

High Readiness Reserve

A Proposal for USAR Combat Formations and IAMD Crew Rotation

Vanguard Strike • Persistent Shield

Version 6.2 — February 2026

DRAFT — For Discussion Purposes

Table of Contents

Part I: The High Readiness Reserve Framework

1. Executive Summary
2. Background and Strategic Context
3. The HRR Training and Benefits Model
4. Healthcare and Medical Readiness
5. HRR Division Organization and Identity
6. Manning Model and Recruiting Strategy
7. Career Management
8. Institutional Considerations and Coalition Strategy

Part II: Application — Maneuver Brigade Combat Teams (Vanguard Strike)

9. BCT Force Structure
10. BCT Training Model
11. Equipment and Readiness
12. Readiness Tiers, Definitions, and FORSCOM Integration
13. BCT Employment and Deployment Framework

Part III: Application — IAMD Crew Rotation (Persistent Shield)

14. IAMD Problem Statement
15. Allied Models and Precedent
16. IAMD Concept of Operations
17. IAMD Organizational Design
18. IAMD Rotation Cycle and Readiness Model

Part IV: Cross-Cutting

19. Phased Implementation
 20. Cost Analysis
 21. Legislative and Administrative Requirements
 22. Risk Assessment
 23. Future Expansion Opportunities
 24. Conclusion
- Change Log

PART I: THE HIGH READINESS RESERVE FRAMEWORK

1. Executive Summary

The High Readiness Reserve (HRR) proposes a new category of United States Army Reserve (USAR) formations designed to operate at readiness levels significantly above standard reserve component (RC) units while costing substantially less than equivalent active component (AC) formations. The HRR achieves this through a combination of active duty full-time support (FTS) cadre, authorized overmanning, extended continuous training periods, guaranteed individual training funding, full TRICARE healthcare, legislatively protected IDT travel funding, and enhanced travel support that makes geographic dispersion viable for high-readiness units.

The HRR has two initial applications, each addressing a distinct force generation challenge:

Maneuver Brigade Combat Teams. The HRR converts one Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) and one Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) from active to reserve status, while adding one entirely new Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) and one Airborne Infantry Battalion. At full operating capability (FOC), the HRR provides FORSCOM with three brigade combat teams and an independent airborne battalion, with three maneuver battalions and one airborne rifle company maintained at T+30 readiness at all times. Remaining formations maintain T+90 readiness, far exceeding standard RC timelines.

Persistent Shield: IAMD Crew Rotation. The HRR establishes integrated active-reserve crew rotation for persistently deployed THAAD, Patriot, and M-SHORAD batteries. For each persistent battery position, the program fields 2 active and 3 USAR crews at IOC (building to 2 active and 4 USAR at FOC), alternating deployment slots in a 1:1 pattern that produces 1:3 dwell for active crews and 1:5 for reserve crews — transforming THAAD dwell from the current 1:1 and Patriot from approximately 1:2.

Beyond force structure, the HRR functions as a retention tool. Active duty soldiers facing temporary life pressures — family obligations, spouse relocation, burnout after repeated deployments — currently face a binary choice between continued active service and permanent separation. The HRR offers a third option: a structured career pause that maintains tactical proficiency, unit affiliation, and military identity while providing the flexibility active duty cannot. A complementary active duty service credit provision allows soldiers who return to active duty within five years to count HRR years toward active duty time in service, eliminating the career penalty that currently makes temporary separation permanent.

Depending on the implementation model selected, the BCT conversion component generates up to approximately \$233–243 million in net annual savings at FOC while adding an armored brigade and airborne battalion that do not currently exist. The Persistent Shield IAMD component costs approximately \$350–420 million annually at IOC but generates approximately 6,175 trained USAR air defenders, creates a second active crew for every persistent position, and effectively doubles the sustainable deployment capacity of 18 existing batteries at roughly 15% of the cost of procuring a single additional THAAD battery. The net HRR portfolio cost at IOC is approximately \$107–187 million per year.

The concept includes a phased implementation beginning with proof-of-concept formations in Year 1, with BCT and IAMD tracks proceeding in parallel. The HRR legislative package includes a complementary proposal to eliminate TRICARE Reserve Select premiums across the entire reserve component, addressing a longstanding quality-of-life gap while building the political coalition necessary for implementation.

All HRR formations fall under the 5th Infantry Division (Red Diamond), a two-star USAR headquarters at Fort Knox, Kentucky, with an Assistant Division Commander for IAMD at Fort Bliss, Texas, and an Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver and Special Operations at Fort Liberty, North Carolina.

