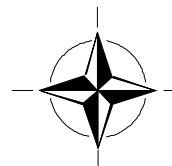




NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE  
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD

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**MC 441/1**

## **NATO FRAMEWORK POLICY ON RESERVES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Reserves are forces composed of various mobilisable categories of personnel who are not normally employed on full-time military service. Personnel may be Voluntary, Ex-Regular or Conscript. They may be assigned to organised units or serve as individuals supporting Regular units.
2. At a time of continuing profound change to the security environment of the North Atlantic Alliance, the spectrum of missions which NATO faces is more wide-ranging and challenging than ever. Within this spectrum, the use of Reserves by some Alliance members is considered as a serious option for many missions. Other Alliance members are already making extensive use of Reserve personnel and units to support NATO missions. Therefore, the overall readiness of the Alliance is derived not only from the readiness of the active forces, but also from the availability and readiness of their Reserves. The availability of Reserves, whether for NATO missions or for their periodic training, depends heavily upon national policy, legislation and societal factors such as the encouragement and assistance of the family, the community and the employer whose support and assistance are vital.
3. Despite the increasing use of Reserves in some NATO countries to meet Alliance force structure needs, particularly in the area of "new missions", there was to date no agreed NATO-wide policy on Reserves.

### **AIM**

4. The aim of this document is to provide NATO with policy guidance on the potential contribution of Reserve forces to NATO's defence interests, including the training, readiness and use of Reserve forces in accomplishing NATO missions. The document seeks to identify both the value that Reserve forces can bring to NATO and the measures needed to ensure that Reserve forces are best able to meet their potential. The document also recognises the prerogative of individual nations in all these areas. This guidance may also serve to enhance international support of Reservists.

## **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

5. Alliance nations have considerably reduced their Regular forces and, in some cases, conscription has been, or is being, abolished or suspended. The general trend in NATO countries of reductions of Regular forces increases the relative importance of Reserve forces to NATO. As the importance of the contribution that Reservists make continues to grow within the Alliance, so does the requirement for NATO better to understand and exploit their inherent potential.

6. There are substantially differing national approaches to the structure, quantity, type, funding, availability, training, call-up and utilisation of Reserves. Their role and potential employment in the future flow directly from the strategic concept and particularly from the three missions now assigned to NATO: collective defence, conflict prevention/crisis management and the projection of stability. With Allied forces at different levels of readiness, in many cases lower than they were before, it has become more important that Reservists participate in individual and crew skills training, collective training and exercises. The effective integration and use of Reserve personnel and units enhance the capability of the total force and fit well within the spectrum of crisis management tools. In peacetime, Reserves can be a cost effective alternative to maintaining large standing forces.

## **CONCEPTS ON RESERVES**

7. Most, but not all, NATO nations call upon the use of Reserves as a part of their national military capability. A nation's Reserves may be composed of various categories of personnel and/or units that are mobilised as required. The Reservist is any Service man or woman not normally on full-time service that may be called for temporary military activities. They may be Volunteers, ex-Regulars or Conscripts. NATO nations have different approaches to the structuring of their military forces. Based on national legislation and Reserve system the Reservist may have an obligation to serve, or serve on a voluntary basis.

8. Depending on national requirements, Reserves may be deployed with Regular forces to a theatre of operations. Reservists can also be used either individually and/or collectively to undertake the duties of Regulars deployed to a theatre of operations. National policy may be to fill out Regular units with Reserve personnel or, in some cases, Reserve units may be filled out with Regulars.

9. As both military personnel and responsible members of their community, Reservists are one of NATO's valuable resources. In addition to their military experience, Reservists can add value by virtue of their civilian expertise and the close relationships that they help NATO nations to establish between the military and the civilian communities. Many Reservists have useful specialised skills such as, but not limited to, medicine, engineering, logistics, law, expertise in foreign languages, public

relations and information management systems. At the same time, military service returns substantial benefits to the Reservist and the employer. The latter benefits from the considerable leadership, educational and training programmes provided to the Reservist while on duty, all of which are directly transferable to their civilian environment.

10. Once a nation has committed Reservists to active NATO duty, it is a national responsibility to ensure that the individual is able to fulfil his task to the appropriate standards. Once this is achieved, there should be no restriction regarding the Reservist's ability to assume duties in support of NATO missions.

