RAF Movement and Maneuver Warfighting Function

Colonel Phillip A. Chambers and Colonel Tarn D. Warren

> By aligning unit headquarters and rotational units to combatant commands, and tailoring our combatant [sic] training centers and exercises to plan for their greatest contingencies, units will gain invaluable expertise and cultural awareness, and be prepared to meet the regional requirements more rapidly and effectively than ever before.
>
> —General Raymond Odierno[1]

The Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) concept is a viable approach for providing trained and ready forces to combatant commanders (CCDRs) to operationalize prevent, shape, and win. When viewed through the lens of the movement and maneuver warfighting function, however, some aspects of the RAF concept require refinement. The brigade combat team (BCT) is the principle maneuver force and represents the primary focus from which to analyze the impact of RAF on the movement and maneuver warfighting function as well as on the existing capability of a BCT to fulfill core maneuver tasks.

The evidence indicates that in addition to existing capability gaps in a BCT's organic reconnaissance force structure, RAF increases the demand for reconnaissance operations to meet information requirements. Therefore, the Army should increase a brigade combat team's capability to conduct reconnaissance. Further examination of the RAF concept and the current Army force generation (ARFORGEN) process confirms that the current system requires adjustment. Modification of the ARFORGEN process is required to support an Army-wide readiness management philosophy that prepares RAF-designated forces while maintaining a higher level of base readiness across the force.

RAF implementation also expands the movement and maneuver warfighting function's role in deterring conflict and shaping the operational environment. Increased exposure to a region will amplify expertise and enhance the ability of maneuver forces to conduct unified land operations. With additional refinement, BCTs will have the capability and capacity to fully support the RAF concept to provide modernized and ready, tailored land force capabilities to meet the combatant commander's requirements across the range of military operations.

The role of conventional forces (CF) evolved over the last decade, expanding its capability and capacity in the current operating environment. After more than 10 years of war, the lines between the traditional roles for conventional and special operating forces (SOF) have blurred. Prior to 2002, foreign internal defense (FID) and relationship-building with indigenous people was solely a SOF function. Many of the tasks traditionally associated with special operations forces can also be performed by conventional forces, however. Recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan identified the necessity for land forces to work in and amongst the people of a host nation. Land forces, both Marines and Soldiers, demonstrated exceptional proficiency in executing traditional SOF missions using SOF techniques.[2]

The new reality is that land forces in general, (Army, Marines and SOF), have expanded their traditional roles and demonstrated enhanced capability and capacity to perform a wider array of tasks across the range of military operations. Considering the range of operations is an effective way to describe the type, complexity, and intensity of conflict from security cooperation activities, to limited contingencies, to full scale war.[3] The

increased demand for conventional forces by combatant commanders (CCDR) to support theater security cooperation activities acknowledges the expanded role of CF. This new reality requires shedding the old labels and outdated roles. The RAF concept provides a starting point for examining the role of land forces in support of CCDRs across the spectrum of conflict.

The RAF concept, however, is not yet well understood. Contributing to the problem is how the acronym "RAF" is used. The military profession uses the acronym in three ways. First, it is used appropriately to describe a regional alignment of forces as a new sourcing strategy to meet CCDR theater security cooperation (TSC) requirements. Second, RAF can be used as a term that identifies specific units considered as service retained, CCMD aligned (SRCA) by the Global Force Management Implementation Guidance (GFMIG) to provide RAF capability for the CCDR. Third, the acronym is also used to describe an innovative concept for supporting CCDRs requirements. Moreover, the public evolution of assorted RAF definitions adds to the confusion which contributes to headquarters' disagreements over authorities and responsibilities. For the purpose of this inquiry, the Department of the Army (DA) G-3/5/7 definition is adopted:

> Regionally Aligned Forces provide the Combatant Commander with up to joint task force capable headquarters with scalable, tailorable capabilities to enable him to shape the environment. They are those Army units assigned to combatant commands, allocated to a combatant command, and those capabilities distributed and prepared by the Army for combatant command regional missions. [RAF] includes Army total force organizations and capabilities which are: forward stationed; operating in a combatant command area of responsibility; supporting from outside the area of responsibility, including providing reach-back; prepared to support from outside the area of responsibility. Regional missions are driven by combatant command requirements. This requires an understanding of the cultures, geography, languages, and militaries of the countries where they are most likely to be employed, as well as expertise in how to impart military knowledge and skills to others.[4]

This definition, unfortunately, is still too broad to be helpful and actually promotes additional confusion because it fails to differentiate RAF as either a sourcing solution, i.e., a new concept for addressing the future role of the Army, or as a capability for the joint team. This definition does provide some helpful insights, but it is not sufficiently specific to support fully meaningful discussion.

