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BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

**Report To The Assistant Secretary Of The
Navy For Manpower And Reserve Affairs**

**Observations On Naval Reserve Training
For Selected Reserve Reinforcing
And Sustaining Units**

The Naval Reserve's readiness training goal is to have 70 percent of its reservists qualified for their assigned jobs. However, at the time of our work only 55 percent were qualified. Several factors contributed to the 15 percent shortfall in the qualification rate. These factors included personnel turnover, continuous changes in jobs assigned to the Naval Reserves, need for more hands-on training, and difficulty in getting reservists the needed technical school training.

The report discusses GAO's observations and suggests ways for improving the Naval Reserve training program.



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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

NATIONAL SECURITY AND
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

B-213991

The Honorable Chapman B. Cox
The Assistant Secretary of the Navy
for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Dear Mr. Cox:

We have completed a survey of the Naval Reserve's training for Selected Reserve sustaining and reinforcing units. These reservists are an important part of total Navy forces. In the event of mobilization, the reservists will join active Navy units and bring them up to wartime strength. We wanted to determine (1) whether the reservists were training on equipment they will have to operate or maintain if mobilized and (2) whether the training was adequate.

The Naval Reserve plan for qualifying reservists requires a team effort by reserve unit commanders and active unit commanders. Each reservist is assigned to a specific job (which the Navy calls a billet)--for a specific active ship or shore site unit--that identifies the work center and equipment that he/she will be expected to operate or maintain upon mobilization. The training required is identified in the job description and must be completed to qualify for the job. Each reservist must demonstrate to the active unit commander--during annual active duty training--that he/she can reasonably be expected to perform the job. Thus, each reserve unit's training program is tailored to meet the specific needs of each individual reservist in qualifying for the job he/she is assigned to fill upon mobilization.

The Naval Reserve's readiness training goal is to have 70 percent of the reservists qualified for their assigned jobs. However, only 55 percent were qualified at the time of our survey. Several constraining factors--most of which the Naval Reserve is aware of--contributed to the 15-percent shortfall in the qualification rate. These factors included personnel turnover, continuous changes in jobs assigned to the Naval Reserves, need for more hands-on training, and difficulty in getting reservists the needed technical school training.

We are concerned that the Naval Reserve's training goal of 70 percent qualification may be overly optimistic (particularly during periods of growth such as the one the Naval Reserve

is now in) unless changes are made to more intensely focus on training and developing reservists for qualification. We believe opportunity exists for improving the Naval Reserve's training program by

- establishing priorities for weekend away training (from the reserve unit) to assure that reservists most needing such training to achieve qualification are receiving it as soon as possible;
- deciding whether reservists in jobs frequently requiring more than 1 year to qualify should be scheduled for more training during the early months of their reserve service to assure that they qualify in a reasonable period of time;
- assuring that cross-assigned reservists are attending annual active duty training at commands that will most facilitate their achieving and maintaining qualification;
- correcting inconsistencies between the Naval Reserve's readiness reporting criteria and the 16 Naval Readiness Command (REDCOM) Regions' implementing guidance to assure that training readiness is consistently reported;
- reviewing requirements for individual reservist's training plans to determine whether such requirements are clear and adequate;
- reviewing all REDCOM implementing instructions to assure they are consistent with Naval Reserve guidance, and making periodic tests of performance at unit level to assure compliance; and
- informing individual reservists about qualification requirements, and having them participate in developing and maintaining their training plan and training files.

These issues are discussed in more detail in appendix I.

Although we are sharing our observations on opportunities for improving the Naval Reserve's training program, we are making no formal recommendations because of the limited scope of our work. While we did not request written agency comments on this report, we did discuss our observations with Naval Reserve Headquarters and REDCOM officials who agreed with the issues presented.

We appreciate the cooperation extended to us during our survey. We would also appreciate being informed of any comments you may have about the issues discussed above and of any actions or initiatives planned.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Landicho". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

John Landicho
Senior Associate Director

C o n t e n t s

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ABBREVIATION

REDCOM Readiness Command

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OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONSFOR IMPROVING NAVAL RESERVE TRAINING

This appendix contains our observations and suggestions for improving Naval Reserve training for Selected Reserve sustaining and reinforcing units.

