

Appendix

A Brief Description of the U.S. Military

The Regular Components

Besides deciding whether or not to enter the military, an individual must also choose a service. Whether as an officer or as an enlisted member, a servicemember can serve either in an active-duty or a reserve capacity in today's military. Regular (active-duty) components include the armed forces—Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps—and the Coast Guard.¹ Figure A.1 shows the number of active-duty commissioned officers, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel at the end of calendar year 1996.²

Reserve Components

Whereas an active-duty status requires full-time service, a reserve status generally involves a part-time commitment. The Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 identified the seven reserve components in the U.S. military: the Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Naval Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, the Air National Guard, and the Coast Guard Reserve. The first six components are part of the Department of Defense; the Coast Guard Reserve, like its active counterpart, is part of the Department of Transportation during peacetime. A unique aspect of reserve-component management is the dual state-federal status of the Army and Air National Guards. During peacetime, National Guard units report to the governor of the state in which they are located. When federalized, they report to the federal government via their respective service organizations.³

Unlike an officer on active duty, who may either possess a regular or a reserve commission, officers in the Reserve or National Guard possess reserve

¹During peacetime, the Coast Guard is part of the Department of Transportation.

²Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics*, Washington, D.C., 1996, p. 49.

³For more information on the structure of the Reserves, see Roger A. Brown et al., *Assessing the Potential for Using Reserves in Operations Other Than War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, MR-796-OSD, 1997; for a description of the roles of the National Guard, see Roger A. Brown et al., *Assessing the State and Federal Missions of the National Guard*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, MR-577-OSD, 1995.

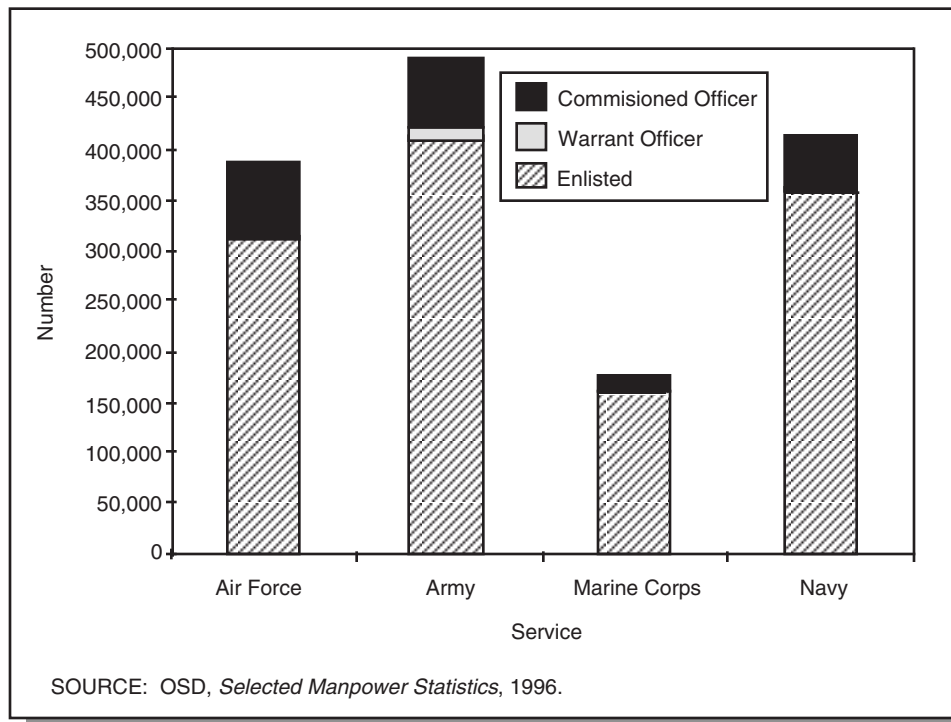


Figure A.1—Active-Duty Personnel, by Service (CY96)

commissions only. Figure A.2 shows the relationship of the reserves to active forces within the military services in CY96.

Rank Structure

A defining aspect of the military is organizational hierarchy, which tends to follow a well-defined rank structure made up of three levels: commissioned officers, warrant officers, and enlisted.⁴ The relationship of the three defines not only status but grade and authority as well. Within each status are specific ranks that individuals achieve by promotion, which is based on a combination of education, performance, and tenure.⁵ The relationship of education to promotion was discussed in Section 5.

⁴U.S. Code Title 10, Section 10, "Definitions of the Armed Forces," defines *rank* as "the order of precedence among members of the armed forces." *Grade* is defined as "a step or degree, in a graduated scale of office or military rank, that is established and designated as a grade by law or regulation."

⁵Some individuals enter in higher ranks because of prior education and experience. There are also unique circumstances for attaining temporary (frocking) or permanent (astronauts) rank.

