The Army National Guard Beyond 2030

Director, Army National Guard Paper #2: Challenges to the ARNG Enterprise

Army National Guard Directorate
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Contents

Preface – The DARNG Papers

The DARNG Paper series establishes a shared strategic direction for beyond 2030 that aids ARNG senior leaders to:

- Advise Army senior leaders and guide State leaders on ARNG employment in a complex environment
- Identify indicators and impacts of organizational and environmental change
- Develop broad options for future DARNGs and TAGs based on those changes

Paper #1 Summary

DARNG Paper #1 introduced the main purpose of the series, identifying and exploring trends and tensions within the ARNG. The paper provided historical context, tracing the ARNG's evolution and its adaptation to changing needs throughout history. Paper #1 identified numerous questions to guide the holistic organizational assessment in this paper. Paper #2 provides some of those answers.

Did you miss it? Scan this code for DARNG Paper 1

What to Expect in Paper #2
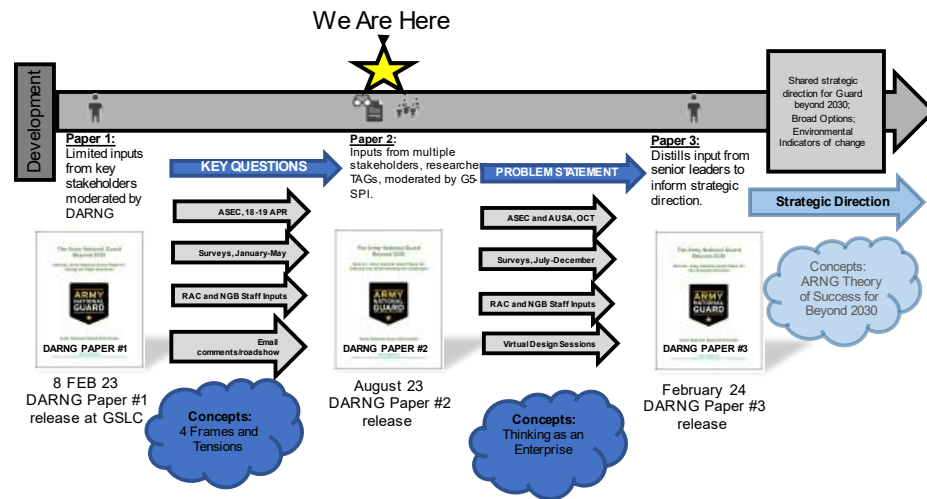
Figure 1 – DARNG Papers Overview

DARNG Paper #2 summarizes research findings to illustrate how tensions identified in Paper #1 affect the ARNG and begins to frame a narrative for a successful ARNG beyond 2030. Research leading to this paper identified the following problem statement:

The ARNG must see, understand, and behave as an enterprise to successfully shape the ARNG beyond 2030 by developing enterprise-level professionals and processes, creating a sustainable strategic narrative, and enhancing transparency and accountability.

I. Introduction to Paper #2 from the DARNG

In my time as the 22nd Director of the Army National Guard (DARNG), I have spoken with leaders throughout the 54 States and Territories (the 54). As the DARNG, communicating and setting priorities are the two most important things I do for our leaders. The DARNG Paper series aims to do both. Paper #1 introduced our unique challenges. Paper #2 communicates our unique capacities, capabilities, and addressable challenges. Paper #3 will develop strategic narratives and engagement options to help the organization navigate a dynamic environment beyond 2030.

The National Guard is unique in the Department of Defense because we are two, overlapping organizations: the National Guard of the United States, and the National Guard of each State or Territory. This means there is no single Commander of the National Guard. We are a peer-led organization that functions most effectively when we have consensus on what we need to do. As the Global War on Terror (GWOT) ended, decades-old debates regarding our identity and purpose have re-emerged.

I remember two interactions as I considered this paper. The first conversation occurred during the ARNG Senior Executive Council, with a colleague who became an Adjutant General (TAG) in 2009. He said in the early 2000's, TAGs focused heavily on policy, legislation, and strategic influence. As we moved through the GWOT's second decade, TAG developmental experiences changed and they became increasingly focused on operations. He reflected that we had lost a great deal of the art and science of leading strategically. The second conversation was with a group of Soldiers, where I remarked that none of the senior leaders want to see us go back to being a "Strategic Reserve." A field grade officer in the audience suggested that I ask young Lieutenant Colonels and Majors instead to see what *they* think.

Ultimately, decisions for how the total force will operate are not ours to make. Governors will decide the best way for their States' National Guards to operate, and the Department of Defense (DoD) will provide guidance and resourcing on how the National Guard of the United States will contribute to Army, Joint Force, and national goals.

However, it remains our responsibility to provide the best possible advice and guidance for those leaders. The ARNG Directorate of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) is uniquely positioned to assess the impact of organizational changes, holistically and strategically. This means rekindling the art and science of enterprise thinking.

This must be a collaborative effort and I invite your participation, regardless of rank or status. Our organization's complicated and complex challenges require input and effort from every level. For those who contributed your thoughts after Paper #1, I thank you. The perspectives of Soldiers are as critical as those of the 50+ TAGs, Command Chief Warrant Officers (CCWOs), and Command Sergeants Major (CSMs) who responded to our survey on Paper #1. The conclusion section of this paper outlines how you can join this conversation. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jon A. Jensen
Lieutenant General
Director, Army National Guard

II. Strategic Environment

The Joint Force is at an inflection point during what will be a decisive decade. Geopolitical relationships are shifting, economies are rising – and falling, rapid technological advances are fueling militaries' modernizations at scale, and external factors like climate change and pandemics are changing the way people live, work, and go to war. […]
The United States must meet this challenge with alacrity, discipline, and fortitude. The window to seize the strategic initiative is now. This National Military Strategy (NMS) is a wakeup call:
Adapt Now or Lose Later.
-National Military Strategy 2022

Rising complexity, increasing polarization, and decreasing resources mark the Army National Guard's strategic environment.[1] Globally, the current strategic era defies definition so much that most experts have referred to it as the "post-Cold War era" for three decades.[2] One trend identified in the 2022 National Security Strategy is the competition between democracies and autocracies.[3] This competition among alliances, individual nations, and multi-national private and public organizations stretches well beyond the military, and requires whole-of-government participation. Nations

Figure 2 – Rise of Autocracy

compete over values and ideals, such as collectivism versus individualism, the extent of human rights, and how people should share power through government. Autocracy is on the rise, threatening the world order established following World War II (see Figure 2).[4,5] Global technological innovation is accelerating and shaping future competition and conflict.[6,7]
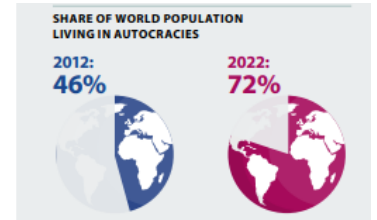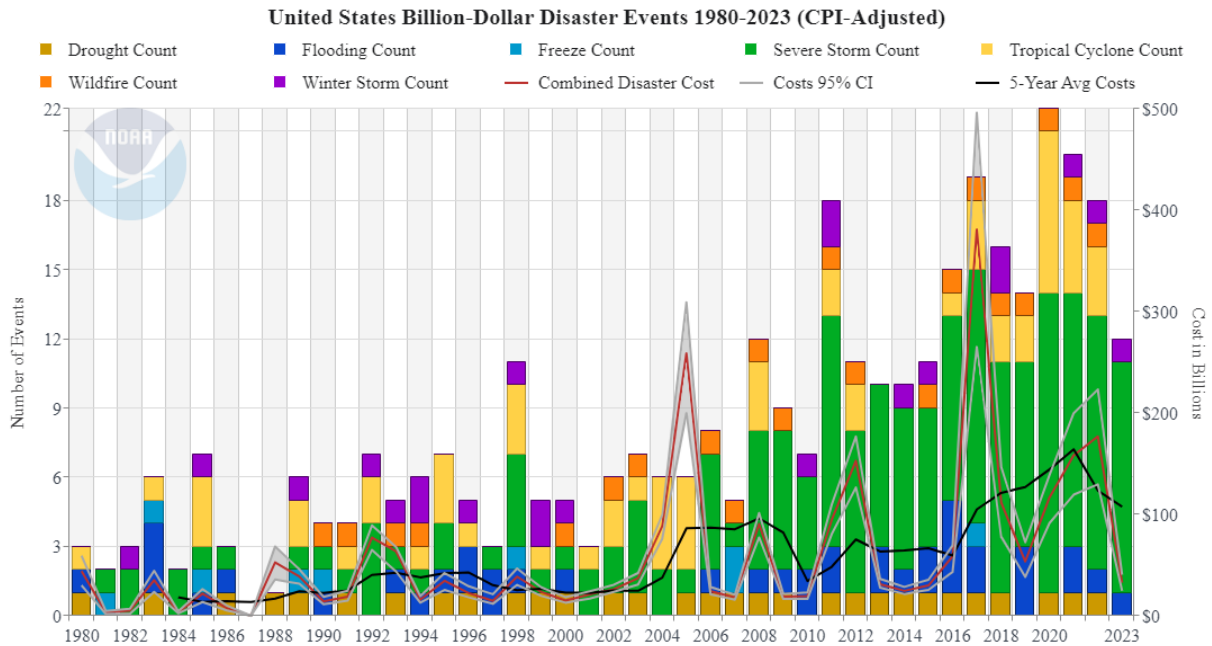
Domestically, the primary foreseeable challenges in the coming decade are the steady increase in disasters, political divisiveness, and civil unrest. From 1980–2023 (as of July 11, 2023), there have been 360 confirmed weather/climate disaster events with

Figure 3 - Disasters

losses exceeding $1 billion (see Figure 3).[8] The pace and cost of damage from these events are increasing.

Concurrently, political division has steadily increased in the United States (see Figure 4).[9] It is evidenced by public opinion polling and demonstrations. As these divisions have grown, extremist activity has increased.[10]

To compound this, changing demographics threaten key resources – namely the labor pool and U.S. budget.[11] The U.S. labor market is growing more slowly than in the past. This leads to a projected decrease in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the next 30 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office (see

Figure 4 - Polarization

Figure 5). Lower GDP generally translates to reduced revenue in the Federal budget. The aging population also drives spending increases on mandatory programs, such as Social Security and Medicare. A compounding national debt further amplifies this imbalance. At current projections, regular spending on national debt interest alone will exceed total defense spending by FY 2029. Barring other changes, this will likely lead to flat or decreasing defense spending.