A RAF-designated unit is provided under a precise set of authorities to deliver specific capabilities to meet CCDR requirements. According to Forces Command (FORSCOM) planners, most active and some reserve component Army units are currently regionally aligned with one of the geographic combatant commands (GCC). These designations consist of assigned, allocated, or service retained, CCMD aligned (SRCA). Units designated as a global response force (GRF) or contingency headquarters, however, will not be regionally aligned.[5]

A more concise definition specifies RAF as "the U.S. Army's vision for providing Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) with tailored, responsive and consistently available Army forces, to include JTF capable headquarters."[6] This definition is useful for addressing RAF as a resourcing strategy concerned with how the Army provides trained and ready forces. If the Army seeks to improve understanding of RAF, then both terminology and corresponding definitions must be simplified and clarified.

Prior to examining the impact that RAF has on the movement and maneuver warfighting function, a review of additional definitions will aid in creating a common understanding. A warfighting function (WfF) provides a method to categorize a group of critical tasks into a format that is used to analyze, synchronize and describe capabilities.[7] In its simplest form, the movement and maneuver WfF encompasses the tasks and systems that place forces in a position of relative advantage over an enemy. Maneuver forces' ability to close

with an enemy is aided through the employment of direct and joint fires. The Army's movement and maneuver framework states that Army forces are maneuver-focused with specific units capable of gaining a positional advantage.[8] This WfF also encompasses force projection as a means for gaining positional advantage over the enemy.[9] As a joint function, the joint doctrine's definition of movement and maneuver further expands our understanding of the WfF. It describes the joint function's role at the strategic, operational and tactical levels and states that maneuver is conducted in relation to an enemy's center of gravity (COG).[10] Through a synthesis of these definitions, this analysis explores the impact of RAF on the movement and maneuver warfighting function.

RAF and Movement and Maneuver WfF

RAF—and the associated capability it promises to deliver—promises both opportunities and increased challenges for the movement and maneuver warfighting function (WfF). The concept provides an approach to expand movement and maneuver's role in preventing conflict and shaping the operational environment. Additionally, RAF will increase regional expertise that will better enable maneuver forces to effectively conduct decisive operations if warranted.

One misperception about RAF is that it is strictly a method for providing a dedicated force to a GCC to conduct theater security cooperation activities. Contributing to the misperception are the rules for employing a RAF-designated force in security cooperation activities, such as requiring a CCDR to gain permission from the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) to employ the SRCA forces in activities other than TSC activities. The RAF concept does, however, allow for the possibility that a RAF-designated force may conduct combat operations. A challenge for the movement and maneuver WfF will be how to provide the promised capability in terms of training, structure, and readiness.

The requirements of the RAF concept on the movement and maneuver warfighting function's expanded role is best captured by the phrase "prevent, shape and win." The CSA uses the phrase to describe his vision of the three roles for the Army.[11] Furthermore, both of the CSA's prevent and shape role descriptions nest with the tasks in joint operations phase 0 (shape) and phase I (deter) definitions in joint doctrine.[12] The RAF concept operationalizes the capability and capacity to fulfill these roles in support of a joint commander.

Implied in the CSA's vision is the maneuver force's role in preventing conflict by serving as a visible forward-deployed deterrent to potential adversaries. In order to provide a credible deterrence, the Army must maintain a modern, trained, and ready Regionally Aligned Force that provides decisive land power to a CCDR as part of the joint force. Effective deterrence provides the strength to support diplomacy with potential rivals or enemies. Therefore, maneuver forces must ensure a high level of proficiency in their WfF's core tasks in order to maintain the capability and readiness to be a credible element of national power.[13]

A Regionally Aligned Force will help shape the global security environment by setting conditions prior to any potential crisis. The CCDRs accomplish this by building relationships that increase partners' or allies' capacity while providing access ahead of crises. This role increases the training requirements of maneuver forces because they must develop regional familiarity, cultural understanding, and basic language skills. An additional requirement is to develop leaders who are capable of teaching military skills to partner nations in support of security cooperation activities. Maneuver forces will be required to conduct key enabling activities including reconnaissance tasks designed to promote better understanding of the infrastructure, terrain and attitudes of the population. Using a maneuver force in an expanded role to get ahead of a possible crisis is a lesson learned over the past 10 years of war. The military must move beyond the old "break glass in case of war" mentality for the employment of conventional maneuver forces. RAF enables CCDRs' TSC plans that are designed to shape the security environment.

The third role in the CSA's vision is "win." Winning is the core Army role: to provide land power in combination with the joint force to fight and win. Maneuver forces derive their core WfF tasks from their ultimate requirement to "win" in combat. An additional expectation is that maneuver forces will contribute to a manner that both mitigates risk and, to the extent possible, precludes long-term conflict.[14]

Movement and Maneuver WfF forces executing the RAF concept in prevent, shape and win roles will face environmental challenges. The Army's Capstone Concept (ACC) provides a description of the anticipated future environment, characterized as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA).[15] In addition, an increased likelihood exists that operations will be conducted among civilian populations. Any new situation or environment has the potential to be complex due to unforeseen friction, chance, perceptions, lack of information and lack of familiarity with the physical and human terrain. Complexity and ambiguity places additional emphasis on developing the capability and capacity of the movement and maneuver WfF.

