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MEMORANDUM FOR Leaders of America's Army Reserve

SUBJECT: Commander's Guidance

**Introduction.**

Where we are going is not where we have been. We are moving into a dynamic and highly contentious future operating environment. For the past 15 years, the asymmetric attacks on our homeland drove our priority-of-effort to progressively develop and deliver units on a predictable and rotational timeline to fight an irregular foe with deadly, but limited, capabilities. This was the "patch chart." It drove processes and created a culture that was well suited at the time, but will no longer suffice to meet the demands of today's emerging challenges and potential threats. While the asymmetric threat of terrorism will persist well into the future, new wolves – well equipped with full-spectrum, all domain capabilities -- are circling the sled. The time to build the readiness to deter and, as necessary, defeat these potential contenders is now, and the shot clock is running.

After flooding the zone for the past seven months, and assessing the seasoned talent and professionalism of our forces around the globe, there is no doubt in my mind that America's Army Reserve is up to the task that lies ahead. As the most battle-tested reserve force in our Nation's history, we must now shift our focus, drive our cultural ethos, and develop our capabilities to meet the imperatives of a threat environment that is characterized by near-peer competitors who will contest American military power across all domains. We are moving into the Territory Ahead.

1. **The Emerging Threat.** In the words of the Chief of Staff of the Army, "Start with the red pen." This means focus first on the threat. Few Soldiers serving today have lived in a world where America's status as the preeminent global power was subject to contention. For more than a generation, the U.S. military has enjoyed significant overmatch in terms of force projection, global-precision strike, forcible entry, space, maritime, and stealth capability. Those days are over. Our potential adversaries have schooled themselves well on how to operationalize a variety of high-end technologies in order to achieve and leverage operational parity with the United States. Russia and China, in particular, have made massive investments in modernizing and deploying sophisticated platforms and forces. Both have emerged as extraordinarily capable competitors who have demonstrated an increased propensity to push boundaries and flex their military might. The lesser, but still unpredictable, threats posed by North Korea

DAAR-ZA

SUBJECT: Commander's Guidance

and Iran's pursuit of nuclear capable Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) are additional challenges that America must be prepared to confront.

a. The new threat is characterized by a number of complicating considerations. To list a few: (i) adversaries with proficiency across all domains to include air, land, sea, undersea, cyber, and space; (ii) the prospect of simultaneous or near-simultaneous contingencies; and (iii) the rapid technological evolution of offensive weapons, and catastrophically disruptive capabilities, e.g. global precision strike, cyber, artificial intelligence, hypersonic, electromagnetic pulse, and bio-engineered weapons. This will be an increasingly lethal and disruptive battlespace for the Joint Force.

b. This emerging environment demands that we move quickly to press ourselves – in terms of training, manning, and equipping our Soldiers and units – to outpace these threats and win on a hotly contested battlefield. As we move forward, you will recall terms engrained in you as a young Soldier: Task, Conditions, and Standards. Our mission is to defeat the enemy; to dominate our foes in a full spectrum environment. The task and standards to achieve it have not changed. What has changed are the conditions — the environment — in which we will operate. Conditions drive all aspects of our preparation to ensure that we are set to win in this environment. We will be set to mobilize, deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States. They will fight to disrupt us in all domains. This reality shapes and drives my intent for America's Army Reserve. It is what informs our vision. It is your job to get after it. It is my job to give you the tools to make it so.

2. **Intent.** The cultural warfighting ethos of America's Army Reserve matches and exceeds the magnitude of the potential threats that the Nation confronts. Our endstate is an Army Reserve that possesses the requisite capabilities -- leadership, training, equipment, and manpower -- to win on the battlefield of tomorrow against any enemy. This is about Survivability, Mobility, Lethality, and Mission Command Connectivity and the ultimate drivers of this ethos are Leadership. Energy. Execution.

3. **Vision.** This is too simple. America's Army Reserve is the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal Federal Reserve force in the history of the Nation. Period. It is the Road to Awesome.

a. **Capable:** We provide essential capabilities, and frequently added capacity, to the Total Force. In many cases, we are able to do this at a huge savings to the taxpayer by leveraging civilian-acquired or retained skills. In other instances, we are able to develop or exploit unique skill sets that are cost-prohibitive for the Active Component to try to retain in a full-time status. What is new is that, while we have always delivered highly functioning enabling capability, we must now do it in a fast paced, full-spectrum environment.

b. Combat-ready: We train as we expect we will fight; against a full-spectrum competitor who will be able to contest our dominance across all domains. This means we train hard and realistically in high-end-threat informed scenarios – wherever possible, alongside the other two components of the Army – that include a robust and modern opposing force (OPFOR) in an environment that stresses the force, gets past the “inside the wire” mentality and acknowledges the relentless pressure of a full-spectrum contest of wills. Combat readiness, however, begins before collective training. It starts with you, the American Soldier; manning units-of-action with the right Soldiers, in the right grades, with the right skills, who are individually prepared — physically fit, mentally tough, and thoroughly determined — to survive and win on the battlefield. It then extends to ensuring that we can rapidly deploy. Deployability is everything. Mobility, Lethality, Connectivity and Survivability, to overmatch the enemy, as important as they are, mean nothing if they are too late. Fast matters. This is about winning. Just as I have made it clear that no unit will deploy into harm’s way with lesser equipment or training because of its component, let me also be clear about this - if you can’t get to the fight quickly, you don’t really matter. It’ll be over.

