



CHAIR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
RESERVE FORCES POLICY BOARD

5109 Leesburg Pike, Suite 501  
Falls Church, VA 22041

20 Dec 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin: *Sir Lloyd,*

As we close out 2024 and my one-year anniversary as the RFPB Chair, I want to update you on the work the RFPB is pursuing across our three subcommittees. On behalf of our board, thank you for your vision and leadership in signing the *Total Force Optimization for Strategic Competition* memo earlier this Fall. This milestone culminated five years of dedicated work by our Total Force Integration Subcommittee and marks a significant step forward in leveraging the full potential of the Reserve Component (RC).

The following subcommittee initiatives highlight the RFPB's continued commitment to improve and enhance the capabilities, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Reserve Components:

**Homeland Defense Subcommittee**

- *RC Support for Homeland Defense Report*: cleared for open publication in August
- Homeland Defense Report findings and recommendations briefed to senior leadership, including Deputy Secretary Hicks and Honorables Vazirani, Keohane, and Zimmerman
- Future out-briefs planned for USNORTHCOM, CYBERCOM, and several other key stakeholders
- Actively developing *Part Two* of the report, focused on the RC's critical role in contested logistics and power projection from the homeland

**Total Force Integration Subcommittee**

- Launched a new project exploring the Reserve Force of 2040 and implications for the national defense strategy
- Initial research led to a recently approved Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) Study, co-sponsored by RFPB and OUSD-RI. Starting in January, this 15-month project will assess U.S. military force structure across the AC and RC to (1) identify gaps that may impact the military's ability to accomplish its mission in the future, given projected near-peer threats, the rapid pace of technological advances and emerging technologies, and geopolitical shifts, and (2) propose forward-looking recommendations to ensure U.S. military force structure can meet future challenges
- Continue to support OUSD P&R in furthering the important efforts detailed by the *Total Force Optimization for Strategic Competition Implementation Plan (I-PLAN)*

### **Personnel Policy Subcommittee**

- Examined mobilization challenges, specifically RC access and readiness across dual roles in current operations, Global Force Management, and strategic depth for protracted conflict
- Provided direct staff and board member support to OUSD P&R efforts as the Executive Agent for National Mobilization as directed by the FY22 NDAA
- Reinvigorating *Duty Status Reform* efforts to streamline and improve RC effectiveness

It's been an honor to serve under your leadership and to serve this board with a long legacy of contributions dating back to 1951. From generating new national mobilization policies after WWII, to the passing of the Montgomery GI Bill and shaping every Total Force Policy since 1973, the Reserve Forces Policy Board remains the Department's leading advocate and independent advisor on the future of the RC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'VR, Disbrow', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Hon. Lisa S. Disbrow  
Chair