Additional requirements placed on the movement and maneuver WfF by the RAF concept fall in the areas of training, building increased capacity in force structure, and managing readiness in a fiscally-constrained environment. A comparison between the capabilities of a known maneuver force, a BCT, to what is expected of a RAF-designated unit operating in a VUCA environment may help identify any gaps.

The BCT: A Primary Movement and Maneuver WfF Organization

The RAF concept relies heavily on the movement and maneuver WfF to provide CCDRs credible deterrent options, support to theater security cooperation plans, and a land force capable of delivering decisive victory in conflict. The BCT is the Army's primary ground maneuver force and the combat aviation brigade (CAB) is the parallel air movement and maneuver force. General Odierno's strategic vision provides the best description of a RAF-designated unit and a sound entry point to broadly understand force requirements:

> It is uniquely organized with the capability and capacity to provide expeditionary, decisive land power to the Joint Force and ready to perform across the range of military operations to Prevent, Shape and Win in support of Combatant Commanders to defend the Nation and its interests at home and abroad, both today and against emerging threats.[16]

This vision creates the expectation that the Army will provide a multi-functional capability in a single unit to a CCDR. As examined through the movement and maneuver warfighting function (WfF), the CSA's vision of a RAF-designated force effectively describes its principal combined-arms maneuver force, the BCT.

The doctrinal role of the BCT aligns with elements of the CSA's vision for the Army. The BCT's capabilities and its role in the movement and maneuver warfighting function is described as follows:

> Heavy, Infantry, and Stryker brigade combat teams are the Army's combat power building blocks for maneuver, and the smallest combined arms units that can be committed independently. BCTs conduct offensive, defensive, stability and civil support operations. Their core mission is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver to destroy or capture enemy forces, or to repel enemy attacks by fire, close combat, and counterattack. The BCT can fight without augmentation, but it also can be tailored to meet the precise needs of its missions. BCTs conduct expeditionary deployment and integrate the efforts of the Army with military and civilian, joint and multinational partners.[17]

Essentially, the BCT is the maneuver force that has the capability required by the RAF concept. Furthermore, doctrine asserts that a BCT is the Army's primary maneuver force for core movement and maneuver warfighting function tasks as well as a range of military operations in a joint environment. A BCT is capable of expeditionary operations and can be scaled to the exact mission requirements. The doctrinal description of a

BCT, however, not only specifies the unit's role in "win" operations, it implies that a BCT can conduct prevent and shape activities.

Designating the BCT as RAF

Three types of BCTs exist: armor (ABCT), infantry (IBCT) and Stryker (SBCT).[18] Each type has a unique modified table of organization and equipment (MTO&E). The acronym "BCT" is used henceforth to describe all three unit types collectively.

The organic capabilities in a BCT make it the RAF sourcing unit of choice for combatant commanders. A BCT is the primary land domain maneuver force and it is organized as a combined arms team. The MTO&E provides commanders the flexibility to internally task-organize for squad through brigade-level missions. A BCT is organized with the level of leadership needed to provide mission command for independent operations of the organic, combat-arms maneuver forces, enabling forces, fires, and functional support units. Furthermore, a BCT proficient on decisive action core competencies is also capable, with limited additional training, to conduct, prevent and shape activities. "Decisive action" describes how land forces conduct decisive and sustainable operations while simultaneously conducting offense, defense and stability tasks, and possibly even defense support of civilian authorities (DSCA).[19]

Brigade combat teams are capable of self-sustainment for up to 96 hours and doctrinally require only limited external augmentation to be able to conduct the full range of military operations.[20] The recent MTO&E change to the BCT force structure eliminated the organic capability of military police and air defense, and reduced the intelligence and communications personnel.[21] This capability loss increases the need for augmentation if the BCT is to provide full warfighting function capability in accord with the RAF concept.

Another BCT capacity gap is the organization's ability to conduct reconnaissance and security operations. This gap is due to an insufficient number of organic reconnaissance forces. The recently published fiscal year (FY) 2014 MTO&E provided a third organic maneuver battalion to IBCTs and ABCTs without an increase in reconnaissance forces. The disparate ratio of reconnaissance to maneuver units in a BCT will undercut reconnaissance operations required by the RAF concept. The challenge for planners and force developers is to translate the requirements of the RAF concept into capabilities that support the CCDR's requirements. The Army must execute due diligence to ensure we have the optimal BCT structure for addressing all contingencies in a RAF-designated BCT environment.

