

**Office of the Secretary of Defense**  
**Reserve Forces Policy Board**  
*Quarterly Meeting Minutes*  
**Wednesday, February 15, 2023**  
**Open Session Location: Pentagon, PLCC**  
**Uniform: Class "B" or Service Equivalent**



**Members Present**

1. Major General Arnold Punaro, USMCR (Ret), Chair, Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB)
2. Major General John B. Hashem, U.S. Army Reserve, Military Executive, RFPB (Non-voting)
3. Sergeant Major Peter J. Running, U.S. Army Reserve, Senior Enlisted Advisor, RFPB (Non-voting)
4. Major General Susan E. Henderson, U.S. Army Reserve
5. Rear Admiral Miriam L. Lafferty, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve
6. Major General Haldane B. Lamberton, Army National Guard
7. Brigadier General Michele K. LaMontagne, Air National Guard
8. Major General Michael S. Martin, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
9. Rear Admiral Eric C. Ruttenberg, U.S. Navy Reserve
10. Ms. Michele M. Lenihan, Executive, Hakluyt & Company
11. Mr. Carlos E. Martinez, Brigadier General (Ret), U.S. Air Force Reserve
12. Mr. John F. Sampa, Command Sergeant Major (Ret), Army National Guard
13. Honorable Dr. Paul N. Stockton, Chair of the Subcommittee for the Reserve Component's Role in Homeland Defense and Support to Civil Authorities: President, Paul N Stockton LLC
14. Honorable Ms. Debra S. Wada, Chair of the Subcommittee for Integration of Total Force Personnel Policy; CEO, Senshi Ame Advisors LLC
15. Ms. Phyllis J. Wilson, President, Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation

**Invited Speakers**

16. Honorable Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense
17. Honorable Ashish Vazirani, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
18. Ms. Stephanie Miller, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy
19. Honorable Erik Raven, Under Secretary of the Navy
20. Honorable Gabe Camarillo, Under Secretary of the Army
21. Mr. John A. Fedrigo, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Manpower & Reserve Affairs
22. General Eric Smith, USMC, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps

**Invited Guests**

23. Mr. Judd Lyons, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Integration
24. Ms. Kimberly Jackson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
25. Mr. Grier Martin, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
26. Mr. Stephen Austin, Executive Director, Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve
27. Vice Admiral John Mustin, USNR, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Forces
28. Lieutenant General David G. Bellon, USMCR, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve and U.S. Marine Corps Forces South
29. Rear Admiral Robert T. Clark, USNR, Reserve Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development, N7, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
30. Lieutenant General John P. Healy, USAFR, Chief of Air Force Reserve, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force
31. Major General Gregory Mosser, USAR, Deputy Chief of the Army Reserve
32. Major General Rafael Ribas, USAR, Deputy Commander for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, U.S. Southern Command

33. Major General William Zana, USAR, Director, Strategic Plans and Policy, and International Affairs, National Guard Bureau
34. Brigadier General Max Stitzer, USAFR, Mobilization Assistant to the Air Force Director of Staff, Headquarters, United States Air Force
35. Mr. Rich Rico, Director of Staff, Air National Guard
36. Mr. Fred Rees, Special Advisor to Chief, National Guard Bureau
37. Ms. Sueann Henderson, Acting-Group Designated Federal Officer, OUSD-P&R
38. CDR Andrew Lawrence, USN, Military Assistant to DASD-Military Personnel Policy
39. CDR Keedah Ray, USCGR, Military Assistant to the Chief of the Coast Guard Reserve
40. Col Joseph Moye, USMC, Military Executive to the Undersecretary of the Navy
41. Col Thomas Butler, USAF, Deputy Mobilization & Reserve Affairs, U.S. Southern Command
42. Col Ileana Ramirez Perez, USAF, Senior Guard Advisor, U.S. Southern Command
43. COL Brandye Williams, USAR, Chief, Joint Plans Division, National Guard Bureau
44. Maj Kyle Faherty, USMC, speech writer for Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps
45. CSM Michael Spaulding, USAR Executive Assistant to the SEA, Chief of the National Guard Bureau
46. CSM Robert Foesch, USAR, Executive NCO to the Command Sergeant Major of the Army Reserve
47. SGM Stephen Minyard, USAR, Senior Enlisted Adviser to Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
48. Sergeant Major Ruben Esparza, USMCR, Senior Enlisted Adviser to the Director of Reserve Affairs

