
SUMMARY

The recently established Total Army School System (TASS) has made some significant changes in how the Army provides individual training, but to this point it has concentrated primarily on changing how Reserve Component (RC) training institutions are organized and managed. This is leading to improvements in the efficiency and performance of RC schools.¹ However, given continued pressure on training resources and continued evidence of underutilized training capacity in the active and reserve components, there remains a need to improve training resource utilization and potentially reduce training infrastructure across the entire Army. Such improvements may be possible through further consolidation and integration of training resources into a common Army training system that is truly seamless and “component-blind.”

The objective of this analysis is to understand the feasibility and potential benefits of further integrating Active Component (AC) and RC schools offering reclassification training and noncommissioned officer (NCO) education. To meet this objective, we developed an optimization model that determines the least-cost assignment of students and courses to schools under a variety of options. We looked at three options in the area of maintenance-related training, focusing on RC Regional Training Sites–Maintenance (RTS–Ms) and the AC proponent schools offering maintenance courses (primarily, but not exclusively, Aberdeen Proving Ground). The premise we examine is that an accredited Army school with certified instructors

¹For a discussion of TASS implementation see Winkler et al. (MR-955-A, forthcoming).

can offer maintenance courses to any soldier (AC or RC) in its local area.

The options that we analyzed were as follows:

- **Nearest school.** We changed only the location where a student receives training, holding fixed (at fiscal year 1996 levels) the schools and the courses offered at each school.
- **Reassign courses.** We assigned AC and RC maintenance courses to AC schools and RTS-Ms based on local demand. Here, we considered two cases, one where RTS-Ms taught a wide range of courses (multifunctional) and one where they specialized in a specific functional area (specialized).
- **Consolidate schools.** We examined the number of schools that offer maintenance-related training if Army maintenance schools offer courses based on localized demand. For this option, we concentrated only on the “specialized” case described above.

Our exploratory analyses suggest that permitting AC and RC students to take the maintenance courses they need at the nearest accredited school (AC school or RTS-M) is feasible and offers a range of economic and cultural benefits. Travel, per diem, and (potentially) instructor² costs are reduced by allowing AC and RC students to take the course they need at the accredited Army school nearest to their home location independent of the component of the student or the school. For example, Figure S.1 shows that travel costs are lower for each of our options compared to a comparable estimate of travel costs for fiscal year 1996, the period we examined. Likewise, Figure S.2 shows the time AC soldiers spend away from their home location for the training, and, therefore, per diem costs are reduced under each option.

Morale benefits include a reduction in the time AC students spend away from their homes and their units and a reduction in the train-

²In our analysis, we did not specifically examine the requirement for, or the use of, different types of instructors at the AC schools or the RTS-Ms. Assigning courses and students to schools under the options we considered might allow more optimum use of the AC and RC instructors. This is certainly an area that warrants further research.

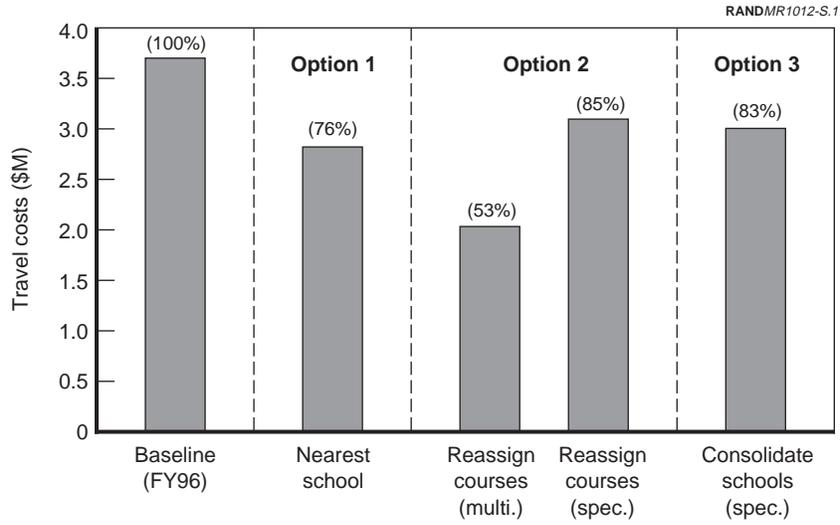


Figure S.1—Relative Impact on Travel Costs

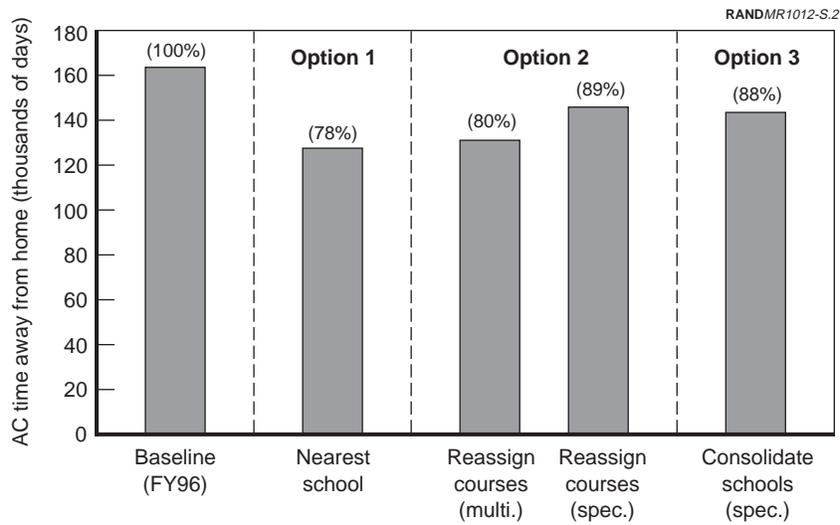


Figure S.2—Relative Active Component Student Time Away from Home

ing workloads of AC instructors. More important, integration of AC and RC training can increase interaction and potentially build trust and confidence across components.

We have examined maintenance-related courses, but there is no reason the types of integration we are proposing could not also work in other areas, particularly where RC schools with fixed facilities, organic equipment, and full-time staff exist or can be made available (i.e., where RC regional training sites have been established). Such Combat Service Support (CSS) functional areas as medical, transportation, or quartermaster are obvious extensions, as are such Combat Support (CS) areas as military intelligence, engineering, and aviation maintenance.

RTS-Ms can also play a valuable role with the advent of distance learning. Local RTS-Ms can provide facilities, and instructor expertise, to help both AC and RC soldiers who are taking courses, or portions of courses, outside a resident school environment.

Based on these findings, we recommend a pilot test to better understand the options and the policy implications of integrating the AC and RC training systems, focusing on maintenance and transportation. In addition, we recommend more thoroughly examining the instructor requirements that would result from a more fully integrated school system.