## **TRAINING AND READINESS**

11. In order for Reserve units or individuals to deploy in support of national or NATO operations it is important that they be trained and after the appropriate preparation time be ready to execute the military missions assigned to them. As a consequence, national training policy should seek to train the Reserve personnel so that, after the appropriate preparation time, they are as well qualified as Regular personnel, particularly if nations intend to use their Reserves to support NATO missions.

12. Reservists should replace active personnel or reinforce active units and Reserve units should replace or reinforce active units in NATO missions only when they are able to achieve the required readiness states. Training programmes for individual and collective training that enable the Reserves to meet those readiness states are based upon national expertise and experience and remain a purely national responsibility.

13. Any existing education or training programme aimed at improving the individual and common skills of Regular military personnel should be accessible to Reservists according to national rules and procedures.

14. According to national priorities, member nations should encourage Reservist participation in joint and combined (multinational) individual training opportunities by exchanging information on the availability of relevant individual training programmes. Co-operation in common individual training projects may also be extended to PfP Nations.

## **OPERATIONS**

15. Several NATO nations have employed Reserves on national and combined missions along with Regular personnel. Today, more and more Reservists are participating in humanitarian and other Peace Support Operations. For personnel in

deployed units or supporting headquarters, the operational environment provides an invaluable school of experience for both Regular and Reserve personnel. There is no substitute for experience acquired in the field.

16. Reservists may fill national manning requirements at unit or headquarters level, as appropriate. Additionally, the specialised Reservist, whose qualifications may not be readily available in the regular units and staffs, is of crucial importance to NATO, particularly in the context of its new missions.

## **NATO ADVISORY AND SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS ON RESERVE MATTERS**

17. The CIOR<sup>1</sup> (Confédération Interalliée des Officiers de Réserve) is an independent confederation of national reserve officers' associations. The CIOR is recognised by NATO under MC 248/1 (final) with the objectives of providing advice on the utilisation of Reservists, continuing to improve the knowledge of NATO authorities about national Reserve forces, and inspiring each member nation to develop its Reserve forces.

18. The NRFC (National Reserve Forces Committee) serves both formally, as a recognised NATO Committee under MC 392 (final) to provide policy advice on Reserve issues to the MC, and informally, as a forum for the discussion of matters of mutual benefit in the field of Reserve forces and Reserve personnel. The NRFC provides appropriate advice and support to CIOR to assist in its activities in support of Alliance goals and advises the MC in accordance with the current NATO protocol documents.

19. The NRFC and CIOR share a common interest in securing the quality of Reserve forces in compliance with national policy on Reserves. The work of each organisation, within their respective roles in support of NATO, should be complementary and conducted in a spirit of partnership, particularly where their requirements converge.

## **SUPPORTING THE RESERVES**

20. The availability of Reservists, whether for NATO missions or for their periodic training, depends on many important factors, such as political willingness, community encouragement / assistance, employer support. National legislation should seek not only to clarify issues regarding the Reservist's status and obligations, rights, social and military benefits but also to cover family support and civilian employment protection.

21. In particular, with the active backing of employers, whether national or multinational, Reservists are better able to meet their reporting and training objectives, and to contribute on a part time basis to the security operations of the nations.

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<sup>1</sup> CIOR includes CIOMR (Confédération Interralliée des Officiers Médicaux de Réserve)

22. Employer support programmes enhance civil-military co-ordination and co-operation. Nations are encouraged to develop employer support programmes tailored to their specific culture and needs. NATO authorities have the opportunity to play an important and active role in this respect, by representing the views of all the nations of the Alliance, at international level, whenever this may be required.

23. The Reservists' important mix of military and civilian skills is not only of substantial benefit to the Alliance in supporting NATO missions and in particular Humanitarian and Peace Support Operations but also to the Reservist and his employer.

## **SUMMARY**

24. NATO Reserves have been, and will continue to be, an important element of the Alliance. They provide NATO with a significant military capability and a useful interface to civilian society. With the increased role of these citizen-soldiers, NATO Reserve forces policy can enhance NATO mission accomplishment. This policy encourages improvements in Reserve training, provides opportunities to participate in peacetime operations and promotes employer support programmes while fully recognising national responsibilities in these areas.