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## Optimizing the Army Reserve – Building “One-Army” Operational Capability Through Structural Reform

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**JCSP 46 DL**

**Solo Flight**

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**OPTIMIZING THE ARMY RESERVE – BUILDING “ONE-ARMY”  
OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY THROUGH STRUCTURAL REFORM**

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## OPTIMIZING THE ARMY RESERVE – BUILDING “ONE-ARMY” OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY THROUGH STRUCTURAL REFORM

### Introduction

In the last five years, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has implemented a number of strategic policies and investments to grow, strengthen, and modernize the operational roles of the Canadian Army (CA) Reserve (ARes). While many of these efforts were catalyzed by a 2016 Office of the Auditor General (OAG) report that highlighted shortcomings in ARes training, equipment, force management, and preparedness, there had already been a concurrent institutional effort to enhance the reserve component’s contributions across the CAF.<sup>1</sup> This effort was marked by the Chief of Defence Staff’s directive on *Strengthening the Primary Reserve* and the CA’s corresponding directive *Strengthening the Army Reserve (StAR)*;<sup>2</sup> both speak to a strategic intent to enhance operational capabilities through the Reserves.<sup>3</sup>

The 2017 release of Canada’s defence policy, *Strong Secure Engaged (SSE)* underscored the political support behind these CAF and CA level directives. SSE mandates that:

“[The CAF] will implement a new vision for the Reserve Force that will:

- enable Reserve Force units and formations to provide full-time capability through part-time service;
  - ensure Reservists are a well-integrated component of the total force;
- and

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<sup>1</sup>Office of the Auditor General, “Report 5–Canadian Army Reserve–National Defence,” *2016 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, Ottawa, 2016. [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl\\_oag\\_201602\\_05\\_e\\_41249.html#hd3d](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201602_05_e_41249.html#hd3d).

<sup>2</sup>Department of National Defence, “Canada’s Reserve Force,” *Departmental Performance Report 15-16*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/departmental-performance/2015-16/supporting-documents/canadas-reserve-force.html>.

<sup>3</sup>Canadian Army, “Strengthening the Army Reserve,” accessed 17 May 2021. <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/star/index.page>.

- appropriately train, prepare and equip Reservists in sufficient numbers to be ready to contribute to operations at home and abroad.”<sup>4</sup>

To those tasked to implement this vision within the CA, the requirements are clear: improve the strength, operational output, and integration of the ARes within a total-force model. Advancing from the StAR directive, numerous supporting initiatives have been developed and are in various phases of implementation to achieve this vision. The most recent being the release of the Canadian Army Modernization Strategy (CAMS).<sup>5</sup> CAMS consolidates the progress made in StAR and lays out the plan towards integrating the part-time ARes into full-time operational capabilities through a force development (FD) cycle titled Force 2025 (F2025).<sup>6</sup>

F2025 seeks to implement a “One Army” model by re-structuring full-time CA units and providing fidelity to the ARes mission-task (MT) concept introduced in StAR.<sup>7</sup> While F2025 supports the intent and objectives of StAR and SSE, the initiative leaves out any analysis on optimizing the foundational structure of ARes units. This legacy structure has largely been unchanged since the Second World War and most units are only a fraction of a doctrinal establishment and lack the leadership depth to generate and sustain operational capabilities.<sup>8</sup>

How would the ARes’s operational capability be enhanced if units were restructured towards doctrinal strength? Would this allow the CA to better harness the

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<sup>4</sup>Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy* (Ottawa: 2017), 67-68. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/reports/2018/strong-secure-engaged/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup>Department of National Defence. *Advancing with Purpose: The Canadian Army Modernization Strategy* (Ottawa: December 2020). [http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/assets/ARMY\\_Internet/docs/en/national/2021-01-canadian-army-modernization-en.pdf](http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/assets/ARMY_Internet/docs/en/national/2021-01-canadian-army-modernization-en.pdf).

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>Office of the Auditor General, “Report 5—Canadian Army Reserve—National Defence,” *2016 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, Ottawa, 2016.

capabilities of the ARes in a “One Army” context? Would efficiencies be gained in training, achieving readiness targets, maintaining equipment suites, and conducting administration? It is my belief that, within current authorized strength and resources, the ARes will be more operationally effective and efficient as a result of structural reforms focused on consolidating units and amalgamating formation headquarters towards a doctrinal establishment.