INTRODUCTION

The Naval Reserve's mission is to provide trained units and qualified personnel for active duty in time of war or in national emergency when authorized by law. The Naval Reserve has about 400,000 members in various categories. The Selected Reserve is one of these categories and its reservists will be the first called upon mobilization. As of August 18, 1983, the Selected Reserve had about 95,400 reservists. The Navy estimates that the Selected Reserve will grow to about 122,000 reservists by fiscal year 1987 as it builds to a 600-ship force. To support this effort, the Naval Reserve's budget has been increased to \$1.8 billion in fiscal year 1983, a 157 percent increase over its fiscal year 1980 budget.

The Selected Reserve includes commissioned units and reinforcing and sustaining units. Commissioned units are complete units with designated missions and supporting weapon systems, such as ships, aircraft, and construction battalions, that will deploy as a unit. Most of these 388 commissioned units are located along the coastal areas of the United States and have about 25,600 reservists. The remaining 69,800 Selected Reservists are assigned to reinforcing and sustaining units. We focused on these in our survey. The approximately 2,600 reinforcing and sustaining units are at 236 training centers located throughout the United States and are subordinate to 16 Naval Readiness Command (REDCOM) Regions. These units are composed of reservists with many different occupations (which the Navy calls ratings) and, upon mobilization, are programmed to augment specific Navy ships and shore operations located in and outside the continental United States. These reinforcing and sustaining units are to bring the Navy units up to wartime manpower authorizations.

Each reservist in a reinforcing or sustaining unit is assigned to a specific mobilization job (which the Navy calls a billet) that requires his/her occupation. A mobilization job is a designated assignment aboard a specific ship or shore activity that the reservist (and his/her reserve unit) is expected to perform upon mobilization. Reserve training is directed at qualifying reservists to operate or maintain the specific systems and/or equipment described in their mobilization job descriptions. For qualification, each reservist must complete all the training that his/her job description requires. The reservist must also demonstrate at the mobilization site/

ship that he/she can reasonably perform--as a productive and useful member of the unit--the duties required at the work center or watch station.

The mobilization unit commander, or designated substitute unit commander, is responsible for certifying, based on his/her observation of the reservist's performance, that a reservist is qualified. Qualification can be demonstrated during weekend training performed at the mobilization site/ship or substitute unit or during the annual 2-week active duty training period. Qualification can be immediate--without reporting to the mobilization site/ship to demonstrate required competence--for reservists who recently left active duty and are assigned to jobs with equipment identical or similar to that which they used while on active duty. In some situations, the mobilization unit commander may delegate to the training unit commander the authority to certify that the reservist is qualified for the mobilization job.

To stay informed of the operational readiness of its reserve units, the Naval Reserve has established the Individual Readiness Assessment Designator System. Using this system, commanding officers of reinforcing and sustaining reserve units report the readiness of each reservist through their REDCOM to the Chief of Naval Reserve. The training readiness report shows considerable information for each job including the name of the assigned reservist and whether he/she has achieved qualification. If the report shows that the reservist has not qualified, the reason as well as the estimated time which will be needed for him/her to qualify is shown.

The Naval Reserve's training readiness goal is to have 70 percent of the reservists qualified for their jobs. The current readiness reporting system does not provide for measuring and reporting the extent (percentage) that reservists not yet qualified have progressed toward qualification. However, a modification to accommodate this data is being developed.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of our survey were to determine (1) whether Naval reservists were trained on equipment that they are expected to operate and/or maintain when and if mobilized and (2) whether the training was adequate for them to promptly develop necessary skills. Our survey focused on Selected Reserve reinforcing and sustaining units.

We performed our survey during the period April through October 1983 at the Navy Headquarters, Washington, D.C.; Naval Reserve Headquarters, New Orleans, Louisiana; Naval Reserve Readiness Command (REDCOM) Region-18, Olathe, Kansas; and

several REDCOM-18 units. REDCOM-18 has 124 reinforcing and sustaining training units located at 15 Naval Reserve Centers in Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Our survey included 15 units located at 6 Naval Reserve Centers in Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. (See p. 17.)

We selected REDCOM-18 for our survey because we wanted to know the extent and quality of training that "high-tech" reservists assigned to inland training units receive on the specific weapon systems and equipment that they are expected to operate and/or maintain upon mobilization. High-tech occupations include (but are not necessarily limited to) fire control technician, gunner's mate (including missiles), electronic technician, operation specialist, electronic warfare specialist, machinist's mate, machinery repairman, boiler technician, and sonar technician.