Figure 5 – Average growth of real potential GDP and its components (Decreasing Resources)

III. The ARNG Enterprise

Enterprise is a term often associated with businesses or business initiatives. The Army Office of Business Transformation defines enterprise as the "highest level in an organization; it includes all missions, tasks, and activities or functions." The ARNG enterprise consists of the ARNG of each State, the ARNG of the United States, and the ARNG Directorate at NGB.

Enterprise thinking refers to the ability of members in each component of the ARNG enterprise to gain a clearer and more uniform perspective of the entirety of the ARNG, a respect for how problems of differing complexity require different approaches, and an ability and willingness to look beyond individual interests in favor of those benefitting the entire organization.

The ARNG enterprise is a system, and each part of it can affect the whole. A system's essential characteristic does not exist solely within its individual parts. For example, a car's essential characteristic is that it can move things from one place to another. No individual component or sub-system of the car allows that – the tires, motor, or axles alone do not enable the car to move things. The car only functions when all pieces work together as a whole.[12] The essential characteristic of the ARNG is its ability to provide strategic depth and operational capability at the State and Federal levels, and **no part of the ARNG can do this in isolation.** To prove this concept, removing Federal funding, training, and standardization would make the ARNG into a State defense force, without the standardization and resources characterizing the modern ARNG. Conversely, removing State missions, equities, and responsibilities would make the ARNG into another Federal reserve force, eliminating the unique experiences and skills ARNG Soldiers develop by responding to State needs. There have been attempts to change the nature of the National Guard, and they have generally failed (see history callout box on page 9).

The ARNG's Dual Nature in the Strategic Environment

The modern ARNG came into being in a strategic environment not unlike our current one, characterized by complexity, threats to the homeland, and changing resources (see history box on right). In the current environment of global competition, domestic disasters, polarization, and decreasing resources, the ARNG offers integrated Army capabilities to the Joint Force and States at a lower employment cost, and military experiences and benefits to its members at lower opportunity cost (see callout box 1). This is the ARNG's core value proposition to its key stakeholders and members.

The National Guard's mission is its most essential characteristic and makes the ARNG unique in the DoD. The ARNG links Federal and State stakeholders with high demand capabilities and capacities in both peace and war, establishing its role as an enduring constant. The value the ARNG

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History of the ARNG Enterprise

The 1916 National Defense Act and the birth of the ARNG's duality

While 1636 is often celebrated as the birth of the ARNG, the ARNG Enterprise in its modern form, came into existence in the early 1900s.

The US faced a crisis following Pancho Villa's raid in New Mexico and the war in Europe. There were several conflicting views on how America should defend itself and respond to an overseas war. Leaders worried about military adventurism creating costly and troublesome commitments.

Two competing schools of thought arose, led by **Emory Upton** and **John McAuley Palmer** respectively. Upton believed the militia system was ineffective and dangerous. Palmer argued that a nation cannot be "democratic in peace and autocratic at war," highlighting the Founders' vision of citizens' engagement in their own defense.

Upton struck first with a plan to raise a million-man Army consisting entirely of Active and Federal Reserve troops, relegating state militias to homeland defense only.

The plan failed for two major reasons; it was costly, and it ran contrary to President Woodrow Wilson's non-intervention narrative.

Palmer, drawing on the political influence of the States, the National Guard Association, and his own positive experience serving with Guardsmen, helped to pen the 1916 National Defense Act, clarifying Guardsmen's dual status and resolving many concerns about the militia.

Additionally, Palmer's plan raised a million-man Army while meeting political realities, and simultaneously increased the ARNG's authorized end strength to 435,000. Of note, since this time the ARNG's target end strength has remained relatively consistent compared to the Army's end strength. (See Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Strength of the ARNG and Active Component
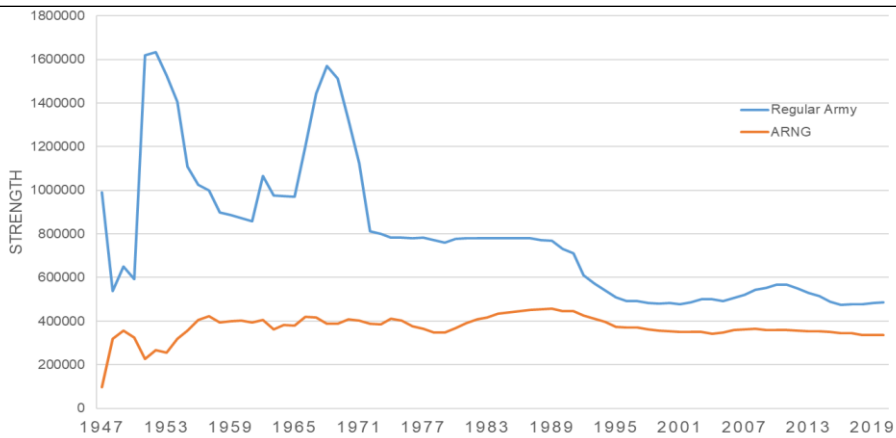
provides has been evidenced by its relatively static end strength over time (see Figure 6). This consistency allows the ARNG to provide the Army a backbone of strategic depth. The ARNG's unique authorities, geographic dispersion, and relationships enable its distinct operational capability.

Leveraging the ARNG's Duality in the Current Environment

Callout 1: Data Supporting the Value of the ARNG.
Recent DoD studies, validated by the Government Accountability Office, show the costs of a traditional drilling Citizen-Soldier are roughly 15% of what a Regular Army Soldier costs. Even when activated, annual costs of Citizen-Soldiers are 85-90% of the cost for Regular Army Soldiers. This "fully burdened life cycle cost" is further reduced in comparison to the Regular Army due to generally lower retirement costs from traditional Guardsmen.

The National Guard's dual mission also gives the ARNG unique capacities for relationship building, both abroad and in the interagency. In strategic competition, partnerships around the world are the nation's most important asset.[13] Trust is the currency of these relationships, and trust cannot be generated at time of need.[14] Multiple efforts over many years form trust. **Most ARNG Soldiers will remain in one state for their entire career,** presenting a unique trust-building advantage not found elsewhere in the U.S. Government. Relationships between State Partner forces and ARNG Soldiers can build over decades,

compared to the Active Component or State Department, which tend to rotate personnel every few years.

This capability for generating trust and experience through enduring relationships also extends to the interagency. Through the role as Governors' response forces, ARNG professionals have a comparative advantage in interagency experience compared to other components and services. In the emerging competitive strategic environment, this translates to ARNG leaders better prepared to operate in whole-of-government and interagency environments.[15]

"All our noncommissioned officer corps across Europe are advancing at different paces. So, we must critically analyze where they are, understand the starting point, and develop a plan to advance them. That is where the National Guard plays a key role since they already have those relationships. Now we can hone in on that, so we are all shooting towards the same target."
CSM Robert Abernethy, USEUCOM

These unique capacities manifest themselves in other National Guard programs, including the Chemical Response Enterprise (CRE), Counterdrug, and the Federated Intelligence Program (FIP).

> "I ultimately re-enlisted in the National Guard in large part due to having a Federated Intelligence Program to plug into during drill. There is no better opportunity to get good at your job than through answering real-world requirements."
> Entry-level M-day Soldier comment related to FIP

The ARNG was not designed for these complex missions, Nevertheless, these programs emerged from the ARNG's unique dual nature and bring value to Federal and State requirements. In a strategic environment characterized by complex needs, such programs appear tailor-made to meet the environment. It is important to remember these programs were not tailor-made, and many operate off nebulous authorities or inconsistent resources. Many of these programs were born in a single state, designed as

> "The work of the NG [Counterdrug] personnel in support of law enforcement makes them more ready to deploy CONUS, as they conduct daily missions involving mission analysis, reconnaissance and observation, and linguistic translation."
> -Chair, National Guard Counterdrug Advisory Council

one-off solutions to specific problems, and grew in scope due to their success and relatively low cost. In the coming decade, authorities and capacities of these programs will likely be expanded – or challenged – as they continue to create impacts around the nation and globe. Other programs may arise to continue leveraging the ARNG's unique characteristics to meet strategic needs.

The ARNG Enterprise and Emerging Technology

The Joint Force must consider impacts of emerging technology on and off the battlefield. As the GEN Westmoreland quote below from 1969 demonstrates, modernization is an ongoing and persistent challenge. In the ARNG enterprise, Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) largely sets the vision for how the total Army will be modernized and employed in combat. The ARNG's

History of the ARNG Enterprise

Strikebreaking, Purpose, and the Birth of NGAUS

The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 led to nationwide activations of state militias. In many states, the National Guard became a tool for employers to suppress dissent, a role that did not sit well with National Guard leaders who saw themselves as links between the community and defense.

This had two consequences. First, at the Federal level, Congress responded to the inconsistent performance of some units by proposing militia reform legislation. At the State and Servicemember levels, officers unwilling to be known only as strikebreakers and wary of Federal oversight, formed the National Guard Association (originally NGA, now NGAUS), the nation's oldest military lobbying organization.

Recognizing the Citizen-Soldiers' inherent connections to elected leaders, the association lobbied for decades to become officially designated as a combat reserve of the Army. NGAUS enabled the Dick Act of 1903 and the National Defense Acts of 1916, 1920, and 1933. These acts gave the National Guard dual-status in the Army and State, Federal funding, and resolved many lingering legal questions about activating the Guard.

They also wrote into existence the National Guard Bureau, and would help defeat attempts in 1915, 1918, 1948, and 1964 to relegate the National Guard to state missions only.

This complex network of State, Federal, elected, and lobbyist actors remains part of understanding the ARNG enterprise.

On the battlefield of the future, enemy forces will be located, tracked, and targeted almost instantaneously through the use of data links, computer assisted intelligence evaluation, and automated fire control […] with surveillance devices that can continually track the enemy, the need for large forces to fix the opponent becomes less important. I see battlefields that are under 24-hour real or near-real time surveillance of all types. I see battlefields on which we can destroy anything we can locate through instant communications and almost instantaneous application of highly lethal firepower. [...] In summary, I see an Army built into and around an integrated area control system that exploits the advanced technology of communications, sensors, fire direction, and the required automatic data processing.
William Westmoreland, Address to the Association of the U.S. Army, October 14,1969

unique capabilities are largely derived from its authorities, relationships, and dual mission. Technology plays a lesser role in generating these unique capabilities but cannot be ignored. The largest impacts to the ARNG come from technologies that change how people work, communicate, and process information.