### **Framing the Problem**

T.C. Willet eloquently frames the conflict between the legacy ARes structure and the objectives of StAR, SSE and CAMS:

“If one takes the map of Canada with [ARes] units superimposed on it... it looks as if there is a substantial and active presence in most large and small cities across the country. This is, however, misleading...the regiments are no more than companies or squadrons, though they still retain the titles they had when they were part of a field army of divisions and brigades. They try hard to retain the regimental character, but they are really little more than reinforcement for the regular Army and a base for expansion if mobilization is required...[ARes] units have no operational capability as regiments...The entire organization is geared toward the administrative convenience of peacetime and has no apparent relation to any discernible conception of warlike operations.”<sup>9</sup>

This paper will posit that structural reform is a necessity for the CA to achieve a “One-Army” model and to also address many of the underlying issues identified in the 2016 OAG report. To support this argument, this paper will first provide the historical background that has resulted in the current ARes structure. It will then examine the existing inefficiencies and challenges across the ARes that have a structural nexus.

With these challenges in mind, this paper will then argue in favor of the benefits of unit and formation level consolidation, supporting my argument with evidence from

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<sup>9</sup>T.C. Willet, *A Heritage at Risk: The Canadian Militia as a Social Institution* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 93.

the practice of horizontal integration in the private/corporate sector. Lastly, this paper will conduct a brief comparative overview of the reserve force structures of the United States Army Reserve (USAR) and Army National Guard (USARNG); these organizations provide operationally ready full-time capability from a part-time force.

Throughout this paper, I will aim to address the most common counter-arguments against ARes restructuring. These arguments are passionately rooted in the historical lineages of the units and the social nexus to the local communities.<sup>10</sup> While these concerns merit attention, the modernization efforts necessary to achieve future operational remits can be met without unduly compromising the heritage of the ARes.

### **Past to Present – History of the ARes**

The ARes can trace its lineage prior to confederation and has an honoured history of defending the interests of Canada through the course of history.<sup>11</sup> While impossible to summarize the history of every regiment, many militia regiments today hold onto and their titles and cherish their battle-honours earned through conflicts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and through the course of the World Wars.

During WWI no formal activation of militia units occurred, however scores of members serving with the non-permanent active militia went into service in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).<sup>12</sup> Following WWI, the Otter Commission stood-up to demobilize the CEF. The commission disbanded the CEF and reorganized/regrouped the

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<sup>10</sup>Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, *Answering the Call: The Future Role of Canada's Primary Reserve* (Ottawa: 2011), 24.

<https://sencanada.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/411/secd/rep/rep04dec11-e.pdf>

<sup>11</sup>T.C. Willet, *A Heritage at Risk: The Canadian Militia as a Social Institution*, 56-58.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 69.

non-permanent active militia in a manner that perpetuated the battle-honours achieved by the CEF.<sup>13</sup>

During the following interwar period, risk was accepted to reduce full-time authorized strength and a shift was made towards a larger part-time militia. In 1939, at the start of WWII, the non-permanent active militia numbered over 46,000 compared to just over 4,000 in the permanent active militia (these terms were replaced with Canadian Army (Active) and Canadian Army (Reserve) in 1940).<sup>14</sup>

Canada's WWII mobilization was based on extant regimental frameworks with militia units serving as mobilization bases to generate brigades and divisions for the war effort, furthering the battle-honours and heritage of the ARes. Following WWII, however, the need arose to rebalance military requirements as threats shifted into the Cold-War period. Shifting security concerns throughout the Cold-War period was consequentially met with changes in the CA's distribution between full-time and part-time forces; full-time strength went from nearly 15,000 in 1947 to 40,000 in 1968 to 80,000 in 1980, whereas ARes strength declined from 47,500 to 23,000, to nearly 14,000 in the same period.<sup>15</sup> From the end of the Korean war through to Afghanistan, the overall CA structure experienced episodic evolutions in capability and varied defence spending (resulting in rerolling of unit capabilities and reorganization of administrative HQs); yet,

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<sup>13</sup>"Perpetuation of the Units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (C.E.F.), 1914-1919," accessed 17 May 2021, [http://www.regimentalrogue.com/cef\\_perpetuation/cef\\_perpetuation.htm](http://www.regimentalrogue.com/cef_perpetuation/cef_perpetuation.htm).