Capability Analysis

DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities) is a framework force developers use to analyze capability. A DOTMLPF analysis can assist in exploring the maneuver BCT as the Army organization that will implement the RAF concept. The substance of the analysis in this report focuses on doctrine, organization and training. Additionally, the evaluation discusses the movement and maneuver WfF's expanded role in doctrine and recommends that reconnaissance be classified as a warfighting function. Furthermore, the capacity gap created by an insufficient ratio of reconnaissance to maneuver forces necessitates standardizing reconnaissance formations across all BCTs. The training analysis centers on adjusting the conditions in which movement and maneuver tasks are performed. The analysis examines and then provides a recommendation to modify the ARFORGEN training model from 24 to 36-months while extending the manning policy from 36 to 48-month tours. Overall, implementing the RAF concept does not impact every movement and maneuver aspect of DOTMLPF.

In general, the movement and maneuver warfighting function's tasks in doctrine adequately address a RAF-designated BCT and supporting RAF concept. Two areas require additional doctrinal attention, however.

First, the need for increased information for RAF when operating regionally warrants a reexamination of reconnaissance. Second, training manuals must be modified.

Army doctrine already provides significant depth to the movement and maneuver WfFs "win" role. The recently published Army Doctrinal Publication 1, *The Army*, specifies the critical nature of the role that landpower performs in deterring potential adversaries, and effectively supporting the prevent role of the RAF concept.[22] Additionally, ADP 1 portrays the critical nature of shaping activities by designating support to security cooperation as a core enabling competency.[23] The Army devoted an entire manual (*Army Support to Security Cooperation*) to assist in executing TSC activities in support of a CCDR.[24] With an eye to the future, *The U.S. Army Functional Concept for Movement and Maneuver 2016-2028* clarifies linkages to the RAF concept and the capabilities that the movement and maneuver WfF should provide to a CCDR. As a result, the future missions and associated tasks required of a BCT nest closely with the current requirements of a RAF BCT.

What is missing from doctrine is recognition of the need to increase reconnaissance operations. The specific requirement provided by the Army Capstone Concept (ACC) is:

> Future Army forces require the capability to fight for, collect, and exploit information in close contact with the enemy and civilian populations through continuous physical reconnaissance, persistent surveillance, and human intelligence, enabled by responsive process, exploitation, and dissemination capabilities to develop the contextual understanding to defeat enemy countermeasures, compensate for technological limitations, and adapt continuously to changing situations within the operational environment in support of unified action.[25]

In order to meet the ACC-generated requirements, the Army must designate reconnaissance as a warfighting function rather than as a tactical enabling task.

Doctrine does not adequately address the critical role that reconnaissance plays in shaping tactical through strategic environments for movement and maneuver and other warfighting functions. Implementing RAF increases reconnaissance requirements. The Army's Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-90 classifies reconnaissance as a tactical enabling task primarily performed in support of intelligence and the movement and maneuver WfFs.[26] The purpose of reconnaissance is to provide information that builds situational awareness and increases the commander's understanding. This understanding provides the RAF unit commander with a clearer visualization of the operating environment, and that which facilitates rapid and informed operational decisions.[27]

Reconnaissance information in support of maneuver is as critical as the fires provided by artillery. Reconnaissance provides the information that enables a commander to understand where he can gain a decisive advantage while limiting the enemy's ability to disrupt maneuver. Establishing reconnaissance as a warfighting function would recognize the importance of reconnaissance activities in RAF operations. Furthermore, and as a warfighting function, increased reconnaissance would help with operations planning and execution in support of prevent, shape, and win.

The current RAF-designated BCT's organic reconnaissance forces are insufficient to meet RAF requirements on the movement and maneuver WfF. Future operating environments will drastically increase the necessity for information/intelligence collection and security operations designed to reduce uncertainty inherent in new or rapidly-evolving situations. A Regionally Aligned Force must be prepared to be expeditionary and ready for deployment to a foreign land. An unfamiliar environment increases the requirement for BCT commanders to have the organic capability to conduct reconnaissance to gather information about the new environment and to conduct appropriate security operations. Higher-level commanders at division, corps or a joint task force (JTF) headquarters also require information to enhance their understanding of the ground situation.

The organic reconnaissance squadron's ultimate role in any type of RAF-designated BCT is to aid movement and maneuver tasks through reconnaissance and security (R&S) operations.[28] During RAF shaping operations that are designed to gain access to and develop relationships with a partner country, reconnaissance forces can assist in setting favorable conditions. They are trained to gather information about the physical environment, infrastructure, people, and culture and could assist theater planners' efforts to gauge capabilities and access limitations in the face of unknown contingencies.[29]

