

Canadian
Forces
College

Collège
des
Forces
Canadiennes



THE CANADIAN ARMY TOTAL FORCE CONCEPT: OPTIMIZING THE ARMY RESERVE CONTRIBUTION

Maj Lance Hoffe

JCSP 44

PCEMI 44

SERVICE PAPER

ÉTUDE MILITAIRE

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2018.

Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2018.

SERVICE PAPER - ÉTUDE MILITAIRE

**THE CANADIAN ARMY TOTAL FORCE CONCEPT:
OPTIMIZING THE ARMY RESERVE CONTRIBUTION**

Maj Lance Hoffe

“This paper was written by a student attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions, which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”

Word Count: 2587

“La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.”

Compte de mots: 2587

THE CANADIAN ARMY TOTAL FORCE CONCEPT: OPTIMIZING THE ARMY RESERVE CONTRIBUTION

AIM

1. The aim of this service paper is to propose an approach for the Canadian Army (CA) to best achieve full time capabilities from the part-time service of the Army Reserve (ARes) as stated in the 2017 Defense Policy, Strong, Secure, Engaged.¹ This paper will provide general recommendations to optimize existing mission tasks and to highlight some considerations when identifying new ARes mission tasks; however, the implementation details, recruiting and retention strategies are beyond the scope of this document.

INTRODUCTION

2. The mission of the CA is to “generate combat effective, multi-purpose land forces to meet Canada’s defence objectives.”² To achieve its mission the CA employs all aspects of the defence team; Regular Force, Reserve Force, Rangers and Civilians. The CA consists of approximately 50,000 personnel of which, 23,000 are regular force and 17,000 are reserve force members. The Army Reserve (ARes) is currently organized in 123 units located in 117 communities across Canada.³ The current structure of the ARes is largely the result of a bygone era when the ARes was seen as the basis for mass mobilization. However, the current employment model sees the ARes as part of a total force concept. The total force concept

¹ Department of National Defence, “Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada’s Defence Policy” (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017), 16.

² Department of National Defence, Canadian Army, “Canadian Army Operating Plan Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Version 2” (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017), 1-7/15.

³ Department of National Defence, Canadian Army, “Canadian Army Thematic Overview Strengthening the Army Reserve” (Ottawa: DND Canada, February 2017), 1.

requires that the ARes be capable of augmenting and integrating with the regular force.⁴

Therefore, the CA is employing an ARes structure, built for mass mobilization in late 19th century and early 20th century, to achieve a 21st century total force employment concept. As a result, the CA has struggled to optimize its reserve component.

3. During the Afghanistan conflict, the CA took advantage of the flexibility offered by the ARes and utilized reserve soldiers to fill empty regular force positions. This saw a significant growth in the number of full-time reservists, demonstrating the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) had began to drift from the actual employment concept of the Reserves as a part-time force. To address the issue, the CAF has conducted a variety of reviews since 2011 that have sought to “review the balance of full and part-time employment across the institution with the goal of returning to the model of a part-time reserve force.”⁵ Consistent with these internal reviews, there was a 2016 report by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) identifying that the ARes lacked clear “guidance on the training that is required for key tasks.”⁶ Additionally, the latest Defence Policy states, “the Reserve Force will receive new operational roles and will become further integrated into the total force.”⁷ In response, the CA has developed a Strengthening the Army Reserve (StAR) initiative that promises to provide the ARes clear direction on assigned

⁴ David Pratt, *Canada's Citizen Soldiers: A Discussion Paper* (Calgary: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, 2011), 20.

⁵ Department of National Defence, “CDS Initiating Directive Reserve Strategy 2015: Strengthening the Primary Reserve” (Ottawa: 10 November 2015), 1-2.

⁶ House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, “Report 5, Canadian Army Reserve – National Defence, of the Spring 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada.” (1st Session, 42nd Parliament, October 2016), 2.

⁷ Department of National Defence, “Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada’s Defence Policy”..., 16.

mission tasks and the expectations of the ARes to meet operational requirements.⁸ This paper will propose considerations that would improve operational capabilities achieved through existing mission tasks and identify considerations for identifying new ARes mission tasks.

