

RECORD VERSION

**STATEMENT
BY**

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The United States Army Reserve
Ready Now! Shaping Tomorrow . . .

Chairman Tester, Ranking Member Collins, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for your continued support to our Soldiers, Civilians, and Families. We thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss America's Army Reserve.

In an increasingly complex global environment, America's Army Reserve remains indispensable, delivering strategic capabilities that enable the Army and Joint Force to defend the homeland and fight and win our Nation's Wars. As the Army focuses on ensuring our adversaries cannot outrange or outpace us on traditional battlefields, space, and cyberspace, a ready and engaged Army Reserve is equally vital in protecting American interests – at home and abroad.

Since its establishment in 1908, the Army Reserve has mobilized more than 1.3 million Citizen Soldiers, bringing flexibility, adaptability, lethality, and cutting-edge capabilities to every training exercise and conflict. The Army Reserve blends high-quality military capabilities with diverse civilian skills, education, training, and experiences, providing a unique strength to the Total Force.

Today's Army Reserve comprises over 175,424 Soldiers and 12,200 Civilians – with units in all 50 states, five U.S. territories, in Germany, Korea and Japan. Fiscally efficient, the Army Reserve supports the needs of the Total Force, with just 16% of the component serving as full-time support.

Making up nearly 20% of the Total Army's personnel, the Army Reserve provides critical units, skillsets, and capabilities – nearly half of its maneuver support and a quarter of its force mobilization capacity – at a cost of just 6% of the total Army budget.

As the Army continuously transforms, integrating new technology to increase mobility and lethality, the Army Reserve provides an essential link to private sector expertise. This strategic position enhances the Army's asymmetric advantage against potential adversaries, a capability critical in Large-Scale Combat Operations and safeguarding the homeland. Simply put, the Joint Force cannot deploy, fight, and win without the Army Reserve.

WARFIGHTING

As a truly operational Reserve, on any given day upwards of 9,000 Army Reserve Soldiers are mobilized or deployed worldwide to support the Army and Combatant Commands. Tens of thousands more participate annually in joint exercises and overseas deployment training that expand the capability base, strengthen alliances and partnerships, and promote interoperability. The Army Reserve supports the First Army by mobilizing and deploying more than 12,000 Soldiers and Civilians annually from all components at multiple mobilization force generation installations.

With only 39 available training days per year, Army Reserve leaders make **every** battle assembly count. To assist the Army in deterring adversaries and maintaining stability, the Army Reserve integrates tough, realistic training – done safely – in multi-component and joint training exercises – alongside allies and partners across the globe and in every theater of operation. The Army Reserve also stands ready to respond to year-round domestic disasters and national emergencies, tapping into our Force's unique civic expertise and dual-use equipment capability.

Combatant Commands rely on the Army Reserve's ability to mobilize and deploy to meet operational plan requirements rapidly. The Army Reserve provides more than 56% of the Army's quartermaster, medical, and transportation capabilities. Support to the Joint and allied forces will be critical in a contested logistics environment where operations, facilities, and activities are targeted in the homeland, in transit, and in the theater. With eight of the Army's 14 Expeditionary Sustainment Commands and 95% of the Total Army's bulk fuel line-haul capacity, the Army Reserve is essential to set the

theater for the Joint Force, enabling combat formations to seize and maintain initiative and extend operational reach.

Notably, the 475th Quartermaster Group took part in Talisman Sabre 23, a large-scale Joint defense exercise with Australia, validating ship-to-shore logistics capability. Working alongside the Navy and Army's 555th and 130th Engineer Brigades, the units connected three-mile-long fuel and water pipelines onshore to 175,000-gallon tanks aboard Australian commercial landing craft about 1,000 meters offshore. The Army Reserve's participation in Talisman Sabre and other overseas exercises helps prepare our Soldiers for the challenges expected in a contested logistics environment, strengthen partnerships, improve interoperability, and enhance collective readiness. Additionally, over 95 units and 4,000 Army Reserve Soldiers actively contribute to Combat Training Center (CTC) and Warfighter Exercise (WFX) events yearly. These exercises play a pivotal role in enhancing the collective readiness and operational effectiveness of the Joint Force.