In selecting REDCOM-18 units for review, we considered the types of units (which the Navy categorizes by program), training readiness occupation of the units, location of the units, and the date of the units' monthly meetings. The types and number of units included in our survey at six training centers are shown below and identified in appendix II.

<u>Types of unit</u>	<u>Number</u>
Surface combatant	9
Shore intermediate maintenance	2
Telecommunications	2
Submarine maintenance	1
Repair ship	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>15</u>

At headquarters and REDCOM-18, we reviewed Naval Reserve training instructions, training plans, and readiness reports. At the reserve units, we reviewed readiness reports and individual reservist's training files. We also had discussions with headquarters and REDCOM-18 officials, center and unit commanders, and selected reservists. At the conclusion of our survey, we discussed the substance of this report with Naval Reserve Headquarters and REDCOM-18 officials who were aware of most of the issues. They said they agreed with the issues and observations.

We performed our survey in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, except we did not review the internal controls over the information systems the Naval Reserve used in preparing the routine management reports that we used in our evaluation.

NAVAL RESERVE TRAINING
GOAL MAY BE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC

Qualification of reservists assigned to reinforcing and sustaining units poses a challenge to the Naval Reserve in meeting its training objectives. Although the training goal is to have at least 70 percent of the reservists qualified for their mobilization jobs, as of August 18, 1983, Navy records show that only about 55 percent were qualified.¹ Of the nine types of units² with a large concentration of high-tech occupations, only one type (mine) of unit had met the 70 percent goal. Because of personnel turnover and other influences, the training goal may be overly optimistic. Annual personnel losses amount to about 32 percent. This indicates to us that, if it takes about 1 year to qualify most reservists, the Naval Reserve could expect to achieve about a 70-percent training goal in the absence of other influences or problems. But other influences are present that have collectively hindered the Naval Reserve in attaining its training readiness goal such as:

- Continuous changes in jobs reduce the number of qualified reservists.
- More than 1 year of hands-on training may be required to qualify.
- Many reservists must receive technical school training to qualify.
- Cross-assigned reservists do not always get preferable training needed to achieve qualification.

Continuous job changes

Mobilization jobs that reservists either have qualified for or are training to qualify for change continuously; i.e., authorized jobs are deleted and new jobs are added. Job changes reduce both the number of qualified reservists and the units' training readiness. Although we requested data from several sources showing the extent of this problem, we did not locate any overall Naval Reserve statistics. However, we estimated

¹This figure does not consider reservists not assigned to a mobilization billet. Of the 69,800 reservists assigned to reinforcing and sustaining units, about 9,400 were awaiting assignment to a billet. Thus, training readiness is computed on the basis of 33,300 reservists qualified of the 60,400 assigned to mobilization billets.

²Mine, submarine, mobile logistics support, surface combatants, air, amphibious, telecommunications, and shore intermediate maintenance, and special warfare.

that it affected as much as 8,900³ (33 percent) of the 27,1004 reservists who were not qualified for their mobilization job as of August 18, 1983. Also, the 9,400 reservists who were awaiting assignment to a job--but who were not included in the computation of training readiness--would include reservists whose job had been recently deleted.

As changes in Navy personnel requirements and force management occur, Navy managers identify for each Navy unit how many personnel will be provided by the active Navy and how many personnel will be provided by the Naval Reserve. Among the many factors influencing changes in personnel authorizations are fiscal constraints, commissioning of new ships, decommissioning of old ships, and feedback on the effectiveness of the mix of active and reserve personnel authorizations in the immediate past. Changes in personnel authorizations are continuous and ultimately result in specific job additions or deletions. The major changes are announced at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Job changes in REDCOM-18 illustrate the extent of the problem. Of its 4,100 authorized jobs, 600 (15 percent) are scheduled for deletion during the first quarter of fiscal year 1984. Additions had not been announced at the time of our survey. The impact of these job changes at unit level can be substantial. For example, for the 6-month period ended April 30, 1983, 12 of 23 REDCOM-18's surface ship units analyzed had job changes. Of the 918 jobs initially authorized, 113 jobs were added and 161 were deleted for a total change of 274 jobs or an absolute change of about 30 percent. As shown below, the extent of the job changes varied from unit to unit.