Chief among these emerging technologies is Artificial Intelligence (AI) which can speed processing of information and significantly improve situational awareness. [16] There are also limitations. Large language models require massive amounts of processing power, relying on internet connectivity for cloud-based processing, which cannot always be guaranteed in a disaster response. Additionally, these models can introduce bias that can be impossible to remove. Finally, aggregation of unclassified data can often lead to classification concerns.

Figure 7 – Army BPR "Lenses"

Balancing the use of these technologies requires a focus beyond the technology itself. The five lenses from Army Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) provide a helpful model for factors that should be considered as the ARNG adapts to new technologies, with a specific focus on the policy, people, and business process considerations (see figure 7).[17] As an example, changing the system which generates orders can create challenges with existing policy, as the output may vary from legacy systems, as was recently evidenced by the switch to IPPS-A. Overreliance on one specific system can impair resiliency as demonstrated by the extended shutdown of the Guard Incentives Management system.

The Current Environment Requires Enterprise Functioning of the ARNG

The ARNG's unique capabilities and capacities are in high demand. In time, increasing demand may threaten the value proposition- and identity- of the ARNG. Increasing opportunity cost to members to such a level that family relationships and civilian careers are threatened may impair strength. Increasing employment cost of the force too close to that of the Active component may threaten the relevance of the organization in meeting Federal and State needs. Exploring how successful enterprises incorporate emerging technology and meet complicated and complex challenges is necessary to build an ARNG strategic direction beyond 2030.

What Successful Enterprises Do – The Art and Science of Enterprise Functioning

A successful enterprise tailors its approach to challenges based on complexity. Complexity of a problem is not the same as difficulty. Instead, a problem's complexity refers to how clearly its causes can be understood– simple, complicated, complex, or chaotic – and what types of practices are best at making sense of and resolving the problem.

The Science of Enterprise Functioning – Simple and Complicated

SECURITY CLEARANCE ORGANIZATIONAL & UNIT TRACKER

Simple domains have clear, self-evident cause and effect, and require skills in the science of leadership. Successful enterprises optimize the simple parts of their systems by using Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) and identifying and sharing best practices across the organization. The ARNG has many simple systems, like inputting data into pay or maintenance systems, performing physical inspections and inventories, medical readiness checks, scheduling exercises, etc. These tasks can be difficult, but with appropriate optimization and standardization, ARNG units can guarantee repeated success and solve problems.

Complicated domains require a higher level of expert skills and good data to reliably see cause and effect. Successful enterprises optimize complicated systems through targeted analysis, which often includes optimizing many simple processes as referenced above. Complicated systems within the overall ARNG enterprise include mobilization processes, manpower calculations, and campaign planning. With sufficient expertise, knowledge, data, and visibility, the ARNG turning these complicated challenges into simpler ones by defining cause and effect, and then optimizing the processes.

An example of resolving a difficult problem in the complicated domain is the Massachusetts ARNG's (MAARNG) Security Clearance Organizational Unit Tracker (SCOUT) program. This program, developed by a traditional MAARNG officer on temporary Active Duty Operations Support (ADOS) orders, leverages tools the enterprise already has, for example PowerBI, to rapidly create Security Clearance Access Rosters (SCARs). SCOUT reduced the labor hours spent on this problem from 567 hours to 15 minutes. The system is so successful that over 75% of States have since adopted it, and the Army Reserve is evaluating it for adoption. Through optimization, data, and expert knowledge, complicated problems can be resolved.

The ARNG is uniquely capable of developing such solutions because each State has authorities to experiment and resolve problems, and most States are dealing with similar problems. This creates 54 possible "laboratories" for innovation which only need appropriate forums to share best practices.

The Art of Enterprise Functioning – Complex

Complex systems are different. Challenges in the complex domain cannot be resolved in the traditional sense.[18] Instead, complex challenges must be actively managed. Continuing the car analogy, introducing a driver makes a car complex. Vehicle drivers are unpredictable and impacted by a wide variety of factors outside of the vehicle itself. Even the driver may not be aware of all those factors.

An example from industry is Wal-Mart's slowing growth.[19] The causes are complex and tangled, and in many ways caused by feedback loops from Wal-Mart's own successes. Wal-Mart's large market share reduced its ability to increase sales, and its low-price brand identity made it difficult to expand into higher-end items. To continue growth, Wal-Mart was faced with changing its brand identity for the first time in 50 years, and all response options were risky and unpredictable. The organization considered expanding into international markets, cutting supplier margins, and introducing a line of higher-price and profit items.[20] Each of these options threatened some aspect of the organization's identity. In the end, Wal-Mart had to evaluate its values, competencies, and aspirations among a diverse group of stakeholders to determine where to take those risks, and ultimately elected to expand into India. Another hallmark of problems in the complex domain – there may be no "right" choice available.

The ARNG is a complex system and has many complex challenges, including building positive command climates, recruiting, and dealing with sexual assault and suicide. Successful enterprises manage complex challenges by bringing together diverse groups of stakeholders, building shared understanding and goals, and iteratively revising practices and

Scenario planning will be addressed in future papers.

Figure 7 – An approach to complex problems

policies. One example is shown above in the PPG Industries model for dealing with problems in complex domains (Figure 7). This begins with identifying the organization's values, competencies, and aspirations, scanning the environment, applying "Pareto analysis[1]" to identify high payoff targets, and analyzing scenarios. The Army Design methodology also provides models for managing complex problems, as do other industry and military design methodologies, including the Stanford D-School design model, IBM's Ideate model, Australian Adaptive Campaigning, and more.[21]

Regardless of approach, the goal in managing complex issues is to **amplify desired effects** and **dampen undesired ones**. Complex problems are never solved or resolved, but managed. Complex problems change over time and in response to how the organization interacts with them. As outlined in the recent DoD Preventing Suicide in

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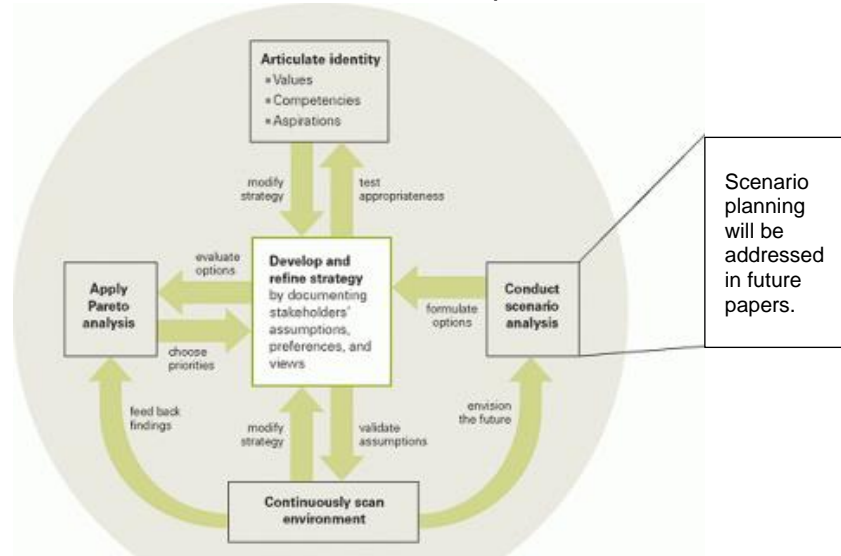[1] The Pareto Principle states that 80 percent of a project's benefit comes from 20 percent of the work. Or, conversely, that 80 percent of problems originate from 20 percent of causes. Pareto Analysis identifies the problem areas or tasks that will have the biggest payoff.

the U.S. Military committee report (SPRIRC), permanent or final resolution to complex problems like suicide are not feasible. Instead, organizations must focus on ongoing and persistent efforts to amplify things like access to resources and safe, confidential reporting, while dampening issues like stigma, cronyism, and mistrust. The same is true for recruiting and retention; how the enterprise competes for labor requires constant updating based on a myriad of cultural and economic factors.

Dealing with these types of challenges requires enterprise-level professionals, transparency, and a common sense of purpose. These are some of the biggest challenges to the ARNG enterprise today.

IV. Priority Challenges to Seeing, Understanding, and Behaving as an Enterprise

Attributes for the ARNG Enterprise beyond 2030
(Recorded at Summer 2023 Senior Leader Offsite)

- A partnered organization, linked to HQDA policy and States, with member permeability to enhance talent management.
- An enterprise with an array of capabilities that functions as part of the total force, leveraging a predictable training model.
- A unit that communicates its unique value proposition and meets State, Army, and national needs without pricing itself out of the market.
- An influential organization that can leverage its unique connections to improve the total force.
- A dynamic organization with a diversity of specialists that demonstrates the ability to rapidly generate readiness as directed, bounded by a realistic understanding of its own agility.
- A facts-based organization that uses data to support decisions and does not overpromise its capabilities.
- An organization on par with the Regular Army for benefits and assignments.
- An organization with the right leaders embedded at all echelons of the Joint Force.

The 54 and the ARNG Directorate of NGB have a statutory, ethical, and moral responsibility to enable Soldier success in future conflicts and crises. In the summer 2023 Senior Leader offsite, TAGs, the DARNG, and HQDA professionals worked together to identify the ideal attributes of an ARNG enterprise at 2030 and beyond (See left). Strengthening the ARNG enterprise requires seeing, understanding, and behaving as an enterprise. The biggest challenges to this are developing enterprise-level professionals and processes, creating a sustainable strategic narrative for the ARNG institution, and enhancing transparency and accountability.

Developing Enterprise-Level Professionals and Processes

The National Guard has the DoD's most complex challenge for producing military professionals. This is because the ARNG professional lives in two worlds – the ARNG of the State and the ARNG of the United States – and because ARNG professionals are more directly connected to many of those stakeholders including elected leaders. To function as an enterprise, the ARNG must develop and resource professionals who fully understand the enterprise and how to function within it. This requires talent management strategies to recruit, retain, and develop professionals who can successfully cope with the complicated and complex challenges of the ARNG. The ARNG must empower those professionals with tools, processes, and policies that enable them to meet Soldiers' needs as a modern employer, while leveraging their influence on behalf of the total force. This includes getting things like communications, pay, and promotions right.

What Makes an Enterprise-Level ARNG Professional or Process?

