army regionalize? Does regionalization just apply to BCTs or will other supporting units (sometimes referred to as “enabling units”) also be regionalized?
- How will language and cultural training be addressed for the Reserve Components?
- Will soldiers be habitually assigned to units in their particular region over the course of their careers? Is the Army Personnel Management System capable of handling this level of assignment specificity?
- Does the Army have a “master plan” for what units will be assigned to what regions and when the “regionalization process” will be conducted for each unit? If the Army does not have such a plan, when can Congress expect to see one?
- Will regionalization also require unique equipment, including Command, Control, Communications, Computer, and Intelligence (C4I) equipment?

- Will the Army's Force Generation (ARFORGEN) readiness construct require major revision to accommodate regionally aligned forces?
- How much will the Army's regionalization effort cost? How does the Army intend to identify "regionalization costs" in its Annual Budget Request to Congress so that Congress can monitor these costs?
- Does the Army plan to develop any Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) to determine if regionalization is benefitting the Army?
- How will regionalization benefit the Army's traditional warfighting mission, which does not require "engagement" but instead the destruction of enemy forces in combat?

Will the Army Be Postured for "Engagement" or for "Warfighting"?

As the Army postures itself for the future, much of the Army's emphasis appears to be focused on engagement activities to better train and equip our partners in order to better "enable" them to address traditional security and, to a certain extent, terrorist threats in their regions. If this is to be the Army's main effort for the foreseeable future, should the Army posture the force more toward engagement and less towards traditional state-on-state combat? If this is the case, do ABCTs and SBCTs have utility in engagement operations or would lighter, more deployable IBCTs be better suited for these types of activities? In a similar manner, will more support units such as engineering, logistical, and maintenance units be required for enabling-type missions, perhaps at the expense of BCTs? Another possible topic for consideration is the balance between Active and Reserve Components as the Army postures the force for the future. If the Active force is expected to take on a greater role in engagement operations, will the Reserve components be given greater responsibility for traditional combat operations?

Appendix A. Title 10 Drawdown Authorities⁶²

Several authorities in Title 10 result in involuntary separation. They were used sparingly during the post-Cold War drawdown and always preceded by the offer of voluntary incentives. These involuntary tools include the following:

Title 10 Drawdown Authorities—Involuntary

Selective Early Retirement Boards (SERB)⁶³

Selective Early Retirement is the involuntary retirement of senior officers who are (1) serving lieutenant colonels or commanders (Navy) who have been twice non-selected for promotion to colonel or captain (Navy) or (2) are serving colonels or captains (Navy) who have at least four years in grade and have not been selected for promotion. If not selected for SERB, an officer cannot be considered for another five years. Those selected must be retired not later than the first day of the seventh month after the Secretary concerned approves the recommendation for retirement. While considered involuntary, those selected will receive retired pay and remain eligible for military healthcare and the other benefits associated with military retirement.

Reduction-in-Force (RIF)⁶⁴

Reduction-in-Force is the second involuntary program available for downsizing the officer cohorts. While SERB is focused on those with 20 or more years of service, RIF is directed at those with more than 6 but less than 20 years of service. While the post-Cold War drawdown emphasized voluntary separations and retirements, RIF was available (but used sparingly) if the voluntary programs did not generate adequate volunteers.

2012 Enlisted Qualitative Service Program (QSP)⁶⁵

On March 14, 2012, the Army announced the initiation of the Enlisted Qualitative Service Program (QSP) directed toward the grades of staff sergeant through command sergeant major. Under these provisions, those soldiers under consideration for this program can opt to separate voluntarily in lieu of being subjected for review by the QSP board.

⁶² For a detailed discussion of each drawdown authority, see David McCormick's "The Downsized Warrior: America's Army in Transition," 1998.

⁶³ §638, Title 10.

⁶⁴ §647, Title 10.

⁶⁵ Information in this section is taken from Army Message dated 141359Z March 2012, Subject: Enlisted Qualitative Service Program (QSP).