2. Background and Strategic Context

2.1 The Readiness Gap

The U.S. Army faces a persistent tension between end-strength constraints, modernization demands, and the need for deployable combat power. Active component brigade combat teams are expensive and compete for limited end-strength authorizations. Traditional reserve component combat formations, while cost-effective on paper, routinely require six months or more of post-mobilization training before deployment, limiting their utility for rapid contingency response.

This gap — between the immediate readiness of active units and the delayed availability of reserve units — represents an opportunity for an intermediate model that captures the cost advantages of reserve manning while achieving near-active readiness levels.

2.2 The IAMD OPTEMPO Crisis

Simultaneously, the Army faces an acute force generation crisis in its air defense artillery community. THAAD soldiers deploy on effectively 1:1 cycles. Patriot battalions rotate on 9-month deployments with dwell times consistently below the DoD's 1:3 goal. M-SHORAD battalions face growing rotational pressure from their first day of fielding. Army Secretary Christine Wormuth has publicly acknowledged that the air defense artillery community is “the most stressed” force in the Army. The equipment — scarce, expensive, and irreplaceable on short timelines — is the binding constraint. The Army cannot buy its way out of this problem at \$1–3 billion per additional battery.

2.3 The High Readiness Concept

The HRR addresses both challenges through a single institutional framework. For maneuver formations, it creates reserve BCTs that maintain near-active readiness through an innovative training and benefits model. For IAMD formations, it creates reserve crew detachments that integrate into an active-reserve rotation pool, decoupling personnel availability from equipment scarcity. Both applications share the same enabling legislation, readiness framework, benefits structure, and command architecture.

2.4 Precedents

The HRR draws on several existing models. The Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) program demonstrates the viability of full-time support to reserve formations. The British Army Reserve and several NATO partner reserve models employ extended continuous training periods rather than monthly drills. The U.S. Marine Corps Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) recall provisions and the Army's own enhanced Separate Brigades of the Cold War era provide additional precedent for high-readiness reserve formations. The Capstone/BOLD SHIFT alignment programs of the 1990s demonstrated that reserve units can be effectively integrated with active warfighting headquarters when given appropriate resources and training opportunities.

For the IAMD application, the most direct precedents are the U.S. Navy's Blue/Gold crew system for ballistic missile submarines, the U.S. Air Force's active associate unit construct, and

the Israel Defense Forces' long-standing practice of maintaining reserve air defense crews for Iron Dome and other IAMD systems.

3. The HRR Training and Benefits Model

3.1 Training Design Philosophy

The HRR training model replaces the traditional RC schedule of 24 weekend drill assemblies (48 UTAs) with quarterly multi-day continuous training periods. This shift is the single most important readiness multiplier in the concept. An 8-day continuous training block allows genuine field exercises with setup, execution, and after-action review — capabilities that are impossible within the constraints of a two-day battle assembly. The traditional RC problem of “starting from scratch every drill” is eliminated; each quarterly period picks up where the last left off, with FTS cadre maintaining training continuity between drills.

For IAMD crews, each quarterly block accommodates a full crew certification cycle including system power-up, tactical scenario execution, simulated engagements, and after-action review. The training model is described in detail for each application in Parts II and III.

3.2 Guaranteed Individual Training (TRIT)

Every HRR soldier is guaranteed 30 days of individual training (school) funding per fiscal year. This funding is legally protected and cannot be raided, reprogrammed, or denied by unit leadership when a soldier has a school reservation and is available to attend. AT funding and TRIT funding are maintained as two distinct, separately fenced accounts. The 30-day TRIT guarantee covers:

Professional Military Education (PME): BLC, ALC, SLC, and other NCOES courses; CCC, ILE, and other officer education requirements. PME currency ensures promotion eligibility and leader development keep pace with training demands.

MOS Qualification and Progression: Reclassification training, advanced MOS courses, and additional skill identifier (ASI) producing courses. For the ABCT, this includes critical crew qualifications for Abrams, Bradley, and Paladin platforms. For IAMD crews, this includes system-specific operator and maintainer certification courses.

Specialty Schools: Ranger, Pathfinder, Joint Fire Observer, Master Gunner, Air Assault, and other functional courses that build the formation’s collective capability. The Airborne Battalion’s Jumpmaster pipeline is a particularly critical example.