#### **RFPB Staff**

49. Colonel Julia Hunt, USMCR, Chief of Staff
50. Colonel Sean Counihan, USAR
51. Colonel Richard Sudder, ARNG, Designated Federal Officer
52. Colonel Gary Beckett, USAFR
53. Colonel Manaal Burge, ANG
54. Captain William McCabe, USNR
55. Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Hedger, USAR
56. Lieutenant Commander Dan Sweeney, USCGR
57. Ms. Margaret Odhiambo, Executive Assistant

#### **The RFPB Fellows Society/Alumni**

58. Major General Larry Taylor, USMCR (Ret)
59. The Honorable Albert Zapanta, Former RFPB Chairman

#### **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)**

60. Mr. Ron Bogle, Chairman, ESGR
61. CAPT Jon Townsend, USNR, Executive Director, ESGR

#### **Other Guests**

62. Col Shane Donahue, USMCR, Chief of Staff, Office of Marine Corps Reserve
63. Col Marc Henri, USAFR, Reserve Advisor, SAF-MR
64. LTC Jason McKenie, USAR, Executive Officer, OCAR
65. LTC Matt Goodwin, Personnel Readiness Officer, JS J1
66. MAJ Alex Park, USAR, Strategic Planner, NGB
67. Maj Alicia Lacy, Joint Interorganizational Planner, NGB
68. Maj Shannon Goans, USMCR, Aide de Camp for Lt Gen Bellon
69. SgtMaj Carlos Ruiz, USMC, Force Sergeant Major, Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces South
70. SFC Russell Gilchrist, DISA JSSC, photographer
71. MSgt Julio Mezamedina, USMCR, Executive Assistant, Reserve Affairs Division, Marine Corps
72. MC2 Alexander Kubitz, Defense Media Activity

73. MCPO Tracy Hunt, Force Command Master Chief, Office of the Chief of the Navy Reserve
74. TSgt Jade Andrew Lundy, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of Air Force Reserve
75. Mr. Michael Petring, Division Chief NGB-J52
76. Mr. Andrew Ryan, Communications Director, Office of Marine Corps Reserve
77. CPO Elisandro Diaz, Deputy Director Public Affairs, Office of the Chief of the Navy Reserve

**The RFPB held a Meeting in open session at the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia on February 15, 2023.**

**\*\*Start of Meeting\*\***

#### **0845 Open Session Opening Comments**

##### **Major General John Hashem, Military Executive**

MG Hashem welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their support of the RFPB. He then turned over remarks to the Designated Federal Officer.

##### **COL Richard Sudder, ARNG, Designated Federal Officer**

COL Richard Sudder introduced himself as the Designated Federal Officer, called the meeting to order, and announced, as required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), that the USD P&R approved the opening of the meeting and the agenda. He also stated that the Board had a quorum and noted no persons had submitted written requests to the Board.

##### **Major General Arnold Punaro, USMCR (Ret), Chair, RFPB**

Chair Punaro administratively opened the Board to conduct required business. He welcomed members, staff, and invited guests. He also asked if anyone wished to address the board; no persons came forward.

#### **0845 – Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense**

Dr. Hicks discussed the strategic importance of reserve forces in Secretary Austin's National Defense Strategy, to include their unique role as "Citizen Soldiers" – critical to bridging the military / civilian divide. She mentioned how this administration's National Defense Strategy sets forth the same priority as its predecessor on an operational, deployable, ready. Reserve Component and recognizes the importance of operating as a total force to meet the strategy's goals. "While the geopolitical landscape has changed, the role of the Reserve Component is as important as ever," said Deputy Secretary Hicks. "A return to strategic competition does not mean we're returning to a strategic reserve. To the contrary, the reserves remain a vital operational component for our force. Our Reserve Component gives us an asymmetric advantage over our global competitors."

Dr. Hicks further discussed the importance of the Reserve Component as an integrated part of America's all-volunteer force. "The Reserve Component also is a living, thriving bridge between the American way of life that we must protect and those who are called to military service to defend it."

She affirmed the Reserve Component's ability to tap into a tremendous amount of private-sector expertise and experience in fields like cybersecurity, logistics, and data science. "It's how we have a small-town mayor in northern Indiana who was able to serve and deploy as an intelligence officer in Afghanistan, and how a current Navy reservist, who is also a senior executive at Apple, has been able to help the Department think through how best to engage the tech sector in Silicon Valley."

