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ARMY FORCE GENERATION: BALANCING MISSIONS IN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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ABSTRACT

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The Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model provides the Army National Guard with an excellent methodology to balance both federal and state mission requirements. The Army National Guard should utilize Ready Expeditionary Forces (REF) to provide support in domestic emergencies while Contingency Expeditionary Forces (CEF) and Deployment Expeditionary Forces (DEF) provide forces for deployment and homeland security missions. While the ARFORGEN model presents numerous advantages for the Army National Guard, the model also presents several risks. Using the Arkansas Army National Guard as an illustration, this paper explores past, present, and future mobilizations, as well as domestic support missions, to analyze the efficacy of the ARFORGEN model in meeting both mission requirements. While forces available across the six-year ARFORGEN model will meet projected federal and state mission requirements in Arkansas, analysis shows that leaders must address the associated risks. Specifically, leaders must explore ways to mitigate risk associated with personnel shortages, equipment shortages, and large natural disasters that exceed the capability of the Arkansas Army National Guard forces. Lessons learned from this analysis can be applied across the Army National Guard in order to successfully implement the ARFORGEN model.

ARMY FORCE GENERATION: BALANCING MISSIONS IN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

The image was clear and projected the message quite well, "Victory." On 01 May 2003, President Bush, arriving aboard the USS Lincoln in a Navy Lockheed S-3 Viking, pronounced to the world that major combat operations in Iraq were over and America had scored a major victory in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). News coverage of the event would last for hours, providing a form of redemption for the administration and a springboard for the 2004 elections.[1] Below the proverbial waterline, the military was in a transitional period that signaled all was not well in efforts to maintain momentum in operations that spanned across numerous conflicts throughout the world. In 2003, the U.S. military had almost 388,000 soldiers stationed on foreign soil.[2] For the Army National Guard, the past two years represented an accelerated transition from a strategic to an operational reserve that had slowly progressed since the 1991 Gulf War. In May 2003, the Army National Guard had almost 80,000 of its 346,000 soldiers deployed in support of seven different missions across the globe.[3] By 2006, almost 75% of Army National Guard personnel had deployed in support of the GWOT.[4]

In December 2002, Thomas F. Hall, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, completed the first phase of a broad Reserve Component review. During an address to the Reserve Officers Association in January 2003, Assistant Secretary Hall revealed the underpinnings of the Department of Defense (DoD) plan to rebalance the Guard and Reserve Forces.[5] During an address to the same meeting, Secretary Rumsfeld stated that the entire Reserve Component deployment process was not, "managed skillfully in a single place."[6] Due in part to Assistant Secretary Hall's review as well as growing issues with Reserve Component mobilization, Secretary Rumsfeld issued a memorandum to senior DoD leaders order changes in the way the Reserve Component was structured and mobilized . The memo directed the services to rebalance Active Component and Reserve Component forces as well as reduce early dependence upon involuntarily mobilized Reserve Component soldiers, to examine the requirements review process, and determine the Reserve Component role in Homeland Defense.[7] Secretary Rumsfeld's memorandum is considered the origin of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) Model. Ultimately, Secretary Rumsfeld's memorandum led the Army to develop the Army Campaign Plan, which directed implementation of the ARFORGEN model before Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 in order "to create a continuous flow of trained, ready, and cohesive units prepared for operational deployment in support of combatant commander requirements and civil authorities."[8]

For the Army National Guard, ARFORGEN promised to better synchronize combatant commander requirements with unit deployments organized around a structured six-year deployment cycle. At the same time, proponents argued that the ARFORGEN model would provide adequate forces for homeland defense missions and other domestic emergencies. Since the introduction of ARFORGEN in 2003, the domestic political environment, coupled with Global War on Terrorism and several high profile natural disasters, has served to mold the process into a workable solution for balancing forces between domestic emergencies and numerous worldwide deployments. However, what does the ARFORGEN process look like when applied to real world missions and operations? Does it provide the promised balance and does it eliminate the need for multiple rotations of units over short periods? What are the risks associated with maintaining the balance between state and federal missions? In order to answer these questions, and to cope with the foreordained surprises along the ARFORGEN implementation trail, leaders must fully understand pitfalls that could thwart the process. The Arkansas Army National Guard provides a good illustration of future challenges government and military leaders may encounter as the Army National Guard implements the ARFORGEN model.

