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MANPOWER CATEGORIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

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Bob Bradford¹

When making force structure decisions, military organizations must make basic choices on how to man their organizations. Required decisions are based on a number of considerations. First should the tasks be completed by the government, or contracted out to industry? Next, if the task is to be done by the government, should it be done by the uniformed military, or by government civilians? Finally, if it is a military task, should the force structure be in the active component, or in one of the reserve components – the National Guard or the reserve. This paper provides a basic primer in the factors that impact manpower-mix decisions. It summarizes departmental guidance that informs these decisions, provides some detail on the categories and considerations for their use, and briefly describes how the department acquires, develops, employs and retains talent for each manpower type.

Force planning decisions are central to the Department of Defense's (DoD's) ability to provide appropriate capabilities that can be employed to meet military objectives. These decisions are important in providing the proper type of force to do each job the military is tasked to accomplish. One of the first considerations in building a force is how it will be manned.

Manpower is a key building block of the capabilities DoD provides. As part of an integrated system, manpower helps organizations meet operational requirements across the joint functions.¹ DoD sources manpower in a various ways. One way is through negotiated contracts with private organizations. Alternatively government employees can be hired to fill manpower needs. These government employees can either be civilians or military service members. Military service members are either full time in the active

force, or part-time as a reservist. Within the select reserve, manpower can come from the National Guard or from federal reserve forces. Federal reserve forces always work for the Department, while National Guard soldiers or airmen, work for the state governor, until federalized.

Figure 1 breaks out the almost three million DoD employees by category and Service as reported in the FY20 Defense Manpower Requirements Report. Numbers of contractors are more difficult to calculate as DoD does not contract for people, but for tasks. A recent Government Accountability Office study estimates that approximately 561,000 contractor full-time equivalent personnel supported the DoD in 2016.² Over three and a half million people provide the DoD's total manpower across all three categories.

DoD Policy provides guiding principles for manpower management that help focus sourcing

¹ Corresponding author. U.S. Army War College, ATTN: DCLM, 122 Forbes Avenue, Carlisle, PA 17013. Robert.bradford@armywarcollege.edu (this version dated 1 November 2018).

¹ Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense of Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Total Force and Manpower Directorate, "Defense Manpower Requirements Report:

Fiscal Year 2020," 116th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, DC, April 2019), v.

² Government Accountability Office, "Civilian and Contractor Workforces: DOD's Cost Comparisons Addressed Most Report Elements but Excluded Some Costs" 115th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington DC, April 2018), 1.

decisions. These principles require DoD to accomplish its military objectives with the least manpower and the maximum effectiveness. These two objectives, minimize number of people while maximizing organizational performance, are often in tension and make some manning decisions difficult. Other principles outlined in policy require flexible management to allow flexible responses to both crisis and changes in management strategies. DOD guidance also requires long-range manning strategies and workforce forecasts to inform changes to policy, doctrine, force structure and training, and direct all manpower actions to follow Presidential and departmental guide lines for managing the workforce.³

Department guidance also provides six policies that serve as a basis for how the force is manned. First, forces should be manned to maintain low to moderate risk of mission failure or loss of government control. "Risk mitigation takes precedence over cost savings when necessary to maintain appropriate control of government operations and missions." Organizations may overman or source requirements using a more costly method when it is required to maintain low to moderate risk. This factor indicates that risk assessments should inform all manning decisions.⁴

The second guideline directs the department to size the peacetime workforce to meet crisis demands that mobilized forces will not meet in time.⁵ This may mean some organizations or forces may be larger than peacetime requirements warrant in order to meet wartime requirements. Thus, some capabilities not needed in peacetime must still be manned with full time personnel.

The third guideline states, "Functions that are **inherently governmental** cannot be legally contracted."⁶ The term inherently governmental

is based in law, policy, and regulation and incorporates those functions that must be done by government employees, either military or civilian. These include command of military forces, the determination of Federal program priorities for budget requests, and the direction and control of federal employees.⁷ Control of military forces, allocation of government resources, and oversight of government employees cannot be performed by contractors. The federal acquisition regulation and DoD Instruction 1100.22 contain additional guidelines that form the basis for determining whether a task is inherently governmental.⁸

The fourth guideline states that activities that are not inherently governmental are called **commercial activities**. Law, policy and agreements require some commercial activities to be conducted by military or government civilians in order to "mitigate operational risk, and to provide sufficient personnel for wartime assignments, overseas or sea-to-shore rotation, career development, continuity of operations, and esprit de corps."⁹ Even when tasks are not inherently governmental, other factors require some to be conducted by the government.