<u>Number of units</u>	<u>Percent change in authorized jobs</u>
3	10 or less
1	11 to 25
5	26 to 50
1	51 to 100
<u>2</u>	over 100
<u>12</u>	

³This figure is based on 14,400 reservists who were not qualified for their jobs and who were reported as assigned to their jobs for less than 90 days, less the approximately 5,500 new reservists recruited during a 90-day period.

⁴This figure is based on 69,800 Selected Naval reservists in reinforcing and sustaining units, less 9,400 reservists that were not assigned to jobs and 33,300 that were qualified for their jobs.

Job changes affect the overall training readiness level of the Naval Reserve. For each job deleted, the Naval Reserve must find a vacant job for the reservist. While awaiting a new job, the reservist will be reported as unassigned. The Naval Reserve will first try to place the reservist in another reserve unit at the center where he/she has been training. If the reservist is not eligible for jobs available, he/she will continue to train with the local reserve unit but will be cross assigned to an appropriate mobilization job in a reserve unit at another training center. A qualified reservist who is assigned to a job that gets deleted may require several additional months to qualify for a new job unless the new job description and related equipment are identical to that in the deleted job. This also applies to reservists who are assigned to and training to qualify for a job that is deleted. For new billets, reservists can be assigned who meet the job eligibility criteria and (1) are in a unit at the training center but unassigned to a job or (2) are cross assigned to a job at a different reserve center. However, it may take several months for a reservist to qualify for his/her new job.

The Naval Reserve has been concerned about the impact of job changes on its training readiness and is working with Navy managers to minimize this problem. The Naval Reserve would like to see, for example, the authorized job structure for a training unit that augments a ship upon mobilization to remain unchanged between ship overhauls. Depending on the class of ship, overhauls are scheduled every 3 to 5 years.

Many reservists need more hands-on training to qualify

Although some reservists can demonstrate within 1 year that they are qualified for their jobs, others may need as much as 3 years to obtain the hands-on training necessary to qualify. As of August 18, 1983, 30 percent of the 27,100 unqualified reservists had not, according to training readiness reports, received sufficient hands-on training at their mobilization units to qualify for their jobs. This figure includes reservists who have recently enlisted but have not yet been to their mobilization units. It also includes reservists who have been to the mobilization site but need additional hands-on training or experience to qualify for their jobs.

Reservists frequently require more than 1 year to qualify for their jobs

The training required and the time needed to qualify for a job differ among occupations and individuals. As a guide for developing training programs, the Chief of Naval Reserve has issued some and intends to issue other reserve job training plans for each class of ship. Each training plan includes an

estimate of the type⁵ and quantity of training needed to qualify for each job. In analyzing the FF 1052 Knox Class Ship training plan, we sampled 17 jobs, projected 36 training days of 8 hours each in a training year,⁶ but did not include any estimates for general military training or administrative matters that the training unit may require. Our analysis shows that, depending on the job, estimates of time needed to complete training for qualification vary from under 1 year to over 2 years.

<u>Number of jobs</u>	<u>Estimated years of training to become qualified</u>
6	Less than 1
9	1 to 2
2	Over 2 ^a

^aThis includes three 2-week active duty periods for hands-on training at the mobilization site/ship.

Similarly, our estimates show varying periods of time used by 24 reservists to qualify for jobs in 3 REDCOM-18 units. We included all reservists in the three units who, according to unit readiness reports, were unqualified as of June 30, 1982, but shown as qualified on July 31, 1983. We projected the time needed to qualify as the difference between the time they entered the Naval Reserve unit and January 15, 1983. This date is the midpoint between the dates on the two reports we analyzed. Some reservists would have qualified earlier and some later, so the midpoint should provide an approximate average. As shown below, we estimate that the time needed to qualify ranged from less than 1 year to over 3 years.

<u>Number of jobs</u>	<u>Estimated years of training to become qualified</u>
6	Less than 1
11	1 to 2
2	2 to 3
5	Over 3 ^a

^aThese reservists may have experienced a job reassignment during this period.

According to center and unit commanders, the key to achieving qualification is getting reservists to their mobilization

⁵Classroom, damage control, and material maintenance management training at the reserve unit; weekend away training at a centralized shipboard simulator, Naval fleet training school, and at the mobilization unit site/ship; and annual 2-week active duty training at the mobilization unit site/ship.

⁶Consists of twelve 2-day weekends and one 2-week (12 days) active duty training period.

units for hands-on training on equipment that they will be expected to operate and/or maintain if and when mobilized.⁷ Such training can be obtained on weekends or during a reservist's annual 2-week active duty training. But, it is almost always obtained during annual active duty training.