Title 10 Drawdown Authorities – Voluntary⁶⁶

The drawdown tools available during the post-Cold War drawdown are still available to force planners, with several of them recently reinstated by the FY2012 NDAA. These programs were used extensively during the post-Cold War drawdown of the 1990s. While these tools are available to all of the services, the following descriptions will focus on Army programs for the drawdown. They include the following:

Voluntary Retirement Incentive⁶⁷

The Voluntary Retirement Incentive is the one incentive that was not available during the post-Cold War drawdown; it was introduced in the FY2012 NDAA. This program targets retirement-eligible servicemembers with between 20 and 29 years of service. The amount of the incentive is determined by the Service Secretary but may not exceed the member's annual basic pay. In exchange for the payment, the servicemember agrees to retire. The program is capped at no more than 675 officers, and the program expires on December 31, 2018.

Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI)⁶⁸

The Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) is an incentive that is paid annually for twice the number of years the individual served on active duty. Servicemembers must have served between 6 and 20 years and additional eligibility criteria are established by the Service Secretary. The formula for determining the annual annuity is 2.5% times monthly basic pay at the time of separation, times 12, times the number of years of service. The original authority for this incentive was the National Defense Authorization Act for 1992/1993,⁶⁹ which terminated the program on December 31, 2001. The VSI program was reinstated by the FY2012 NDAA⁷⁰ for the period December 31, 2011, through December 31, 2018.

Special Separation Bonus (SSB)⁷¹

The Special Separation Bonus (SSB) is a voluntary separation incentive available to any eligible member of the Armed Forces. SSB is a lump sum payment equal to 15% times years of service (YOS) and 12 times monthly basic pay. To be eligible, members must have served for more than 6 years but for less than 20. Other requirements may be established by the Service Secretary. The original authority for the SSB program also expired on December 31, 2001, but was reinstated by the FY2012 NDAA⁷² for the period December 31, 2011, through December 31, 2018.

⁶⁶ Calculating the actual value of any of these voluntary programs requires individual calculations best done by a finance and accounting professional.

⁶⁷ §504, P.L. 112-81, December 31, 2011.

⁶⁸ §1175, Title 10.

⁶⁹ P.L. 102-190, December 5, 1991.

⁷⁰ §504, P.L. 112-81, December 31, 2011.

⁷¹ §1174a, Title 10.

⁷² §504, P.L. 112-81, December 31, 2011.

VSI and SSB were complementary programs that were both offered to eligible populations. The primary difference was that VSI was an annuity program, while SSB represents a lump sum payment. Those who volunteer for VSI or SSB do not receive retirement benefits such as a lifelong annuity and retiree health care benefits, although they may later qualify for retirement through reserve service.

Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA)⁷³

The Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA) provided an opportunity for eligible officers, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel to retire prior to completion of 20 years of service. Those in selected grades and skills could voluntarily retire with as few as 15 years of service. TERA retirees have their retired pay reduced for every year less than 20. However, as a retiree, they remain eligible for retired pay; military healthcare; commissary and exchange privileges; and Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities. The original TERA program expired on September 1, 2002, but has been reauthorized by the FY2012 NDAA. The current program began on December 31, 2011, and extends through December 31, 2018.

Voluntary Early Release/Retirement Program (VEERP)⁷⁴

This voluntary program targeted the most junior and the most senior ends of the officer spectrum, with the incentive being a reduction in service obligation. Junior officers (lieutenants and captains) were permitted to resign prior to fulfilling their active duty obligation (five years for U.S. Military Academy graduates, four years for most ROTC scholarship graduates, and three years for Officer Candidate School graduates). Senior officers (lieutenant colonels and colonels) were permitted to retire at their present rank, waiving one year of the existing retirement eligibility criteria (normally three years). For example, a colonel could retire as a colonel but with only two years in grade, rather than the usual three years. This authority was originally included in the FY1991 NDAA.