Not every soldier will use all 30 days in a given year. A senior NCO who has completed all required PME may use none; a junior soldier preparing for the T+30 year might use all 30. Aggregate utilization is estimated at 50–65% in any given fiscal year. The critical policy principle is that the funding must always be available: there must never be an excuse of “no funding” when a soldier is ready and able to attend a required or career-enhancing school. This provision should ultimately be extended across the entire reserve component; the HRR provides the initial proof of concept.

3.3 IDT Travel as Statutory Entitlement

The current IDT travel program is authorized but not funded as an entitlement: it is subject to unit and command discretionary funding, frequently runs out mid-fiscal-year, and reimbursement

timelines can extend for months. For HRR soldiers conducting 8-day quarterly blocks that may require air travel, unreliable travel reimbursement is a potential show-stopper that would undermine recruiting and retention.

The HRR enabling legislation establishes IDT travel for HRR-designated soldiers as a statutory entitlement at 150% of the currently authorized rate. This means mandatory funding not subject to availability of funds, payment within 30 days of claim submission, and statutory protection against deferral or reduction by command decision. The legislation also directs a study, reporting within 24 months, on feasibility of extending statutory IDT travel protections to the broader reserve component.

3.4 Active Duty Cadre

Each HRR unit receives embedded active duty full-time support (FTS) cadre. These are active component soldiers — not Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) — on 24-month tours with 60–90 day overlap for continuity. FTS cadre maintain day-to-day unit readiness, enforce training standards, manage equipment, and bridge the active-reserve cultural gap. All FTS assignments include a mandatory orientation course covering RC administrative systems. FTS tours also serve as a structured career option for active duty soldiers seeking a predictable assignment during a demanding life phase.

3.5 Overmanning Authorization

HRR units are authorized at 110% of MTOE strength, with 105% as the standard operating target. This deliberate overmanning absorbs normal attrition without falling below 100%, provides cross-training depth at key positions, and ensures that after screening for medical, administrative, and personal non-deployability (typically 10–15% of any RC unit), the formation can still deploy at or near full strength. For IAMD crews operating complex weapon systems with zero tolerance for key personnel gaps, overmanning is essential.

3.6 Key Position Additional Duty Days

Personnel in designated command and key staff positions — battalion and company commanders, first sergeants, command sergeants major, executive officers, and S3/operations officers — receive 12 additional funded duty days per fiscal year for remote planning, coordination, and readiness management between quarterly drill periods. These days are separate from battle assembly and TRIT allocations. The rationale is that these positions carry genuine between-drill responsibilities (training calendar management, personnel actions, coordination with gaining units, FTS cadre supervision, readiness reporting) that cannot wait for the next 8-day block. Twelve days at approximately \$300–500 per day per soldier represents a negligible addition to the program budget but formalizes what would otherwise be unfunded volunteer work or a readiness gap. This provision applies across all HRR formations, both BCT and IAMD.

3.7 Virtual Readiness Management

Beyond the key position additional duty days, much of the between-drill planning, coordination, and professional development work for all HRR soldiers can be conducted remotely — distance

learning modules, online PME pre-work, virtual training meetings with FTS cadre, and administrative actions. Formalizing this expectation preserves battle assembly days primarily for hands-on collective training rather than consuming field time on tasks that could have been completed from home.

3.8 Voluntary Training Augmentation (VTA)

The HRR establishes a Voluntary Training Augmentation (VTA) program that provides soldiers with funded opportunities to participate in additional training events beyond their quarterly drills, annual training, and TRIT allocations. VTA addresses a persistent gap in the reserve component: motivated soldiers who want to do more training currently have almost no funded pathway to do so. The soldier who volunteers for additional training is exactly the kind of soldier the Army should be retaining, and the absence of a mechanism to channel that motivation is a readiness and retention failure.

3.8.1 Tier 1 — HRR Guaranteed

HRR soldiers not currently in T+30 readiness status (BCT) or pre-deployment certification status (IAMD) are authorized up to 15 VTA days per fiscal year as a statutory entitlement. Funding is fenced within the HRR program budget and cannot be denied for budgetary reasons — the same principle as TRIT. Company commander approval is required, but the default is approval unless there is a specific readiness, personnel, or operational reason for denial. VTA days are separate from and additional to TRIT, AT, key position additional duty days, and quarterly drill days.