<sup>14</sup>Jack English, "The Role of the Militia in Today's Canadian Forces," Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute (September 2011), 7. [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cdfai/pages/95/attachments/original/1413683498/The\\_Role\\_of\\_the\\_Militia\\_in\\_Today\\_Canadian\\_Forces.pdf?1413683498](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cdfai/pages/95/attachments/original/1413683498/The_Role_of_the_Militia_in_Today_Canadian_Forces.pdf?1413683498)

<sup>15</sup>T.C. Willet, *A Heritage at Risk: The Canadian Militia as a Social Institution*, 73.

by and large, the regimental structure, distribution, and organization of the ARes remains unchanged.<sup>16</sup>

This leads to today's ARes structure which is composed of roughly 20,000 reservists distributed in 123 units across all corps and branches with the preponderance being infantry (51 regiments), artillery (19 regiments) and armour (18 regiments).<sup>17</sup> ARes units are organized into 10 geographically/regionally organized Canadian Brigade Groups (CBGs) that function as administrative HQs.<sup>18</sup> CBGs are subsequently grouped underneath the four CA division HQs based on geographic affiliation and are parallel in organizational hierarchy to the Regular Force (RegF) Canadian Mechanized Brigade Groups (CMBGs).<sup>19</sup>

As history has shown, the concept of volunteers organized into a part-time army has been a cornerstone of Canada's National Defence organization. This has held true even in Canada's most recent expeditionary contributions in Afghanistan; statistics demonstrate that ARes members represented 20% of the deployed force during periods of the conflict.<sup>20</sup> Former Chief of Defence Staff, General Vance, validates the ARes contributions: "there is no way we could have done this, not only in terms of our quality

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<sup>16</sup>George Petrolekas, "Reserve Options," Canadian Global Affairs Institute, July 2016, 1. [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cdfai/pages/3608/attachments/original/1524876014/Reserve\\_Options\\_-\\_George\\_Petrolekas.pdf?1524876014](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cdfai/pages/3608/attachments/original/1524876014/Reserve_Options_-_George_Petrolekas.pdf?1524876014).

<sup>17</sup>Department of National Defence, "Canada's Reserve Force," *Departmental Performance Report 17-18*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/departmental-results-report/departmental-results-2017-18-index/supporting-documents-index/canadas-reserve-force.html>.

<sup>18</sup>Canadian Army, "The Canadian Army of Today," accessed 17 May 2021. <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/home/organization.page>.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Rob Roy MacKenzie and Howard G. Coombs, "Canadian Armed Forces: A New Vision for the Reserves," *Canadian Military Journal* 20, no. 3 (Summer 2020): 8. <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/Vol20/No3/PDF/CMJ203Ep6.pdf>.



of forces but also in terms of our endurance there, had we not had credible Reserves. It would not have been done.”<sup>21</sup>

### **Full-Time Capability from a Part-time Force: Mission Tasks and “One-Army”**

The contributions in Afghanistan once again brought into the question how to best balance CA requirements across both the RegF and the ARes, realizing that limitations in overall authorized strength result in the RegF being stretched thin to meet all of its contingency readiness and institutional requirements.<sup>22</sup> Spurred by the training, funding and integration related deficiencies noted in the 2016 OAG report, this post-Afghanistan analysis culminated in the vision of an integrated “One-Army” as detailed in StAR and backed through SSE.<sup>23</sup> This new vision marks a paradigm shift away from individual augmentation towards the force generation of ARes mission task (MT) elements to provide professionally trained and equipped capabilities to maintain the CA’s operational tempo.<sup>24</sup>

To achieve this, the CA’s StAR directive mandates that by 2024 every ARes unit will be able to force generate a MT operational capability that would train and integrate with an affiliated RegF partner unit.<sup>25</sup> The MT effort has since been rolled up into CAMS and F2025, with an aim to “integrate ARes MT elements into structure, at appropriate

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<sup>21</sup>Sandra Song, “The Canadian Reserves: Rightfully Earning Recognition,” NATO Association of Canada, last modified 2 July 2013. <https://natoassociation.ca/the-canadian-reserves-rightfully-earning-recognition/>.