While the ARFORGEN model provides the Arkansas Army National Guard with an excellent methodology to balance federal and state mission requirements, it is not without risks. Operationally, balancing missions is passably obvious. The Arkansas Army National Guard should use Ready Expeditionary Forces (REF), those forces in the first four years of the ARFORGEN cycle, to provide support in state missions. Contingency Expeditionary Forces (CEF) and Deployment Expeditionary Forces (DEF), those forces in the last two years of the ARFORGEN cycle, should provide forces for deployment and homeland security missions. Translating ARFORGEN plans into action requires a thorough understanding of how ARFORGEN began and what challenges will occur as implementation proceeds ahead. Starting with the DoD Transformation Planning Guidance published in April 2003, this paper analyzes the origin of the ARFORGEN training model and reviews guidance provided by the Secretary of Defense, Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA), and the Army National Guard. The Arkansas Army National Guard is used to illustrate how best to implement ARFORGEN model and balance competing federal and state missions. A thorough examination of the current and future force structure of the Arkansas Army National Guard, as well as historical deployment and domestic support missions, yields answers to the viability of ARFORGEN in the Army National Guard. Likewise, analysis quickly exposes risks as Soldiers embark on the quest to meet the federal and state missions. Military leaders must address key issues now that stand to derail the ARFORGEN process in the future.

The seeds of the ARFORGEN process reside in the post-Vietnam era mix of Active Component and Reserve Component forces. The reliance upon Reserve Component forces was the brainchild of Army Chief of Staff Creighton W. Abrams. General Abrams, upset by the Johnson and Nixon administration's failure to call up Army National Guard forces during the Vietnam War, redesigned the force to ensure Reserve Component forces utilization in future wars.[9] While the Abrams system seemed to work during the 1990-91 Gulf War, major weaknesses began to show as the GWOT entered its second year during the fall of 2002. Secretary Rumsfeld's frustration with the Reserve Component mobilization system began to openly surface in late 2002 and early 2003, stating that the method in which mobilizations were carried out caused needles hardships on too many member of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve.[10] General Richard B. Myers, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recognized that 100 percent of some military capabilities existed in the Reserve component.[11]

Even before Secretary Rumsfeld's experiences with the Reserve component mobilization system, the Quadrennial Defense Review of 2001 recognized the fact that DoD would continue to rely upon Reserve Component forces. The Quadrennial Defense Review directed DoD to undertake a comprehensive review of the Active Component and Reserve Component mix, organization, priority missions, and associated resources.[12] Additionally, the Quadrennial Defense Review articulated a need to explore the role of the Reserve Component, which would lead to decisions on the Army Reserve and Army National Guard, particularly in the areas of readiness, transformation, end strength, and structure.[13] Because of the Quadrennial Defense Review and concerns of senior DoD leaders, the Assistant Secretary for Reserve Affairs, Thomas F. Hall, conducted a broad review of the Reserve Component mission and structure resulting in the document entitled, "Review of Reserve Component Contributions to National Defense" published in December 2002. The review looked at Reserve Component contributions and provided foundational recommendations for future use of the forces.[14]

Following the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review and Secretary Hall's December 2002 review, the Secretary of Defense published the Transformation Planning Guidance in April 2003. In Secretary Rumsfeld's Foreword, he described a need to change "…the way we train, the way we exercise, and the way we fight."[15] Secretary Rumsfeld directed Secretaries of Military Departments and Service Chiefs to "build transformation roadmaps to achieve transformational capabilities to enable those concepts" found in the Transformation Planning Guidance strategy.[16] Subsequently, the Army Campaign Plan, published in April 2004, established a roadmap to achieve objectives found in the Transformation Planning Guidance. While the Army Campaign Plan addressed the total Army transformation, it also established

measures to increase combat effectiveness by introducing lifecycle management techniques into the Army's operational cycle.[17] The ARFORGEN foundational concepts "reset, train, and ready," can be found in the Army Campaign Plan.[18]