The time that is needed to achieve qualification depends on (1) how long a reservist was out of the Navy before joining the reserves and (2) how familiar the reservist is with the equipment he/she is expected to operate and/or maintain. For persons who were out of the Navy for several months or years before joining the reserve, at least one annual 2-week active duty training period at the mobilization site/ship is needed to demonstrate qualification. If they do not qualify, they continue to train on the equipment during the annual 2-week active duty training periods until they do qualify. Reservists who are expected to operate and/or maintain different equipment than they used on active duty may require several annual 2-week active duty training periods to obtain the necessary hands-on training and to demonstrate qualification. Once they qualify, reservists continue the annual 2-week active duty training periods at their mobilization sites to maintain their proficiency.

Reservists assigned to ship
jobs require more time
than others to qualify

Reservists who are assigned to mobilization jobs on combat ships appear to require more time to qualify than those reservists assigned at shore sites. Five training units assigned to shore-based mobilization sites showed 70 percent of their 135 high-tech reservists as qualified. In comparison, 9 training units assigned to mobilization units on ships showed 52 percent of their 85 high-tech reservists as qualified.

Part of this difference could be due to greater requirements involved in qualifying reservists assigned to mobilization jobs on combat ships. Unlike shore jobs, reservists assigned mobilization jobs on combat ships must demonstrate that they are qualified to perform specified watch station requirements while at sea. Therefore, to demonstrate qualification requires not only that the reservist perform his/her responsibilities on board the combat ship, but that the ship be underway and not in port. If the ship is not underway, a decision on qualification must be deferred until a training period on board while the ship is underway can be arranged.

⁷One exception is where qualification can be immediate without reporting to the mobilization site/ship. This exception applies to reservists who recently left active duty and are assigned to jobs with equipment identical or similar to that they used while on active duty.

Priorities not established
for weekend-away training

Even though reservists who are assigned to combat ships appear to require more time to qualify than reservists assigned to shore sites, REDCOM-18 training units seldom send such reservists to their mobilization combat ship for weekend training. Travel funds and Navy transportation are allocated among the REDCOMs to transport reservists as necessary to obtain weekend training that cannot be provided at the training unit. In fiscal year 1983, only one REDCOM-18 reserve unit assigned to mobilize to a combat ship provided travel for a few of its reservists to one weekend training period aboard its mobilization ship. In contrast, several supply reserve units were sent quarterly to their mobilization site at Oakland, California, at a cost of about \$75,000 for the year, excluding the costs of any Navy-provided transportation. In discussing the disparity with a REDCOM-18 representative, he pointed out that Naval Reserve Instruction 1510.7B (Vol.II) required such training quarterly for supply units and only encouraged it for combat ship units.

Establishment of training priorities could help the Navy maximize the contribution of its weekend-away training activity toward getting reservists promptly qualified. Although we did not evaluate the effectiveness of this Naval Reserve activity, which cost about \$8.5 million in fiscal year 1983 excluding Navy transportation, we believe the most benefit could be realized if funds were allocated on a priority basis. For example, units with the highest priority mobilization requirement or reservists most needing hands-on equipment training for qualification not available at the training unit would get priority. The Naval Reserve is establishing mobilization priorities for reserve training units. Once established, such priorities could be useful in establishing training priorities that are consistent with mobilization priorities.

Many reservists need
technical schools to meet
job qualification requirements

At least 10 percent (2,700) of the reservists reported as not qualified lacked the required school training. However, this number may be understated. In our review of 69 high-tech reservists shown as qualified in the training readiness reports for 6 REDCOM-18 units, we noted that the same reports showed 22 reservists had not received the required school training.⁸ Reporting of these reservists as qualified may be due to inconsistent reporting criteria. Naval Reserve Instruction 1510.7B states that 100 percent of the job training requirements must

⁸Reservists did not have the required Navy enlisted classification code which is awarded upon completion of the required training.

be completed prior to reporting a reservist as qualified. But REDCOM-18 Instruction 3501.3 allows reporting reservists as qualified once the mobilization commander certifies that he/she has demonstrated they can be reasonably expected to perform the job's work center and work station requirements. The REDCOM-18 instruction also states that the reservist must "continue to make satisfactory progress" toward completing the remaining job training requirements. Thus, the REDCOM-18 instruction contains less stringent qualification for readiness reporting than the Naval Reserve instruction does.