Before taking questions from board members Dr. Hicks stated the need for a current and comprehensive Total Force Policy. "I know the Board is recommending that Secretary Austin direct the Department to update the Total Force Policy, and I think that makes good sense. We have not updated it since 2009, and as I said, there's been a lot of change since then. It's time."

Dr. Hicks thanked the Board for their efforts and told the members that Secretary Austin and her "are very proud of this board; we're proud of each and every one of you who volunteered to join in this effort, and we're very much looking forward to the counsel that you can provide us. We like our boards to be working boards."

Dr. Stockton provided the first question from the Board and asked how the Department was considering the role

of the Reserve Component and civilian skill sets in Homeland Defense Operations. Dr. Hicks responded that those civilian skill sets inherent in the Reserve Component are vital to Homeland Defense and are a significant advantage in keeping this Nation's military relevant.

Ms. Phyllis Wilson inquired about the percentage of women in the military considering the percentage of women in the national population, and whether the Department has a plan to address this short fall with any recruiting initiatives? Dr. Hicks agreed the Department needs to tell the story of its female senior leaders (DoD currently has four women serving as 4-star Generals). Additionally, the Department needs to collect and conduct data analysis of cultural biases and barriers to develop recruiting initiatives to attract more women into military service.

Lastly, RADM Miriam Lafferty inquired about civilian skill sets in the Reserve Component and whether the DoD is thinking about a way to access those high-demand low-density skill sets for mobilizations? Dr. Hicks responded by saying that "we" as senior leaders need to start asking the right questions regarding this topic. Leaders need to communicate, capture the data, and use that analysis to inform policy decisions regarding the use of civilian skills to increase readiness.

This concluded Dr. Hicks' comments.

#### **0915 – Hon. Ashish Vazirani, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness**

Hon. Vazirani discussed P&R's continued commitment to enhancing the capabilities of the RC through several initiatives in support of SecDef's priority of Taking Care of People. P&R's purpose is to support and enable the people who serve in defense of our nation, with the vision of a diverse, resilient, and ready DoD community. This is supported by a mission to ensure a strong, adaptable, and ready force supported through exceptional policy, programs, and services.

Hon. Vazirani described four P&R priorities:

Change the culture to eliminate corrosive behaviors and improve diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Promote the health, well-being, and safety of the force and families by addressing the military health system to ensure medical readiness, and family programs.

Cultivate talent management through permeability of the Total Force, Duty Status Reform, reimagining the DoD workforce, and hiring a Chief Talent Management Officer.

Advance strategic readiness to enable senior leaders to access data-driven decision support tools and have a wholistic view of the readiness framework to strengthen deterrence.

Hon. Vazirani recognized that the RC is operational and the way the Department relies on the RC as a critical component of the National Defense. He said P&R is looking forward to seeing a recommendation from the RFPB on refreshing the Total Force Policy.

Dr. Stockton asked how the Department is viewing the growing skepticism on the value of diversity. Hon. Vazirani stated that diversity is essential for readiness, and for understanding where to recruit. For example, half the population is female, and evidence shows targeted recruiting works, and geographic diversity requires targeted recruiting. Ms. Lenihan asked how the Board can maximize support to P&R's efforts, and Hon. Vazirani requested that the Board give a variety of perspectives on how to re-imagine the Total Force. Mr. Vashistha asked, "What does good look like in the Total Force?" and Hon. Vazirani responded that "good" is when all people are treated with respect, and those who want to serve honorably can do so. Mr. Sampa emphasized that diversity and geography are intertwined, and MG Henderson commented that women remain underrepresented in the military and are still not included in the draft. Hon. Vazirani stated that including women in the draft would signal that we are "all in" on inclusion, but that DoD does not have a position on the topic, and it ultimately belongs with Congress. Ms. Wilson asked about the varying quality of healthcare to service members, stating it should be more like athlete care, and Hon. Vazirani answered that DoD is looking at a modernized fitness model for the Total Force. Mr. Martinez observed that with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force, a lack of a draft causes a lack of diversity of thought, with no forcing function. Hon. Vazirani offered that there is too much generalization about the military and recruiting needs the individual stories of those who serve.