The National Military Strategy, published in 2004, solidified the Army's approach to transformation as promulgated through the ARFORGEN process. The strategy, derived from the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy, describes how the armed forces of the United States would achieve the goals and objectives established by the President and Secretary of Defense. The 2004 version of the National Military Strategy, lists three priories for the future: winning the War on Terrorism, enhancing joint warfighting, and transformation. The 2004 National Military Strategy established the initial framework in which the ARFORGEN model would take root. Within the area of transformation, the strategy describes a force design and size that must be large enough to defend the homeland, deter forward from four regions, and conduct two overlapping campaigns. The National Military Strategy looks beyond current operations. According to the National Military Strategy, the health of the force rests on the ability to generate, sustain, and transform capabilities over the longer term. Sizing the force must take into consideration ongoing training and other requirements that may restrict availability of forces and capabilities provided to the combatant commanders.[19] Within the framework of transformation, the National Military Strategy, 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, the Army Campaign Plan, and DoD-directed reviews provided the path for development of the ARFORGEN implementation plan.

In February 2006, HQDA published the ARFORGEN planning directive, or Implementation Plan (I-Plan), to support the National Military Strategy, DoD's Transformation Planning Guidance, and the Army Campaign Plan. The Army I-Plan describes ARFORGEN as "the structured progression of increased unit readiness over time, resulting in recurring periods of availability of trained, ready, and cohesive units prepared for operational deployments in support of civil authorities and combatant commander requirements."[20] In essence, the Combatant Commander's plans and requirements drive the ARFORGEN process. In order to inculcate a level of predictability into troop deployments, planners match Army units against requirements as early as possible in the planning cycle. The Army I-Plan phases implementation of ARFORGEN into three distinct states: Current State, Bridging State, and Objective State. From an operational tempo standpoint, the Objective State of ARFORGEN starts once units (generally) achieve the planning goal of one deployment in three years for Active Component units and one deployment in six years for Reserve Component units.[21] Under the I-Plan, Active Component forces would ideally spend one year in a Reset/Train Force Pool, one year in a

Ready Force Pool, and one year in an Available Force Pool. Reserve Component units would follow the same basic flow, however the timeline extended to six years; four years in the Reset/Train Force Pool, one year in Ready Force Pool, and one year in the Available Force Pool.[22] This basic concept was the cornerstone of Secretary Rumsfeld's "Rebalancing Forces" memo.[23] Furthermore, the Army I-Plan organizes units into requirements driven and capabilities based force packages. Army planners then assigned each unit to one of the three force packages: Deployment Expeditionary Forces (DEF), Contingency Expeditionary Forces (CEF), and Ready Expeditionary Forces (REF).

DEF units are those units currently supporting a combatant commander's operational requirements or designated to support future operations. For Reserve Component forces, DEF units are those that have been alerted, mobilized, or are currently supporting operations. CEF units are those units remaining in the Available Force Pool and are capable of immediate deployment but are not allocated against any particular operation or are not mobilized in the case of Reserve Component units. REF units are those units that are in a training window in preparation for CEF or DEF status. Units can rotate between REF, DEF, and CEF status. For the Reserve Component units, the ARFORGEN process means elimination of tiered readiness systems in favor of a time-sequenced approach to readiness based upon ARFORGEN deployment timelines.[24]

The Army National Guard published the Final Coordinating Draft ARFORGEN I-Plan on 27 September 2006. The Army National Guard ARFORGEN I-Plan provided a roadmap for subordinate states and incorporated Brigade Combat Teams and other combat, combat support, and combat service support training models. The stated purpose of the Army National Guard I-Plan was to provide combatant commanders with trained and ready Army National Guard units. Units would be task organized into modular expeditionary forces tailored to joint mission requirements while still providing civil authorities with access to Army National Guard units. Units would be sufficiently manned, equipped, and trained to meet domestic emergencies.[25] The plan's broad end state: The Army National Guard achieves a sustained, more predictable posture to generate trained and ready modular forces tailored to joint mission requirements while preserving Army National Guard capability to defend the homeland, respond to domestic emergencies, surge to conduct major combat operations, and sustain the quality of the all-volunteer force in persistent conflict.[26] Perhaps COL John Renaud, Army National Guard chief of strategic plans and policy, describes the effect of ARFORGEN the best, "Years ago, in the strategic Reserve, you maybe mobilized once in a 20-year career." Furthermore, he

added that since the Army National Guard has transitioned to an operation reserve, "mobilization is an expectation, not an exception."[27]