The Army Reserve is essential in supporting critical capabilities and enablers for key training events centers such as CTC rotations. Supporting approximately 24 rotations annually, the Army Reserve directly influences the preparation of the Total Force for operational challenges. This commitment to excellence highlights the Army Reserve's integral role in enhancing the nation's defense capabilities and ensuring military readiness across diverse operations.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities

The Army Reserve, in coordination with our partners in the National Guard, is a Federal Response Partner, maintaining a constant state of readiness for Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) operations as a valuable resource and capability provider. In DSCA responses, the Army Reserve has provided rapid activation of units when and where needed.

This readiness was evident in the Army Reserve's swift and effective crisis support response to Hurricane Ian and wildfires in Hawai'i. Army Reserve Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers and recovery personnel played a crucial role in preparing for and rapidly responding to these and other natural disasters throughout the United States this past year. The Army Reserve's dedication to national defense and disaster response underscores its vital role in safeguarding local communities.

Innovative Readiness Training (IRT)

Last year, more than 1,500 Army Reserve Soldiers participated in 16 Department of Defense (DoD) Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) missions across 12 States and three U.S. territories. IRT leverages expertise in specialties spanning healthcare, construction, and civil affairs, to provide real world critical services with lasting benefits to communities across America.

The Army Reserve led three of DoD's four IRT missions outside the continental United States. Soldiers conducted training and support in Puerto Rico and the Mariana Islands, including Guam Wellness, where Soldiers performed nearly 15,000 medical procedures on more than 5,000 patients. During Operation Health in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, nearly 24,000 procedures were provided to Saipan, Tinian, and Rota residents. In recognition of the impact, 126 Army Reserve Soldiers received the DoD's Civil-Military Partnership of the Year Award.

DELIVER AND SUSTAIN COMBAT READY POWER

Preserving our All-Volunteer Force – and retaining the multiplying effects of the unique skillsets our Citizen Soldiers bring – is paramount to safeguarding our national security interests. To strengthen and deliver this combat-ready power, the Army Reserve encourages "Dual Pursuits," fostering an environment that promotes collaboration and growth in uniform and outside of duty status.

By prioritizing "tough, realistic training, done safely," we have made significant strides toward achieving our retention objectives. When our Soldiers have compelling and

meaningful experiences to share after battle assemblies or training events, we know we are moving in the right direction. Our goal is to consistently inspire our Soldiers' development and enthusiasm for their mission.

The Army Reserve offers exceptional opportunities that can set a Soldier up for a lifetime of success, creating the ultimate Warrior Citizen who shares their skills and talents with the Army while pursuing a fulfilling civilian career.

Quality of Life

The Army Reserve prioritizes Soldiers by promoting quality-of-life programs that improve the Army Reserve experience while making integrating family, work, and military life easier. Readiness relies upon the Families who support and sustain our Soldiers serving the Army and the Nation. A critical part of realizing our vision for the future is ensuring our Soldiers and their Families are well cared for and supported where they live and work.

To enhance quality of life, the Army Reserve is committed to improving barracks conditions and collective training facilities, promoting the health and well-being of our Soldiers, increasing recruiting and retention, and improving our readiness.

The average age of the Army Reserve barracks inventory is 72 years old. To maintain and upgrade Soldiers' living quarters and improve overall quality of life, the Army Reserve prioritizes Facilities Restoration and Military Barracks Construction. A continued focus on the program – which serves the 409 Collective Training Barracks, seven Institutional Training Barracks, and three Permanent Party Barracks across the Army Reserve footprint – is essential to the well-being and readiness of our Soldiers and their Families.

The Army Reserve has requested significant increases in MILCON funding for Advanced Skills Training Barracks in the President's FY 2025 budget, demonstrating a strong commitment to inventory improvements. The Army Reserve is planning and

programming the modernization of Collective Training barracks when economically viable and planning and programming projects for Military Construction (MILCON) to replace and divest barracks that are not economical to repair.

