
PREFACE

This report is an executive summary of a study examining personnel readiness of the Selected Reserve Components from FY86–FY94. The study results are reported in a companion document, MR-681/2-OSD, which describes the data, technical analyses, and findings in detail and will serve as a reference source for future work in this area. This summary sets the overall findings in a policy context and highlights their importance. In addition, it points to some potential areas of concern with respect to reserve manning in the future. The study builds on earlier work on reserve personnel readiness that was based on the FY89 inventory of reserve personnel and was reported in Grissmer et al. (1994a). That report highlighted a potential constraint to relying on the reserve force: the likelihood of future limits on the availability of experienced formerly active-duty personnel for reserve service resulting from the active drawdown.

The current study updates and extends the earlier analysis in a number of important ways. First, the data examined are more recent (through FY94) and reflect the early effects of both the active and the reserve drawdown; second, analyses of the large cohorts recently separated from active duty point to the success of the Reserve Components in recruiting from this prior-service pool; third, fears that Operation Desert Storm might lead to a huge outflow from the reserves can largely be laid to rest, as the analysis of attrition shows. Indeed, the study reveals that the Reserve Components have been remarkably successful in keeping quality high, attracting and retaining prior-service personnel, improving skill match rates at entry, and keeping attrition and skill-qualification rates fairly stable.

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