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Report to John P. White, Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense; by R. L. Krieger, Director, Federal Personnel and Compensation Div.

Issue Area: Personnel Management and Compensation (300).

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Organization Concerned: Department of the Air Force; Department of the Army; Department of the Navy.

During a survey of the recruitment practices of the military services for Reserve and National Guard personnel, several potential problems were noted. Findings/Conclusions: There are significant differences in the policies and procedures that each reserve component uses in recruiter selection criteria, deployment, length of training and topic coverage, and utilization. The Reserves appear to be coordinating their recruiting advertising programs with the active forces, but the Guard components are acting independently. The effectiveness of advertising was questioned in a previous GAO report. The capability of the existing management to implement expanded recruitment programs will determine whether the desired results are achieved. Consideration should be given to analyzing the cost benefits and effectiveness of trends towards a nonprior service program compared with maximizing the potential of prior service personnel. Various service enlistment options should be studied. A change in assumptions about the eligible male population could change the recruiting emphasis and should be studied. (Author/HTW)

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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND COMPENSATION DIVISION

B-157371

AUG 12 1977

03080

The Honorable John P. White  
Assistant Secretary of Defense

Dear Mr. White:

We have concluded our survey (code 961056) of the policies, procedures, and practices the military services follow for recruiting Reserve and National Guard personnel. Our work was conducted in the New Orleans, Louisiana, and Atlanta, Georgia, regions and Washington, D.C.

During our survey we noted several potential problems that merit your attention.

- The Reserves and National Guard are enlarging their recruiter forces. Our survey indicated that there are significant differences in the policies and procedures each reserve component uses in recruiter selection criteria, deployment, length of training and topic coverage, and utilization. In our March 5, 1976, report to the Congress, "Improving the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Recruiting," we addressed the issue of recruiter force management for the active forces and believe that some of our recommendations might improve the reserve components' recruiting system.
- The Reserves appear to be coordinating their recruiting advertising programs with the active forces. The Guard components are acting independently. Since advertising is an expensive recruiting means with some questions about its effectiveness, we suggest that the issues addressed in our March 29, 1976, report to the Congress, "Advertising for Military Recruiting: How Effective Is It?," be considered as you expand the advertising program for all Reserve Components and the National Guard.
- Our observations at the operational level have raised a question about whether the existing managerial capability is sufficiently strong to economically and efficiently implement expanded and accelerated recruitment

programs. Without a strong managerial capability, the desired results may not be achieved.

- The trend is shifting towards a nonprior service program as compared to maximizing the potential of prior service personnel. While we are aware of the constraints of grade authorizations in Reserve units, consideration should be given to analyzing the cost benefits and effectiveness of adjusting authorizations to accommodate the potential for reserve recruiting represented by prior service personnel.
- Three services have only one enlistment option for nonprior service personnel consisting of an active duty tour of 6 months followed by a 5-1/2-year reserve tour. The Navy offers a 2- or 3-year active duty tour program, which is followed by a reserve tour to complete 6 years. Although we have not fully analyzed the Navy's effectiveness in meeting total requirements, we believe the program merits your review for use by the other services.
- Recruiting emphasis is determined, at least in part, by assessing the male population that is qualified and available for military service. We note that out of the current 10.6 million 17- to 21-year old males, the military establishes a prime target of about 1 to 1.5 million to fill a quota of about 380,000 for the active duty forces. A change in the assumptions made about qualifications and availability could substantially alter recruiting emphasis and subsequent results. Unnecessarily constraining the eligible male population may result in the active duty and the Reserve recruiters competing for the same population. We suggest that a close study of the constraints imposed by assessment methods be made, particularly if such studies can identify a reserve recruiting profile not now being considered.

We would appreciate being advised of any plans or actions contemplated or underway on the issues, and we are willing to discuss further our survey observations.

Sincerely yours,



H. L. Krieger  
Director