Reservists have not attended the schools because they can not or will not take time off from their civilian jobs to do so or because the Naval Reserve has not obtained a slot at the Navy school. Courses range in time from a few days to over 300 days.

The Chief of Naval Reserves is searching for ways to solve the problem in qualifying reservists whose billets require lengthy training at Navy schools. Two alternatives are being studied. One alternative is to determine how many such jobs can be withdrawn from the reserve and filled by active duty personnel. Another alternative is to divide the training courses into segments and provide training to the reservists over a period of time. This last alternative enhances the probability that reservists could eventually obtain the needed training.

Cross-assigned reservists do not always get preferred training

Fewer cross-assigned personnel were qualified than were personnel assigned for mobilization with local training units. As of September 31, 1983, only about 39 percent of the 11,471 cross-assigned reservists were qualified for their jobs compared to about 55 percent qualified overall. When a reserve unit no longer needs certain occupations, it cross-assigns reservists into any other training unit (regardless of location) that needs their particular occupations. However, these reservists continue to train with their local reserve units.

Some unit manning documents in April and May 1983 for REDCOM-18 show that as much as three times as many reservists assigned for mobilization with a local reserve unit were qualified as compared to cross-assigned reservists. About 52 percent of the reservists assigned to nine combat ships were qualified compared to only 14 percent of the cross-assigned reservists training in the same reserve units. Similarly, about 70 percent of the reservists assigned to five shore-based units were qualified compared to about 16 percent of the cross-assigned reservists training in the same reserve units.

Cross-assigned reservists do not always perform their annual 2-week active duty training at their mobilization sites. This may hinder prompt qualification. In one REDCOM-18 unit

where we reviewed the training schedules for all nine cross-assigned personnel, none were scheduled for training at their mobilization site during the year. Unit commanders stated that cross-assigned reservists do not always get their annual 2-week active duty training with their mobilization unit because (1) coordinating such training with the commander of the other training unit is difficult, and (2) many reservists prefer to train with their local training units.

Observations

The Naval Reserve's training goal of 70 percent may be overly optimistic. The Navy Reserve plan for qualifying reservists for their jobs requires a team effort on the part of reserve and mobilization unit commanders. But, at the time of our survey, only 55 percent were qualified. Several constraining factors--most of which the Navy is aware of--contributed to the 15 percent shortfall in the qualification level. We are concerned that the Naval Reserve's goal will not be met (particularly during a period of growth such as the Navy is now in) unless changes are made to more intensely focus on training and developing reservists for qualification. Accordingly, we believe that the Chief of Naval Reserve should consider

- establishing priorities for weekend-away training to assure that reservists who most need such training are getting it as soon as possible,
- deciding whether reservists in jobs frequently requiring more than 1 year to qualify should be scheduled for more training during the early months of their reserve service to assure that they qualify in a reasonable period of time, and
- determining whether cross-assigned reservists are attending 2-week active duty training at commands that will most facilitate their achieving qualification.

The Naval Reserve criteria for reporting qualification for training readiness is more stringent than that of the REDCOM-18 instruction. Following the REDCOM-18 instruction could result in overstated training readiness. We believe the Naval Reserve should correct this discrepancy and assure that all of the REDCOMs' implementing instructions containing such criteria are consistent with Naval Reserve guidance.

INDIVIDUAL RESERVIST'S
TRAINING FILES ARE INCOMPLETE

The accuracy of REDCOM-18's reported training readiness is questionable because reservists' training files lacked required supporting records showing that needed training and certification were achieved. Collectively, 6 units that we reviewed in 3 training centers reported that 69 of their 121⁹ high-tech reservists (57 percent) were qualified for their mobilization jobs. But the required support for such judgment was recorded in only 35 (29 percent) of the training files. Similarly, many files for the 52 high-tech reservists who were not reported as qualified did not contain required training plans for achieving job qualification, nor did the files show training and progress made toward achieving job qualification. Several unit commanders said there was not sufficient time to keep up with all the paperwork required to document training plans and accomplishments.