ARNG enterprise-level professionals must understand and function within the ARNG of the State and ARNGUS. This means they can recognize the roles and authorities of NGB, the ARNG of the State, and the ARNGUS, and can operate within those complexities to establish processes that **take care of Soldiers, navigate multiple systems and authorities,** and **meet mission requirements.** A great deal is expected from these ARNG professionals. They are expected to develop and maintain capabilities associated with both their military and

> "The service member (SM) signs a contract and part of that contract is a bonus or incentive pay or even rank, however the SM has to fight or wait for years to receive it. In some cases this turns into an IG complaint to get movement. When the SM doesn't fulfill their part of the obligation the command team is quick to take corrective actions, but when the enterprise fails to meet its obligation the SM is told nothing can be done. […] they feel as if the enterprise let them down."
>
> Command Chief Warrant Officer Survey Comment

civilian jobs, as well as understand and navigate a complicated web of benefits, authorities, and systems at the State level. As State laws govern each State ARNG, this means ARNG service in each State differs based on that State's environment. Additionally, many processes, such as promotions, cross both State and Federal lines; ARNG leaders must be promoted by both the ARNG of their State and the ARNGUS. These processes introduce significant delays and bureaucracy.

In the ARNG system, failure to develop adequate enterprise-level processes and professionals creates problems in three ways. First, it prevents the ARNG from functioning as a team. Second, poor support and processes lead to administrative failures (delayed bonuses or promotions, late school cancellations, etc.), prompting talented individuals to leave the organization in pursuit of better opportunities. This in turn diminishes the overall talent pool from which the ARNG can develop enterprise professionals. Finally, lack of enterprise-level professional thinking impairs proper prioritization and allocation of resources. The four frames from Paper #1 help us to understand the role of ARNG enterprise-level professionals and processes in the current system.

ARNG's composition presents distinct challenges to developing enterprise-level professionals and processes, based on where and how these professionals serve. ARNG personnel are comprised of (from largest element to smallest): M-Day Soldiers, T32 AGR, T10 AGR, and Title 5 civilians. The M-Day force includes traditional drilling Guardsmen, Military Technicians (MILTECHs), and ADOS serving on temporary active duty to meet State or Federal requirements. There are no "part-time" Citizen-Soldiers, as ARNG servicemembers live the Army Values every day. However, respecting and enabling the balance M-Day Soldiers must strike requires recognition that the ARNG is not their full-time career.

Numerous tensions exist within and between these parts of the ARNG. First, many strategic and operational decisions impacting the ARNG are made by full-time personnel, but primarily impact the M-Day force. Second, States and the ARNG

Directorate directly compete for the best-qualified people. Third, certain programs (such as MILTECHs) have the perception of lower benefits and employee experiences, often leading to high turnover. Increased turnover creates disproportionate training costs and impairs development of institutional knowledge in this force. Factors impacting professional development of the ARNG force can be further understood through the four frames identified in Paper #1.

Challenges in the Federal frame – Roles, Authorities, and Statuses

The ARNG operates at the nexus of many complicated laws and policies ARNG leaders must know. For example, traditional Soldiers may qualify for significantly different benefits based on service for training under Title 32 USC §502(a), activated with Governor's authority under Title 32 USC §502(f), or deployed overseas under Title 10 USC. Who can approve and order an activation varies based on the statute invoked. Despite the depth of knowledge this represents, a current standard Professional Military Education (PME) requirement to develop this knowledge in ARNG leaders does not exist, and these authorities are poorly understand by the Active Component.

Many ARNG leaders do not fully understand the duality of the ARNG. States increasingly spend Federal resources to meet State needs. ARNG leaders misallocate Federal funds for activities that do not produce Federal readiness, creating tension between the ARNG and HQDA. Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) often perceive the ARNG as being inaccessible. This source of tension stems from historical examples when ARNG elements created delays or modified forces provided in order to meet local, parochial interests.

In Title 10 status, the President exercises executive authority over ARNG forces through the CCDR receiving the forces. In Title 32, Governors are responsible for their State's ARNG. They exercise their executive authority through the TAGs to meet Federal readiness requirements, using Federal resources. In State Active Duty (SAD) status, Governors have executive authority over the ARNG of a State, and the State pays all activation costs. As such, TAGs and Governors have relatively unlimited authority for employing their State's ARNG in SAD status.

Title 10 AGRs in the ARNG enterprise mostly work at the National Guard Bureau to support the Chief of National Guard Bureau and his representatives. This includes the Army National Guard directorate, which is delegated to represent the Chief in all Army corporate processes. NGB is a Joint Activity and a component of the DoD; it is not a Headquarters or a Command. NGB's purpose is administering policy, process, and programming (allocation of resources), and providing advice and guidance across the DoD and the 54. Title 10 USC §10503 outlines NGB's specific functions:

- Allocation of force structure and strength (Programming)
- Prescribing the training discipline and requirements for the Army National Guard, and allocating Federal funds for training (Policy, Programming)
- Ensuring States train units in accordance with approved programs from the Chief and Secretary of the Army (Policy, Process)
- Monitoring and assisting States in organizing, maintaining, and operating National Guard units so as to provide well-trained and well-equipped units capable of augmenting active forces in time of war (Policy, Process, and Programming)

History of the ARNG Enterprise

Perpich v DoD and the Guard Abroad

Lessons from World War II and the Korean War led to an attempt to consolidate a variety of existing laws and provide greater clarity over reserve forces, resulting in the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952. This clarified that National Guardsmen could be activated even outside of a National Emergency *if the Governor consented.* Combined with similar legislation in 1956, these acts which brought into existence aspects of Title 10, Title 32, and other legal embodiments of the ARNG's distinct State and Federal roles.

Concurrent with these changes was the introduction of universal basic training for Army Guardsmen, and authority for the Federal Government to activate National Guardsmen for training as well as mobilization.

In the 1980s, Ronald Reagan significantly increased manning and equipping for the National Guard as a signal to the USSR. This included sending ARNG units overseas, especially in South America, to train with partner nation forces and send a signal to the Soviet Government.

Mobilizing these forces for training allowed President Reagan to bypass Congressional approval normally required to call forth the militia.

Following the Iran-Contra scandal, some Governors objected to ARNG training in South America and revoked their consent.
The legal contest led to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court determined that the Constitution required no such consent from Governors and struck down the requirement, stating that the Federal Government's responsibility to "organize, arm, discipline, and govern" the militia extended to the National Guard.

- Planning and administering the ARNG budget (Programming)
- Supervising acquisition and supply of Federal Property issues to the National Guard (Policy, Process)
- Granting and withdrawing Federal Recognition of National Guard units and Officers of the National Guard (Policy)
- Establishing policies and programs for employment and use of National Guard Technicians (Policy)
- Issuing directives, regulations, and publications consistent with approved Army policies, as appropriate (Policy, Process)
- Facilitating and supporting the training of National Guard members and units (Advice, Process)
- Assisting the Secretary of Defense in coordinating other Federal Agencies, the TAGs, and NORTHCOM for operations conducted in Title 32 or in support of State Missions (Advice, Process)

Challenges in the State frame – Understanding Stakeholders and State Systems

Strategy for developing an institution differs from strategy for employing forces. There are more stakeholders in institutional strategy, and the outputs are different. The ARNG's duality gives it the most diverse and complex set of stakeholders in the Army. This includes industry partners, professional associations, Governors, and Federal entities (see Figure 8). As shown in the history box on page 16, Governors do not always agree with use of their ARNG, and political polarization increases the likelihood of these conflicts. The most influential ARNG professionals at the State level are the TAGs, who are appointed by Governors and have significant control over command climates, training, and ARNG utilization. Some TAGs also serve as heads of State Emergency Management
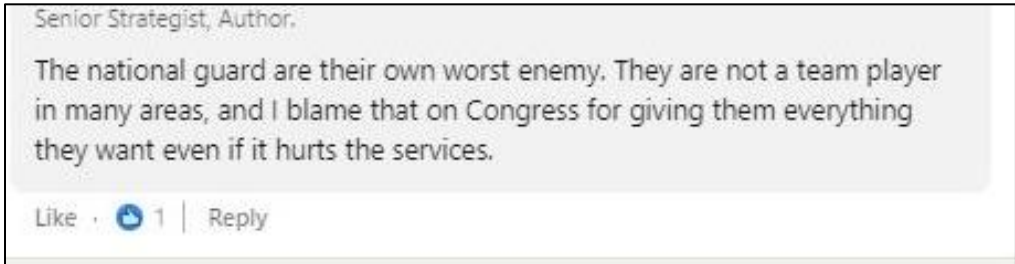
Figure 8 – ARNG Stakeholders and Influence
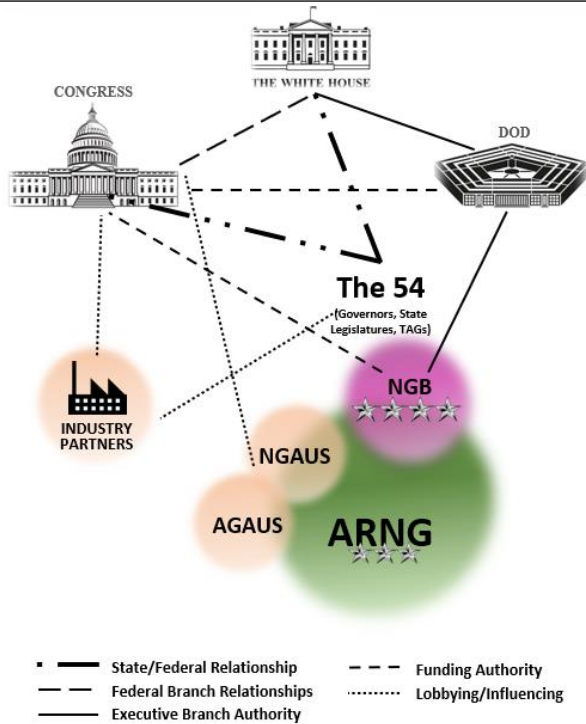
Departments, streamlining communication but further increasing the complexity of balancing State and Federal challenges.

State legislatures play a critical role as stakeholders, as they can shape the experiences of ARNG members through resource allocation for facilities, incentives, and benefits, affecting recruiting and retention. Federal representatives also have a stake in their State's National Guard due to the large number of constituents it represents, its relationship with industry, and contributions to the State's overall resilience. This direct relationship can also lead to a perception of disproportionate National Guard influence in Congress. When not in alignment with the total Army enterprise, this perceived influence can create tension, as demonstrated by this comment from a popular professional social networking site:

Senior Strategist, Author.

The national guard are their own worst enemy. They are not a team player in many areas, and I blame that on Congress for giving them everything they want even if it hurts the services.