VTA opportunities include: CTC observer/controller (O/C) duty at JRTC or NTC; augmentation of active unit field training exercises; individual slots on bilateral or partner nation exercises; JMRC rotation support in Europe; specialty skill employment (JFOs at fires exercises, master gunners supporting gunnery density, medics at MEDEX events); and for IAMD soldiers, additional system certification repetitions, allied Patriot interoperability exercises, and AAMDC-coordinated events. VTA participation builds individual proficiency, generates interoperability experience beyond the designated gaining unit, and provides informal recruiting exposure as active soldiers see HRR soldiers performing well in demanding training environments.

3.8.2 Tier 2 — Broader RC Available

The same VTA framework is extended to the broader Selected Reserve (USAR and ARNG) on a non-guaranteed basis. Non-HRR Selected Reserve soldiers may apply for up to 15 VTA days per fiscal year, funded from a new RC Voluntary Training Augmentation account, subject to availability of funds. The process is a competitive application: the soldier identifies a training opportunity, submits a request with unit commander endorsement, and if funding exists and the host training unit accepts, the soldier is placed on orders. Unit commander endorsement should be the norm unless there is a specific readiness or personnel reason for denial; commanders should not withhold endorsement arbitrarily for soldiers who volunteer for additional training.

Tier 2 VTA serves multiple purposes beyond individual readiness. It creates a new benefit that aligns Guard and Reserve institutional interests with the HRR legislative package — NGAUS cannot object to giving Guard soldiers the option to volunteer for additional training. It feeds the retention pipeline: a Guard NCO who uses VTA to augment an NTC rotation may discover the

HRR and transfer in, or may simply become a better-trained Guard soldier. Either outcome benefits the total force. Initial-year funding covers only the HRR guarantee (Tier 1); Tier 2 funding grows as the program validates.

3.8.3 Exclusions and Study Mandate

Soldiers in T+30 readiness status, IAMD pre-deployment certification windows, or other critical readiness postures are excluded from VTA. These soldiers are already at elevated duty day counts and need to remain available and rested for their primary mission. The enabling legislation directs a study within 36 months on VTA utilization rates, readiness impact, employer friction, and cost-effectiveness across both tiers, to inform future decisions on expanding the Tier 1 entitlement to the broader RC.

3.9 Barracks, Travel, and Ground Transportation

HRR personnel reside in installation barracks during all drill periods and annual training. Barracks are the default; Lodging in Kind (LIK) is authorized only when on-post barracks capacity is insufficient (e.g., multiple battalions drilling simultaneously at the same installation), and only with prior brigade commander approval.

Each HRR installation maintains an expanded Government-Owned Vehicle (GOV) fleet including 15-passenger vans and buses. GOV support is preferred over contracted transportation for cost and scheduling flexibility. Pre-planned shuttle routes operate from the nearest commercial airport on drill arrival and departure days. Soldiers residing within the local commuting area (defined as within 50 miles of the installation) may use privately owned vehicles (POVs) for daily commuting during drill periods. Soldiers commuting from beyond 50 miles may use commercial air travel reimbursed under the IDT travel entitlement with GOV shuttle from airport to installation, or may drive POVs and claim mileage reimbursement at the applicable GSA rate. Many soldiers within 200–300 miles will prefer to drive for personal flexibility, and mileage reimbursement is often less expensive for the government than airfare.

Rental cars are not authorized for individual drill travel except with O-5 or above exception-to-policy approval for specific operational necessity. This policy avoids the cost proliferation that results from individual rental car authorizations across a formation of thousands of geographically dispersed soldiers. The GOV fleet expansion and shuttle schedule provide adequate mobility for drill operations.

4. Healthcare and Medical Readiness

4.1 Full TRICARE Prime for All HRR Soldiers

All HRR part-time soldiers receive full TRICARE Prime healthcare coverage — the same coverage provided to active duty soldiers and their families. This is a foundational benefit of the HRR program, not an optional add-on. TRICARE Prime replaces the TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) enrollment and Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP) periodic assessments used by standard RC soldiers.

The rationale is both readiness-driven and economic. The Army's persistent 60–70% medical readiness rate in the reserve component is largely a function of soldiers lacking consistent healthcare access between drill periods. Soldiers without year-round comprehensive coverage arrive at mobilization with dental Category 3 classifications, untreated vision deficiencies, lapsed immunizations, and unmanaged chronic conditions. Each medically non-deployable soldier represents a gap in the formation and wasted training investment.

Full TRICARE Prime addresses these problems at the source. Soldiers with year-round healthcare maintain dental readiness, manage chronic conditions proactively, and address emerging medical issues before they become readiness disqualifiers. The target is 90–95% Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) at all times.