LtGen Bellon commented that the National Defense Strategy is void of Operational Design and Use of the Reserve Component or of Cost of the Force, and that in the future we are going to need more access to the RC. He also asked whether the consolidation of the military health system has been validated yet as the lack of it is harming retention. Mr. Austin commented that while the AC is installation-based, the Guard and RC are the connection to the country. Hon. Vazirani noted that with the RC and veterans, the department can bridge the divide to civilians, and improve connection and community. Lt Gen Healy asked for support for Duty Status Reform, and MG Zana recommended the use of the term "Integrated Reserve" rather than "operational" or "strategic" and asked for the necessary authorities and policies for use of the RC.

Hon. Vazirani thanked the Board for their work and concluded his comments.

#### **0945 – Total Force Policy Discussion and Vote**

Chair Punaro discussed the history of Department's prior Total Force policies. He described the work the RFPB's Total Force Integration subcommittee conducted on Total Force Policy and asked if there are any questions from the Board Members. Board Member Michelle Lenihan thanked the RFPB staff for their assistance to the subcommittee. Chair Punaro presented the subcommittee's proposed findings and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on Total Force Policy to the Board for a vote. The Board Members present unanimously voted for presenting the findings and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

#### **1015 – Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Personnel Policy**

Ms. Stephanie Miller discussed the status of the Reserve Component Recruiting & Retention data, initiatives, and future outlook of the Reserve Components. Ms. Miller mentioned that the Department is facing unprecedented challenges. The market has not changed but some influencing factors have. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, established relationships with high schools and other community outlets have expired primarily due to lack of presence and staff rotation. These relationships and the trust between recruiters and these outlets need to be reestablished. One of the ways they are accomplishing this is through partnering new recruiters with ASVAB administrators who already have these relationships.

Ms. Miller stated that the Department needs to do a better job when educating youth on the benefits of military service. The quadrennial review on military compensation is underway and from this review DoD will be able to show the total compensation package.

So far 2023 has been worse than 2022 regarding number of recruits and thus far USMC and the USSF are the only services on track to meet recruiting missions. Regarding incentives, they've tried historically high recruiting bonuses and saw zero net increase in recruits. The best return on investment has been marketing and advertising. They have analyzed private sector compensation packages and found total compensation in the military is still a better offering even with the changes in corporate offerings such as tuition assistance. The challenge continues to be educating potential recruits beyond the basic pay chart.

The motivations of young people are everchanging. They are looking for travel, leadership, and opportunity with benefits as a basic expectation. Compensation packages should be viewed as an additional enhancement to the baseline benefits of military service.

Today's youth are reluctant to enter long-term commitment; they hear "military," and they hear "a lifetime of service," which deters them. The Department needs to do better at educating our youth on the many other service options. DoD is working with Congress and veteran organizations to educate on current offerings and asking for their help educating and advocating to their constituents.

The 2023 NDAA allowed increased flexibility regarding PII requirements for perspective recruits. This flexibility allows increased gathering and use of PII to create profiles and avatars to target key topics which resonate with prospects and to tailor content geographically. The NDAA also increased flexibility through use of unique incentive offerings like offering different levels of Tricare benefits for target populations.

However, the 2023 NDAA did not grant increased access to high schools due to reluctance of some members on the Hill. JROTC programs are outstanding youth outreach but recent poor press regarding these programs and "DoD's predatory practices" have hurt access in certain areas.

DoD wants to expand pools without lowering standards; for example, the Army has a program where recruits who are on the cusp but need help in specific areas can ship to boot camp and attend training tailored to their deficiencies prior to commencing basic training. The Department is looking into organizations that can help these members locally rather than at basic training locations to make it scalable. DoD is also looking to add a personality test and interest inventory to compliment the ASVAB.

Known marketing factors that DoD faces include:

- Confidence gap: recruits that don't believe they are capable of military service.
- Support gap: influencers have lower support for military service.
- Trust gap: government institutions as a whole have seen a decline in trust.

This concluded Ms. Miller's comments.

#### **1400 – Honorable Erik Raven, Under Secretary of the Navy**

The Honorable Erik Raven stated with the NDS renewed for 2022, the key issue is making sure the Reserve Components are aligned with maritime missions. When looking at the roles of the RC serving today, they need to be focused on serving those maritime missions. For the Navy, COO and CMO's challenges include recruiting, retention, and talent management. Challenges also evolve from younger individuals and their propensity to serve in uniform. Embarking on an integrated campaign to explain value of service, led by General Berger, the DoD needs to tell servicemembers' stories about national service.

He also mentioned the Navy increasingly faces challenges with DoD benefits. Private industry has adopted similar approaches and are now offering more generous benefits. DoD needs to relook at benefits offered by the military services.

