



Enabling the Global Response Force

Access Strategies for the 82nd Airborne Division

Christopher G. Pernin, Katharina Ley Best, Matthew E. Boyer, Jeremy M. Eckhause, John Gordon

IV, Dan Madden, Katherine Pfrommer, Anthony D. Rosello, Michael Schwillie, Michael Shurkin, Jonathan P. Wong

www.rand.org/t/RR1161

The Global Response Force (GRF) is built for rapid response to unforeseen operations. This study determined access strategies for each geographic combatant command given constraints in aircraft, intermediate staging bases, operational capabilities, and other factors. Global access requires both well-established and austere staging bases; complex joint deployment concepts are necessary to ensure access.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How is the Army’s portion of the Global Response Force going to get where it needs to go?
- What needs to be done to enable GRF operations, in terms of concept development, planning, and exercises?



KEY FINDINGS

In addition to its intended use as a rapid response capability, the Army’s portion of the GRF has a role on longer time lines.

Multiple, complex deployment concepts are necessary to ensure global coverage.

- Airborne insertion of early-entry forces can arrive from great distances on various types of lift.

The GRF needs use of intermediate staging bases to ensure global coverage for their missions.

- Accessing austere bases with limited infrastructure will be necessary for global coverage.

Force packaging and initial and follow-on force flows drive aircraft demands and ISB selection.

- There is wide variation in sizes of the forces, depending on multiple factors.
- GRF requirement for strategic lift can be reasonable, given the availability.
- Mustering airdrop-qualified crews does not seem to be a problem.

Plans, planning, exercises, and site preparation are rarely applied to GRF operations.

- Realistic exercises, and habitual planning, are key to validating the GRF's capabilities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- The multiple, complex deployment concepts should be codified in joint and service doctrine and multi-service TTPs.
- Deployment concepts should be validated for readiness through plans, planning, and exercises.
- Tailoring force packages, for both initial-entry and follow-on forces, should be done to meet demands of the environment and limitations in Joint assets (like strategic lift).
- A joint letter between Army and Air Force should lay to rest an ongoing perception of constraints in airdrop-crew availability for airborne operations.