4.2 Cost Comparison

Cost Category	RHRP + TRS	Full TRICARE
RHRP Assessment Costs	~\$12M/yr	\$0
Government Healthcare Subsidy	~\$56M/yr (TRS)	~\$140M/yr (Prime)
Total Government Cost	~\$68M/yr	~\$140M/yr
Net Additional Cost of Full TRICARE		~\$72M/yr
Expected Medical Readiness Rate	75–80%	90–95%

4.3 Downstream Value

The \$72 million annual cost premium produces several downstream benefits beyond the medical readiness rate improvement. Soldiers who are medically ready at mobilization do not require extended remediation periods, meaning shorter total time away from civilian employers — critical for employer support of the HRR model. Every soldier who avoids medical non-deployability represents avoided costs in replacement personnel sourcing, last-minute cross-leveling, and degraded unit cohesion. Full TRICARE is also a powerful recruiting and retention tool: for soldiers leaving active duty, loss of TRICARE Prime is among the most significant quality-of-life decreases, and restoring it through HRR service directly addresses one of the primary reasons soldiers leave the military entirely.

4.4 Installation Medical Support

HRR soldiers also have access to installation medical and dental facilities at Fort Johnson, Fort Carson, Fort Knox, and Fort Liberty during drill periods and annual training. Installation clinics serve a supplementary role for routine screenings, immunizations, dental cleanings, and annual PHAs. However, installation clinics are not the primary driver of medical readiness — year-round TRICARE Prime access is. A full-time medical readiness NCO is assigned to each battalion, with a medical readiness section at brigade level, to track and enforce IMR standards.

5. HRR Division Organization and Identity

5.1 Division Headquarters

All HRR formations fall under the 5th Infantry Division (Red Diamond), reactivated as a two-star USAR headquarters reporting to USARC. The Commanding General is headquartered at Fort Knox, Kentucky, co-located with U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC). This co-location maximizes integration with the personnel management systems that drive HRR recruiting from the ETS pipeline, active cadre rotation, career tracking, and the transition pipeline between active and reserve service. The HRR Division CG is peer to the HRC CG (also a two-star) at Knox; the senior commander at Fort Knox is the Commanding General of U.S. Army Recruiting Command, a three-star headquarters under Training and Doctrine Command. Forward liaison elements (3–5 personnel) at each subordinate BCT installation provide day-to-day connectivity.

5.2 Assistant Division Commander — IAMD

The ADC-IAMD is a one-star headquartered at Fort Bliss, Texas, co-located with the active ADA enterprise. The ADC-IAMD exercises administrative control (ADCON) over the USAR IAMD Group and its subordinate battalions, serves as the rank-appropriate counterpart for AAMDC (a two-star) and the active ADA brigade commanders, and leads resource advocacy for the IAMD program. At FOC with 2:4 ratios, the IAMD enterprise encompasses over 8,000 USAR soldiers — a formation warranting general officer oversight.

5.3 Assistant Division Commander — Maneuver and Special Operations

The ADC-BCT is a one-star headquartered at Fort Liberty, North Carolina, co-located with USARC headquarters and near the HRR Airborne Infantry Battalion. This ADC oversees the three HRR BCTs (IBCT at Fort Johnson, SBCT at Fort Carson, ABCT at Fort Knox), manages the Airborne Battalion's administrative relationship with USARC, and serves as the Division's interface with USARC on administrative and legislative matters. The IBCT and SBCT are commanded by their O-6 BCT commanders; the ADC-BCT provides coordination and oversight without inserting an unnecessary layer into the tactical chain of command.

5.4 HQ Location Rationale

Fort Knox is selected as the HRR Division headquarters location for three mutually reinforcing reasons. First, co-location with HRC provides direct integration with the personnel management functions most critical to HRR success: recruiting from the ETS pipeline, managing active cadre rotation orders, tracking transitions between active and reserve service, and administering the active duty service credit provision. Second, the HRR Division CG is co-located with the ABCT — the most maintenance-intensive and newest HRR formation, requiring the closest senior oversight during its standup from APS equipment. Third, Fort Knox provides ample headquarters infrastructure. The ADC-BCT at Fort Liberty bridges the geographic separation to the IBCT (Johnson) and SBCT (Carson) through forward liaison elements, while the ADC-IAMD at Fort Bliss interfaces with the active ADA enterprise.