<sup>22</sup>Rob Roy MacKenzie and Howard G. Coombs, “Canadian Armed Forces: A New Vision for the Reserves,”<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>24</sup>Chris Thatcher, “Ready for Adaptive Dispersed Operations: The Army’s modernization strategy,” Canadian Army Today, last modified 27 November 2020. <https://canadianarmytoday.com/ready-for-adaptive-dispersed-operations-the-armys-modernization-strategy/>.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

notice to move and deployment timelines,” to contribute to a “One-Army” approach to meeting operational requirements.<sup>26</sup>

Notably, the CA assigned MT based on an awareness of the limitations of the legacy ARes structure and the stark asymmetry between regiments.<sup>27</sup> Larger units received more complex and specialized MTs (assault pioneer, direct fire support, CBRN reconnaissance, etc.) and smaller units received core capability MTs (i.e. dismounted infantry platoon).<sup>28</sup>

### **Contemporary ARes Challenges – Size, Asymmetry, Depth**

The 2016 OAG report identified numerous deficiencies in the ARes that present challenges in generating a full-time ARes capability; the primary challenges are rooted in size, asymmetry, and leadership depth.<sup>29</sup> From a size perspective, the ARes does not have doctrinally structured units. Across the 123 units, there are only 183 sub-units (average 1.5 per unit), whereas doctrinally structured battalions and regiments normally consist of three corps/branch specific sub-units plus a support sub-unit.<sup>30</sup> This issue is further compounded by the ARes being well below its preferred manning level of 29,000.<sup>31</sup>

Since 2015 onward, the overall ARes strength has held steady around 20,000, with an effective-strength of 14,000-15,000; the remaining are recruits, those releasing, and those who have not yet completed occupational training and thus are not contributing

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<sup>26</sup>Canadian Army, “Force 2025 – Commanders Planning Guidance,” 10 September 20, 8.

<sup>27</sup>Canadian Army, “Backgrounder: Strengthening the Army Reserve through Mission Tasks,” last modified 26 April 2018. <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/news-publications/national-news-details-no-menu.page?doc=backgrounder-strengthening-the-army-reserve-through-mission-tasks/jgb8dbj5>.

<sup>28</sup>Canadian Army, “Backgrounder: Strengthening the Army Reserve through Mission Tasks,” last modified 26 April 2018.

<sup>29</sup>Office of the Auditor General, “Report 5–Canadian Army Reserve–National Defence,” *2016 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, Ottawa, 2016. [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl\\_oag\\_201602\\_05\\_e\\_41249.html#hd3d](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201602_05_e_41249.html#hd3d).

<sup>30</sup>John Boileau, “Infantry,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 18 May 2021. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/infantry>.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.39.

to operational capabilities.<sup>32</sup> The 2016 OAG report found “that 58 of the ARes units were at less than 70 percent of their ideal unit [strength and] 12 Army units were at less than 50 percent of their ideal unit [strength].”<sup>33</sup> The OAG report concludes that “[ARes] units do not have the number of soldiers they need to train so that soldiers and teams are prepared to deploy when required.”<sup>34</sup>

ARes unit sizes are also well short of the establishment requirements identified in StAR; StAR projects that in order to generate a full-time capability from a part-time force then a force generation ratio of 7:1 is required.<sup>35</sup> Given MTs are platoon strength at approximately 40, this would imply that the minimum size to achieve full-time MT capability is at least 280 trained-effective strength. On average, ARes units are closer to 3:1 and well shy of a ubiquitous 7:1.<sup>36</sup>

The second concern is that of asymmetry. Various factors attributable to the legacy structure have resulted in asymmetrical differences in unit strength; often correlated to host-community demographics. For comparison, all ARes units in 32 CBG (densely populated Toronto region) average over 285 members,<sup>37</sup> whereas units in 38 CBG (scarcely populated Saskatchewan and Manitoba) average less than 100.<sup>38</sup> These

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<sup>32</sup>Department of National Defence, “Canada’s Reserve Force,” *Departmental Performance Report 17-18*.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.49.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.35.

<sup>35</sup>Canadian Army, “Backgrounder: Strengthening the Army Reserve through Mission Tasks,” last modified 26 April 2018.

<sup>36</sup>Calculated based on 15,000 Trained Effective Strength divided by 122 units divided by 40 personnel per MT = 3.07.

<sup>37</sup>Canadian Army, “32 Canadian Brigade Group,” accessed 18 May 2021. <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/4-canadian-division/32-canadian-brigade-group/index.page>. (calculated based on listed strength / number of units)

<sup>38</sup>Canadian Army, “38 Canadian Brigade Group,” accessed 18 May 2021. <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/3-canadian-division/38-canadian-brigade-group/index.page>. (calculated based on listed strength / number of units)

numbers reflect total strength and are not adjusted for trained-effective strength, which would be an even smaller number.