The Army Reserve is geographically dispersed – maintaining five key installations, along with an extensive network of 753 facilities. The Army Reserve's dispersed footprint is a national strategic asset, allowing the U.S. to project combat power and enhance overall resiliency. Through sustained improvements in our Soldiers' living conditions and collective training facilities, the Army Reserve is investing in the long-term health and well-being of the force, enabling our Soldiers and families to thrive, and positively impacting readiness, recruiting and retention, and overall quality of life.

Childcare

Another issue affecting Citizen Soldiers and their Families has been a nationwide shortage of weekend childcare services. This has had an adverse impact to both retention and quality of life. The Army Reserve has around 15,000 single parents and 7,000 dual-military couples who often face challenges finding suitable childcare during Battle Assembly weekends and Annual Training. Operating on the weekends comes at a cost, as many childcare providers do not provide services throughout the weekend.

In 2020, the Department of Defense recognized this shortfall and extended childcare benefits to the Reserve Components. The Army Reserve Family Program office implemented multiple programs to combat this critically needed asset for Soldiers and their families. In the 4th quarter of FY 2023, the Army Reserve established a pilot program through an Intergovernmental Support Agreement in the Kansas City metro area, offering no-cost childcare options during weekend and annual training. The program has shown promising results since its implementation from September 01, 2023, to March 12, 2024. During this period, 1,039 families and 1,849 children registered with the program, with 83 families and 303 children actively utilizing childcare services. While the Army Reserve continues to assess data from pilot programs

launched recently, we continue to explore alternative childcare solutions to enhance long-term readiness and retention across the Army Reserve.

Public Private Partnership (P3O)

The Private Public Partnership Office (P3O) continues to build on a nationwide network of corporate, profit/nonprofit and employee partnerships. The employment outreach program pairs thousands of qualified Soldiers, Family members and Veterans with hundreds of private and public organizations – across more than 20 industry sectors – to develop career pathways through training, internships, or apprenticeships with respected companies. Recognizing the multiple responsibilities that Soldiers carry, including family and career commitments, P3O demonstrates the importance of a strong relationship between the civilian sector and the Army Reserve. This connection not only acknowledges shared talent but also significantly contributes to reducing stressors in Soldiers' lives, allowing them to focus on training while balancing family and career obligations.

P3O supports transitioning active-duty service members through its innovative Active Component to Reserve Component program. P3O actively links transitioning service members with civilian career pathways to find meaningful employment, thereby facilitating the seamless transition of those service members into the Army Reserve. In 2023, P3O assisted 837 Soldiers, 90 Veterans, and 85 dependents in finding employment. The partnership has extended to over 240 businesses, ensuring Soldiers and their families can access diverse employment opportunities.

Army Reserve Ambassadors

Army Reserve Ambassadors (ARAs) continue to play a crucial role in fostering positive relationships and generating support for the Army Reserve among a diverse array of stakeholders. These dedicated individuals leverage their extensive connections with legislative, business, and community leaders across the United States to make a significant difference for Soldiers and their families. Through their strategic outreach and advocacy, ARAs have demonstrated their commitment to the future force by actively

engaging in initiatives to attract new talent and retain junior leaders. Notably, their combined efforts – along with Major Subordinate Commands – have contributed to the growth of the force through the awarding of more than 200 Minuteman College Scholarships valued at more than \$23 million, thereby enhancing educational benefits for deserving individuals.

E5 in 5

This past year, we implemented the *E5 in 5* Initiative. It aims to empower Soldiers to attain the rank of sergeant within five years of joining the Army Reserve. Recognizing the abundance of talent within our ranks, the Army Reserve is committed to promoting individuals who exemplify leadership qualities and set a positive example.

As part of the initiative, leaders take the proactive steps of enrolling Soldiers in the Distributed Leader Course (DLC), expeditiously scheduling the Basic Leader Course (BLC), conducting flexible promotion boards, and utilizing temporary promotions when feasible. This initiative underscores the importance of cultivating leadership skills among our dedicated enlisted corps.

As a result, by the end of 2023, the Army Reserve had exceeded 103% of required strength for Sergeants for the first time in four years by promoting over 5,000 Specialists who all demonstrated the potential to serve as noncommissioned officers.