“Early Outs”⁷⁵

Service Secretaries have the authority to discharge enlisted servicemembers up to three months prior to the end of their term of enlistment. The FY2012 NDAA⁷⁶ expanded the three-month standard to one year with no loss of benefits for the members taking advantage of this opportunity. However, members are not entitled to pay and allowances for the period not served. There is no termination date associated with this authority.

⁷³ §1293, Title 10 (note).

⁷⁴ §647, Title 10.

⁷⁵ §1171, Title 10.

⁷⁶ §525, P.L. 112-81, December 31, 2011.

Other Personnel Tools with Drawdown Implications

Enlisted Retention Control Points

The military expects that individual performance will result in the periodic promotion of enlisted personnel as their military experience increases and as their individual responsibility within the organization grows. Those who do not progress in a timely manner may be separated prior to the end of their term of service. This policy is implemented through a series of retention control points that dictate how long a servicemember may remain at the current rank/grade before being promoted. Those who fail promotion in a timely manner can be separated prior to their normal term of service. These retention control points can be adjusted over time and can aid in force shaping by separating those with less potential.

The current and previous Army retention control points are shown in **Table A-1**

Table A-1. Army Retention Control Points (RCP)
 (“Shaping the enlisted force through tenure”)

Rank	Previous RCP	Current RCP (as of June 1, 2011)
Private and Private First Class	8 years	5 years
Specialist	10 years	8 years
Promotable Specialist	15 years	12 years
Sergeants	15 years	13 years
Promotable Sergeants	20 years	15 years
Staff Sergeants	23 years	20 years

Notes: The previous RCP allowed a Sergeant (E-5) to remain on active duty until retirement eligibility at 20 years of service. With the recent tightening of these standards, a Sergeant must separate at 13 years and only the Staff Sergeant (E-6) may remain until 20 years.

Officer Promotion Non-selection

The military’s officer management system is an “up or out” system—officers who fail to promote after being twice considered for the next higher grade may be involuntarily separated. To support the officer manpower requirements during the decade of OIF and OEF, many non-selected officers were selectively continued in their current grade. In addition, the OIF/OEF period was one of unusually high promotion selection rates (opportunity) and reduced time-in-grade (timing) before promotion consideration. With the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq and the gradual drawdown of forces in Afghanistan, the services are again enforcing the standards for promotion and retention. The promotion timing and opportunity standards established by DOD are shown in **Table A-2**.

Table A-2. Promotion Timing and Opportunity

To Grade	Opportunity	Timing
Major/Lieutenant Commander	80 percent	10 years +/- 1 year
Lieutenant Colonel/Commander	70 percent	16 years +/- 1 year
Colonel/Captain	50 percent	22 year +/- 1 year

Source: DOD Instruction 1320.13, July 22, 2009.

Notes: Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel apply to the Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force. Lieutenant Commander, Commander, and Captain apply to the Navy.

Most recently, the Air Force involuntarily separated 157 majors who had been twice non-selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel.⁷⁷ These officers received separation pay and other transition benefits and may be eligible to transfer to the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve but their Active Duty careers have ended.

⁷⁷ *The Wall Street Journal*, "Air Force Is Following Congress's Mandate, as It Must," January 6, 2012.

Appendix B. Brief History of Past Army Drawdowns

Post-World War II

During World War II, the Army determined what its reasonable post-war strength should be and developed plans for a peaceful demobilization. Initially, the Army established a post-war goal of an Active and Reserve structure capable of mobilizing 4 million troops within a year of the outbreak of a future war. Later, the Army set the strength of the active ground and air forces at 1.5 million (the Army Air Corps did not become the U.S. Air Force until July 26, 1947, with the enactment of the National Security Act of 1947, P.L. 80-235). The vast majority of servicemembers in the Army during World War II were draftees. The Army's demobilization plans provided for the release of troops on an individual basis based on points. Soldiers received point credits for length of service, combat participation and awards, time spent overseas, and parenthood. Also factoring into the Army's plans was the availability of shipping to bring overseas troops to the United States, as well as the capacity to process the discharged soldiers.