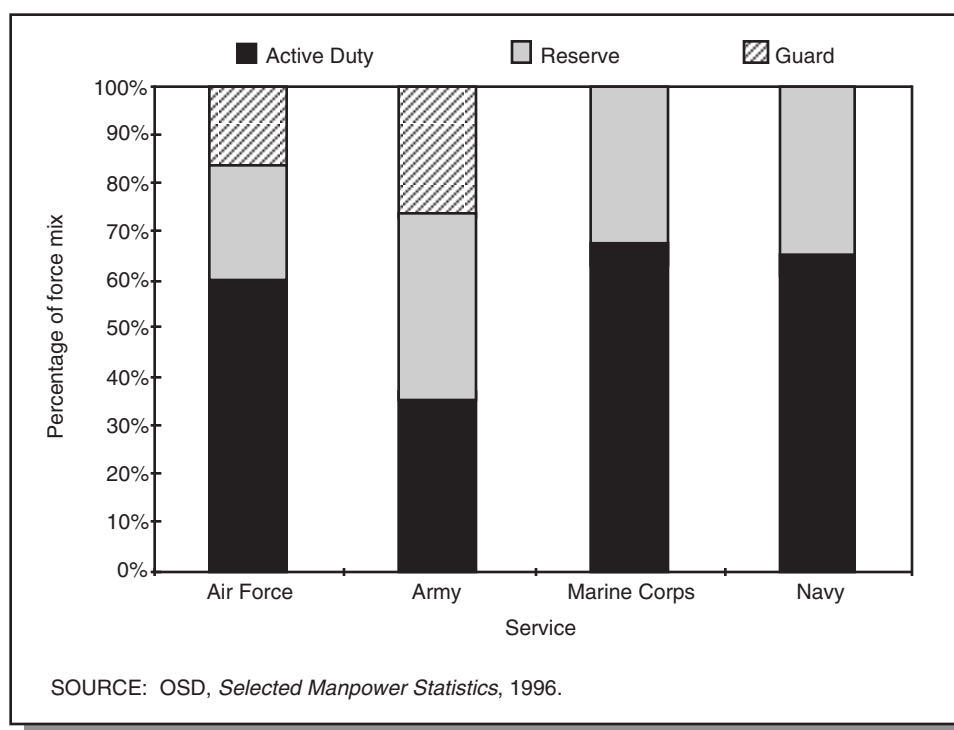


Figure A.2—Relationship of Active, Reserve, and Guard Forces in the Total Military Force Mix (CY96)

Upon choosing the military as an occupation, individuals usually enter at one of two grades: by enlisting, they will enter as an E-1, E-2, or E-3; by being commissioned as an officer, they will generally enter as an O-1. The only exception to this latter rule is for individuals who complete specialized, professional training, such as medical, legal, or religious schooling. Such officers enter through a direct appointment and usually join the military as O-3s. Tables A.1, A.2, and A.3 summarize grades and ranks and their titles across all services.

Table A.1
Commissioned-Officer Grades and Ranks

Grade	Service			
Commissioned Officer	Air Force	Army	Marine Corps	Navy
O-10	General	General	General	Admiral
O-9	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral
O-8	Major General	Major General	Major General	Rear Admiral
O-7	Brigadier General	Brigadier General	Brigadier General	Rear Admiral Lower Half
O-6	Colonel	Colonel	Colonel	Captain
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander
O-4	Major	Major	Major	Lieutenant Commander
O-3	Captain	Captain	Captain	Lieutenant
O-2	1st Lieutenant	1st Lieutenant	1st Lieutenant	Lieutenant Junior Grade
O-1	2nd Lieutenant	2nd Lieutenant	2nd Lieutenant	Ensign

Table A.2
Warrant-Officer Grades and Ranks

Grade	Service			
Warrant Officer	Air Force	Army	Marine Corps	Navy
W-5	Air Force does not have Warrant Officers	Chief Warrant Officer Five	Chief Warrant Officer Five	
W-4		Chief Warrant Officer Four	Chief Warrant Officer Four	Warrant Officer Four
W-3		Chief Warrant Officer Three	Chief Warrant Officer Three	Warrant Officer Three
W-2		Chief Warrant Officer Two	Chief Warrant Officer Two	Warrant Officer Two
W-1		Warrant Officer One	Warrant Officer One	Warrant Officer

Table A.3
Enlisted Grades and Ranks

Grade Enlisted	Service			
	Air Force	Army	Marine Corps	Navy
E-9	Chief Master Sergeant	Sergeant Major or Command Sergeant Major	Sergeant Major or Master Gunnery Sergeant	Master Chief Petty Officer Senior Chief Petty Officer
E-8	Senior Master Sergeant	First Sergeant or Master Sergeant	First Sergeant or Master Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer
E-7	Master Sergeant	Sergeant First Class	Gunnery Sergeant	Petty Officer First Class
E-6	Technical Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer Second Class
E-5	Staff Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant	Petty Officer Third Class
E-4	Sergeant or Senior Airman	Corporal or Specialist	Corporal	Seaman
E-3	Airman First Class	Private First Class	Lance Corporal	Seaman Apprentice
E-2	Airman	Private	Private First Class	Seaman Recruit
E-1	Airman Basic	Private	Private	