Reducing Harmful Behaviors

The Army Reserve is addressing harmful behaviors that break the trust between our Army Reserve and our Soldiers. Foundational Readiness sessions give leaders time to conduct counseling, build esprit de corps, and underscore the Army Values while bolstering programs such as Project Inclusion and Equal Opportunity.

Every Soldier deserves a workplace free of sexual assault, sexual harassment, retaliation, and other behaviors that adversely impact the work environment. The results of a thorough internal analysis of the Army Reserve's Sexual Harassment/Assault

Response and Prevention Program have enabled programmatic changes driven by the Secretary of Defense and the NDAA, including improved victim care, staffing, organization, reporting, and oversight.

The Army Reserve SHARP Team coordinates with Headquarters, Department of the Army SHARP team and Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) to develop an Army Reserve-centric staffing model consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC-SAM), as approved by the Secretary of Defense. The Army Reserve SHARP program inspects and provides staff assistance to every major subordinate command's program. The 99th Readiness Division's recently completed virtual Fusion Directorate pilot program offered valuable insights validating the need to sustain a 24/7 hotline and implement division-level consolidated Sexual Assault Review Board and Training. The Army Reserve legal community supports the Office of Special Trial Counsel (OSTC). Army Reserve support to OSTC will significantly strengthen the prosecution of sexual assault and other serious criminal offenses by specially trained attorneys independent of the chain of command.

Suicide Prevention

Suicides are devastating to Families, units, and readiness, and the Army Reserve is committed to identifying and providing services and support to vulnerable individuals to let them know that every life is a life worth living. Suicide remains one of the Army's most complex challenges, and prevention requires a comprehensive approach. However, in most recorded suicidal ideation cases, Soldiers actively sought help, or leaders intervened upon recognizing changes in behavior.

The Army Reserve also empowers Soldiers down to the squad-leader level to escort any Soldier in crisis to immediate lifesaving care. The Army Reserve is conducting training sessions to help identify and address high-risk behavior. Further, the Army Reserve authorizes a paid duty status for the Soldiers who perform these critical lifesaving missions and for those who need help.

CONTINUOUS TRANSFORMATION

The Army is adapting to meet threats posed by the rapidly changing face of warfare – transforming to ensure we outpace adversaries by harnessing the latest technologies for warfighting advantage. For the Army Reserve, continuous transformation means evolving our structure to support the Army of 2040, reviewing capabilities, and investing in high-demand civilian skills.

The Engineer 2030 Force (E30F) is leaning forward for the Army of the future, aligning Army Reserve Engineer Battalions with Active Component Divisions to provide full spectrum engineering services in the supported theater – including counter-mobility, mobility and survivability.

Finally, the Army Reserve requires modernization funding for our aging High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) fleet, which will remain mission critical at home and overseas for the foreseeable future. About half of our nearly 18,000 HMMWVs are beyond their useful life, reducing our ability to respond to crises and risking Soldiers' safety without upgraded anti-lock brake systems and electronic stability control kits.

Cyber Capabilities

The Army Reserve's approach to cyber capabilities extends beyond traditional military training, recognizing the importance of leveraging external resources and partnering with academic institutions to stay at the forefront of cybersecurity. It continues to evolve and adapt to the rapidly growing threats in the digital domain. Our Soldiers play a crucial role in the overall cyber capabilities of the Total Force.

The Army Reserve actively engages with the civilian sector to tap into cutting-edge talent, acknowledging the importance of staying connected with advancements in the private industry. Recognizing the significance of early career education, the Army

Reserve seeks to engage with the next generation of Cyber Warriors, Data Scientists, and individuals involved in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs. Establishing partnerships with educational institutions, including K-12 schools and universities, is crucial for developing a pool of skilled individuals who can contribute to the evolving landscape of cyber warfare.

Presently, the Army Reserve channels talent into 10 Cyber Protection Teams, representing 25% of the Army's Cyber Protection Team capability. These teams consist of experienced Defensive Cyber Operation (DCO) warriors with unique and specialized civilian skill sets. These skills include Industrial Control Systems, supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems, cloud computing, data science, digital forensics, computer programming languages, application engineering, and more. These Soldiers contribute not only to military operations but also bring insights from their commercial experiences, adding value to the overall cyber defense strategy.