Size and asymmetry consequentially lead to a paradigm of “have” versus “have-not” regiments when it comes to being able to maintain succession, leadership depth, and sufficient trained soldiers to perpetuate in-unit training. The OAG report finds that: “[small] units are not able to train effectively because they lack the qualified instructors, leaders, or soldiers they need to train in teams.”<sup>39</sup>

Although a response to these challenges could simply be to invest more resources into growth, there is limited evidence that the current situation can be remedied through this path alone. StAR and preceding CAF directive both offered systemic improvements and increased resources to the growth and recruiting programme (such as high-school co-op credits and guaranteed full-time summer employment).<sup>40</sup> Despite this, growth has been modest and the capacity to train new recruits acts as a governor to intake rates.<sup>41</sup> Likewise, intake does not immediately alleviate the deficiencies at critical ranks (Master Corporal / Captain and up) which require accrued seniority and experience (five to ten years). In sum, the challenges inherent to the current ARes structure present insurmountable challenges in meeting full-time capability outputs at the sub-sub-unit size from a part-time organization.

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<sup>39</sup>Office of the Auditor General, “Report 5–Canadian Army Reserve–National Defence,” *2016 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, Ottawa, 2016, 5.49.

<sup>40</sup>Richard Bray, “New initiative will make the Reserves more operationally effective,” *Canadian Army Today*, last modified 22 February 2018. <https://canadianarmytoday.com/new-initiative-will-make-the-reserves-more-operationally-effective/>.

<sup>41</sup>John Selkirk, “Reserves 2000 meets with new Commander Canadian Army (CCA), LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier,” last modified 21 August 2018. <https://reserves2000.ca/reserves-2000-meets-with-new-commander-canadian-army-cca-lgen-jean-marc-lanthier/>.

## **Consolidation – Setting the Conditions for Success**

The remedy to address the aforementioned challenges is to conduct a consolidation of units and formation HQs; this will address issues stemming from size, asymmetry and leadership depth and make the ARes more effective in meeting the objectives of StAR, SSE and the integrated “One-Army” vision. This proposal will remain generalized in nature and posits that consolidation should be targeted towards achieving a doctrinal establishment that mirrors RegF structures/establishment where applicable. In general terms, this would see the amalgamation towards 35-40 ARes units (each exceeding StAR’s 7:1 ratio with 350-400 trained-effective strength based on current strength). Consequentially, this would allow for CBG HQs to amalgamate along regional lines into a single formation HQ per CA division (from ten to four) and maintain a span of control over roughly ten subordinate units. It is possible that some units may need to be re-rolled in terms of capability to ensure that each CBG remains balanced between manoeuvre, combat support and service support capabilities; likewise, each consolidation would need to be bespoke to consider factors such as regional demographics and historical strength trends.

At face value, the benefits are obvious. Consolidation towards a doctrinal establishment will result in harmonizing the average-paid trained-effective strength and units would be symmetrical and doctrinally structured according to their respective corps or branch establishments. While this stands to alleviate both issues in size and asymmetry, consolidation would also alleviate challenges in leadership depth.

The current structure sees senior NCOs and officers in leadership positions with only fractions of platoons and companies under their command; today’s hollow ARes

structure begets a limited ability to deliver effective training.<sup>42</sup> The same issue exists at the regimental command team level where a Lieutenant-Colonel and Chief Warrant Officer are employed to command units no larger than company strength.<sup>43</sup> Through consolidation, hollow structures will be filled towards doctrinal strength, allowing for the span of control to increase across leadership ranks. This will optimize leader capacity and see command teams at every level be employed over complete structures that can train and operate together.

In sum, consolidating units will increase ARes effectiveness<sup>44</sup> and enable the ARes to meet the intentions outlined in StAR to force generate MT operational capabilities to integrate and operate alongside the RegF.

### **Horizontal Integration - ARes Efficiency<sup>45</sup> Gains**

The proposed structural reforms are comparable to the practice of horizontal integration in the private/corporate sector, specifically the practice of mergers. Mergers occurs when two firms operating in the same industry at the same level in the supply chain corporately amalgamate in order to benefit from synergistic effects.<sup>46</sup> The primary benefits cited for horizontal integration / mergers are: optimization of managerial capacity, reduced competitiveness and reduced overhead (i.e economy of scale).<sup>47</sup> In

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<sup>42</sup>Office of the Auditor General, “Report 5–Canadian Army Reserve–National Defence,” *2016 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, Ottawa, 2016, 5.49.