c. Lethal: Regardless of MOS, unit type, or level of command, in the end, we are American Soldiers. Recite the Creed. Think lethal; be lethal. Our job is to close with and destroy the enemy. It is as simple as that. While our experiences over the last 15 years of war have taught us some valuable lessons, we have also grown accustomed to the luxuries of a “rear area” with secure facilities and established theater architecture. In the future operating environment, the “rear area” will not be secure. Our command posts, lodgments, APODS, SPODs, massed formations, supply chains, and commodity distribution points are prime targets for any enemy that fights with stealth strike aircraft, MRLS, massed artillery, and low-radar-cross-section cruise missiles. They will be attacked. We win by moving faster and lighter, while confronting the enemy with multiple dilemmas and relentlessly disrupting and pounding him. That is lethality.

#### 4. Priorities.

a. Readiness. Readiness is Job One. As I said above, start with our Creed: “I will always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.” As you advance to collective training, basic proficiency – Warrior Tasks and Drills – remains the foundation for small unit readiness. View readiness as a “kill chain.” Systematically assess, locate, and get after those impediments to getting your team to the best they can be. As a leader, you own the outcome. Manning, equipping, and training your team is your main effort.

(1) The Dual Imperative. The “rotational readiness model” we have grown to accept as *status quo* is not suited to a “fight tonight” scenario where certain OPLANS will drive a much larger force requirement on highly compressed timelines. Units that are well-manned, equipped, and trained need to be ready to deploy, enable, and fight in days and weeks, not months or years. We have already begun the process of developing and organizing a “fight tonight” and ready force capability package. This will

DAAR-ZA  
SUBJECT: Commander's Guidance

ensure that we optimize America's Army Reserve to meet these requirements while also anticipating the possibility of near-simultaneous demand for forces from two theaters of operations. This new readiness imperative is our main effort. The supporting effort is the steady-state requirement to support on-going operations and activities on a rotational basis – the "patch chart" – in order to meet enduring national commitments. This is an important supporting effort and one that we have mastered over the years; it is simply insufficient, in itself, to meet the new requirements of the day.

(2) Personnel readiness is the first step in driving units to improving collective readiness and building the combat capability that is required to win our Nation's wars. As I said, if you can't get to the fight, you don't matter. Make it your personal priority to work deployability; drive individual medical, dental, DMOSQ readiness. Pound hard on personal fitness for all troops. Initiate separation actions on Soldiers who won't pass the PT test or meet the weight standard. This life is not for everyone. Focus particular attention to our AGR force. Drill down — by name — to ensure they are ready to deploy and are setting the example for the rest of our tribe. Our full-time support is here to support us in being ready. They are here to be the model for "what right looks like". If they are not, call the question. This is about winning wars.

(3) Synchronize Training. We maximize time and resources by centralizing the planning and decentralizing the execution of training events. Unit Commanders: focus on your Mission Essential Task List and rely on task, conditions, and standards as the foundation of assessing outcomes. Leverage partnerships with other units, to include the National Guard, Active Army, and the Joint Force to make up for shortfalls in organic assets. Medical readiness, talent management, maintenance, and other activities may require partnerships and regional approaches to maximize readiness.

(4) Leverage our resources before you blame a lack of readiness on a perceived lack of resources. Get creative. Seize the initiative. We always have a way to get more ammo. Our challenge is not as much about resources as it is prioritization and focus. Every dollar spent at a conference or in related travel is a dollar not available for ammo, equipment, maintenance, C2 capabilities, or body armor. Don't ask for money for "multiple AT's" unless you know that your Soldiers can go to a collective training event as well as NCOES without losing their civilian job.

(5) Tighten our Interior Lines. We have an awesome team, but we cannot rest on yesterday's accomplishments. Pay attention to standards. Pay attention to bearing. Look sharp. Show up. Be on time. Be ready. Be fit. Be ready to deploy. Be ready to fight. Don't walk past a mistake. Set an SOP for uniforms and drive it. Hold yourselves, and each other, accountable for getting the mission accomplished. Take care of each other. Resist the urge to see "down time" as an excuse to leave Soldiers to themselves. Your time with them is precious. Remember, this is not a job. Being a Soldier is a thing set apart.