The fifth guideline stipulates that functions that are not inherently governmental or exempt from private sector performance should be performed by DoD civilians, unless either a cost comparison shows it is less expensive to contract these tasks, or law, regulation, or procedure make the use of civilian personnel inappropriate.¹⁰ These procedural barriers include the case where "DoD civilians cannot be hired, hired in time, or retained to perform the work."¹¹ Government civilians are the default, unless either they cannot meet the requirement or a contractor can do it cheaper.

The final DoD guideline on workforce sourcing helps determine when the military

³ Department of Defense, "Directive 1100.4, *Guidance for Manpower Management*," 109th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington DC, February 12, 2005), 2.

⁴ Department of Defense "Instruction (DoDI) 1100.22, *Policy and Procedures for Determining Workforce Mix*), 111th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington DC, April 12, 2010 with change 1 December 1, 2017), paragraph 4.a.

⁵ DoDI 1100.22, Paragraph 4.b.

⁶ DoDI 1100.22, Paragraph 4.c. (emphasis added)

⁷ "Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), subpart 7.5," FAR Parts, Acquisition.gov, effective 11-12-2019,

<https://www.acquisition.gov/content/part-7-acquisition-planning#i1118491>.

⁸ FAR subpart 7.5 and DoDI 1100.22, Enclosure 4.

⁹ DoDI 1100.22, Paragraph 4.d.

¹⁰ The process for determining whether these commercial activities should be done by the government or contractors is described in OMB Circular A-76 and privatization studies are often called A-76 studies. Office of Management and Budget, "Circular No. A-76, Performance of Commercial Activities" 108th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington DC, May 29, 2003).

¹¹ DoDI 1100.22, Paragraph 4.e.

should be used to do the task instead of civilians. Military are used when jobs require military unique knowledge or skills; law, policy, treaty or agreement require military to perform the tasks; command and control, risk mitigation or esprit de corps direct military use; positions are needed to provide for military rotation, career development or wartime positions; or unusual working conditions or costs make civilians inappropriate.¹² Things like combat, command, or treaty liaison must be done by uniformed service members and cannot be done by civilians.

Military forces can be on active duty in the regular force or can be in the select reserve, made up of the reserve and the National Guard. Regular forces are the most responsive to crisis. They serve full-time, and are usually resourced at a higher level of readiness than reserve forces. Because they are full-time, they cost more when not deployed.

Title 10 U.S. Code states, “The purpose of each reserve component is to provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the armed forces, in time of war or national emergency, and at such other times as the national security may require, to fill the needs of the armed forces whenever more units and persons are needed than are in the regular components.”¹³ Basically reserve forces are a safety valve that can be mobilized when requirements for forces outstrip inventory in the active force. When not mobilized, reserve forces cost less than equivalent active forces as they only work part time. Because they are part time, they do not have as much time to maintain readiness, and normally, in addition to their pre-mobilization training, must conduct some post-mobilization training to build readiness prior to employment.

National Guard forces normally work for their state or territory governor, but they can be federalized to support national requirements. (Because of the unique status of the District of Columbia, the DC National Guard is always in

federal status).¹⁴ Because they work for their governor, they are very responsive to emergencies and natural disasters in their state. When federalized, National Guard units are controlled by the President and the national chain of command. When they are eventually demobilized and return to state control, and so they remain connected to their state chain of command.

Reserve component units are community-based and live and work in local towns and cities. They are based in armories and reserve centers in every state and in most areas of the country. Each unit also includes some full time support personnel to help them with training, maintenance, and administration. Reserve component units are tightly connected to the local populace and so command some attention from local politicians. Political considerations are important when considering sourcing organizational requirements with the reserve component, particularly the 54 state and territory National Guard elements.

With clear DoD guidelines, it may appear simple to make manpower decisions: describe the tasks, follow the checklist, and build the force. However, in practice determining the manpower mix is not that simple, as many requirements are subject to interpretation. The DoD has guidelines that help interpret governing criteria like “low to moderate risk” or “at less cost”. At the root, each of these assessments are assumptions that still rely on professional judgment. This leaves some room for interpretation and disagreement on appropriate manpower solutions.