5.5 Division Identity and Lineage

The HRR Division reactivates the 5th Infantry Division (Red Diamond). Activated in 1917, the 5th ID served with distinction in both World Wars — including the crossing of the Rhine at Remagen — and was stationed at various CONUS installations before inactivation in 1992. The Red Diamond is a versatile, infantry-rooted identity that accommodates the HRR's mixed force structure (light, Stryker, heavy, airborne, IAMD) without implying a single branch affiliation. Its clean, distinctive red diamond patch provides instant institutional recognition.

The HRR's two applications are designated as named programs that exist independently of the division's organizational structure:

Vanguard Strike designates the HRR high-readiness maneuver program. All HRR formations operating under the maneuver readiness model — the three BCTs under the 5th ID, the Airborne Battalion aligned to the 82nd Airborne Division, and any future expansion formations regardless of parent headquarters — are Vanguard Strike units. The name captures the T+30 rapid-response mission (vanguard: the leading element of an advance) and the offensive combat power these formations provide.

Persistent Shield designates the HRR IAMD crew rotation program. All USAR IAMD detachments under the IAMD Group are Persistent Shield units.

Separating the program identities from the divisional identity is deliberate. If the HRR expands beyond one division equivalent — for example, adding a Hawaiian IBCT that remains under the 25th Infantry Division — that formation joins the Vanguard Strike program without needing to be reassigned to the 5th ID. The program names travel independently of the division flag, enabling scalability without organizational awkwardness.

5.6 Regiment Lineage

The converting IBCT and SBCT retain their pre-conversion active duty regiment designations. This maintains lineage continuity and signals that these are the same formations in a different service status — reinforcing the “not a downgrade” message. The newly established ABCT at Fort Knox and Airborne Infantry Battalion at Fort Liberty should reactivate inactive active duty regiment lineages rather than receiving reserve-associated designations. For the ABCT, a regiment historically associated with Fort Knox or the armor branch is appropriate. For the Airborne Battalion, a regiment from the 82nd Airborne Division's historical order of battle that is currently inactive would reinforce the battalion's alignment with the division.

6. Manning Model and Recruiting Strategy

6.1 Personnel Categories

HRR formations comprise four categories of personnel:

Part-Time HRR Soldiers (TPU). The bulk of the formation, approximately 75–80% of authorized strength. These are reserve component soldiers serving under the quarterly multi-day drill schedule, maintaining civilian employment and residing throughout the United States. They receive full TRICARE Prime and guaranteed TRIT funding.

Full-Time Support (FTS) Cadre. Active duty soldiers on 24-month rotational tours, approximately 10–15% of authorized strength. These replace AGR positions within HRR formations and occupy key leadership, training management, and readiness positions. All transitions require 60–90 day overlap.

Military Technicians (Mil-Techs). Dual-status federal employees who serve simultaneously as civilian technicians and uniformed members of the unit. Mil-techs provide day-to-day maintenance, logistics, and equipment readiness between quarterly drills. The ABCT at Fort Knox requires the heaviest mil-tech allocation at approximately 2–3 times the density of light infantry formations due to the maintenance demands of the armored fleet.

Department of the Army (DA) Civilians. Federal civilian employees filling administrative, financial management, human resources, facilities management, and contract oversight positions where military status provides no added value. DA civilian positions insulate critical administrative functions from military personnel turbulence.

6.2 Notional Manning by Formation

Category	IBCT	SBCT	ABCT	ABN BN	IAMD	Div HQ
Auth (110%)	4,840	4,950	5,170	990	~8,655*	200
Target (105%)	4,620	4,725	4,935	945	—	190
Part-Time (TPU)	~3,600	~3,650	~3,700	~700	~7,800	~80
FTS Cadre (AD)	~660	~680	~700	~130	~600	~80
Mil-Techs	~200	~230	~350	~40	~100	~15
DA Civilians	~80	~85	~100	~15	~55	~15

* IAMD figures reflect FOC at 2:4 ratio. Additional ~1,810 active end strength for second IAMD crews are assigned to parent active ADA battalions, not the HRR Division.

6.3 Maintenance Support

HRR installations maintain organic maintenance capability through their assigned mil-tech workforce, supplemented by installation-level DPW and contracted support where applicable. Area Maintenance Support Activity (AMSA) facilities, which serve geographically dispersed standard USAR units, are not required for HRR formations because HRR equipment is consolidated at the duty installation and maintained continuously by on-site personnel. For the ABCT, Fort Knox's existing maintenance infrastructure — motor pools, covered maintenance

bays, diagnostic equipment, and parts warehouses from its tenure as the Armor School — provides a strong foundation that reduces infrastructure investment requirements.