Even with the seven standard Army R&S missions, there is no standard reconnaissance squadron organization between the IBCT, SBCT and ABCT organizations. This incongruent approach extends to the platoon level, where there are different capabilities and limitations. The approved FY14 MTO&E, dated October 1, 2013, adds another maneuver battalion to BCTs with the exception of those BCTs currently stationed in Europe.[30] An additional maneuver battalion further exacerbates the imbalanced ratio of reconnaissance forces to maneuver forces in a BCT. As a result, this imbalanced ratio may require a BCT commander to divert maneuver forces to reconnaissance or security missions in order to acquire situational awareness or protect a flank. Diverting maneuver battalions to R&S operations negates the purpose of returning the third maneuver battalion to a maneuver brigade formation.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the mission sets assigned to most BCTs required three or more battalions to serve as land owning commands. BCT commanders were obliged to employ their reconnaissance squadrons in a maneuver battalion role, which severely degraded their BCT's organic ability to answer priority information requirements (PIR). The addition of a third maneuver battalion allows BCT commanders to employ their organic reconnaissance squadron to conduct reconnaissance and security missions. In sum, the Army should not increase the number of maneuver battalions without a corresponding increase in reconnaissance forces. Furthermore, the Army does not appear to employ a standard logic for how reconnaissance forces are structured to support each type of BCT. The ratio of mounted reconnaissance troop headquarters to infantry or armor company headquarters provides the differences between BCT types. The ratios of mounted recon troops to maneuver companies are: 1:6 in an IBCT, 1:3 in an SBCT, and 1:4 in an ABCT. Although the MTO&E for each reconnaissance squadron associated with its respective IBCT/ABCT/SBCT is significantly different, the seven core missions remain the same.[31]

The Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) at Fort Benning recognizes the capability gaps in the current structure of reconnaissance squadrons and is actively working to enhance capability through increased structure.[32] The MCoE has also been developing concepts to address the future operating environment and guidance contained in the ACC. Its ongoing efforts will develop solutions to meet the joint and Army reconnaissance and security requirements as defined by the Army Operating Concept (AOC), the ACC, [33] and the Army Movement and Maneuver Concept (MMC).[34] The reconnaissance and intelligence communities need to identify a path forward that will better enable maneuver forces while supporting the reconnaissance demands of the RAF.

The Army should institute a standard ratio of one mounted reconnaissance troop, with three platoons, to each maneuver battalion. This would allow BCT commanders to task organize reconnaissance capabilities to each maneuver unit as the mission requires. A single mounted reconnaissance troop should be capable of conducting R&S missions in support of a maneuver battalion's doctrinal frontal coverage. Additionally, each BCT should be organized with a two-platoon dismounted reconnaissance troop (DRT) to perform specialized surveillance and reconnaissance tasks needed to answer a BCT commander's PIR.

To effectively address the reconnaissance force capability gaps, decision-makers must standardize the recon platoon's manning, equipment and training in order to meet the requirements placed on the movement and maneuver WfF by the RAF concept. In addition to differing reconnaissance troop quantities, each type of

BCT has a significantly different reconnaissance platoon in terms of manning, equipping and associated training requirements.[35] Retaining multiple platoon configurations is not efficient for the training base, nor is it cost-effective. Each of the three types of mounted recon platoon configurations has a dissimilar set of capabilities and limitations due to the equipment and manning. Incongruent capacity between RAF-designated BCTs makes it difficult for the joint force to understand the reconnaissance capabilities and limitations within each type of regionally aligned BCT.

Joint Readiness Training Center observers/coaches/trainers, some of the Army's most qualified experts on reconnaissance and security operations, developed several recommendations to address reconnaissance and security capability gaps.[36] Their principal recommendation urges the Army to standardize BCT reconnaissance squadrons with three mounted reconnaissance troops, each consisting of three mounted platoons. Additionally, they suggest that the Army increase reconnaissance platoon size and consider a standard platoon configuration that is manned with 42 Soldiers and equipped with four Stryker vehicles, four light weight, wheeled reconnaissance vehicles, (such as the Medium Assault Vehicle-Light or Flyer Advanced Light Strike Vehicle) and two side-by-side all-terrain vehicles.[37]

A standard platoon configuration would reduce institutional training costs and associated local training costs associated when scouts join a different platoon configuration on permanent change of station (PCS). The increased manning level allows a platoon to be able to execute core tasks for long durations, while limiting the requirement for maneuver force augmentation. Another strength is that this recommendation provides a more flexible organization focused on gathering information rather than fighting for it. Future RAF-designated BCTs of any type must be equally capable of providing reconnaissance capability in support of RAF. Widening the aperture, the RAF concept also requires changes to force generation.

The current ARFORGEN process manages all Army units in a predictive cycle that synchronizes manning, equipping and training. Units progress through reset, train/ready or available force pools in a 24-month cycle while personnel rotate on a 36-month tour.[38] For the most part, the current approach is adequate to train and manage readiness for RAF-designated maneuver units in accord with the RAF concept. The current ARFORGEN system, however, does not provide a holistic methodology to mitigate risk to the baseline readiness of the entire force. The high level training proficiency required of maneuver units by the RAF concept necessitates a refined ARFORGEN model capable of achieving a sustainable level of readiness.[39]

The RAF concept requires that Regionally Aligned Forces achieve training readiness level one (T-1) proficiency in their core decisive action mission essential task list (C-METL). These forces are then validated in a mandated culminating training event (CTE) at either home station or a combat training center (CTC).[40] The CCDR may dictate additional training requirements, including specific regional training and ideally some level of language familiarization.[41] Specific to the movement and maneuver warfighting function, the RAF concept demands acquiring a high level of proficiency in less than a year and maintaining it for an additional year while the RAF unit remains available to the CCDR.

