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AIM

1. This paper will propose conceptual changes to the rationale, training mandate, and Regular Force support to the Army Reserve component with a view to improving the Canadian Army (CA)'s total Force Generation (FG) outputs as mandated in the recently promulgated defence policy statement *Strong, Secure, Engaged*.

INTRODUCTION

2. The Army Reserve in Canada is a long-standing institution with a proud history and heritage of scaling the country's defence needs in times of war and international crisis. Despite its demonstrated historical import, the Army Reserve conundrum has presented a perennial challenge to the institution since the end of the Second World War, when the focus of Western forces shifted towards relatively smaller, professionalised forces-in-being and away from the larger, mobilization base of strategic reserves (forces-in-waiting). This institutional shift can be traced to several causes including the perception that war in the nuclear-era would be high-intensity and short duration, the increasing importance and complexity of modern military equipment, and the unreliability and readiness levels associated with reserve FG outputs. To deal with this issue, the Government of Canada proposed the Total Force concept in the 1987

Defence Policy Statement – Commitment and Challenge which led to the creation of 10/90 mixed units within the Canadian Army (CA) in the early 1990s.¹ This concept was quickly proven untenable and ultimately abandoned. Since then, the Army Reserves have been the subject of numerous policy statements, Auditor General reports, restructure efforts, and position papers all centred upon resolving the role and best use of the Army Reserve.

3. This paper will propose several conceptual changes to achieve greater balance in the Army's FG outputs, predicated upon key changes to the rationale, training mandate and support to the Army Reserve. Given the ongoing personnel policy review process, *The Journey* initiative, led by the Chief of Military Personnel (CMP), this paper will not address potential personnel policy initiatives, nor will it focus on specific force structures, organizations and resource levels. Instead, the paper will first identify the key FG outputs mandated in the Government's 2017 defence policy as well as Reserve-specific initiatives. This will lead to a discussion of the changing rationale for the Reserves, the conceptual changes to Reserve training mandates and support to training within the Army, with a view to proposing potential force generation and collective training roles that should be further considered and analysed for implementation.

¹Canada. Department of National Defence. *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada*. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply Services Canada, 1987), 65.

DISCUSSION

4. The 2017 Defence Policy Report, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, mandated several specific and other less-specific capacity requirements for concurrent operations which effectively translate into the various FG outputs expected of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Though ambiguous with respect to the component-specific FG outputs, the CA outputs can logically be assumed as a proportional representation of the total CA established strength relative to the CAF strength (excluding the Rangers and Cadets for whom there is no FG output). An approximate proportional CA strength of 40% of the CAF total establishment has been identified; however, for planning purposes a figure of 50% of the CAF output will be used owing to the traditionally high proportion of CA elements deployed on international operations. Framed within this context and these planning assumptions the key CAF and CA-specific FG outputs are detailed in Annex A and summarized as follows:

- a. Defend Canada, including responding concurrently to multiple domestic emergencies in support of civilian authorities.² This output has an unspecified capacity and is assumed to be risk-managed as a function of locally available and otherwise uncommitted forces.
- b. Contribute to international peace and stability through:
 - (1) Sustained operations comprising up to 4,000 CAF personnel including up to 2,000 CA personnel; and

²Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 17.

- (2) Surge operations comprising up to an additional 2,500+³ CAF personnel including up to 1,250 CA personnel.⁴

5. Thus, in a worst-case scenario with all concurrent international lines of operation deployed, the CA would reasonably assumed to be responsible for force generating a total of 3,250+ personnel. The CA Managed Readiness Plan (MRP) currently centres upon preparing one Regular Force High-Readiness (HR) Brigade with an established strength of roughly 4,500 personnel to fulfill these various tasks. However, recent iterations of the Road-to-High Readiness (RTHR) training cycles have seen brigades with an effective strength with as few as 3,000 personnel completing training. This potential deficiency is further corroborated by historical experiences during periods of high-tempo operations in both the Balkans and Afghanistan where the Army Reserves contributed upwards of 20% of personnel deploying on those missions. Consequently, there exists a need to more holistically prepare, train and ready reservists as part of the MRP.

6. In addition to the FG outputs mandated by the defence policy statement and the resulting requirement to take a more holistic approach to managed readiness within the CA, the government has directed several initiatives specific to the Reserve Force. Amongst the several announced initiatives, those of interest to the analysis presented here include:

³The (+) denotes scalable additional support as part of the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation lines of operations.