6.4 Primary Recruiting Strategy

The HRR's primary recruiting concept reframes the transition from active duty not as separation but as a temporary shift in service tempo. Active duty soldiers approaching ETS who wish to continue military service — or who need a period of reduced commitment due to family obligations, spouse relocation, burnout, or civilian career demands — are the primary target population. The HRR offers these soldiers a structured career pause that maintains tactical proficiency and military identity while providing the geographic flexibility and predictable schedule that active duty cannot. Many of these soldiers currently leave the military entirely because the only alternative to active duty is a traditional reserve unit they perceive as a significant step down in training quality and operational relevance. The HRR eliminates that false choice.

For BCT positions, primary recruits include infantry, armor, cavalry, field artillery, engineer, and logistics soldiers from the converting active formations and across the broader active force. For IAMD positions, primary recruits include THAAD, Patriot, and M-SHORAD operators, with the defense industry (Lockheed Martin, RTX/Raytheon, Northrop Grumman) serving as a natural employer pool with institutional familiarity with reserve obligations. The HRR's training model is also a powerful NCO retention and development tool: running live-fire ranges, supervising gunnery tables, and conducting CTC rotations four times per year plus AT provides NCO development opportunities that standard TPU cannot offer and that most Guard units experience only at annual training.

6.5 Secondary and Tertiary Recruiting Pools

Secondary sources include high-performing soldiers in standard USAR Troop Program Units (TPU) who seek greater training intensity and readiness commitment. Transfers from standard USAR TPU to HRR units require a minimum two-year service commitment to bridge the train-up and readiness cycles. Transfers from HRR to standard TPU, ARNG, or IMA status are unrestricted, providing an off-ramp for soldiers whose circumstances change. Tertiary: existing USAR and ARNG ADA soldiers meeting qualification standards (for IAMD positions). Cross-training expands the pool as systems converge (e.g., IBCS for IAMD).

6.6 Trailing Spouse Recruiting

The HRR's fly-in model is uniquely suited to military trailing spouses and the spouses of other frequently relocated federal professionals (Foreign Service officers, FBI agents, and similar). This population faces a structural challenge: frequent geographic moves make sustained membership in a local Guard unit or TPU impractical, as each PCS requires finding a new unit, re-establishing training relationships, and often requalifying on different equipment. The HRR eliminates this problem entirely — the soldier flies to the same installation regardless of current residence.

The quarterly schedule is predictable enough to plan around a spouse's PCS timeline. The enhanced commitment level attracts people who want meaningful service, not just a checkbox.

Much of the between-drill planning and readiness work — training management, personnel coordination, remote meetings with FTS cadre, professional development through distance learning — can be done remotely, preserving battle assembly days primarily for hands-on collective training. For a trailing spouse who is otherwise a stay-at-home parent during frequent PCS moves, the HRR offers income, healthcare (full TRICARE extends to the HRR soldier's dependents, which may be relevant when the active-duty spouse's TRICARE already covers the family, but provides an independent benefit basis), professional identity, retirement points, and career progression.

The HRR should actively market to this population through installation transition offices, spouse employment programs, and partnerships with organizations like Blue Star Families and the Military Spouse Career Network (MSCCN). Targeted recruiting at installations with high PCS turnover rates — Fort Liberty, Fort Carson, JBLM, Fort Campbell — would reach this population where it concentrates.

7. Career Management

7.1 Voluntary Assignment

Assignment to HRR formations is voluntary at all times. Soldiers may transfer to HRR units from either active duty ETS or standard USAR TPU. The voluntary nature is a fundamental design feature: HRR units should comprise self-selecting, highly motivated personnel who choose the higher training tempo. This self-selection is arguably the single largest readiness multiplier in the entire model, as motivation is the root cause of most RC readiness challenges.

7.2 The Reserve Career Continuum and the Career Pause

The HRR is designed to function as one element in a flexible career continuum that spans active duty, high-readiness reserve, traditional reserve, and individual mobilization augmentee (IMA) service. Critically, the HRR offers active duty soldiers something the Army currently lacks: a structured career pause that maintains tactical proficiency and military identity while accommodating temporary life pressures. A soldier whose spouse is entering medical residency, who needs to care for an aging parent, who is recovering from the cumulative strain of repeated deployments, or who simply needs time to decide whether to commit to a full active duty career — these soldiers currently face a binary choice between staying on active duty and leaving the military entirely. The HRR provides the third option: step down in tempo without stepping out of the Army.