Like · 👍 1 | Reply

Challenges in the Servicemember Frame – Enterprise-Level Processes and Talent Management

Strategic decision-making at both the State and Federal levels of the ARNG requires careful management to ensure it reflects traditional Citizen-Soldier perspectives. Without careful management as an enterprise, those decisions can lead to significant increases in perceived disconnects between the organizational leadership and its members. Recent sensing sessions have shown this perception is common throughout ARNG formations. As leaders determine the ARNG's strategic direction, they must consider which practices make the organization an attractive, viable option to both respect the balance in traditional Citizen-Soldiers' lives. This is critical to maintaining and sustaining strength in an increasingly challenging recruiting and retention environment.

ARNG process functionality varies significantly across States and the ARNG Directorate, exacerbating problem resolution challenges for Soldiers. State laws determine State-based benefits, pay, and authorities, significantly impacting servicemembers. Soldiers' SAD pay and benefits varies widely from State to State, with daily pay rates ranging from State minimum wage to full military wages. Medical

insurance and retirement benefits may or may not be included.[22] State-level recruiting and retention incentives are also derived from State law. This contributes to a more direct relationship between the ARNG of a State and political leaders, employers, educational institutions, and businesses who must collaborate to identify needed changes in State-level programs. This creates challenges and opportunities for the ARNG enterprise, as it contributes to cross-State competition, but also provides opportunities to identify and share best practices across State lines. Successful enterprises share best practices across elements of the organization. The ARNG shares best practices within certain communities, such as the Military Personnel Advisory Committee (MILPAC) and would benefit from expanding where and how it shares these practices.

Sensing sessions conducted in preparation for this paper highlight how ARNG processes can negatively impact servicemember experiences and create perceptions of uncaring leadership. The data reveals the numerous challenges ARNG leaders face when navigating the intricate landscape of Federal and State policies, resources, and authorities. Among the most frequently mentioned themes were concerns regarding lack of Soldier care, administrative and planning failures impacting pay and resources, poor leadership training and talent management, as well as issues related to cronyism, nepotism, and a perceived lack of prioritization or clear direction from leaders. If not addressed, these issues can negatively impact readiness among all ranks.

Additionally, some ARNG Soldiers perceive a disconnect between traditional Citizen-Soldiers and ARNG Soldiers on active duty. By regulation, AGR Soldiers should not occupy more than 10% of a State's leadership positions. No State or Territory currently adheres to this requirement.[23] However, servicemembers are more concerned with leadership performance and timely

Figure 9 – Percent of AGRs in CMD, CSM, & 1SG positions
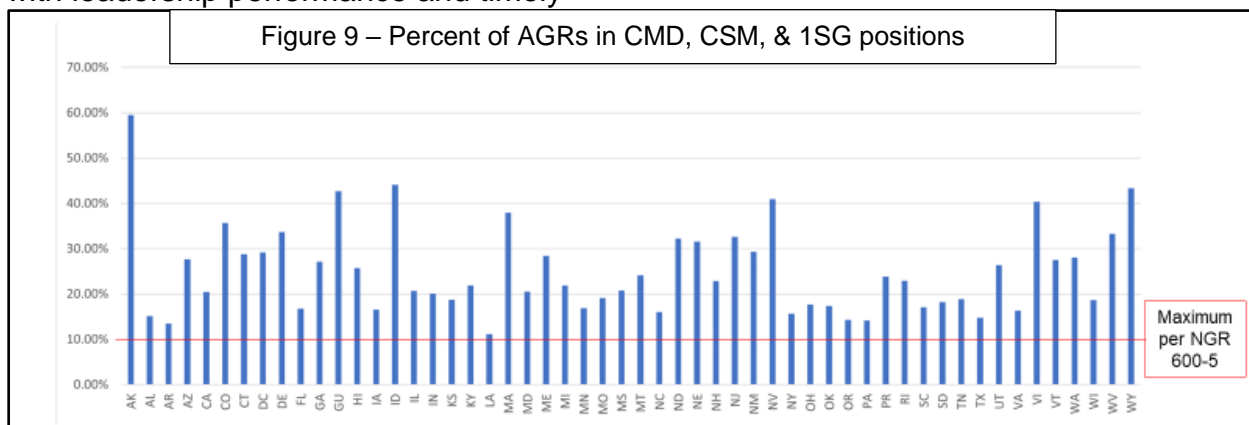
resolution of administrative issues rather than whether leaders are in a full-time or traditional drilling status.

Interestingly, there is a correlation between a State's ARNG size and the number of AGRs serving in leadership positions, with smaller States more reliant on AGRs. This phenomenon warrants further study to explore possible explanations, such as differences in talent management programs between larger and smaller States. If nothing else, it illustrates that State practices are not always reflective of NGB policy.

What Can We Do About It?

Most of the challenges in this frame are complex, requiring a diverse group to identify the core values, capabilities, and aspirations of the organization and use those to develop solutions. The ARNG Staff, Readiness Advisory Councils, and 54 can work together to identify core competencies of an ARNG Professional at the Entry, Mid, and Senior levels, and identify gaps. From those gaps, ways and means can be identified to increase competencies without adding to training requirements or training schedules.

Sense of Purpose and Sustainable Strategic Narrative for the ARNG Institution

The 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) identifies four national defense priorities – defend the homeland; deter strategic attacks against the United States, Allies, and Partners; deter aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict; and build a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem. The NDS identifies three primary strategic ways to achieve these priorities: integrated deterrence, campaigning, and building enduring advantages.[24] Due to the duality of the ARNG, each State maintains a separate, but nested sense of purpose to meet State needs while contributing to national defense. The reality of ARNG service is that it is neither a "strategic reserve" nor an "operational reserve," but concurrently provides strategic depth and operational capabilities at both the State and Federal levels.[25] This means balancing State and Federal needs will continue to be a key task for the ARNG enterprise. Defining this balance is a complex problem, and there is currently no consensus on how it should be defined.

"We are a reserve component. We are not the [active component]. We need to focus on what we can accomplish and not be overly worried about [Large Scale Combat Operations] and Division alignment. We have to be a force of Citizen-Soldiers – not active duty. If we overreach, we will not be able to retain Soldiers." Adjutant General, comment on post-ASEC survey	"We must remain focused on being the Army's Combat Reserve. If we fail in that role, then our need to the Army and the nation is removed, which means we will cease to have any value. Staying focused on being the Army's Combat Reserve is simply imperative." Adjutant General, comment on DARNG Paper #1 survey

Both TAG statements above prioritize different aspects of the unique ARNG identity, founded in history as State militias.[26] As there is no singular ARNG Commander, arriving at a common consensus on the way ahead is a complex task and requires ongoing communication, especially between the DARNG and the TAGs. Failure to establish common narratives introduces risk to the organization's credibility, especially if one State or element within the ARNG makes decisions or advocates for policy counter to other organizational objectives. Additionally, while specific demand from GWOT has significantly decreased, the ARNG still faces consistent Federal demand to support the Joint Force. State demand is also increasing in response to a broad spectrum of national and local domestic challenges. These demands generally

impose opportunity cost on ARNG servicemembers by adding to time requirements above and beyond statutory training requirements. This threatens the "part-time, community-focused" identity of ARNG service. Shaping the ARNG beyond 2030 requires the ARNG enterprise to collaboratively develop a shared strategic narrative for the ARNG institution. This narrative must simultaneously facilitate managing the increasing demands across a range of requirements and sustaining the ARNG's core identity.

Challenges in the Federal Frame: More than Mobilization – ARNG Contributions to Theater Strategy

The ARNG provides strategic depth and operational capability to the Army through training Soldiers and mobilizing forces. As discussed in Section III, the ARNG's unique State-based nature also provides unique capabilities to Theater Strategy even outside of mobilizations, including the State Partnership Program (SPP), Overseas Deployment Training, and other programs. How the ARNG will leverage its unique capabilities in a future warfight is explored in the developing Integrated Reserve concept.

> **Data Callout 2: ARNG contributions to the Army**
> The ARNG increases the capabilities and capacity of the Total Force, providing the Army with 39% of its Operating Forces and 22% of its Generating Forces. The ARNG manages nearly 42% of the total Army's manned and unmanned aircraft.

The Integrated Reserve

> "I am not sure that I am sold on 'Integrated Reserve.' I do understand why we feel it is important to define ourselves in another way to get away from defining ourselves as either a Strategic or Operational Reserve...but I am not sure 'Integrated' is it.... and will it really make a difference? When I reference DoDD 1200.17 (29 OCT 2008), in Paragraph 4 under POLICY....it talks about operational capabilities and strategic depth....and integrated as a Total Force....and Unity of Effort....this is what we really are and I don't yet see how calling ourselves an 'Integrated Reserve' is necessary and going to change anything. **I think educating all about what we do is more important than calling ourselves an 'Integrated Reserve'**......we are more of an 'Essential Reserve' than 'Integrated.' ".
> ATAG, ASEC survey response

The ARNG needs a coherent message to convey to Federal stakeholders the totality of what it does. One model proposed by the ARNG G-3/5/7 is the Integrated Reserve (Figure 10). The purpose of this model is to depict how the ARNG contributes to the NDS, as well as define some of its unique

Figure 10 – Integrated Reserve

capabilities and capacities. The model has met with mixed reception, as expressed by the quote above.

The ARNG will continue to develop this model iteratively with TAGs and HQDA/NGB stakeholders. It may be a more appropriate model for the entire Reserve Component, leaving room for a specific ARNG operating concept beyond 2030.

Challenges in the State Frame: How do States Meet Domestic Challenges?

The ARNG must meet State requirements in the face of increasing disasters, civil unrest, and threats to the homeland. How ARNGs function in each State or Territory varies. States have considerable leeway for developing their own operating concepts, strategic and campaign plans, and Table of Distribution and Allowance (TDA) structure. This can lead to significantly different practices and strategic narratives across the 54, with varying levels of predictability. Some States pre-designate forces as a "first line" for State missions each year, allowing Commanders to incorporate the expectation into their training plans. Another example of variance is Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) design and function. In some States, the JFHQ is a separate, Domestic Operations focused staff, lateral to the Army and Air staffs. In others, it is the TAG's staff, superior to the Army and Air staffs. Some States maintain a minimal JFHQ but establish a Joint Planning Group when crises occur, while others make no change to the structure. Variances in JFHQ structure and processes directly impact how Soldiers experience State activations and crises.