However, pressure for faster demobilization from the public, Congress, and the troops themselves affected the Army's plan for an orderly process. The Army responded by easing eligibility requirements and released half of its 8 million troops by the end of 1945. In early 1946, the Army slowed its return of troops from overseas to meet its constabulary requirements in Germany and Japan, which elicited another public outcry to speed up demobilization. Public opposition diminished after the Army more than halved its remaining strength during the first six months of 1946.

President Truman was determined to balance the national budget, which also affected the Army's manpower. The Administration's dollar ceiling for FY1947 led to a new maximum Army strength of just over 1 million. In order to reach this new level, the Army stopped draft calls and released all post-war draftees along with any other troops eligible for demobilization. By June of 1947, the Army consisted of 684,000 ground troops and 306,000 airmen. Although considered large for a peacetime Army by American standards, the loss of many capable maintenance specialists resulted in widespread deterioration of equipment. Active Army units were understrength, had many barely trained replacements, and were considered "shadows of the efficient organizations they had been at the end of the war."

This post-war reduction saw the Army go from 8 million soldiers and 89 divisions in 1945 to 591,000 men and 10 divisions by 1950—a 93% reduction in manpower over five years. Half of the Army's 10 divisions were deployed overseas, with Far Eastern Command controlling four infantry divisions on occupation duty in Japan and the European Command controlling one infantry division in Germany. The remaining five divisions (two airborne, two infantry, and one armored division) were stationed in the United States and constituted a general reserve to meet emergencies. All 10 divisions had undergone organizational changes, largely based on wartime experience. Despite this reorganization, 9 out of 10 divisions were well below their authorized strength, with most infantry regiments having only two of their three authorized battalions, for example. Also, most units lacked their organic armored units and lacked their wartime complement of weapons. Whatever weapons and equipment these units had were described as "worn-out leftovers from World War II." The low personnel and equipment readiness levels in

1950 became apparent during the initially weak U.S. military response when the Korean War broke out in June of that year.

Post-Vietnam

During the 1960s, DOD had shaped and sized the Armed Forces to fight two and a half wars simultaneously. The wars were two major theater wars, or MTWs—a war in Europe and one in Asia—and a “half war,” a small-scale contingency operation. The force to fight this two-and-a-half-war construct numbered over 950,000 through the middle of the 1960s, and at the height of the Vietnam War in 1968, the Army grew to over 1,570,000 men and women. The conscripted Army of the Vietnam War had a disproportionate representation of lower-income and non-college-educated soldiers in its ranks, with many middle and upper class men able to qualify for student deferments by attending college. This perceived unfairness of the draft and the protracted nature of the Vietnam War were credited with helping to bring about the All-Volunteer Force.

In 1970, in anticipation of a drawdown in Vietnam, the Army instituted a reduction in force—known as an RIF—with the intent of getting rid of low-performing soldiers that had accumulated during Vietnam. The process was applied unevenly and, although the Army eliminated some “deadwood,” a significant number of good soldiers were released and many substandard soldiers remained on active duty.

1973 was a pivotal year for the U.S. Army as direct involvement in Vietnam’s ground war ended and the transition to an all-volunteer Army began. Many believed the Army was a weakened institution, and military and political leaders were blamed by many for the poor conduct and outcome of the war. Because of the unpopular nature of the war, many returning soldiers faced a hostile or indifferent public reception. Noted one historian, “[T]he Army that left Vietnam and returned to America and its garrisons in Germany and Korea in the 1970s was at low ebb on morale, discipline, and military effectiveness.”

The withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam in 1973 also ushered in an era of decreased defense budgets. In 1973, in light of budgetary constraints, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger formally instituted the Total Force. These budget reductions translated into a smaller Army, and the Army’s endstrength declined from its Vietnam War high of 1.57 million in FY1968 to 785,000 in FY1974. By 1974, the Army fielded 13 Active Duty divisions.

Chief of Staff of the Army General Creighton Abrams believed that a 13-division Active Duty Army was insufficient to meet the United States’ global requirements. Furthermore, the Army’s Director of Manpower and Forces noted the Army’s 13 divisions constituted the smallest force since prior to the Korean War and, in reality, the Army could field only 12 divisions, and only 4 of those divisions were rated as “combat ready.”

General Abrams obtained the Secretary of Defense’s approval to increase the Army’s active divisions to 16 without an increase in Army Active Duty endstrength, which stood at 765,000. This was achieved, in part, by shifting soldiers from Army headquarters and instructional units to Army divisions, assigning reserve component “round-out” brigades to late-deploying Active Duty divisions, and moving combat support and combat service support units to the Reserve Component.

There were a number of perceived problems associated with the Total Force. Filling the Army’s three new Active Duty divisions from capped endstrength severely taxed the Army’s already thin

manpower pool. The relationship between the Active Duty and Reserve Components was considered by many as poor, with Active Duty commanders typically viewing their Reserve Component counterparts as “weekend warriors” and doubting the combat readiness of reserve forces. The heavy reliance on reserve forces for combat support and service support also meant active forces would have a difficult time operating in the early days of a major conflict until reserve forces could be mobilized and trained up to standard. While some viewed the heavy reliance on reserve forces as problematic, General Abrams believed increased reliance on the reserves would be beneficial in obtaining American public support in the event of a major conflict and avoiding the kind of public dissonance associated with Vietnam. Issues related to limited Army endstrength versus requirements, poor recruit quality, budgetary constraints, and lack of public support in the mid-to-late 1970s led senior Army leadership to characterize the Army as being a “hollow force.”

Post-Cold War/Desert Storm

The “hollow force” of the mid-1970s and early 1980s recovered due in part to the arguments of senior DOD leaders, congressional action, and the defense build-up under the Reagan Administration. In 1987, the Active Army consisted of 780,815 personnel comprising 18 divisions, with 2 of the 18 divisions still forming and not yet at 100% strength. In late 1989, the Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union began to unravel. The demise of the Soviet Union led the United States and its allies to pursue a “peace dividend,” whereby defense budgets and manpower would be drastically reduced in order to decrease taxes and divert resources to other uses. In the end, a 535,000 soldier Active Duty force—a more than 30% cut—was agreed to, constituting the smallest Army since 1939.

The late 1980s saw a fundamental rethinking of U.S. defense policy and Army force structure. A 1987 Army force structure review examining the declining Soviet threat recommended a smaller force structure of 15 divisions and 640,000 soldiers. This force level and structure was referred to as the “BASE Force.” Under this scenario, Chief of Staff of the Army Carl Vuono argued that decreasing force structure by more than 35,000 soldiers per year would jeopardize readiness. Many believed in order to achieve any meaningful savings, the Army would need to be smaller than General Vuono’s 640,000 soldier Army. Iraq’s August 1990 invasion of Kuwait suspended downsizing debates. At the conclusion of the “100 Hour War” to liberate Kuwait, many saw it as a validation of a more technologically focused approach toward warfare, and the policy debates about reducing the size of the Army were renewed.

In 1993, the Clinton Administration announced it would pursue defense budget reductions of at least \$88 billion from FY1994 to FY1997. As part of this effort, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin initiated a Bottom Up Review intended to modify force structure based on current and projected threats to national security. The review recommended placing added emphasis on U.S. air power and a reduction of Army endstrength to 495,000 soldiers while retaining the ability to fight two MTWs simultaneously. In March 1994, the Bottom Up Review recommendations were implemented and Active Army endstrength reductions to 495,000 soldiers began and 2 of 12 divisions were eliminated.

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