DISCUSSION

Canada's Current Total Force Concept

4. The most recent defence strategy lists the CAF core missions⁹ of which, the CA has a role to play in nearly all. In order to meet the demands of these missions, it is essential that the CA optimize operational output through a total force concept consisting of both Regular and Reserve Force components. In an environment of limited resources and a society that continues to place greater demands on demonstrating accountability, the CA must display good stewardship of resources in achieving Government of Canada (GoC) assigned missions. The CA must also consider what will benefit the unique challenges of attracting and retaining its part-time soldiers in line with StAR objectives. To meet these requirements, the CA must identify and clearly articulate the expectations of both Regular and Reserve components. The expectations of the Regular Force are clear and well documented but this has not traditionally been the case for the ARes.¹⁰ This paper will explore several considerations that the CA should apply when selecting new ARes mission tasks and how to optimize existing mission tasks so that the ARes improve its contribution to CA operational capabilities.

⁸ House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, "Report 5, Canadian Army Reserve – National Defence, of the Spring 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada"..., 3.

⁹ Department of National Defence, "Strong, Secure, Engaged. Canada's Defence Policy"..., 17.

¹⁰ House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, "Report 5, Canadian Army Reserve – National Defence, of the Spring 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada"..., 3.

5. The CA has already assigned several unique mission tasks to the ARes such as Influence Activities that consist of Civil-Military Co-operation (CIMIC) and Psychological Operations (PSYOPS). These skill sets are resident in the Influence Activity Task Force (IATF) and draws soldiers from across the ARes. These skill sets are not directly related to specific military occupations. Soldiers attend IA training only after they have achieved the occupation function point for their specific military occupations, which is primarily decided by the designation of their home unit. There are other mission tasks that traditionally fell to the ARes during the Afghanistan conflict, such as convoy escort and force protection¹¹ but these are not standing tasks and are not assigned to specific ARes units to train. There are also several mission tasks for domestic operations such as ceremonial duties (Ceremonial Guard), Territorial Battalion Groups (TBG) and Arctic Response Company Groups (ARCG). The TBGs and ARCGs are intended to replace or augment Regular Force Immediate Response Units (IRU) in the situation of a domestic operation.¹² The traditional tasks for these groupings require very little training of specialty skill sets. In the case of both the TBG an ARCG, the primary role of the ARes is to provide additional manpower if the requirement of the domestic operation is beyond what can be provided by the Regular Force IRU.

¹¹ Ibid., 2.

¹² John McLearn, *Territorial Battalion Group*, Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia (26 January 2016), 2.

Total Force Concept in Other Countries

6. The United States Army Reserve (USAR) total force concept was primarily conceived to ensure that the US government could not go to war without the support of the American people.¹³ Following the Vietnam War, the United States Army (USA) total force concept has required that the USA deploy with elements of the USAR. Demonstrating the effectiveness of the total force concept, the US force during the second Iraq war consisted of up to 40% reservists¹⁴ and in total the USA has successfully deployed more than 300,000 reservists since 2001.¹⁵ The USA total force concept has designated the majority of USA combat support and combat service support capabilities to the USAR and includes the majority of the USA Civil Affairs, PSYOPS, logistics and transportation, construction engineers, military police and medical capabilities.¹⁶ Secondary benefits of the USA concept include limited duplication between regular and reserve capabilities, harnesses the potential of civilian qualifications and gives purpose to reserve units. The USA model relies on the reserve component to provide mission critical capabilities which, in turn drives a total force concept because of the unique skill sets that are only found within the USAR.

7. The United Kingdom Army has taken a slightly different approach and has attempted to reorganize both regular and reserve units to create closer integration of the UK Army Reserve (UKAR) into the total force concept. At home, reserves are responsible for routine activities such as security for large events as well as disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. Abroad, they

¹³ David Pratt, *Canada's Citizen Soldiers: A Discussion Paper...*, 20.

¹⁴ Richard Weitz, *The Reserve Policies of Nations: A Comparative Analysis* (Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 8.

