At the request of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER), RAND conducted a project entitled “Personnel Policy Implications of Army Distance Learning.” The goal of this effort was to help the Army maintain readiness and manage personnel efficiently as it implements distance learning (DL) throughout its Active and Reserve Component training systems. Initially, we described the potential scope of impact of the Army’s distance learning program and established a framework for assessing personnel policy issues; that analysis documented the need to examine more specifically the potential of DL to improve readiness. Subsequently, we focused on ways to capitalize on DL to enhance personnel readiness, focusing on two areas: (1) DL’s potential for reducing personnel shortages in Army enlisted occupations and (2) DL’s effect on stability and the professional development of soldiers.

In this report we provide a broad overview of the research conducted over the course of this project and then discuss some ways in which the Army can further leverage the potential of DL technologies.

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