To better meet the needs of the Army and the Nation, the Army Reserve Cyber Protection Brigade (ARCPB) is expanding by more than 600 positions, creating four deployable command and control battalions; four Cyber Security Companies to support persistent Defensive Cyber Operations; and four additional CPTs, posturing the Army Reserve to meet U.S. Cyber Command and U.S. Army Cyber Command mission requirements.

The Army Reserve is also focusing on innovation and initiatives by restructuring the 75th Army Reserve Innovation Command into a two-star command with two innovation brigades and 25 innovation detachments – a holistic structural overhaul executed over three years.

Energy

Across the nation, we are investing to strengthen energy and water resilience to ensure access for critical missions under all conditions. We are securing funding for projects ranging from installation-wide energy and water distribution plans to ongoing

improvements of our energy use and water accessibility across our footprint. These projects include electric microgrids, renewable energy technology, centralized building controls and metering, and facility-related control systems that are protected from cyberattacks.

The Army Reserve recently installed seven dual-port electric vehicle chargers at Parks Reserve Forces Training Area, CA, and three more at the 63rd Readiness Division Headquarters in Mountain View, CA. The evaluation of these chargers will inform our plans for the entire Army Reserve fleet.

STRENGTHEN THE ARMY PROFESSION

The range of Army Reserve capabilities encompasses medical expertise, logistics, transportation, water purification, railroad operations, engineer, chaplain services, intelligence, military police, instructional capacities, and civil affairs. As the primary provider of combat service and combat service support expertise, the Army Reserve provides tailored responses to meet the demands of current or emerging requirements. The specialized capabilities within the Army Reserve ensure that we are both ready and adaptive, aligning with the evolving needs of the Army and the nation.

Our Soldiers' high-demand career skillsets, such as medical, cyber, legal, engineering, and port operations – which are costly and challenging to maintain on active duty – are invaluable in positioning the Army Reserve as a critical asset for the Army and the Joint Force.

Civilian Acquired Skills Program

In alignment with Total Army objectives, the Army Reserve has significantly strengthened its Army Civilian Acquired Skills Program (ACASP) to strengthen our ranks with adept and experienced individuals. The primary aim of this program is to recognize and incentivize recruits possessing up-to-date, pertinent civilian skills, particularly in emerging technologies. The ACASP program enables Soldiers with civilian skills to

undergo shorter entry-level training and contribute more swiftly in their new roles to the unit and the mission. This reduces the time away from civilian employers.

Recently expanded from seven to 44 certifiable career fields, ACASP facilitates a streamlined training process for Soldiers who have already certified their skills through trade schools, professional certifications, academic degrees, or work experience. This expansion has ushered in nearly 200 new Soldiers in 2023, ensuring a continued influx of dynamic and proficient capabilities for future challenges. For example, a civilian electrician, enlisting as an Interior Electrician (12R) under ACASP, was able to reduce his training path by six weeks. Similarly, medical professionals enlisting in fields like combat medic can accelerate their training timeline, reducing a 16-week training program to nine weeks with existing and relevant certifications.

CONCLUSION

The Army Reserve provides trained, equipped, and ready Soldiers to fulfill the Nation's domestic and international requirements. Whether engaged in combat missions or contingency operations or safeguarding lives and property within America's communities, Army Reserve formations remain a source of versatile and effective capabilities.

The Army Reserve requires consistent, adequate, and predictable funding to maintain critical operational capabilities. Such funding is vital to ensuring the Army Reserve can adequately meet the demands of the Army and the Joint Force. We are grateful for the Congressional support with defense spending that positively impacts people, enhances readiness, and supports modernization efforts. It is critical to the Army Reserve's investment strategy and an invaluable resource for modernizing essential mission equipment.

The Army Reserve stands ready to contribute significantly to the success of the Army, the Total Force, and the Nation as a whole. Acknowledging the challenges ahead, the

Army Reserve remains committed to providing unwavering support and crucial capabilities for the Nation's security.

Thank you again for this opportunity to discuss the Army Reserve and for your strong support of our Soldiers, Civilians, and their families. I look forward to your questions.