While the Army National Guard ARFORGEN I-Plan shared many similarities with the Army I-Plan, it additionally requires that Army National Guard units be "…prepared to respond to domestic emergencies under command and control of their respective governors."[28] This dynamic alone sets the Army National Guard approach to ARFORGEN apart from the Active Component. The domestic support mission represents a degree of importance that many Army National Guard leaders express as the primary reason the Army National Guard existed. LTG Blum, Director for the National Guard, stated that "Homeland defense is mission one for the National Guard. Governors count on the National Guard to be the first military responder and call on the Guard assets at their disposal within hours of an event, which makes resourcing crucial."[29]

The Army National Guard is currently executing the Bridging State phase of their I-Plan. While the I-Plan acknowledges serious resources constraints, the plan boasts of an effective strategy to generate forces to meet operational requirements. The goal of the Bridging State is to reach one deployment in every six years, which will signal a transition to the final phase of the I-Plan: the Objective State. In the Bridging State, the Army National Guard will have achieved a balance between requirements and capabilities.[30] Like the Army I-Plan, the Army National Guard I-Plan divides units into force pools: Reset/Train, Ready, and Available. Ideally, units will spend 48 months in the Reset/Train Force Pool, 12 months in the Ready Force Pool, and 12 months in the Available Force Pool. However, the actual time in each pool can and will vary, especially during the Bridging Phase. During the 48-month cycle, units will progress through readiness tiers, with specific goals to achieve in training, personnel, supply, and equipment readiness. The Reset/Train Force Pool will contain units redeploying from major operational missions, units activating or undergoing major reorganization, and units moving from the Available Force Pool who did not deploy. The Ready Force Pool will contain units that meet requirements to be eligible for sourcing against operational requirements. Finally, the Available Force Pool contains those Army National Guard units sourced or that can be sourced against operational requirements.

Key to movement through the force pool is the Army National Guard Availability Matrix. The Army National Guard Availability Matrix is a database of Army National Guard units and aligns each unit against a Reset/Train, Ready, or Available Force Pool. Additionally, the Army National Guard I-Plan establishes key readiness goals as units progress through the Availability Matrix, although resource constraints can be expected through the Bridging Phase. The Army

National Guard adjusts the Availability Matrix through a series of meetings, workshops, and conferences together with the Army's synchronization efforts. Although a system to change the Availability Matrix exists, the complexity of the system makes changes extremely difficult to support and places a strain on the entire system when a unit fails to meet readiness goals. The Arkansas Army National Guard presents an excellent example of just how critical the Availability Matrix is in synchronizing deployments with homeland security and domestic support missions.

The Arkansas Army National Guard essentially began their ARFORGEN transition in 2005 with the return of the 39th Brigade Combat Team from Iraq. While much of the planning within Arkansas rests on a completed plan from the Army National Guard, the Arkansas Army National Guard has concurrently participated in the overall design of the Army National Guard I-Plan and its associated Availability Matrix. In training year 2008 (TY-08) Arkansas Army National Guard Yearly Training Guidance, the Adjutant General established the ARFORGEN model as the source for developing training strategies and readiness goals.[31] Major General Ron Chastain, commander of the 39th BCT in Iraq and Arkansas' Adjutant General until February 2007, stated that his main objective for the future of the Arkansas Army National Guard is to increase readiness levels and ensure soldiers remain prepared for deployments when called.[32] The ARFORGEN process presents the Arkansas Army National Guard with a valuable tool to manage readiness and the deployment process. The most current Availability Matrix lists 31 separate Arkansas Army National Guard units and provides an overview of force pools through 2015.[33] The Arkansas Army National Guard has a wide array of units and has had an extensive mix of deployments, homeland security missions, and domestic support missions over the past five years.

The Arkansas Army National Guard is authorized 8033 soldiers assigned to one of four major commands and a Joint Force Headquarters. The mix of forces in Arkansas represents an representative example of units most commonly found in the various states and territories of the Army National Guard. The Arkansas Army National Guard contains an Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Fires Brigade, Aviation Brigade, and a Corp-level Troop Command. The Troop Command contains a mixture of engineer, medical, transportation, military police, public affairs, and maintenance units as well as a band and Rear Area Operations Center. According the Arkansas Army National Guard Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, the force structure will increase to approximately 8250 by FY 2013.[34] However, nearly 1000 of the total are part of normally non-deploying units like Joint Force Headquarters command elements or garrison units and will not appear on a sourcing Availability Matrix but could be used as individual fillers. To increase the complexity of the deployment process, several Arkansas Army National Guard

units are part of commands headquartered outside of Arkansas and will move through the ARFORGEN Availability Matrix with their parent units. Additionally, several units are currently undergoing transformation, which adds additional stress to the ARFORGEN process.