<sup>43</sup>George Petrolekas, “Reserve Options,” Canadian Global Affairs Institute, July 2016, 2.

<sup>44</sup>Treasury Board Secretariat, “Guide to Developing Performance Measurement,” Accessed 17 May 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/centre-excellence-evaluation/guide-developing-performance-measurement-strategies.html>. Defines effectiveness as “the extent to which a program is achieving expected outcomes.”

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.* Defines efficiency as “the extent to which resources are used such that a greater level of output is produced with the same level of input or a lower level of input is used to produce the same level of output.”

<sup>46</sup>M.J. Millenaar, “The Influence of Horizontal Integration on Business Performance,” (Wageningen University, January 2016): 8-9. <https://edepot.wur.nl/374975>.

<sup>47</sup>Lumen, “Mergers and Acquisitions,” accessed 18 May 2021. <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wmopen-introbusiness/chapter/mergers-and-acquisitions/>.

principal, it is expected that similar synergistic effects will occur through ARes unit and formation HQ consolidation which will not only provide efficiencies in terms of human-capital but also financial resources. Notably, the benefits of optimizing managerial capacity align with earlier discussion in that unit consolidation will enable greater utility of unit leadership and provide greater leadership depth.

In terms of overhead, each unit has administrative requirements such as periodic reports and returns, resource management, stock-taking, mess administration, and personnel management obligations that necessitate a degree of administrative staff-effort intrinsic to being a CAF unit, regardless of size. This extends as well to the breadth of obligatory secondary duties and positions that are required regardless of unit size, such as unit environment officer, ammo/explosives representative, public affairs officer, etc. While many of these administrative functions will scale up in complexity through the course of unit consolidation, there are notable redundancies that can be eliminated. This will equate to human-capital efficiencies and allow for part-time Reservists to direct more of their staff-effort towards training and readiness.

Reducing overhead will also generate efficiencies at the formation HQ and national level through streamlining the chain of command. Consolidation will result in higher echelons having significantly fewer subordinate nodes with which to direct, monitor and maintain communications. This will also reduce the margin of effort and ensure greater standardization and quality control; this is akin to the concept of unity of effort.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Department of National Defence, B-GJ-005-300/FP-001, *Canadian Forces Joint Publication 3.0 Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2010), 1-3. [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2011/dn-nd/D2-252-300-2010-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/dn-nd/D2-252-300-2010-eng.pdf).

Efficiency gains in training coordination and resource management are also expected. Consolidation will result in fewer formations HQs and unit competing over the same training resources; efforts spent on deconflicting and coordinating across 123 units will be greatly diminished as more deliberate planning can occur within individual units which are sized and structured to achieve more robust operational capabilities.

Research on horizontal integration, however, has indicated that efficiency gains are challenged to be realized in many cases where case corporate cultures between merging firms do not harmonize.<sup>49</sup> This presents a potential challenge to ARes consolidation between regiments where regimental loyalties promote competitiveness between units.<sup>50</sup> Not only will clear communications related to consolidation be required, but the CA will need to ensure that the resources, training and education support, and investments into the ARes remain a priority in order for the consolidation initiative not to lose credibility and face internal resistance and institutional inertia.

### **Concerns – Loss of History and Heritage**

Importantly, this proposal takes into account the importance of the ARes's physical presence in communities across Canada, whether that be for future military expansion, local domestic response, or community engagement.<sup>51</sup> As such, this proposal is not recommending the closure of ARes units nor geographic relocation of armouries, making consolidation a relatively low-cost and rapidly achievable initiative; instead, this proposal intends to leverage technology to overcome resistance to institutional change.

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<sup>49</sup>Daniel Rottig, Taco Reus and Shlomo Tarba, "The Impact of Culture on Mergers and Acquisitions: A Third of a Century of Research" *Advances in Mergers and Acquisitions*, 2009: 136.

<sup>50</sup>Donna Winslow, "Misplaced Loyalties: The Role of Military Culture in the Breakdown of Discipline in Two Peace Operations," (University of Ottawa, 21 Jan 1991): 8-9.  
<https://jmss.org/article/download/57794/43469>.

<sup>51</sup>Dan A. Doran, "Sacrificing Culture in the Name of Strategy: Why Militia Armouries Matter," *Canadian Military Journal* 20, no. 4 (autumn 2020): 67.  
<http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol20/no4/page66-eng.asp>.