The range of missions appropriate to a RAF-designated BCT continues to grow. BCTs may be expected to conduct combat operations, perform strategic response force duties, and conduct security cooperation activities. A BCT might also be tasked to serve as a visible and capable formation that both reassures our allies while deterring an adversary. The Army may also be called upon to rapidly provide regionally aligned BCTs to a CCDR in support of an emerging crisis. Regardless of the assigned mission, managing unit readiness is important if the promised capability is to be available to a CCDR as needed.

The Army's training strategy should focus on meeting the CSA's vision for providing a ready, expeditionary land force with the capability and capacity to perform the range of military operations needed to support the joint force commander.[42] The strategy must also account for how to maintain training readiness to

"ensure the right mix of operationally ready and responsive Total Army forces and capabilities to rapidly meet emergent Global Combatant Command requirements while maintaining an operational and strategic landpower reserve."[43] Training is but one indicator of overall readiness for combat. The challenges in maintaining a trained and ready RAF-oriented Army are compounded by current fiscal constraints. The Secretary of the Army and the CSA characterized the impact of resource constraints in their 2013 posture statement to Congress:

> With sequestration, the Army will not be able to fully train our Soldiers, whether through professional military education or collective unit training, in a way that enables them to operate successfully in a complex environment across the full range of military operations. The long-term readiness impacts of the resulting deficit in trained forces will jeopardize the Army's ability to meet war plan requirements.[44]

Given the CSA's vision and pending fiscal constraints, the challenge is to meet existing requirements without creating a hollow force. The Army will not likely have the resources to maintain every BCT at a T-1 readiness level on a 24-month cycle. Additionally, the Army cannot mortgage the readiness of "operational and responsive Total Army forces"[45] and must mitigate risks associated with fiscal constraints. The task then is to develop low-cost solutions for building and maintaining readiness with the available resources.

The Army should adopt a new approach to the ARFORGEN process, one that creates a higher base level of readiness through better manning and equipping strategies. A potential solution must also consider how to mitigate the effects of sequestration on Army readiness should units awaiting a specific mission be targeted. Units can maintain a higher level of training proficiency and create a higher level of readiness by continuously manning units near 100 percent of authorization, reducing personnel turbulence, and maintaining equipment at peak readiness. Hence, personnel stability can partially offset the damage caused by budget reductions. Furthermore, raising unit readiness requires less training time and fewer resources if the unit is already manned and equipped at the highest levels. Together, these actions can mitigate the oft-criticized and obsolete industrial-age Army personnel management system where soldiers are often viewed simply as interchangeable parts.[46]

Personnel tours should be increased from three to four years for Soldiers assigned to corps and below formations when RAF designated. The increased time on station would permit reduced unit turbulence by rotating only six percent of the BCT personnel per quarter. Clearly there would be exceptions to the four-year rule, such as the need to accommodate 24-month BN/BDE command team rotations. Talent management consideration should also be extended for those individuals identified for early departure to key broadening assignments. A four-year assignment cycle will also generate cost savings by reducing the number of PCS moves. Longer tours will support the RAF tenet for Soldiers to develop a more comprehensive understanding of a specific region. Former SECDEF Leon Panetta raised the notion of reversibility in the Defense Strategic Guidance. His guidance was to maintain a system that allows the military industrial base and military to quickly grow capability and capacity to respond to unforeseen threats.[47] The Army must set conditions to accommodate that guidance. Raising the readiness baseline while instituting a four year assignment process is a first step forward.

Overall unit readiness is a combined function of personnel, equipment, supply and training readiness. If the Army can resource personnel and equipment, and sustain equipment readiness for units in a reset or train/ready force pool, those units will require less time and fewer resources when called upon. A commander whose unit is manned and equipped at a high level should be able to find innovative ways to enhance training proficiency. Generally speaking, opting for a higher training base will decrease the time required to achieve level-one readiness.

The adage "It takes three to make one" applies. The phrase intimates that in order to produce a trained and ready BCT, two additional BCTs are required. One is required to conduct the current mission, a second to train to replace the first, while the third BCT is recovering and resetting. This third BCT plays a critical role in protecting the other two from support tasks and out-load requirements during a deployment.

The Army should increase the current 24-month ARFORGEN model to 36 months while modifying the existing force pool construct to improve and manage readiness (see Figure 1). Modifying the existing ARFORGEN process will support a higher baseline level of readiness while acknowledging and enhancing the importance of regional alignment.