When matching the availability matrix against historical domestic support missions we find that mobilizations peaked in FY-03 at 4300 and have dwindled down to 1600 as of September 2006. Domestic support missions rarely peaked above 100 during the past five years, however Hurricane Katrina created a significant anomaly when domestic support missions peaked at 960 during the period between September 2005 and February 2006. It appears that the "Katrina Effect" has caused a new baseline in National Guard domestic support use, at least in Arkansas. In FY-06, the total usage increased to 332, more than double pre-Katrina figures. This figure, coupled with state cooperative agreements, will ensure that post-Katrina use of Army National Guard Soldiers in domestic emergency support missions will continue to remain comparatively high in the coming years. Additionally, the State provided almost 200 soldiers in support of the Southwest Border mission in New Mexico and Texas in 2006 and 2007.[35]

The Global War on Terrorism combined with ongoing domestic support missions and increased use of the Arkansas Army National Guard in natural disasters demands a methodology for allocating forces and prioritizing missions. Although the ARFORGEN model provides a strategy and structure for the future, does it provide a framework to satisfy the competing demands of the Arkansas Army National Guard? A close examination of future requirements, available forces in the ARFORGEN cycle, and Arkansas Army National Guard planning proves that the ARFORGEN model will work. In 2007, the Arkansas Army National Guard will mobilize an additional 300 personnel in support of OIF 07-09; this is coupled with the more than 700 Soldiers that deployed in 2006. Also during 2007, the State will continue to support the Southwest Border mission with approximately 200 soldiers. In December 2006, the State entered into an Emergency Management Assistant Compact (EMAC) with the State of Louisiana. The EMAC provides mutual assistance between the states entering into the compact. An EMAC covers a wide variety of emergency or disaster assistance to include natural disasters, technological hazards, man-made disasters, civil emergency resource shortages, community disorders, insurgency threats, or enemy attack.[36] The Louisiana EMAC provides one multi-functional battalion consisting of 444 personnel and equipment within 48 hours of a projected hurricane landfall.[37] Along with the Louisiana EMAC, the Arkansas Army National Guard can expect to activate as many as 300 soldiers to support future State Active Duty (SAD) missions, given recent trends in internal disaster response missions. In order to

balance these competing demands, leaders must integrate domestic support mission forecasts into the ARFORGEN model or face shortfalls in future domestic emergencies.

While many facets of ARFORGEN are in place in the Arkansas Army National Guard, leaders are developing final plans concurrently with the Army and Army National Guard. Arkansas Army National Guard officials state that they remain involved with transformation working groups as they have for the past 18 months.[38] While the Arkansas Army National Guard plan is in its formulation stage, elements of the National Guard plans can be found in the several documents currently driving the Arkansas Army National Guard ARFORGEN process. The 39th's BCT "Equip to Train Model" lists the types and amounts of major equipment/weapon systems required to support the training needs of the unit as it passes through various phases of ARFORGEN.[39] Additionally, the Adjutant General's Yearly Training Guidance lists several ARFORGEN related goals for TY-08 including readiness goals to be achieved by 30 September 2008. Interestingly, the Adjutant General's readiness goals align with the Army National Guard ARFORGEN I-Plan readiness goals.[40] There are several instances where Arkansas Army National Guard goals exceed National Guard ARFORGEN I-Plan goals primarily because the units are entering the Reset/Train Force Pool at much higher readiness rates than most units.[41] One excellent example is the 142nd Fire Brigade. Most units have recently completed deployment, are currently deployed, or will return from deployment by TY-08. Readiness goals for these units are slightly higher than Availability Matrix expectations; however, equipment shortages have hampered the ARFORGEN process.[42]