Hon. Raven further discussed outreach efforts to the Departments of Education (to ensure recruiters have access to schools) and Labor. He also stated Secretary Del Toro started a task force for recruiting and retention efforts, with monthly meetings and periodic updates to SECNAV. The task force will develop action plans to fix identified problems.

Prior to COVID, the Navy was at 101 percent end-strength and is now at 95 percent end-strength. Some specific efforts of the Navy Reserve Recruiting command include advertising specifically focused on the Navy Reserve in the areas of Retention and Talent Management since it is the all-volunteer force. People "vote with their feet" and Quality of Life and Quality of Mission are important areas of focus.

A few priorities highlighted with respect to the Total Force were: (1) Highest priority is education, to include benefits and Professional Military Education; (2) Infrastructure, not just barracks but all buildings; (3) promotion opportunities; and (4) sexual assault, mental health, and suicide prevention.

Hon. Raven stated they are looking for recommendations from the RFPB on how to improve Department of the Navy efforts.

With regard to IT solutions, commercial solutions move faster than government procurement. The Navy is leading the Department in zero trust framework currently. More broadly, with systems from logistics to human resources, the Navy is working to make measurable progress. Of note, the Navy implemented a program called 'cattle drive' which evaluates different IT systems, opportunities for consolidation to simplify IT, and invest in systems it needs to move forward.

Board Member Michelle Lenihan asked about IT in reserve centers. Hon. Raven responded the Navy

replaced and updated numerous systems.

### **1430 - Honorable Gabe Camarillo, Under Secretary of the Army**

Honorable Camarillo discussed the U.S. Army's priorities related to personnel issues, recruiting, and Total Force Policy.

Hon. Camarillo began by affirming the Army's commitment to their total force approach. He stated that the "Army cannot meet our global demands or complete our missions without the expertise of our Reserve Component Soldiers. And as pressures on active-duty end-strength mount, we rely on them now more than ever." He highlighted that the conflict in the Ukraine offers one of the best examples of the critical role that our Reserve Component Soldiers play in support of the Army's global missions. Hon. Camarillo talked about his recent visit to the European theater where he observed training efforts of servicemembers from the NY Army National Guard in action as part of the Joint Mission Training Group. Additionally, five Reserve Component units (approximately 600 servicemembers) will be deploying to the Area of Operations this summer.

Hon. Camarillo went on to highlight a few FY2022 accomplishments which included benefits-processing for grey area retirees, and childcare & infrastructure investments.

Regarding grey area retirees, the Army has allocated funding to mobilize soldiers to augment the administrative teams who are actively working through the retiree benefits backlog. He said, "this has been a multi-component effort to increase throughput and get our RC retirees the pay they have earned and deserve." Additionally, investing in childcare and infrastructure is one of Secretary of Army Wormuth's principal priorities. Hon. Camarillo further stated that the Army recognizes the unique challenges of childcare for its Reserve Component Soldiers, many of whom may be single parents or drill far from home. To address this challenge, the Army has implemented several pilots, in coordination with OSD, ARNG, and OCAR.

Next, the Under Secretary of the Army laid out Reserve Component initiatives HQDA will be addressing during this fiscal year. A few of the higher priority issues are reverse credentialing, permeability, and recruiting. In addressing reverse credentialing, Hon. Camarillo stated "from truck drivers to engineers, we need to make it easier for credentials and schooling to transfer from industry to the Army, and from state to state. We need to establish a process to provide credit for talented civilians' professional training that they are bringing to bear in uniform."

On the issue of permeability, many Soldiers separate from the Army whenever life brings challenges or opportunities that seem to conflict with one's military service. To increase flexibility and reduce attrition across the total force, the Army is working to increase permeability across components which will ensure that people have the flexibility to increase or decrease their Army commitments without having to hang up the uniform. Whether to take care of family, pursue schooling, or advance in one's career (be it military or civilian), the Army is building in the flexibility to accommodate the workforce of the future. He went on to say, "increasing permeability is also about readiness; it enables the Army to employ its greatest resource at the right time, to the right assignment, to meet the dynamic requirements of a complex world."