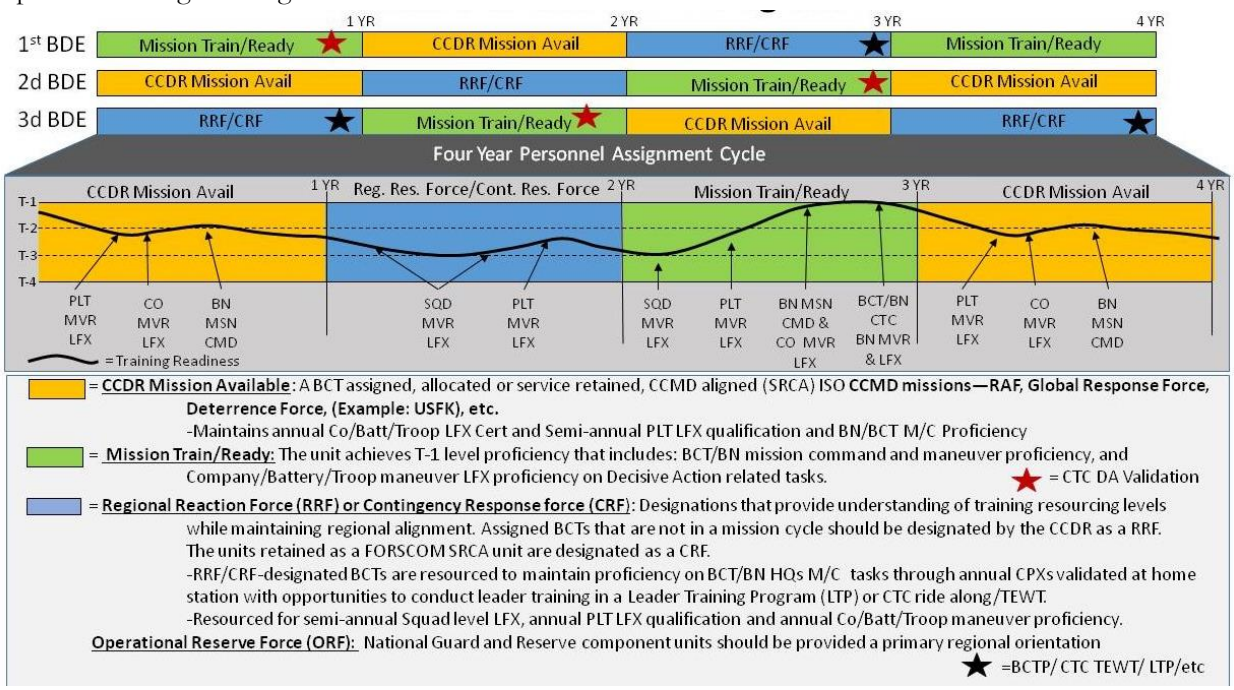

Figure 1. The Rule of Three Training Model[48]

The Army should rotationally designate BCTs that are not assigned a mission as contingency response forces (CRF). Likewise, combatant commands should designate select units as regional reserve forces (RRF). Designating units as a RRF/CRF provides a way to manage readiness through a resourcing strategy that supports enhanced baseline readiness while maintaining a regional focus. Designated RRF/CRF units would maintain a level of proficiency sufficiently high to accept any assigned mission while home station training to achieve T-1 proficiency could be accomplished in 30 days or less.

While serving as a RRF/CRF, a BCT would conduct reset, provide support to the installation, and be prepared to support deployment out-load operations. Additionally, the BCT in a RRF/CRF role allows other BCTs in the train/ready and mission availability pools to concentrate on their missions. A potential drawback to a 36-month model is that commanders and command sergeants major might not command during a mission cycle or they might prepare the unit and change command/responsibility prior to mission execution. The multiple-BCT focus recommended here also accounts for the requirements that may be expected of BCTs in support of a senior commander on a single Army post. This cyclical approach averts a tiered readiness system that has significant negative implications on the professionalism, readiness and morale of Soldiers and, moreover, remains fiscally feasible despite resource constraints.

The RAF concept does not produce any new requirements for material development for the movement and maneuver WfF that the MCoE has yet to address. The MCoE has placed significant effort on developing concepts to address future capability requirements for maneuver and reconnaissance forces. The RAF concept, however, places additional demands on the leadership and education for the movement and maneuver WfF such as regional orientation, cultural awareness and basic language competency. These training requirements are addressed in the FORSCOM training guidance and Army doctrine.

The RAF concept creates implications for the movement aspect of the warfighting function with regard to the location of Army units and an installation's out-load capability. One expectation for RAF-designated units is to be rapidly capable of global employment in order to achieve positional advantage by strategic movement. In order to meet rapid deployment requirements, the DoD should retain and build the capacity of domestic and foreign installations that are in close proximity to aerial and sea ports of embarkation. In a fiscally-constrained environment, retaining locations for rapid and optimal strategic movement should remain consistent with requirements in our National Military Strategy.