Naval Reserve Instruction 1510.7B states that training goals and objectives for each reservist must be specifically stated, contain time frames for completion, and be designed for measurement and evaluation. In implementing this guidance, REDCOM-18 issued specific instructions (3501.3) for developing and monitoring a training program tailored to the needs of the individual reservist and to support the readiness training report. At a minimum, the REDCOM-18 instruction requires that each reservist's training file include the following information pertinent to job qualification:

- Personal qualification standards for damage control and material maintenance management.
- Specific training requirements for the work center and work stations applicable to a reservist's mobilization job.
- A record of progress in meeting work center and work station requirements. (Individual Qualification Record showing training requirements and completion dates.)
- An Individual Qualification Letter, for reservists reported as qualified, certifying that the individual has demonstrated he/she can be reasonably expected to perform upon mobilization the duties required at the work center or watch station (required beginning September 30, 1982).

⁹This figure consists of 75 reservists assigned to mobilize with the training units and 46 cross assigned to mobilize with other training units. We excluded reservists with no training files or no information in their training files.

Needed reserve job training plans are being developed

Before developing individual reserve job training plans, unit commanders need mobilization job descriptions and training requirements. If such job descriptions and training requirements have not been developed for jobs added to the Naval Reserve, the reserve unit commander and mobilization unit commander must develop them. One commander said he spent almost 2 years getting agreement with the mobilization unit commander on job descriptions. The Naval Reserve is in the process of developing standardized reserve job training plans for each class of ship. Although some standardized plans have been completed, current estimates indicate that it will take until October 1984 to issue the plans needed to cover about 95 percent of REDCOM-18's surface jobs. Such plans are also being developed for shore mobilization jobs where practical.

The reserve job training plan, for a specified class of ship, includes specific reserve job descriptions and reserve job training requirements for each mobilization job assigned to the Naval Reserve. The purpose of the plan is to provide unit job descriptions and the minimum requirements which must be achieved for qualification in each job.

Standardized reserve job training plans will be a valuable asset to reserve unit commanders in developing individual reserve training plans.

Reservists' training files do not support reported job qualifications

Training readiness reports show reservists as qualified for their jobs even though required supporting documentation was not in the files. At 6 REDCOM-18 units, we reviewed training files for 69 high-tech reservists' who were reported as qualified for their mobilization jobs. Only 13 (19 percent) of the 69 training files contained Individual Qualification Letters or similar documents certifying that the reservists were qualified for their jobs. Training files for another 22 (32 percent) of the reservists considered qualified as of or before September 30, 1982--when the requirement for a certification letter was established--did not contain such letters.

Specific shortcomings in training file records for the remaining 34 of the 69 reservists reported as qualified are explained below.

--Thirty-two of the training files did not contain a complete job description, which is essential for developing a meaningful individual training plan.

--None of the training files contained any information supporting that the reservist had qualified for his/her job. The files did not contain any record of certification. A REDCOM-18 representative stated that an Individual Qualification Record, showing training requirements and completion dates, is the minimum support required for reporting a reservist as qualified.

Reservists' training files
lack training plans for
job qualification

Training files for reservists who were reported as not qualified for their mobilization jobs did not contain required information needed for developing and monitoring of individual reservist's training. At 6 REDCOM-18 units, we reviewed 52 high-tech reservists' training files. The training files lacked training plans and achievements needed to monitor training and evaluate the extent that reservists had progressed toward qualifying for their jobs.

Mobilization job qualification requirements are essential for designing a training program tailored to the individual reservist. Yet 39 of the 52 files reviewed contained no work center or work station requirements for the mobilization jobs. Personal qualifications standards for basic damage control and material maintenance management were filed in all but seven training files.

None of the files contained specific training plans with time frames for achieving each training requirement. Such plans are essential for efficiently monitoring and evaluating progress toward achieving qualification. Also, such plans and time frames would provide a basis for estimating, and recording in the readiness reporting system, how long it would take for each reservist to become qualified.

None of the files contained completed Individual Qualification Records showing the training required and achieved. Although 28 of the 52 training files contained evaluation documents showing that reservists attended 2-week active duty training, the evaluations were unclear as to

--the specific training received and

--how the training contributed toward achieving job qualification.

Similarly, none of the files contained any information about requirements for weekend-away training from the training unit and no information on training achieved. Weekend-away training allows a reservist to accomplish job training requirements that cannot be provided at his/her reserve unit. Central

locations for shipboard simulators have been established within each REDCOM to train reservists from several reserve training centers. And the Naval School at Great Lakes provides reservists with some hands-on equipment training. Although many reservists participate in weekend-away training over the period of a year, only 6 of the 53 reservists' training files that we reviewed showed they had participated. But, in these six cases, the files did not show

--what training was achieved or

--how such training enhanced the reservist's prospects for job qualification.