⁴Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 17.

- a. Assigning Reserve Force units and formations new roles that provide full-time capability to the CAF through part-time service, including:
 - (1) Light Urban Search and Rescue;
 - (2) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence;
and
 - (3) Combat capabilities such as direct fire, mortar and pioneer platoons.
- b. Employ the Reserve Force to deliver select expeditionary missions in a primary role such as [Security Force] capacity building.⁵

Thus, beyond the analytically-derived requirement for integrating Reserve Forces into the MRP from a risk-management perspective, the Government has constrained the decision-space with specifically mandated capabilities and initiatives that must be included in further analysis.

7. Having established the requirement for a more holistic approach to the management of the Total Force, let us turn now to the changing rationale and key factors which must guide the proposed concepts for improving the balance between Regular Force and Reserve Force outputs. While some proponents continue to advocate for the Army Reserve to focus on maintaining a Strategic Reserve in the event of mass mobilization⁶, this concept is dated and becoming

⁵Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 69.

⁶John English. "Government Should Embrace Concept of Strategic Army Reserve." iPolitics, 25 January 2012.

increasingly irrelevant. Whereas historically military capability was primarily a function of manpower, the capability of modern militaries is increasingly a function the synergistic effect of equipment, technology, personnel, doctrine and training. This notion is perhaps best illustrated in the outcome of the First Gulf War where an Army of relatively equal scale was destroyed in relatively short order by technologically superior and more capable Coalition forces. Moreover, the approach of technological superiority as opposed to mass and scale underpinned the approach of NATO forces against the numerically superior Warsaw-Pact throughout the cold war. Consequently, in the event of a major international crisis or war, it is highly unlikely that the scaling of forces on the timeframe of several months to years would factor prominently in the balance of strategic success, particularly when inadequate stocks of weapons and equipment exist to support such a mobilization. Indeed, this conclusion is supported in a recent Senate report on the Future Role of Canada's Reserve Forces.⁷

8. The abandonment of the historic mobilization role of the Reserves, which represented the most dangerous potential scenario, implies a corresponding increased emphasis in preparing and training the Reserve Force for the most-likely roles and tasks that they would be expected to deliver upon. More specifically, this suggests an increased focus on trade-specific, basic individual skills and training, and targeted collective training towards both universally applicable skills and specific force generation outputs. Examples of universally applicable collective training for potential expeditionary contingencies include convoy escort and force protection tasks such as vital point security and control, and security force assistance and capacity building.

⁷Canada. Senate. *Answering the Call, the Future of Canada's Primary Reserve*. (Ottawa: Senate of Canada, 2011), 61.

9. In the context of likely Reserve-specific force generation outputs, the most likely historical roles and tasks are generic and require minimal training. The emphasis in domestic relief tasks is generally more manpower-centric as opposed to technically complex, specialised roles and tasks. For instance, typical domestic relief roles include aid to the civil power and remediation in the aftermath of forest fires, floods, storms and potentially earthquakes. Aid to the civil power in these instances requires negligible advance preparation and training, rather the focus is supplying additional personnel in a formed, organized, and disciplined force to assist and augment other government agencies. The above-noted basic tasks for collective training in support of likely expeditionary roles are equally applicable in a range of domestic contingency operations with the notable addition of the Government-directed tasks associated with light-urban search and rescue and CBRN defence roles.

10. The other Government-mandated roles outlined in Strong, Secure, Engaged including the provision of security force capacity building roles and specific combat support capabilities such as direct fire, mortar and pioneer occupational specialist qualifications (OSQ) and require more careful consideration. The Army Reserve is particularly well-suited to the security force capacity building role given the higher predominance of senior non-commissioned officers (Sr NCOs) and officers that make up the preponderance of company and platoon-sized organizations with unit level command and staff appointments. Thus, hereto is a role to which the reserves are inherently well-suited, so long as the capacity is more closely synchronized and managed with a small but manageable additional individual training demand. Further, many reservists bring a unique secondary skill-set to such a role through their civilian studies and occupations with varied employment including teachers, police officers, lawyers, or tradesmen to name a few.

However, managing and implementing the provisioning of specific combat support capabilities requires a more deliberate approach.