The Army National Guard Availability Matrix lists units by force pool from 2006 to 2015. For the Arkansas Army National Guard, Ready and Available Force Pools reach the lowest number at the start of the matrix in FY06 and reach the same number again in FY11, each year representing less than 10% of the total force in the Ready or Available Force Pools. Conversely, the Availability Matrix indicates that in 2009 and 2010, more than 55% of the forces will be either in a Ready or Available Force Pool. The cycle repeats itself every sixth year.[43]

In the wake of the attacks of 11 September 2001 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, federal and state government officials are relying heavily upon Army National Guard. Shortly after the attacks of 11 September 2001, more than 3000 Army National Guard soldiers were on-duty providing critical infrastructure security.[44] Other domestic support missions since 11 September 2001 included airport security, Hurricane Katrina, National Special Security Events such as the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, G-8 Summit in Savannah Georgia, 2004 Democratic

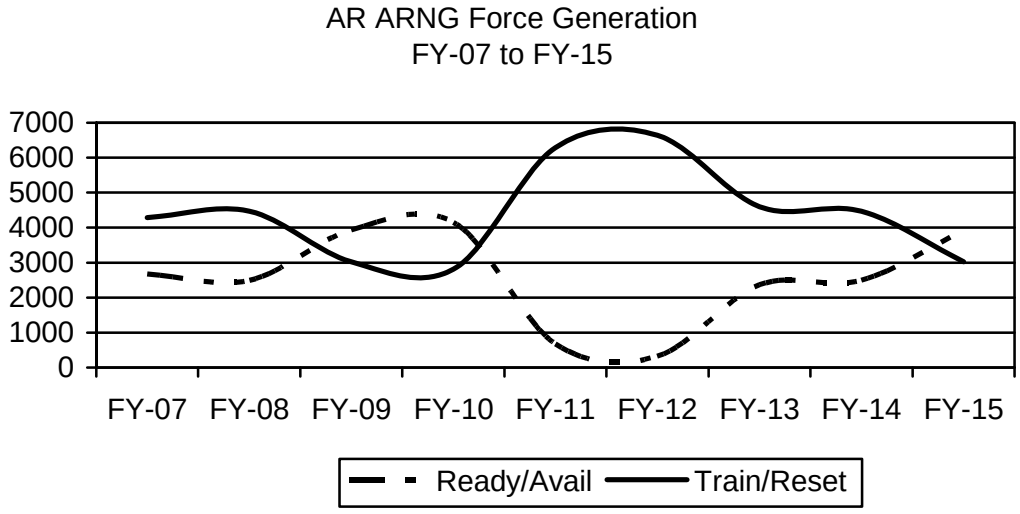

Figure 1.

and Republican Conventions, and several border security missions.[45] In FY-03, use of Reserve Component forces peaked at 62.8 million duty days, almost five times higher than any previous year in the past decade.[46] Military leaders state that the Global War on Terrorism is a war of long duration; consequently, Army National Guard units can expect to be used at rates well above pre-9/11 and pre-Katrina figures.[47] The story is no different for the Arkansas Army National Guard. Average yearly domestic support missions, including federal homeland security missions and state disaster assistance, have increased over previous years. For example, in 1998 and 1999, the Arkansas Army National Guard rarely exceeded 50 Soldiers responding to domestic support missions. Conversely, Hurricane Katrina and the border security mission required deployment of soldiers numbering from 200 to 1800.[48] Couple the internal disaster assistance missions with external state cooperative agreements and homeland security missions, the Arkansas Army National Guard could expect to deploy as many as 800 soldiers simultaneously responding to domestic support and homeland security missions.

Taking into consideration the ARFORGEN model and related planning documents, how should the Arkansas Army National Guard balance mobilizations with competing federal and state missions? The Arkansas Army National Guard should designate forces in the Reset/Train Force Pool as primary domestic support forces, the Arkansas Army National Guard will have adequate forces in which to address any homeland security and domestic support requirement similar to those experienced in recent history or reasonably projected to occur in the near future. Units in the Ready Force Pool, or designated as CEF, could be used in emergency cases. Available Force Pool units, or DEF units, could not be used for domestic requirements if under

T10 authority unless authorized by the owning combatant commander. By Integrating homeland security and domestic support requirements into the ARFORGEN model, the Arkansas Army National Guard can reach the necessary balance and accomplish both missions. However, there are risks associated in maintaining the balance. When allocating forces towards projected mission requirements, the Arkansas Army National Guard leaders must understand and address these risks. Specifically, the Arkansas Army National Guard must work with government leaders in Arkansas to develop contingency plans where the combined size of an extended domestic emergency and a federal mission exceeds force capabilities. Additionally, the Arkansas Army National Guard must work with military and government leaders to reduce the equipment shortfall and its resultant impact upon training readiness. Finally, the Arkansas Army National Guard must make a thorough assessment of personnel readiness requirements and take steps to reduce the risk of personnel shortages upon mission readiness.