b. Nurture and Sustain the support of our Families and Employers. This is vital and directly affects readiness. Look for ways to grow and nourish a culture of appreciation and recognition for our Families and our Employers. We have the unique and powerful opportunity to tell the story of America's Army Reserve and to generate local support, and drive our strategic message: We serve the people of the United States; in turn, we need their support to do our part in defending the American way of life. We must constantly reaffirm our support of our Employers. We are only able to recruit and retain quality Soldiers by acknowledging and respecting the balance that each Soldier strikes while serving in uniform but also keeping a good civilian job. Our challenge is be ready enough to be relevant to the Army, but not so ready that our Soldiers cannot maintain their civilian careers. Look for ways to retain and reward top quality Soldiers, while also providing them the flexibility to meet their civilian goals and commitments. If we do not, superb talent will vote with their feet.

c. Shape and Grow the Future Force. Leader development, requirements-based future force structure, demographically informed unit repositioning, and emerging technologies, capabilities, and opportunities are all key aspects of informing, shaping, and growing the future force. This is about leveraging our flexibility and agility as America's Army Reserve. We have an ability to move, adjust, and anticipate in a way that no other component can replicate. As we lean into the future, several key drivers will guide us:

(1) Develop Future Leaders. Leaders with talent and initiative are the best hedge against complexity and uncertainty, and a critical requirement that technology cannot replace. Future leaders must uphold the Army Values by creating and sustaining a culture of dignity, respect, and inclusivity for the entire team. Leaders must have the moral courage to enforce standards and hold others accountable. Support and promote future leaders who embrace this culture and who are clearly committed to the team over their own advancement. Coach and lead those leaders who do not. Clearly identify both good and bad behavior to selection boards. Identify, grow, and mentor future leaders and functional experts to ensure the highest standard of technical and tactical expertise. The future will demand competent, adaptive, and high-functioning team players -- both military and civilian -- who know how to get the most out of their unit by leveraging the power that only selfless and motivated leadership can conjure.

(2) Build for the Future. This ensures that America's Army Reserve not only anticipates new and emerging force structure requirements, but also to position the right units where people are going to be, not where they were. We will align force structure and unit locations with trending demographics, which will help us overcome perennial and recalcitrant recruiting and retention challenges and set tomorrow's leadership up for success. We will also anticipate and assess the challenges associated with expanding the Army -- or rapidly mobilizing it -- when it needs to surge or expand. This means we will evaluate and leverage training platforms -- their location, capabilities, and limitations -- in an integrated and holistic manner across the Army by optimizing their

ability to provide relevant and combat-focused training experiences for various types of units, regardless of component or the “owning” organization or agency. No one installation is ideally suited to providing first-class training to all formations; nor is any one installation disqualified from providing great training and material support to some.

(3) Focus on getting your Soldiers and units-of-action ready and get smart on emerging technologies. This is about informing and filling capability gaps for the Army. America's Army Reserve provides a reservoir of talent, skills, and opportunities that we will exploit as technology evolves. Our reach into America gives us huge advantages in the ability to sense, understand, and develop creative and cutting-edge capabilities in the private sector and help match them with emerging gaps within the Total Force. Think broadly about the unique strengths of our Soldiers and institutions and how we can attract and retain talent for the future. Also, look outwardly at emerging capabilities and new opportunities that fit naturally within the unique role of a Federal Reserve force of skilled Citizen-Soldiers.

**5. The Big Shift.** Conditions have changed; we must adapt. We all own a piece of the heavy lifting required to move our team from a limited threat culture into one that embraces the Big Shift: manning, equipping, and training units-of-action that can survive and win across the range of military operations. To dominate in this environment, we must understand our potential adversaries — their capabilities, interests, and propensities — which will drive all aspects of our push to realize the Army Reserve Vision. The Big Shift requires Leadership, Energy, and Execution.

a. Leadership. This is the game-changer – it has always been and will always be, the Silver Bullet. I expect you to embrace The Big Shift, step up to your readiness challenges and own the outcome. The only way we will succeed is through leaders who set the example, are competent, selfless, and hold themselves and their subordinates accountable. It is that basic.

b. Energy. Energetic leaders are enthusiastic and passionate in confronting a challenge. Our fundamental focus is to get after The Big Shift, and bring the entire team with us. This will take dynamic, fast-paced, team-focused, and highly motivated leaders who possess the mental and physical toughness to drive cultural change and to overcome the forces of inertia and resistance. Enthusiasm is a combat-multiplier, and energy is the driver.

c. Execution. Do not confuse activity with results, or action with effects. There will be challenges on the Road to Awesome. Understand, assess, orient, decide, and then act with an eye on the effect you need to generate in order to drive the change that we need. Do not admire problems or walk past mistakes.

DAAR-ZA  
SUBJECT: Commander's Guidance

**Conclusion.**

We are breaking new trail. This is not because I showed up. It is because highly capable adversaries did. As we build the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal Federal Reserve force in the history of the Nation, I know this will be a significant cultural shift for some of you. That is normal. Get past it. Understand that America's Army Reserve must evolve. It is essential that we shift, learn, and grow to match the magnitude of threats that America will confront. It is that simple. We have already taken our first steps on this Road to Awesome. We will continue to press. Ruck up and lead.

Keep Pounding...

Double Eagle 6

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Heard!