11. All of the specific combat support capabilities now envisioned for force generation by the Reserve Force have atrophied within the Regular Force. Specifically, within the Infantry Corps, all of the cited combat support platoons have ceased to formally exist. While there remains small quantities of Regular Force infanteers who continue to possess those OSQs, these specialist roles must first be re-constituted amongst the Regular Force to enable the further devolvement and decentralization of the necessary individual training inherent with those roles. In order to manage this training effort, lessons can be learnt from the failed implementation of 10/90 Total Force units to address an emerging issue with the Regular Force while simultaneously addressing the requirement for such specialist roles within the reserves.

12. Under the 10/90 Total Force unit concept of the 1990s, Reserve Force units were assigned sub-unit and sub-sub-unit force generation responsibilities which complemented the 10% Regular Force cadre forming the nucleus of the command, staff and support elements. Drawing on this concept in reverse, the proposal would be to post a more robust Regular Support Staff (RSS) training cadre into specific Reserve Force units or potentially at the brigade headquarters staff to serve as a more robust distributed training staff. Of course, units and formations in large urban centres where a sufficient critical mass of potential trainees to leverage this more robust RSS and training cadre would inform the prioritization of such resources. This approach would serve the dual aim of providing additional positions to Regular Force Sr NCOs

and officers within large urban centers in comparison to the status quo which could result in improved retention rates amongst those looking for greater stability, predictability and geographic diversity.

13. The obvious drawback to the concept of a more robust RSS and training cadre element is that such an approach will further exacerbate already strained manning levels within Regular Force field units. While this is true, there appears no other viable option to facilitate the necessary individual training to devolve specialist support roles to the reserves. To introduce these specialist roles throughout the Reserve Force would require an additional individual training burden of between 11 and 20 training days. Consequently, within a typical Class A part-time construct with funding for upwards of 40 training days, such skill sets are inherently demanding and difficult to generate through a centralized training model, particularly within the reserve context. Moreover, the creation of additional Regular Force positions within large urban centers would improve flexibility in career management and offer greater geographic diversity and posting options to the Regular Force, potentially resulting in increased retention rates. Clearly, such a concept would require and warrant additional study for its potential dual benefits.

14. The final concept for further study and consideration is the regularizing of specific force generation outputs assigned to Reserve Force units and formations integrated into the MRP and closer affiliations with Regular Force units. This concept has its origins in the RTHR training process for the mounting and preparation of successive rotations to Operation *ARCHER* and *ATHENA* in Afghanistan where Reserve Force personnel figured prominently in enabling the

generation of sufficient quantities of soldiers to support the mission. In fact, Reserve Force representation typically ranged from 10-20% of the deploying forces throughout the commitment.⁸ Consequently, with that conflict and commitment now over, consideration should be given to continuing to include a robust Reserve Force component in the RTHR training despite the potential uncertainty surrounding operational deployment. A logical baseline target for Reserve Force component augmentation to Regular Force HR brigades would be the lower range of historical participation rates in Afghanistan (10%) of the Government-directed CA Regular Force sustained operations objective of 2,000 personnel – approximately 200 personnel. These remits would be in addition to the Territorial Battalion Group and Arctic Response Company Group force generation outputs already generated by the Army Reserves.

CONCLUSION

15. In all, despite a history of resentment, rivalry and misunderstanding amongst Regular and Reserve force components, the crucial role that the reserves have played throughout this nation's history and in recent conflicts is undeniable. Consequently, their mandate must be regularized and better integrated with the planned FG outputs of the CA both as a result of Government direction and prudent risk-management. To reach this objective three conceptual options have been proposed. Firstly, a more focused approach to training to master the basics and collective tasks which are equally relevant across a variety of expeditionary and domestic contingencies. Secondly, drawing on the concept of the 10/90 Total Force units in reverse to enable the

⁸David Pratt. *Canada's Citizen Soldiers: A Discussion Paper*. (Calgary: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, 2011), 77.

generation of combat support specialist training and serve as a more robust training cadre in key urban centres where the potential return justifies the investment. Finally, the continued establishment of Reserve Force components of HR brigade elements is advocated to ensure that the Reserve Force remains relevant and responsive.

RECOMMENDATION

16. The above-noted proposals are conceptual. The implementation of a more focused and targeted collective training mandate in support of the MRP requires a more detailed review of appropriate battle task standards and must be synchronized with division-specific MRP collective FG outputs. Further, with respect to the creation of a more robust RSS training cadre to support targeted Reserve Force formations and units it would be prudent to further review the concept and adopt a phased approach to implementation prior to full adoption.

Annex:

Annex A – CAF and CA Mandated Force Generation Outputs

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