The ability to use digital tools to enable remote command and control between locations is a factor that enables consolidation in a way that previously would not have been possible nor practicable. Recent experience from how the CAF has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that the CA can continue to force generate and deploy on operations with portions of the force tele-working.<sup>52</sup> This is even more relevant in the ARes where it is already common for coordination and administration to occur digitally between part-time Reservists in-between scheduled training periods.

Nonetheless, it is anticipated that such a proposal will come under criticism from regimental influencers and ARes advocacy groups; previous CA discussions regarding amalgamation have galvanized advocacy groups like Reserves 2000 who believe consolidation will undermine the storied heritage and history of the units.<sup>53</sup> This is fair concern, however there remains many ways in which history can be remembered through annual ceremonial activities and community engagement. A strong messaging campaign will be needed to communicate that regimental titles do not translate to capability and the overall intent is to better harness and utilize the ARes within a “One-Army” structure; this is a cause that any external advocacy group should be seen to support as it will ultimately protect the credibility of the ARes into the future.

### **United States Army: Achieving Full-Time Capability from a Part-Time Force**

The United States Army has two reserve (part-time) components: the US Army Reserve (USAR) and the US Army National Guard (USARNG). The USAR is a federal force that is focused to provide whole-of-army combat service support such as

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<sup>52</sup>Department of National Defence, “Defence Team COVID-19 - Working remotely,” accessed 18 May 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/campaigns/covid-19/working-remotely.html>.

<sup>53</sup>“Army looking to overhaul reserves through amalgamation,” *CBC News*, last modified 11 March, 2009, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/army-looking-to-overhaul-reserves-through-amalgamation-1.812523>.

sustainment, medical, intelligence, theatre engineering and civil affairs, whereas the USARNG is a state-level, federally responsive, force focused on generating manoeuvre and combat support capabilities up to the brigade-combat-team level.<sup>54,55</sup> Notably, both USAR and USARNG are doctrinally structured and have maintained 95% of strength in the last 5 years.<sup>56</sup>

USAR and USARNG soldiers train part-time (approximately 39 days/year) and deliberate scheduling across multiple years of part-time service lead to a deployable level of readiness.<sup>57</sup> The contributions for USAR and USARNG have been critical in the United States' two decades long campaign in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with reserve formations deploying over 45% of the force in these theatres.<sup>58</sup> Although the US defence enterprise is significantly larger than that of Canada, the USAR and USARNG models are demonstrative of the fact that full-time capability can be produced from a part-time force.<sup>59</sup> As the CAF and CA look to further refine StAR and CAMS initiatives, it would be incumbent to learn from the force generation challenges that USAR and USARNG experience.

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<sup>54</sup>Wolfgang W. Riedel, "The Canadian Army Needs a Paradigm Shift," *Canadian Military Journal* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 25-27. <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol20/no2/PDF/CMJ202Ep19.pdf>.

<sup>55</sup>Steven Blum, "Army National Guard Division and Brigade Combat Team Designation," Torchbearer Special Report, December 2005, 1. <https://www.ausa.org/sites/default/files/TBSR-2005-ARNG-Division-and-Brigade-Combat-Team-Designations.pdf>.

<sup>56</sup>Mark F. Cancian, "U.S. Military Forces in FY 2020," Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 2019, 7. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-military-forces-fy-2020-army>.

<sup>57</sup>Wolfgang W. Riedel, "The Canadian Army Needs a Paradigm Shift," 29.

<sup>58</sup>Population Reference Bureau, "U.S. Military's Reliance on the Reserves," March 2005, <https://www.prb.org/usmilitarysrelianceonthereserves/>.

<sup>59</sup>Wolfgang W. Riedel, "The Canadian Army Needs a Paradigm Shift," 29.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has shown that the consolidation of units is a beneficial means towards improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the ARes without significantly compromising the Reserve's geographic relevance and community presence. The benefits to be derived through unit and formation HQ consolidation towards a doctrinal structure have been demonstrated to address deficiencies identified in the 2016 OAG report and will set the conditions for achieving full-time capability from a part-time force. If the CA truly intends to achieve the objectives of StAR, SSE, and CAMS, a structural reform of the ARes is necessary to aide in the achievement of "One-Army" integrated outputs. As such, further analysis on ARes consolidation should be considered complimentary to the work being undertaken within F2025.

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