The DoD frequently looks to cut or restructure its manpower for cost savings or to improve effectiveness. Efforts include reducing non-combat military structure by converting it to civilian or contract force, reducing the number of government civilians supporting organizations by some percentage or reducing the number of service contracts supporting the department.¹⁵ These initiatives are mainly driven by the

¹² DoDI 1100.22 Paragraph 4.f.

¹³ Title 10 United States Code, § 10102.

¹⁴ Congressional Research Service, “Defense Primer: Reserve Forces,” Lawrence Kapp, 115th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington DC, December 12, 2018), 1.

¹⁵ See, David F. Eisler, *A Brief History of Military-to-Civilian conversions in the Department of Defense, 1965-2015* (Alexandria, VA:

Institute for Defense Analysis, March 2017). See also Frederico Bartels, *Renewing OMB Circular A-76 Competitions: Savings and Greater Effectiveness* (Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, August 2, 2018), <https://www.heritage.org/defense/report/renewing-omb-circular-76-competitions-savings-and-greater-effectiveness>.

excessive cost of manpower within the defense budget; and a desire to reallocate savings in personnel costs to other priorities like modernization or readiness. While these are important funding requirements, reductions in *required* manpower can result in even greater reductions in organizational performance. Particularly damaging are cross- organization reduction mandates of a given percentage that fail to prioritize or even consider the different negative consequences of these cuts on the various organizations. While this “equal tax” or salami-slice method may be ineffective, it is frequently used. Higher headquarters delegate the analysis and risk acceptance to lower levels, and often do not fully understand the impact of seemingly arbitrary manpower reductions.

Some of the factors that impact manpower choices include how personnel are acquired, developed, employed, and retained. Figure 2 contains some factors for each of the manpower categories and each of the lifecycle stages that might inform some of the workforce mix choices.

Finally, an illustrative example may help explain how these manpower considerations work in the real world. For instance, how has Carlisle Barracks manned its entry control gates?¹⁶

The post entry sites have been manned by almost all of the previously listed manning types. Prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Carlisle Barracks was an open post, with Regular Army military police conducting law enforcement tasks. No one regularly conducted entry control at the gate. Generally, law enforcement on U.S. bases is not a specific military task, but having uniformed military police positions on bases like Carlisle, allowed Soldiers to stay ready for their wartime law and order mission and provided more US based positions to support overseas rotation and career development. Immediately after 9-11, the post was closed and Soldiers and the MP force were used to man the entry control point, until DA security guards could be hired starting in 2002 to man the gates.

In 2003, Congress passed a law authorizing DoD to use contractors to augment soldiers and civilian guards performing post access control. (Without this law, post security was an inherently governmental function). The Department of the Army also mobilized reserve units to augment security at the gates, and to serve as a local reaction force while the civilian guard force was established. Carlisle Barracks security was done by an amalgamation of contractors and mobilized reservists from either the Army Reserve or the Army National Guard as the civilian force was hired and established.

In 2006, Congress rescinded its legal exception that allowed contractors to secure the gates. Around the same time, the Army eliminated the uniformed military police positions at its small and medium installations, including Carlisle Barracks. These military positions were reallocated to higher priority requirements in units that could deploy to support ongoing missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Installation uniformed Provost Marshals were replaced with civilian Directors of Emergency Services. From 2006-2010, Carlisle Barracks tried to get civilian guard positions added to their authorization document. For much of this time, civilian guards were deliberate overhires in excess of actual civilian authorizations while the authorization document moved through the approval process.

The Army has had some challenges hiring and retaining civilian guards at some posts because of the positions’ low pay grade. This year, the Army approved grade increases that should help organizations keep the positions filled.

As this case demonstrates, these sourcing decisions are frequently relooked in order to adapt to a changing environment. Defense manpower for different tasks can be, and often is, sourced in many ways, and an understanding of these principles is important for military leaders.