States also have differing processes and practices for resolving problems. As demonstrated by the SCOUT example in Section III, properly leveraged and empowered, these can improve the functioning of the entire enterprise. Evaluating and sharing best practices from these diverse ways of addressing problems is the mark of a *successful* enterprise. Because most ARNG professionals will serve their career in one State, very few may realize just how different ARNG practices across States can be. The ARNG Directorate is best positioned to empower and resource states to explore emerging technology and identify how these practices impact retention and ability to meet dynamic mission requirements.
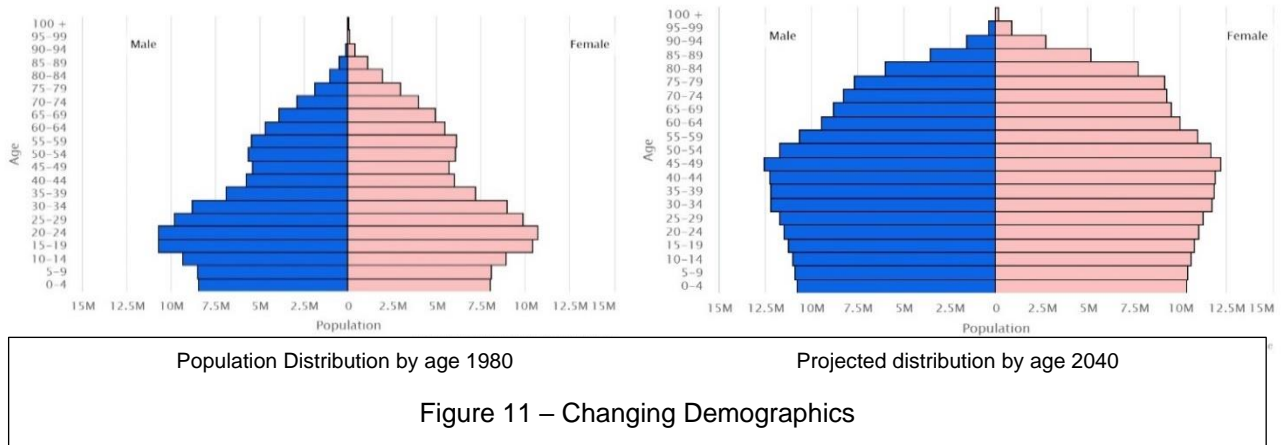
Challenges in the Society Frame: Threats to Sustainability in ARNG Strength

Societal changes threaten ARNG force sustainability via a reduced eligible population. Studies have consistently found that macroeconomic factors, such as unemployment rates and the value of military pay relative to civilian pay, exert significant influence on Americans' decisions to join the Army. Current competition for labor is high. Long-term demographic changes indicate the labor pool will likely continue to shrink overall, even if the comparative benefit of service improves.

A recent popular article in *Business Insider* highlighted the challenges that increasing civilian sector wages and benefits impose on military recruiting. Many employers now offer benefits previously exclusive to military service, including college tuition benefits. This may decrease the perceived comparative value of military service.

Changing wages also increase competition between National Guard and civilian employers for available personnel. One notable example compares National Guard service against fast food industry employment. Bureau of Labor Statistics data (as of April 2023) states that production and nonsupervisory employees at fast food

establishments earned an average of $17.64 hourly (up from $13.96 in January 2021). Including supervisory roles increases the average wage to $19.44 hourly.[27] Military pay is rarely expressed as a per-hour wage. For comparison, an E-3 with two years of service receives $320 in base pay for a two-day drill weekend. Assuming 16 hours of work across the two drill days, this is an effective pay rate of $20 per hour. However, if the drill lasts 12 hours on each day, which is not uncommon, the effective pay rate decreases to $13.33 per hour. This rate does not factor in costs associated with training attendance (see Pay and Benefits, page 25, for more information).

Population Distribution by age 1980	Projected distribution by age 2040

Figure 11 – Changing Demographics

These increases in benefits and competition are a side effect of changing age demographics in the United States. Even if all other factors remained equal (propensity and eligibility to serve, etc.) this still creates recruiting challenges due to increased competition for a relatively narrow band of potential recruits in the 18-24 age bracket. The ARNG may be prove more resilient in the face of this challenge, as the average ARNG servicemember skews older than those in the Active Component.

Additionally, American attitudes on military service and eligibility are changing. Americans are divided on whether they would advise a close friend or the child of a close friend to join the military. Slightly more than one-third say they would (37%), whereas another one-third are unsure (31%). Veterans are much more likely to say they would (62%). However, when compared to previous studies, fewer Veterans are willing to recommend military service. Concurrently, obesity, drug abuse, and other issues continue to reduce the supply of eligible individuals. All of this indicates that the experience of serving in the ARNG must be competitive, which requires enterprise-level professionals and processes, and can be enabled through a sustainable strategic narrative.

Challenges in the Servicemember Frame: Defining an ARNG Experience that Sustains Strength

- Reserve component members reported an average of 39 *nights away from home in the past 12 months* because of military duties

Margins of error do not exceed ±2 nights

KEY: More Than Average Less Than Average	Total	ARNG	USAR	USNR	USMCR	ANG	USAFR	E1–E4	E5–E9	O1–O3	O4–O6	Not Deployed	Deployed	Male	Female	Single w/ Child(ren)	Single w/o Child(ren)	Married w/ Child(ren)	Married w/o Child(ren)
Nights spent away from home because of military duties in past 12 months	39	47	31	32	35	36	36	33	41	53	40	29	96	39	37	35	38	39	46

Margins of error range from ±2 to ±12 nights

SOFS-R 2020 Q48

The Office of People Analytics 2020 Status of Reserve Component Members shows that ARNG respondents spent an average of 76 days in a paid status in a year, with 47 nights away from home. This far exceeds all other military reserve components. The 39-day model outlined in statute no longer reflects ARNG servicemember experiences. This creates a disconnect with legacy messaging. National Guard and military reserve service is still associated with "one weekend a month, two weeks a year" for much of the public, but this has not been the reality for some time.
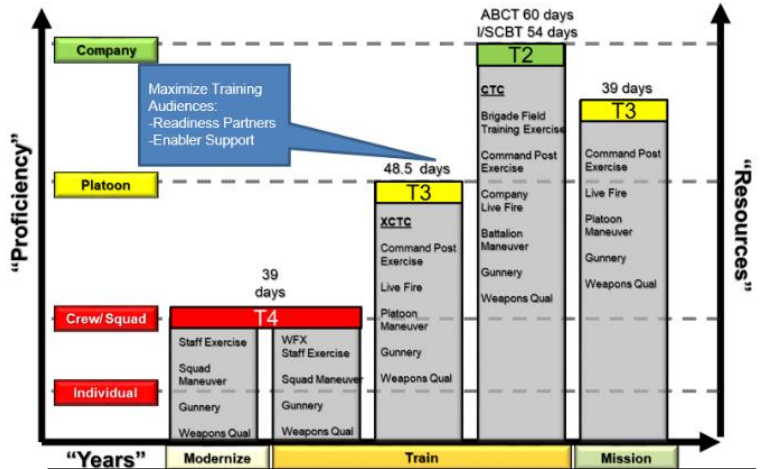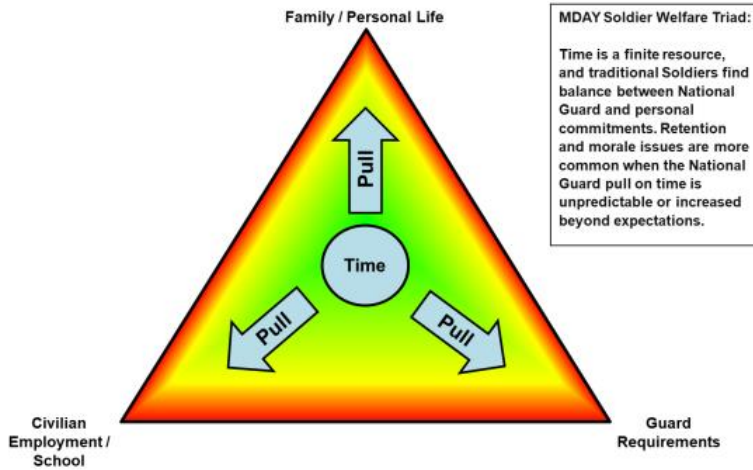

Figure 12 – CTC Training Model

Figure 13 – M-Day Soldier Welfare Triad

Additionally, ARNG resourcing and service contracts are based on this 39-day model. The sample CTC training model (Figure 12) depicts at least two years requiring more than 39 days, and does not account for state level activations, PME, or other school requirements. Every increase in ARNG requirements inherently pulls from either family and personal life, or civilian employment or school for M-Day servicemembers (see Figure 13).[28]

Sensing Session Themes

As an all-volunteer, part-time force, we will continue to compete with family, civilian full-time employment, and/or school for our Soldiers' time. As Paper #1 demonstrates, the demands on the National Guard have grown greatly since 9/11 and the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that we provide all of our Soldiers with a sense of purpose, and make the best use of their time during our limited amount of training time available.

ARNG State Senior Enlisted Advisor, DARNG Paper #1 Survey

Sensing sessions conducted during events such as the Director's Strength Management Awards ceremony, 2023 G2 conference, and email comments received after Paper #1 include:

Time Away from Family

Average Commuting Distance by grade	
Entry-Level (Enlisted)	89
Entry-Level (Officer)	153
Mid-Grade (Enlisted)	86
Mid-Grade (Officer)	113
Senior-Grade (Enlisted)	96
Senior-Grade (Officer)	127

Traditional ARNG Soldiers are on duty more than ever and **now lead all reserve components in annual nights away from home.** When this is unpredictable, it can have disproportionate impacts on family and civilian careers. Additionally, ARNG members were more likely to identify time away from home as a factor decreasing their desire to remain in service. A current review of Directors Personal Readiness Objective (DPRO) data shows that the average commuting distance to drill is between 89 and 153 miles, with an **average of 99 miles** across the force for currently serving Guardsmen. This directly challenges the traditional "community-based" identity of the ARNG, despite the higher geographic dispersion of ARNG armories as compared to other reserve services.

On average, junior officers spend more days away from home and commute longer distances, which likely contributes to recent increases in separations at the O-3 and O-4 level.