Hon. Camarillo noted that recruiting is the Army's number one priority. Last year, the Army fell short of Active-Duty recruiting goals by approximately 15,000 soldiers. This recruiting challenge similarly reverberated across Compos 2 and 3, which together missed mission by more than 22,300 soldiers. Hon. Camarillo stated that many of the recruiting initiatives positively benefit RC accessions, including updating the ASVAB, reducing ESL barriers, broadening pathways to citizenship through military service, and overcoming lowering propensity among young Americans. "Put simply, we are overhauling how we recruit," he said.

Lastly, the Under Secretary of the Army stated that integrating the Army Reserve with the Army active component is critical to our readiness. As the Army transforms from Counterterrorism to Large Scale Combat Operations, the Reserve Components is vital to decisively navigating the complex threats of the

future. The Army cannot meet this challenge without an ability to support multiple engagements simultaneously, which cannot be done without the Reserve Component, comprising 78% of our sustainment force. Additionally, 55% of medical units, 65% of finance units, and 73% of human resources capability reside in the Army Reserve. Hon. Camarillo closed by reiterating how essential Reserve Component forces are to the Army missions and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to address the RFPB.

MG Lamberton asked the first question and stated that the National Guard today is not the Guard prior to 9/11. With the end of GWOT Operations, are senior leaders considering how to keep readiness in our formations with the lack of mobilization opportunities? Hon. Camarillo stated that we can't go back to pre-9/11 readiness, and that while mission OPTEMPO isn't down, the size of the missions has been scaled down. The Army needs to make an enduring case to keep deploying Compo 2 & 3. They have no choice but to use a total Army approach.

Ms. Sid Ashworth asked if senior leaders realize the potential future effect of the aging civilian workforce population. The Under Secretary stated that the Army does have a civilian talent management issue regarding the aging population. Additionally, hiring authorities are outdated and we need Congress to look into this issue and work with our personnel community. Lastly, the Army needs to articulate to the public what our mission is, and all the "cool" jobs you can do in the Army's Civilian Workforce (e.g. cyber & space). The Under Secretary cited the example that it is kind of like working for NASA in the 1960's.

Ms. Michelle Lenihan inquired into recruiting issues and incentives by stating that it seems as if the biggest obstacle is people not feeling a connection to the military or the government. She asked how the Army plans to tackle the issue. Hon. Camarillo agreed with her comment, especially with only 1% of the population serving. He added that the Services and Department need to advocate for and inform the public of the skills and characteristics that serving in the military instill in a Citizen Soldier. Additionally, the Army needs to tell its story about the unique incentive and mission sets that one can experience by serving in the military.

CSM(Ret) Sampa brought up issues with grey area retirees in the Reserve Component. He stated how the process to receive retired pay & benefits with the Army Human Resources Command is frustrating, and this frustration is leaking into the force which affects recruiting & retention. He asked if the Army has a plan to remedy the situation. Hon. Camarillo started by thanking CSM Sampa for his service and apologized for the frustration. He referred to his previous comments regarding bringing ADOS Soldiers on orders to help clear the retirement backlog at HRC. Additionally, he talked about how it was affecting recruiting and retention, and that on top of the initiatives in place (BRS, etc.), the Army needs to look holistically at its recruiting efforts and build trust and influence with parents, the key influencers in a potential recruit's life.

MG Henderson noted that the Army is not planning to drop standards for recruits and asked whether it was considering adjusting them. Hon. Camarillo responded by saying that the Army is always trying to attract the best of the best in its recruits, but it needs to find some middle ground. Maybe the Army needs to look at recruits on a case-by-case basis, depending on the MOS or type of enlistment. But at the end of the day, it is all about the quality of the talent it is bringing into the force. One of the items the Army is reviewing is how it messages and attract people into Service, as once they join, the Army has a good chance of retaining them.

This concluded Hon. Camarillo's remarks.

#### **1500 – Mr. John A. Fedrigo, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs**

Mr. Fedrigo discussed the important priorities held by the Air Force. He stressed the importance of pay and benefits and the need for Duty Status Reform (DSR). He stated there are currently over 30 duty statuses that need to be condensed to four, which is a challenge given the current authorities. He also highlighted that this massive DSR effort began with an individual who experienced duty status challenges as an Air Force Reservist and took it for action. Thus, the origination of DSR started with an Air Force Reserve Colonel who put pen to paper and has grown to a voluminous legislative proposal before OMB.