DoD’s first guiding principle, accomplish objectives while minimizing cost and maximizing effectiveness, is frequently in tension. More effectiveness often requires more

¹⁶ Illustrative example based on Bob Suskie, Carlisle Barracks Director of Emergency Services, email to author, December 4, 2019.

people. Fewer people are usually less effective. But this tension can be healthy if it is acknowledged and used to guide conscious choices. Understanding the considerations in this paper should prepare war college students to be effective participants in manpower and sourcing decisions in their future roles.

BOB BRADFORD is an Associate Professor in the Department of Command, Leadership, and Management whose research interests include the defense enterprise and its processes that support fielding an effective military. He has served at the U.S. Army War College since 2016.

	Active		Select Reserve		Total Military	Total
	Civilian	Military	National Guard	Reserve		
Army	197	487.5	343.5	199.5	1030.5	1227.5
Navy	192.7	338.8		59	397.8	590.5
USMC	21.3	186.1		38.5	224.6	245.9
USAF	176.5	329.1	107.1	70.1	506.3	682.8
Defense Wide	181.7	<i>Included in Service totals</i>			0	181.7
Total	769.2	1341.5	450.6	367.1	2159.2	2928.4

Numbers are in thousands
 Source for data: Defense Manpower Requirements Report, FY20

Figure 1. Department of Defense Manpower Totals, FY22 Estimates¹⁸

¹⁸ Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense of Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Total Force and Manpower Directorate, "Defense Manpower Requirements Report: Fiscal Year 2020," 116th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, DC, April 2019), 2.

	Contractor	Government Civilian	Active Component	Reserve	National Guard
Acquire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor manpower supports service contracts acquired through defense acquisition process. Positions are added as either a new contractor or a new task order on an existing contract vehicle. Service contracts specify tasks to be completed. Private company responsible for hiring and firing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local units hire their employees with help of civilian personnel centers. USAJOBS website contains job announcements and is central to application process. People can enter the system at any level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National recruiting processes for officers and enlisted personnel managed by the Services. Individual recruiters are based at recruiting centers across the country. People generally come in at the bottom and work their way up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National recruiting processes for officers and enlisted personnel managed by the Services. Individual recruiters are based at recruiting centers across the country. Some are recruited from those leaving the active component. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and units are responsible for recruiting to fill their units. Some officers are acquired through Service recruiting like ROTC. Some are recruited from those leaving the active component.
Develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company is responsible to provide people with the required skills to do their job. Government does not generally pay for required training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants must possess required skills before hiring Civilian professional development is available at certain stages in career. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soldiers attend Initial Entry Training before assigned to a unit. Services provide professional development at key points in career development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soldiers are assigned to unit before Initial Entry Training. Services provide professional development at key points in career development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soldiers are assigned to unit before Initial Entry Training. Services provide professional development at key points in career development.
Employ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of work describes tasks contractors perform. Changes to tasks must go back through contracting office. Contractors will do most tasks for the right price. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People can remain in positions and locations for many years. In order to move jobs, people must apply for another position. Position descriptions describe the scope of civilian jobs. Civilian employees only required to deploy if it is in the scope of position description. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centrally managed personnel system assigns people to organizations. Soldiers are moved to their organizations. "Up or out" Soldiers can be assigned tasks outside of their normal duties. Generally faster to deploy on operational assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locally managed personnel system. People apply for jobs. Can be selected for promotion, but not promoted until in job at the higher rank. Soldiers can be assigned tasks outside of their normal duties. Must be mobilized to deploy on operational assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State managed personnel system. People work within their state. Can be selected for promotion, but not promoted until in job at the higher rank. Soldiers can be assigned tasks outside of their normal duties. Must be mobilized to deploy on operational assignments.
Retain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts are generally time limited, and rebid on a standard schedule. Some contracts can be built for a base period, with options to extend at described cost. Generally cannot require contractor provide specific person, only specific tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People can remain in their jobs as long as they meet standards. No formal retention process, although occasional retirement incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined career paths with gates and retention control points. Reenlistment bonuses targeted to help retention. If you aren't moving up, you must get out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need to move to a different unit to get promoted. Reenlistment bonuses targeted to help retention. Many reservists end up with multiple specialties in order to keep serving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need to move units to get promoted. In-state career paths may be limited. Reenlistment bonuses targeted to help retention. Many reservists end up with multiple specialties in order to keep serving.

Figure 2. Categories of Manpower and Considerations (by author)