Conclusion

The Regionally Aligned Forces concept is a viable approach to providing trained and ready maneuver forces to combatant commanders (CCDRs) charged with operationalizing the prevent, shape and win strategy. The concept creates a number of challenges for the movement and maneuver warfighting function in terms of doctrine, organization, training and readiness for BCTs. This report identified existing capability gaps, provided recommendations to address those shortfalls, and discussed the risks and potential mitigation strategies involved in training and manning a BCT under current ARFORGEN policies. With additional refinement, brigade combat teams will have the capability and capacity to fully support the Regionally Aligned Forces concept: to provide ready and tailored land forces capable of meeting the combatant commander's requirements across the range of military operations.

Notes

[1] C. Todd Lopez, "Future Army Forces Must Be Regionally Aligned, Odierno Says," available from www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=118316, accessed on February 9, 2014.

[2] Bennet S. Sacolick and Wayne W. Grigsby: "Special Operations/Conventional Forces Interdependence: A Critical Role in "Prevent, Shape, Win"," *Army*, June, 2012, p. 39.

[3] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, August 11, 2011, p. V-1.

[4] James Learmont, "Regional Alignment of Forces," briefing slides, Carlisle Barracks, PA, U.S. Army War College, November 25, 2013.

[5] James E. Rexford, "Regionally Aligned Forces," briefing slides, Carlisle Barracks, PA, U.S. Army War College, November 19, 2013.

[6] Learmont, "Regional Alignment of Forces," briefing slides.

[7] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Publication 3-0 w/ Change 2, *Unified Land Operations,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 10, 2011, p. iv.

[8] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-6, *The U.S. Army Functional Concept for Movement and Maneuver 2016-2028,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 13, 2010, p. 3.

[9] Ibid.

[10] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, p. III-1.

[11] Raymond T. Odierno, "CSA Editorial: Prevent, Shape, Win," available from www.army.mil/article/71030/, accessed on January 21, 2014.

[12] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, August 11, 2011, pp. III-41- III-42.

[13] Odierno, "CSA Editorial: Prevent, Shape, Win."

[14] Ibid.

[15] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-0, *The U.S. Army Capstone Concept,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 19, 2012, p. 6.

[16] The Chief of Staff of the Army Home Page, "Army Vision Statement," available from www.army.mil/leaders/csa/, accessed on February 9, 2014.

[17] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-90.6, *Brigade Combat Team,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 2010, p. 1-1.

[18] Ibid*,* p. 1-6.

[19] Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Unified Land Operations*, p. 5.

[20] Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Brigade Combat Team,* p. 1-1.

[21] Michelle Tan, "The Huge BCT Overhaul," available from www.armytimes.com/articl e/20130702/NEWS/307020002/The-huge-BCT-overhaul, accessed on March 2, 2014.

[22] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Publication 1-0 w/ Change 2, *The Army,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, September, 2012, p. 3-2.

[23] Ibid., p. 3-3.

[24] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-22 w/ Change 1, *Army Support to Security Cooperation,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 22, 2013, p. 1-5.

[25] Headquarters, Department of the Army, *The U.S. Army Capstone Concept,* p. 29.

[26] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-90, *Offense and Defense,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, August, 31, 2012, p. 5-1.

[27] Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Brigade Combat Team,* p. 6-1.

[28] Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Reconnaissance and Cavalry Squadron,* Field Manual 3-20.96, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 12, 2010, p. 1-3.

[29] Ibid., p. 1-2.

[30] Tan, "The Huge BCT Overhaul."

[31] Ibid.

[32] U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, "Seizing the Initiative; Meeting Joint and Army Reconnaissance and Security Requirements," draft white paper, Fort Benning, GA, December 17, 2012.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-6, *The U.S. Army Functional Concept for Movement and Maneuver 2016-2028,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 13, 2010, p. 29.

[35] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Techniques and Procedures 3-20.98, *Reconnaissance Platoon,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 5, 2013, pp. 2-5, 2-8, 2-10.

[36] Interview conducted by author with CPT Nick Corrigan and SFC Kyle West, U.S. Army, Observers, Coaches and Trainers, Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, LA, February 25, 2013.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 525-29, *Military Operations, Army Force Generation,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 14, 2011, p. 3.

[39]John M. McHugh and Raymond Odierno, "A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2013, Fiscal year 2013," posture statement presented to the 113th Cong.,1st Sess., Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2013, p. 5.

[40] Kimberly Field, James Learmont and Jason Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces; Business Not as Usual," *Parameters* Vol. 43, No. 3, Autumn 2013, pp. 55-63.

[41] Learmont, "Regional Alignment of Forces."

[42]Raymond Odierno, *CSA Strategic Priorities, Waypoint 2, available from* usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/329319.pdf, accessed on February 5, 2013, p. 2.

[43] Ibid.

[44] McHugh and Odierno*,* "A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2013, Fiscal year 2013," p. 6.

[45] Ibid., p. 5.

[46] Raven Bukowski, John Childress, Michael J. Colarusso, David S. Lyle, "Creating an Effective Regional Alignment Strategy for the U.S. Army," Strategic Studies Institute Monograph, November 2014, p.5.

[47] Leon Panetta, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense,* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2012, p. 7.

[48] Graphic designed by authors.