Mr. Fedrigo also emphasized the importance of childcare provisions. The USAF reviewed its issues finding regarding qualified childcare providers for the Child Development Centers (CDC) and found that it was due to providers staying home to care for their own children. To correct these issues, the Air Force implemented a new policy in the CDCs, allowing the first child to be free. This enabled more qualified providers and reduced costs for families. The policy also includes graduated costs for additional children. The USAF's new childcare policy allows families to be in a good place which allows Airmen and Guardians to focus on the mission.

The Air Force also implemented a new initiative called "no wrong door." This initiative centralizes help for anyone in need from sexual assault or violence of any kind. Instead of being referred to different offices on base, there will be one entity (like the chaplain, a mental health professional or specialist) that receives victims. The central point of contact makes receiving care from the helping agencies more accessible.

Mr. Fedrigo also noted that like the other Services' recruiting issues, the Air Force is also experiencing issues in this area. He talked about the lack of a "propensity to serve" in this generation. As an example, he discussed that out of a population of 20 million, only 400,000 might be eligible to physically serve. Therefore, recruiters need to recruit 50% more in order to be successful. The same cohort of eligible recruits are also being recruited by the Police, Fire, and other public service organizations. Over the past three decades, the force is smaller while the population is larger, but we are still in danger of not meeting the mission. Some of the reasons for these recruiting challenges involve impressions of military service as the current generation is instilled with a fear of being killed, maimed, injured, and then abandoned.

While the USAF is a leader in suicide prevention, sexual assault prevention, and domestic abuse response, the message is not being received. The population believes it is worse in the military than regular society, which is contrary to data. Mr. Fedrigo stated the DoD has a branding problem, and the message should be that DoD is leading the nation in how to solve these nationwide challenges. DoD needs a nation-wide campaign on service, as it lost one million potentials between 2018-2021. This generation doesn't believe in American Exceptionalism, so why would it fight for the country?

This concluded Mr. Fedrigo's comments.

### **1515 – General Eric Smith, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps**

General Smith opened with stating the Marine Corps fully supports the Total Force, and that there is only one Marine Corps. He said that being in the RC means that you will be called to active duty soon. He commented that we are asking more of our Reservists than the system was designed for, and RC Marines are called on full-time duty often. He described Force Design and Direct Affiliation in his Service as the assumption that Marines will join the RC upon the end of their active service.

Gen Smith described the RC construct as being built on a 1:5 deploy-to-dwell ratio, and if that is not possible, then the unit knows their next six-month rotation date well in advance. He also said that MarForRes and II MEF remain Service-retained forces for all CCMDs outside INDOPACOM, and still must maintain the 1:5 deploy-to-dwell ratio. He further stated that RC end-strength is 36,800 and AC end-strength is 175,000. He noted that the RC is below end-strength now due to the delay in RC recruit training during COVID, since only AC recruits were trained. He then stated that there is a place for every active-duty Marine to stay in the Reserves, and that there is a plan to retain talent and retrain Marines as needed.

Gen Smith indicated that we need improved IT systems to open visibility of all billet vacancies, and more tools to modernize force management. He stated that the Marine Corps is not going to reduce the quality of its recruits. Gen Smith also described that MarForRes is dual hatted with MarForSouth, which allows for RC Marines to serve in SOUTHCOM missions and deploy in support of the CCMD. He also highlighted that this creates exciting opportunities for RC Marines.

RADM Lafferty commented on the close alignment between the USCGR and the Marine Corps Reserve in that both are small and use similar Total Force messaging. She stated that one weekend each month and two weeks in the summer is not accurate anymore. She asked about ADOS fatigue, and whether using ADOS to fill AC gaps that the AC won't fill causes problems. She also noted that AC recruiting failures result in RC mission crises 4 years later. Gen Smith stated that ADOS is not a solution for targeted billet reductions and should only be used for pop-up requirements.

Gen Smith described that the old RC adage of "support and reinforce" sounds subordinate to the AC, but that it is no longer accurate. Instead, he said it should be "what is your mission? what part of the mission do you own?" as a part of the Total Force.

Ms. Wada asked about exiting service members and how the Marine Corps handles rank for inter-service transfer or return to active-duty. Gen Smith acknowledged that the Marine Corps used to reduce rank but has since abandoned that practice and members retain their rank.

This concluded Gen Smith's remarks.

**1545 – RFPB Closing Remarks**

Chairman Punaro thanked everyone for their attendance and stated that the next meeting will occur on 9 May 23.

**1550 – Meeting Adjourned**



Arnold L. Punaro  
Major General, USMCR (Ret)  
Chairman, Reserve Forces Policy Board