O-3 and O-4 Separations
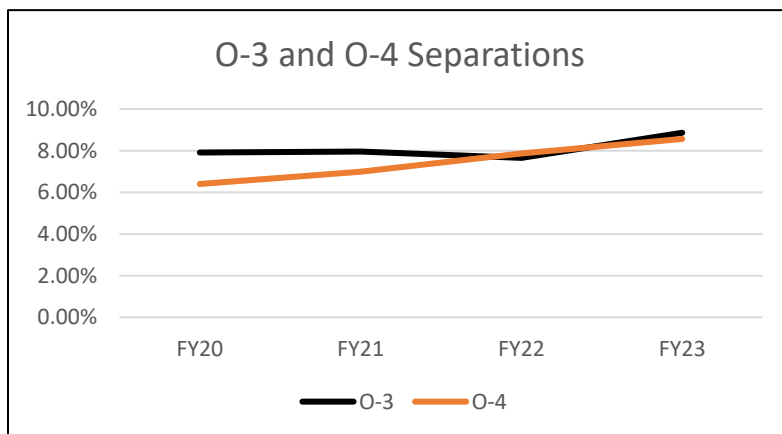
More Work from Fewer People

Some servicemembers expressed concerns that a lack of resources or funding is negatively impacting training and readiness. Feedback from hiring managers (HROs) indicates that because full-time ARNG support is limited, those employees are expected to do more. An anecdote highlighting this was identified in a sensing session with State

HROs, who reported that several contract managers from other DoD agencies accepted full-time ARNG positions and were so shocked by the comparatively higher workload that they resigned and returned to their previous agencies within weeks. Furthermore, this pattern has been consistent.[29] This anecdote reinforces trends in sensing session data from across much of the full-time force, and also includes company-level AGRs, who often report being overwhelmed with the volume of tasks they are responsible for.

Pay and Benefits

Data gathered during sensing sessions revealed common themes among the participants. Retention NCOs reported that entry-level Soldiers are concerned pay is not keeping pace with inflation. They also highlighted the financial challenges of paying for benefits; drill attendance frequently results in a net financial loss to Soldiers, particularly those junior in grade who often rely heavily on supplemental income (see table below). Note, the "TRS (Tricare Reserve Select) Premium" column cost varies. At the time of writing, the TRS monthly premium is $48.47 for an individual plan, and $239.69 for family plans. Also, fuel costs and average commuting distance varies by State – the total net "loss" may be as low as $18.55 in a state like Rhode Island, or as high as $55.56 in a State like Washington.

	E3 Drill Pay Over 2 years	TSP Max to match	Average Tax Offset (13%)	SGLI Premium ($31)	TRS Premium	Average Distance (Jr Enlisted)	Avg Fuel Economy	Avg Gas Consumption	Avg Gas Cost	Avg Cost	Total Cash From Drill
Single TRS premium	320	304	264.48	233.48	$185.01	92	25.7	7.16	$3.59	$26.20	$158.81
Family TRS Premium	320	304	264.48	233.48	-$6.21	92.06	25.7	7.16	$3.59	26.20	-$32.41

A diverse group of servicemembers also see a net income decrease due to drill or Annual Training because they make more in their civilian jobs. As recruiting pools decrease, the ARNG would benefit from considering these populations through options such as flexible drill schedules or virtual drills. Over time, these trends may change the types of professionals the ARNG attracts and retains.

Mid-level and senior-level attendees at sensing sessions displayed fewer concerns about actual pay amounts. They focused primarily on administrative delays and failures that hinder access to benefits for themselves and their Soldiers. These issues included delays in the Line of Duty investigation process, and disparities in pay and benefits between State and Federal statuses.

Training Quality

Retention NCOs reported that separating Soldiers often expressed feeling unproductive during drill sessions as a contributing factor in their desire to separate. Soldiers want to focus on training for their job responsibilities during weekend drills, but found that administrative tasks consistently consumed the majority of their time. A perceived lack of "warfighting focus" was a recurring theme for a substantial percentage of separating Soldiers. Many attributed these issues to inadequate planning and prioritization, which they believed were underlying causes of their challenges.

State and Federal Missions

Sensing session participants attributed serving their communities on State missions as a primary motivation for continued service. However, some concerns arose regarding inconsistency of SAD pay and benefits. Mid- and senior-grade participants cited predictable deployments and operations tempo (OPTEMPO) more frequently, whereas entry-level participants expressed the least concern about predictability.

What Can We Do About It?

Developing a shared strategic narrative that: provides a common sense of purpose for ARNGs of the States and ARNGUS, helps dispel myths and inspires a new generation to serve or continue serving, and meets the various needs of ARNG Stakeholders is a complex task to say the least. It does consist of numerous simple and complicated ones, including establishing surveys and gathering data about what matters to Servicemembers and Stakeholders to check institutional biases. This topic will be a major focus of the next six months of Governance meetings, including the Army Senior Executive Council (ASEC), Senior Leader Offsite (SLOS), and ARNG contributions at Army of the United States Association (AUSA) Conference.

Transparency and Accountability

To function as an Enterprise, the ARNG must see itself and behave as an enterprise. ARNG authorities are inherently divided across State and Federal lines, and States largely operate independently in administrative tasks. This division is reflected in information systems and in how accountability is enforced. Additionally, mirroring the nation's style of government, the ARNG of States, ARNGUS, and the ARNG Directorate are intended to keep each other accountable for training, resource management, etc. Lack of transparency and inherent tensions impair that accountability, and thus impair effective functioning of the ARNG enterprise.

The ARNG does not see itself as an enterprise. This is not a metaphor. Incompatible, outdated data systems, insufficient data literacy in the force, and obstacles from legacy policy and procedures create significant, persistent blind spots throughout the organization and impair enterprise functioning. These blind spots damage reliability, confidence, and trust. The role of JFHQs (and joint activities like NGB), is to receive, generate, and move information.[30] Enterprise functioning for the ARNG requires transparency and accountability.

Challenges to Transparency in the Federal and State Frames – Linking the Networks

The Army generates a massive amount of data (see Figure 14 for scale in physical hard drives).[31] Most States also run their own instance of Office 365, with entirely separate sets of "data lakes." From the Federal and State frames, policies require a division of systems, but this also impairs enterprise-level visibility. For example, NGB has limited visibility over SAD activations, pay, and state-level benefits.[32] Additionally, legacy data systems do not naturally integrate, creating significant walls

that either prevent visibility or require significant effort to overcome. This means the organization generates large amounts of data it cannot use for multiple functions. This is called "dark data," and it loses utility if not properly tagged and identified when it is recorded. Currently, Army 365, the primary information network for the Army, houses 9.5 petabytes (9,500,000 gigabytes) of data that is now largely useless to new data analysis methods due to insufficient practices. As new technology emerges to manage and process large data, business practices, policies, and training must also adapt to leverage that data, or it will remain "dark" and unable to be indexed and used.

Figure 14 – Size of A365 Data

Currently isolated ARNG data sources limit data sharing, hinder decision-making speed at echelon, and prohibit the use of cloud capabilities, including evolving Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) services and tools. The evolving threat landscape mandates changes to the culture and operational construct in which the ARNG manages and shares data. The ARNG also lacks recruitment, training, assessment, and retention policies to ensure it cultivates data talent.
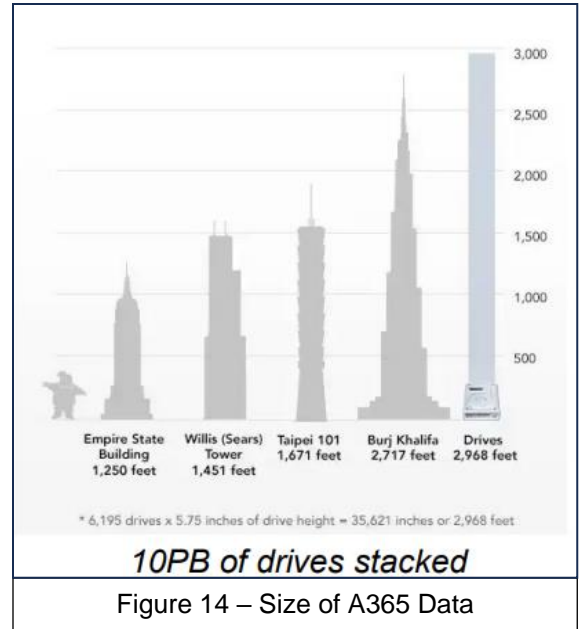
Challenges to Accountability in the Federal and State Frames

ARNG professionals operate under distributed authorities. For the vast majority of the ARNG, TAGs are the highest command level. Commanders at all DoD echelons assume risk in implementing policy and statutory requirements. As an example, the T32 AGR program places specific limitations on AGR duty. T32 AGRs are funded to administer, train, maintain, and provide for medical readiness of the ARNG. This does not include funeral honors.[33] However, many TAGs accept risk by allowing their AGRs to perform funeral duties, as the perceived benefits outweigh both the risks to readiness and the risks of not performing this duty.

More contentious statute and policy interpretations often create national-level debate. Recent examples include COVID-19 vaccination and deployment to the southwest border. Shared authority over the ARNG has the potential to devolve rapidly and raises questions about how to maintain accountability. NGB can only impose consequences by modifying the resources it allocates to the States, which in turn creates an organizational dilemma by negatively impacting readiness. Since producing readiness is the NGB's major priority, NGB cannot impose consequences without creating significant risk for itself. States have more limited direct ability to impose consequences on NGB. However, many ARNG functions at the Federal level require Governor's consent, and all members serving at NGB must remain in good standing with their State ARNG.

Lastly, the States retain significant informal direct linkages to elected officials. Occasional, State has leveraged these linkages to stop proposed policy changes. This can create a significant challenge to enterprise functioning across the State and NGB

elements of the enterprise. Improving accountability of the ARNG enterprise is best facilitated through open dialogue, consensus building, and governance processes. Increasing political polarization threatens to create new challenges in this area of enterprise functioning.

Challenges in the Servicemember / Societal Frame – Credibility and Data Literacy

A widespread lack of data literacy across the organization exacerbates transparency problems servicemember frame. Current ARNG leader training focuses on understanding specific data systems, with no training on understanding overall data literacy.[34] This produces leaders who are generally trained as system technicians, but not truly data literate. Modern Army staff work involves effectively managing and analyzing data to optimize the utility of useable information.[35] In addition to legacy systems and insufficient enterprise-level knowledge, the ARNG lacks knowledgeable professionals to share best practices and revise policies to enable better transparency. As the DoD becomes an increasingly data-driven organization, this problem threatens to damage the ARNG's credibility if it hesitates to resolve data visibility problems.