Comments of reserve personnel

Although we limited our review of training records to 6 of the 15 REDCOM-18 units visited, we discussed maintenance of training files with several unit and center commanders. Maintaining the training files was generally recognized as a problem area for the following reasons:

--Insufficient time to maintain the records as required.

--Lack of trained staff assigned to the unit to maintain the records.

--Letters certifying that reservists are qualified are not always forthcoming and sometimes get lost in transit.

--It takes time to reach agreement with mobilization unit commanders on job descriptions and training requirements preparatory to qualifying people in those instances where standardized plans have not been developed. As pointed out previously, the Naval Reserve is in the process of developing standard plans for most jobs which should alleviate this problem.

In discussing training with several reservists, we concluded that many did not appear to understand the process for achieving job qualification. We talked to 36 reservists in high-tech occupations in 6 units about their qualification status. Of the 36 reservists, 20 (55 percent) were unaware of or disagreed with their reported status as follows:

--Four did not understand the process involved in qualifying and its effect on training readiness reporting.

--Twelve did not know whether they were reported as qualified, or not.

--Four did not agree with their reported qualification status that we scheduled from unit readiness training reports.

Reserve unit commanders could more actively involve reservists in developing and maintaining their training plan to achieve qualification for their assigned job upon mobilization. By involving the reservists, they would be more informed about the importance of their role in enhancing Naval Reserve readiness. In addition, reserve unit commanders would get needed assistance in maintaining current and complete training files.

Observations

The ultimate goal of the Naval Reserve is to achieve and maintain qualification of its reservists to perform their assigned jobs upon mobilization. Standardized mobilization job descriptions and training plans are important in effectively planning for needed training; the Naval Reserve is preparing such standardized guidelines and should complete them by late 1984. The sooner these plans are available, the better for reserve commanders.

Individual training plans tailored to each reservist's specific needs are equally important in planning and guiding reservists prompt qualification. The Naval Reserve and REDCOM-18 have issued instructions providing a systematic approach to planning, monitoring, evaluating, and recording individual reservist's training. Although the REDCOM-18 instruction requires that training plans and achievements be recorded in individual reservist's training files, the files were often incomplete. Moreover many reservists were unaware of or disagreed with their reported job qualification status. Accordingly, we believe the Naval Reserve should

- review its requirements for individual reservist's training plans to determine whether the instructions and the specified forms of documentation are clear and adequate to facilitate planning for training and to support training readiness reports,
- review all REDCOMs' implementing instructions for maintaining training files to assure that such instructions are consistent with Naval Reserve guidelines,
- make sufficient tests of performance periodically at the unit level to assure compliance, and
- take the action necessary to assure that individual reservists are informed about qualification requirements, participate in developing and updating their training plan and achievements, and have some responsibility for assuring that their training files are accurate and current.

LOCATIONS VISITED

U.S. Navy Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

U.S. Naval Reserve Headquarters, New Orleans, Louisiana

Naval Reserve Readiness Command Region 18 (REDCOM 18),
Olathe, Kansas

Naval Reserve Air Station, Olathe, Kansas

Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center, Kansas City, Missouri

Reserve units¹⁰

--FF 1070 Downes 7018

--Telecommunications Station Phillipines

--Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity,
San Diego 2018

--Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, Detachment 918

--AR 6 Ajax Detachment 218

Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center, Omaha, Nebraska

Reserve units 10

--Telecommunications Advance Base Functional
Component C3A6 218

--FPG 2 Ramsey Detachment 118

--DD 988 Thorn 8818

--Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity,
San Diego 2018

Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center, Topeka, Kansas

Reserve units 10

--FF 1069 Bagley 6918

--DD 986 Hill 8618

Naval Reserve Center, St. Joseph, Missouri

Reserve units 10

--DD 987 O'Bannon 8718

--DDG Stoddert 2220

Naval Reserve Center, Joplin, Missouri

Reserve unit 10

--FF 1062 Whipple 6218

¹⁰The name is the same as the mobilization units.

Naval Reserve Center, Wichita, Kansas

Reserve unit¹¹

--FF 1045 Davidson 4518

¹¹The name is the same as the mobilization units.

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