According to Arkansas Army National Guard officials, Arkansas has adequately responded to all intrastate domestic emergencies in recent history. In fact, internal requirements for Arkansas Army National Guard forces have rarely peaked above 100 soldiers over the last 10 years.[49] Additionally, the Federal Emergency Management lists only 41 major disaster declarations in Arkansas over the past 50 years.[50] Therefore, the likelihood of a domestic emergency exceeding the capacity of the Arkansas Army National Guard as portrayed in the ARFORGEN Availability Matrix is not likely. However, natural disasters or civil emergencies could exceed the response capability of the Arkansas Army National Guard. In 1811-12, the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ), which stretches from Southern Illinois to Northeast Arkansas, was the origin of a series of earthquakes that registered an estimated magnitude of 8.0 on the Richter scale. The New Madrid earthquake remains one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded in the contiguous United States.[51] More recently, the NMSZ recorded a magnitude 4.0 earthquake in April 2003 near in the Northeastern part of the State.[52] The more recent series of events highlights the fact that the Arkansas Army National Guard must develop contingency plans for natural disasters and civil emergencies that could exceed capabilities. The Arkansas Army National Guard should collaborate with the government leaders in Arkansas to develop cooperative agreements with border states as a contingency when Reset/Train or Ready forces cannot meet the internal emergency needs. Of critical concern for Arkansas are the years 2009 and particularly 2010. In 2010, more than 4150 soldiers will be in the Available Force Pool, leaving 2813 soldiers remaining. While this number

provides adequate coverage for most domestic emergencies, it could fall short during major disasters such as a NMSZ earthquake.

Equipment shortages appear to be the biggest near term impediment to implementing the ARFORGEN model in the Army National Guard. National Guard leaders report that they have less than 35 percent of equipment required to perform wartime missions.[53] As recently as 26 January 2007, the Army National Guard reports indicate that the Arkansas Army National Guard had only 53.3% of critical equipment lines against current requirements.[54] The issue of equipping the Army National Guard has been the subject of numerous Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports, most recently on September 21, 2006. The most recent report stated that Army lacked sufficient funding plans and details need to implement the ARFORGEN model.[55] In October 2006, Army Secretary Francis Harvey stated that the Army would invest $39 billion on National Guard equipment from 2005 through 2013 to help meet transformation goals.[56] Army National Guard leaders must continue to pursue transformation funding through government and military leaders in order to meet ARFORGEN expectations and timelines. Until needed equipment arrives, the Army National Guard must rely upon the current equipment cross-leveling program, equipment pools, and equipment loans to meet ARFORGEN training gates and deployment readiness requirements.

Along with equipment concerns, personnel readiness is a multi-faceted aspect of the ARFORGEN process that requires detailed thought, planning, and resource allocation in order to meet timelines and expectations. Critical to personnel readiness is strength, Duty Military Occupational Specialty Qualification (DMOSQ), and medical readiness. While the Army National Guard remains slightly below the 350,000 assigned strength goal, the Arkansas Army National Guard is fortunate to have 100.7% of assigned strength, or 8219 Soldiers, and ranks seventh nationally in assigned strength among other Army National Guard states and territories.[57] Even though assigned strength exceeds authorized strength, the Arkansas Army National Guard is still loses approximately 18% of personnel each year due to normal attrition.[58] Moreover, weakness in company grade officer strength threatens to disrupt efforts to meet ARFORGEN collective training goals as platoon and company level units progress through training cycles. Analysis also reveals a weakness in DMOSQ primarily because of unit transformations that have been ongoing since 2005 and an influx of new soldiers because of successful recruiting operations over the past year. As of December 2006, the Arkansas Army National Guard stood at 78.6% DMOSQ, according to Army National Guard figures.[59] Analysis also reveals that DMOSQ rates are weak across the Army National Guard, peaking out at 87% in Puerto Rico and South Dakota but averaging only 76% across the Army National Guard.[60]