Lack of candor also contributes to this problem. There are insufficient training hours to accomplish all statutory ARNG requirements, which inculcates dishonesty.[36] Some organizations discuss this more openly than others, and command climates that foster more open communication often see increased performance. Research shows that organizations that support both accountability (drive) and psychological safety (belief that communication can be open without fear of reprisal) tend to perform better (see figure 15).[37] Important to note is that open communication alone is not sufficient, as without accountability to drive results, high-performing team members will often leave to find new challenges. Once again, open communication facilitated by governance provides the best way ahead to improve enterprise-level functioning.
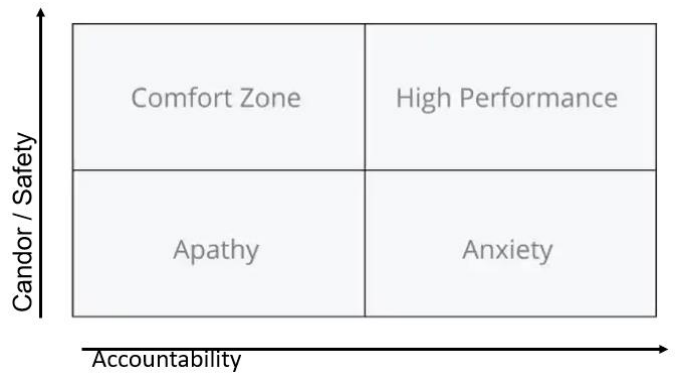

Figure 15 – Candor and Accountability

What Can We Do About It?

Many of the challenges associated with transparency are complicated, not complex. Linking data networks requires identification of best practices and expert analysis. The ARNG Directorate can review business practices across the 54 States and territories, identify what is working, and communicate those best practices, while leveraging analysts to determine where intervention will be most effective to help bridge gaps between ARNG and the States. Enhancing candor and accountability is a more complex issue. Governance processes significantly improve transparency throughout the organization by creating open venues to share data, experiences and bring diverse groups together. Building upon this and better communicating the results may assist in enhancing communication and mutual accountability.

V. Conclusion

In an ideal world, the Army would have the capability to answer every possible national demand now and in the future, fulfill every regulatory requirement, and sustain itself without strain. The essence of institutional strategy lies in making hard choices among competing demands with finite, and possibly uncertain, resources.

Army Strategy Note (Institutional Strategy), 1 April 2022

The DARNG Papers are a work of institutional strategy, which is communicated through advice and guidance, and manifested in policy, processes, programming decisions. These papers are not all-inclusive and represent only part of this effort. The concepts in this paper will be validated and shared in senior leader conferences and meetings, ARNG governance forums, Readiness Advisory Councils, and through surveys and sensing sessions across the total force, including our AC and USAR teammates. Enhanced communication and transparency through these governance forums and outreach efforts will provide enterprise-level visibility and understanding. They will also provide a venue for the 54 to share best practices and resolve problems.
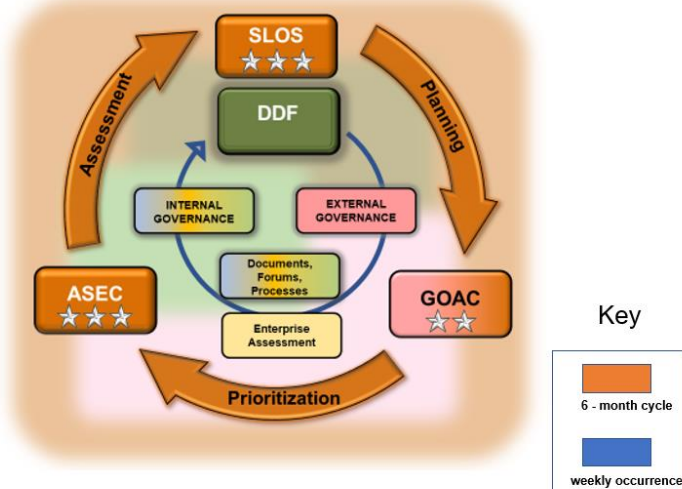
Way Ahead

Figure 17 - ARNG Strategic Planning Cycle

The complex challenges identified in this paper will be a major focus of the next ARNG Strategic Planning Cycle, which includes the Army Senior Executive Council (ASEC), Senior Leader Offsite (SLOS), and ARNG contributions during the 2023 Association of the United States Army (AUSA) conference. The goal of these forums will be to openly examine and build consensus on the organization's core **values, capabilities,** and **aspirations** to balance risk and respond to future challenges, to provide inputs into the Army Strategic Planning System, as well as guidance into State, Joint, and Interagency Strategic Planning as outlined by policy and as members of the Army team.

Values

The Army National Guard (ARNG)'s values are firmly entrenched in the American spirit and embody the principles and values of a democratic republican government. Like the government, this has unique benefits and significant costs. The next strategic planning cycle will focus on how we manifest those values in law, policy, and processes and inculcate those values in Enterprise level professionals.

Capabilities

The ARNG's State-based nature gives rise to unique capabilities and capacities. These include building enduring relationships with partner nations, linking of military and industry skills and networks, and establishing influence and collaboration across a variety of stakeholders, including elected officials and the interagency. The next strategic planning cycle will focus on how we leverage those unique capabilities as part of the Total Army Force and State's response forces in a sustainable strategic narrative.

Aspirations

Because of the ARNG's peer-led nature, hopes for the organization's future are not uniform or standardized- and shouldn't be. There is no question that all members of our enterprise want the ARNG to continue doing what it has always done – providing hope and solutions on some of the darkest days in the nation's history. The next strategic planning cycle will focus on how we meet those days while maintaining transparency and accountability to ensure the ARNG's credibility remains high.

Join the conversation! Scan or click this QR Code to respond.

Feedback

As we continue to develop the strategic direction beyond 2030, ARNG leadership once again welcomes comment, feedback, and perspectives from the entire ARNG enterprise. If you wish to respond to this paper, a short, six-question survey is available at the QR code on the left, or at https://www.research.net/r/GV978LL. The proponent for this paper is the office of the Director of the Army National Guard. The consolidation point for feedback is the Institutions Branch of ARNG G5 Strategic Plans Integration (SPI) Division at ng.ncr.ngb-arng.list.spi-institutions@army.mil

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[1] White House, "2022 National Defense Strategy" (Washington, DC: White House, 2022), https://media.defense.gov/2022/Oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.PDF.

[2] Hal Brands, ed., *The New Makers of Modern Strategy: From the Ancient World to the Digital Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023). p.1119

[3] White House, "2022 National Security Strategy" (Washington, DC: White House, October 2022), https://media.defense.gov/2022/Oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.PDF.

[4] Larry Diamond, "Democracy in Decline," *Foreign Affairs*, June 13, 2016, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2016-06-13/democracy-decline.

[5] "Democracy Report 2023" (Gothenburg, Sweden: V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenberg, March 2023), https://www.v-dem.net/documents/29/V-dem_democracyreport2023_lowres.pdf.

[6] DNI Global Trends 2040

[7] AFC Pam 525-2

[8] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters (2023). https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/, DOI: 10.25921/stkw-7w73

[9] Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy, "The Shift in the American Public's Political Values," n.d., accessed August 1, 2023, https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/interactives/political-polarization-1994-2017/.

[10] U. S. Government Accountability Office, *Domestic Terrorism: Further Actions Needed to Strengthen FBI and DHS Collaboration to Counter Threats | U.S. GAO* (Government Accountability Office, March 2, 2023), accessed August 1, 2023, https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-104720.

[11] "An Update to the Economic Outlook: 2023 to 2025 | Congressional Budget Office," last modified July 26, 2023, accessed August 1, 2023, https://www.cbo.gov/publication/59258.

[12] These ideas occur in countless writings on cybernetics, systems, theory, etc. This specific example comes from a speech by Dr. Russ Ackoff in 1994, which can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqEeIG8aPPk

[13] White House, "2022 National Security Strategy"

[14] White House, "2022 National Security Strategy."

[15] White House, "2022 National Security Strategy."

[16] AI is a group of technologies which include: machine learning (ML), which refers to simple mathematical models to make classifications or predictions; deep learning, which refers to more complex networks of mathematical formulas for more sophisticated problem solving, and Large Language Models (LLMs), which are deep learning models "trained" on hundreds of billions of lines of text or images to solve complex problems.

[17] See Army Business Process Reengineering Center of Excellence. https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-448898

[18] Some writing refers to these as "wicked problems"

[19] John C. Camillus, "Strategy as a Wicked Problem," *Harvard Business Review*, May 1, 2008, accessed November 9, 2021, https://hbr.org/2008/05/strategy-as-a-wicked-problem.

[20] John C. Camillus, "Strategy as a Wicked Problem," *Harvard Business Review*, May 1, 2008, accessed November 9, 2021, https://hbr.org/2008/05/strategy-as-a-wicked-problem.

[21] Ben Zweibelson, *Understanding the Military Design Movement: War, Change and Innovation*, Routledge Studies in Conflict, Security and Technology (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2023). Note, this reference is from an early review copy of the text.

[22] Based on review of various states Statutes related to State Active Duty.

[23] NGR 600-5 States the 10% rule; data pulled from DPRO by identifying positions coded in IPPS-A as "Commander, CSM or 1SG" and identifying Soldier's duty status.

[24] Lloyd J. Austin, 2022 National Defense Strategy (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, October 27, 2022), 1.

[25] DODD 1200.17

[26] Michael Doubler, *I Am the Guard* (Washington DC: U.S Government Printing Office, 2001).

[27] https://www.businessinsider.com/war-for-talent-national-guard-amazon-wendys-competition-employment-2023-7

[28] Taken from the Washington ARNG Strategic Plan, https://mil.wa.gov/army-guard

[29] Interview with HRO Executive Council, April 2023

[30] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "JP 5-0, Joint Planning," December 1, 2020. And DODD 5105.83

[31] Graphic source: NETCOM, MAJ Lucas Brown

[32] ASEC discussion notes

[33] See AR 570-4

[34] Andrew Farina, "The Impending Data Literacy Crisis Among Military Leaders," *Cyber Defense Review*, Fall 2022, https://cyberdefensereview.army.mil/Portals/6/Documents/2022_fall/05_Farina.pdf?ver=BYnHYWAYLrW_PpP4lljm5A%3D%3D.

[35] Farina.

[36] Leonard Wong and Stephen J. Gerras, *Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2015).

[37] Amy Gallo, "What Is Psychological Safety?," *Harvard Business Review*, February 15, 2023, accessed August 2, 2023, https://hbr.org/2023/02/what-is-psychological-safety.