¹⁵ US Army, *The United States Army Reserve 2017 Posture Statement* (Washington: United States Army Reserve, 26 April 2017), 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

are to be used for lower threat activities such as non-combatant evacuation, stability operations, standing commitments, while the regular force will be used for higher threat and contingency tasks.¹⁷ To better integrate training, each UKAR unit has been paired with a regular force unit. Additionally, several tasks such as medical and cyber have been given to the UKAR in order to take advantage of the civilian skills associated with these capabilities.¹⁸

8. The CA could not fully apply either the US or UK total force model due to the distinctly Canadian realities such as having a relatively small force dispersed over a large geographical area but there are elements of each that could serve the CA very well. From the US model the CA should consider, to the extent possible, assigning unique capabilities that only the ARes would possess. This would limit duplication of effort between regular and reserve forces. It would also focus ARes training and make ARes the experts in specific capability areas as opposed to being viewed as second rate in the skills trained by the regular force. From the UK model the CA should attempt, where geography permits, to align ARes units with regular force units. This will better integrate regular and reserve training and potentially improve regular force engagement in the community. From both US and UK model, the CA should look to assign mission tasks to the ARes in areas where civilian skills can be leveraged to provide CA operational capabilities.

¹⁷ Ministry of Defence, *Reserves In The Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued* (London, UK: MOD, 2013), 17.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Optimizing Existing Mission Tasks

9. As previously mentioned, the CA currently has several mission tasks that are unique to the ARes in the form of influence activities but the ability of the ARes to deliver operational capability based on these mission tasks is not optimal. The current construct has a single unit, in the form of the IATF in 5 Canadian Division, that has a sufficient concentration of qualified soldiers to provide the CA a capability. The IATF draws its members from units across the ARes that have personnel with the requisite qualifications. Under the current system, a soldier cannot enrol in the ARes to be CIMIC or PSYOPS soldier in the IATF. They must first join a unit and complete trade specific training in accordance with the designation of that unit and then subsequently attend CIMIC or PSYOPS training. Upon completion of this specialty training, soldiers return to their home units where they are unlikely to use or maintain these skills unless they capable of finding opportunities to work with the IATF.

10. Due to the part-time nature of the ARes, the CA must focus soldier training to concentrate on those skills that are expected to provide the CA with an operational capability. Given the current planning factor of 37.5 in-unit training days plus 7 days of collective training,¹⁹ exclusive of individual trades training, is not sufficient for individuals to be proficient in the skills of their primary military occupations as well as those skills required of the specialties such as PSYOPS and CIMIC. Even if the planned training days were expanded for personnel with such speciality qualifications, there is insufficient time for these soldiers to be proficient in all skills. Additionally, we should not forget that the intent is for ARes to be part-

¹⁹ House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts, “Report 5, Canadian Army Reserve – National Defence, of the Spring 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada”...,16.

time soldiers who have civilian careers and by simply adding financial resources for additional training doesn't mean that these soldiers will be available for such training. Therefore, to optimize available time and resources for these specialties, and others like it, they should be designated as distinct military occupations. This would permit soldiers to focus training efforts on becoming experts within these specialties. The current scenario in the ARes for such speciality skills is less than optimal in the time that it takes to produce a qualified soldier and the ability to maintain specialty skills.

11. By extension of creating new military occupations the CA should consider creating specialty units, such as IA or CIMIC and PSYOPS units, that would be integrated into the structure of each of the Army Divisions. This would require the creation of new units or changing the role of existing units. As a result, the CA would have a larger pool of better-trained soldiers that are more integrated with the regular force formations than is currently possible with a single centralized unit.

Considerations For New Mission Tasks

12. Many of these unique mission tasks assigned to the ARes can and should be highly technical, and even include new military occupations such as cyber, but it is not reasonable or necessary for all existing ARes units to achieve such a highly technical capabilities. However, there should be some consideration placed on re-purposing or creating a small number of reserve units, in areas where there is sufficient population base, such as large urban areas or those with a

significant tech sector, which could sustain such highly specialized capabilities. “Reserve units need to be re-examined so as to structure them along viable lines matched to the recruiting demographics of the host area...”²⁰ However, this paper is not proposing that the only option to improve operational output from the ARes requires drastic changes to the occupational and unit makeup of reserve formations. There should also be consideration given to assigning specialties, to existing units, which fall within traditional military occupations but are not currently resident in the Regular Force. These unique skill sets must be complimentary to Regular Force operational capabilities while focusing ARes unit training and providing them with a unique purpose.