The Arkansas Army National Guard has benefited greatly from the Army National Guard's Guard Recruiter Assistance Program (GRAP), which offers monetary incentives for Soldiers to assist in the recruiting effort. The GRAP program has helped propel the assigned strength beyond authorized strength and it appears the trend will continue throughout 2007. The Army National Guard must continue to fund programs like GRAP in order to fill units beyond authorized strength. The Army National Guard should extend GRAP-like programs in order to boost company-grade officer strength. Additionally, the Army National Guard must continue to focus bonus programs towards critical units and occupations. The Army National Guard should authorize payment of these bonuses up to 125% of authorized strength in order to compensate for attrition losses and non-qualified Soldiers. The Army National Guard can improve low DMOSQ rates through several direct and indirect approaches. First, prioritize training funds into units that have entered the Available and Ready Force Pools. Second, use volunteers from units entering the Reset/Train Force Pool to fill critical shortages in deploying units. Finally, design programs and allocate funding to retain qualified soldiers in order to reduce the need to train new soldiers. Programs should focus not only on retaining the soldier but also on retaining the family member and civilian employers. In the area of medical readiness, the Army National Guard should leverage internal and external medical resources to make medical examinations and medical care readily available for soldiers entering the Ready or Available Force Pool. Strength, DMOSQ, and medical readiness are critical to meeting the personnel readiness requirements of the ARFORGEN model and the Army National Guard must continue to improve in these critical areas

The ARFORGEN methodology has the support of the leadership at the Department of Army, Army National Guard, and state level. LTG Vaughn stated in an Army News Service article that he was "100% behind the ARFORGEN."[61] LTG Jack Stultz, chief of the U.S. Army Reserve, stated in a 28 June 2006 memo to the force that, "ARFORGEN is the future of the Army Reserve and the active Army."[62] While the roots of ARFORGEN originated in the post-9/11 mobilization issues, the process is central to rebalancing Active Component and Reserve Component forces that are required to meet the National Military Strategy of 2004 and more recently the National Defense Strategy of 2006. The ARFORGEN plan will provide the Army National Guard with an excellent methodology to balance deployment timelines with homeland security and domestic support missions.

For the Army National Guard, forces arrayed across three force pools present prioritization issues that could conflict with state domestic emergencies. While the ARFORGEN model builds enough flexibility to allow the state to respond to most domestic emergencies,

Army National Guard leaders must recognize the weakness inherent throughout the force generation process and develop mitigating strategies to ensure they meet the expectations of civilian and military leaders. The Army National Guard should use soldiers in the Reset/Retrain Force Pool to provide support in domestic emergencies while soldiers in the Ready and Available Force Pools provide forces for federal mission requirements including deployments and homeland security missions. Army National Guard leaders at the local and state level must constantly strive to improve personnel readiness, especially in the areas of strength, DMOSQ, and medical readiness in order to ensure forces will be available for deployment in either a state disaster or deployment. Additionally, governmental leaders should enter into EMACs or State Cooperative Agreements (SCA) with Border States as a hedge against large domestic emergencies likely to hit Arkansas or border states.

The transition of the Army National Guard from a strategic to operational reserve that started during Operation Desert Storm has had far-reaching effects upon how the Army National Guard is resourced, trained, and deployed. Long gone are soldiers who spend 30 years in the Army National Guard never to see a deployment. Soldiers in the future can expect 3-5 deployments across the same career span. With this move from a strategic to an operational reserve, Army National Guard leaders, as well as civilian officials must realize that the Army National Guard may not always be available in the numbers that may be required for domestic emergencies. Understanding the ARFORGEN process, as well as past and future Army National Guard mission requirements, is critical to the safety and security of the United States. Army National Guard and governmental leaders should thoroughly examine the risk associated with future deployments by understanding where their Army National Guard units fall in the ARFORGEN Availability Matrix and then balance shortfalls, if they exist, with EMAC or SCAs. Likewise, Army National Guard leaders must continue to develop innovative plans that ensure Soldiers and units are ready to deploy when called.

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