13. Consideration should be given to identify unique or new specialties when assigning mission tasks to ARes units and avoid assigning those where the capability already exists in the Regular Force. By providing ARes with unique skills that are not resident in the Regular Force it will limit overall duplication of effort in the CA. It also gives ARes personnel a sense of being unique and being in a position of adding value to the CA. It would also become a forcing function of a total force employment concept. The CA should look to address existing capability gaps resulting from previous capability divestment or new specialties that have evolved due to the contemporary operating environment. These mission tasks should be focused toward traditional ARes units that can be paired with regular force units. This will ensure that regular and reserve unit training is integrated, providing mutually beneficial advantages to both

²⁰ Howard Coombs, “Canadian Armed Forces Reserves for the Twenty-First Century,” *Mackenzie Institute*. Last modified 21 April 2016. <http://mackenzieinstitute.com/canadian-armed-forces-reserves-for-the-twenty-first-century/>

components. An example of such a skill set could be to assign an ARes infantry unit with the mission task of providing assault pioneers and pairing that unit with a regular force infantry battalion in the same geographical area.

CONCLUSION

14. The intent of this paper is not to identify all of the possible mission tasks but to make recommendations that optimize those that already exist and to highlight considerations to be applied when identifying new ARes mission tasks. In applying the considerations presented above, the CA will create an ARes that is complementary to the Regular Force and not duplicative. It will also provide the CA with desirable operational capabilities that take advantage of skills present in the local population and it will provide ARes units with purpose and a training focus.

15. In the words of former Defense Minister David Pratt, “Canada must have one Army consisting of a Regular and Reserve Force. These soldiers must know their roles, be well trained, well equipped and respectful of the other’s contributions to the profession of arms.”²¹ The CA must get beyond tradition and overcome any resistance to change in order to optimize the total force concept. Canada does not need the ARes of old and must provide the CA with tangible operational capabilities. To achieve this, the CA must provide clear direction on the operational capability expectations of the Army’s reserve component.

²¹ David Pratt, *Canada’s Citizen Soldiers: A Discussion Paper...*, 75.

RECOMMENDATION

16. To enhance the total force concept the CA must focus on the operational capabilities of the ARes. To achieve this, the CA should apply the two primary considerations presented in this paper. First, the CA should put emphasis on skill sets that do not exist in the Regular Force. To optimize available training time, the CA should create a limited number of new military occupations and create new or re-role existing units to focus on these occupations and the operational capability that they would provide. This option should also capitalize on unique and highly desirable civilian skill sets that exist in the local community. Secondly, the CA should identify sub-specialties within existing military occupations that are currently lacking in the regular force due to previous capability divestment or as new capability requirements are identified due to the evolving contemporary operating environment. Specific ARes units should be designated to focus on these sub-specialties and be paired with Regular Force units in order to better integrate capabilities and training.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Canada. Department of National Defence, Canadian Army. "Canadian Army Operating Plan Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Version 2." Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017.
- Canada. Department of National Defence, Canadian Army. "Strengthening The Canadian Army Reserve." Ottawa: ND Canada, 28 June 2016.
- Canada. Department of National Defence, Canadian Army. "Strengthening The Canadian Army Reserve – Amplification." Ottawa: DND Canada, 29 July 2016.
- Canada. Department of National Defence, Canadian Army. "Canadian Army Thematic Overview: Strengthening the Army Reserve." Ottawa: DND Canada, February 2017.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "CDS Initiating Directive Reserve Strategy 2015: Strengthening the Primary Reserve." Ottawa: DND Canada, 10 November 2015.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces 2016-2017 Departmental Results Report." Ottawa: DND 2017.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. "Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy." Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017.
- Canada. House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts. "Report 5, Canadian Army Reserve – National Defence, of the Spring 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada." 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, October 2016.
- Canada. Office of the Auditor General. "Report 5- Canadian Army Reserve – National Defence." *Spring 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, Ottawa, 2016.
- Coombs, Howard. "Canadian Armed Forces Reserves for the Twenty-First Century," *Mackenzie Institute*. Last modified 21 April 2016. <http://mackenzieinstitute.com/canadian-armed-forces-reserves-for-the-twenty-first-century/>
- McLearn, John. *Territorial Battalion Group*. Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia. 26 January 2016.
- Pratt, David. *Canada's Citizen Soldiers: A Discussion Paper*. Calgary: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, 2011.
- United States. US Army, *The United States Army Reserve 2017 Posture Statement*. Washington: United States Army Reserve, 26 April 2017.
- Weitz, Richard. *The Reserve Policies of Nations: A Comparative Analysis*. Strategic Studies Institute. September 2007.
- Whitlock, Joseph E. *How To Make The Army Force Generation Work For The Army's Reserve Components*. Strategic Studies Institute, August 2006.