A typical career pathway might flow as follows: a soldier commissions or enlists on active duty, serves 4–8 years gaining tactical experience, transitions into the HRR for 2–6 years of continued high-quality service while resolving whatever circumstance prompted the change, and then either returns to active duty or transitions to a standard TPU, ARNG unit, or IMA assignment as civilian career demands evolve further. Each stage serves a different purpose, and soldiers should be able to move between them with minimal administrative friction.

7.3 Active Duty Service Credit

The most powerful mechanism for making the career pause viable is crediting HRR service toward active duty time in service for soldiers who return to active duty. Under current law, a soldier who separates from active duty, serves in the reserve component, and later returns does not receive active duty time-in-service credit for the reserve years. This creates a compounding career penalty: every year off active duty extends the timeline to promotion gates and active duty retirement. A captain who separates after 8 years, serves 4 years in the HRR, and returns finds herself at 8 years of creditable service rather than 12 — now facing 12 more years to retirement rather than 8. This penalty makes temporary separation effectively permanent for most soldiers.

The HRR service credit provision eliminates this barrier. Soldiers who depart active duty directly into HRR status and return to active duty within five years of their active duty separation date receive full active duty time-in-service credit for their HRR years, subject to a minimum five-year active duty service obligation upon return. Time-in-service credit affects pay computation, promotion timeline eligibility, and active duty retirement calculation. Time-in-grade credit is also granted. However, the returning soldier must still complete any key developmental assignments

missed during the HRR period. A captain who held HRR company command — which carries KD credit under the proposed MILPER policy — returns fully competitive for promotion.

Eligibility is limited to soldiers who depart active duty directly into HRR status — not soldiers who have been in a standard TPU or IMA billet for years and subsequently join the HRR. The intent is to catch soldiers at the moment of active duty separation and keep them on a trajectory that leads back. This provision requires statutory authorization through amendment to Title 10.

7.4 Education Benefits

HRR soldiers are members of the Selected Reserve and qualify for the Montgomery GI Bill — Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606), which provides education benefits to all drilling reservists with a six-year service obligation. More significantly, HRR duty is performed under 10 U.S.C. §12301(b) — active duty for training — which accrues qualifying days toward the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33). At 39–60 duty days per year, an HRR soldier accumulates qualifying time with each quarterly drill, unlocking the lowest benefit tier (40%) after approximately two years and progressively higher tiers with continued service. This accrual is a meaningful recruiting incentive, particularly for the trailing spouse population seeking to build education benefits while maintaining a military career through geographic moves.

7.5 IMA Integration

The Individual Mobilization Augmentee program and the HRR serve fundamentally different purposes — IMA provides individual staff depth to headquarters and joint organizations, while the HRR provides formed tactical units — but they draw from overlapping populations. The HRR-to-IMA transition is a natural career progression that mirrors the active duty arc from command to staff assignments. A company-grade officer or mid-career NCO serves 3–6 years in the HRR during their tactical prime, gaining CTC rotations, T+30 deployments, and command experience. As they promote to field grade and take on greater civilian responsibilities, they transition to an IMA billet at a division headquarters, corps staff, or combatant command — bringing operational credibility and recent tactical experience that makes them far more valuable as a staff augmentee.

HRR veterans should receive priority consideration for high-value IMA billets at division level and above. Administrative processes for HRR-to-IMA transfers should be streamlined, and the IMA option should be explicitly presented to departing HRR soldiers as an alternative to TPU, ARNG, or separation.

7.6 Early Departure Consequences

The HRR's three-year readiness cycle represents a significant training investment that builds progressively. The expected departure point is the recovery year, after the soldier has completed the demanding T+30 year. However, the HRR's voluntary character is a foundational design principle. Punitive consequences for early departure would trap unmotivated soldiers in high-readiness billets — a worse outcome than losing them. The consequence model is graduated, based on timing and reason, with no truly punitive measures under any circumstances.

7.6.1 Hardship Departures

Soldiers departing for genuine hardship reasons — family emergency, medical conditions, involuntary job loss — face zero consequences regardless of timing. Full honorable transfer to TPU, ARNG, or IMA status; partial TRIT and KD credit for time served; unrestricted eligibility to return.

7.6.2 Voluntary Departure During Recovery Year

This is the expected and designed off-ramp. No consequences. Standard unrestricted transfer. The system working as intended.

7.6.3 Voluntary Departure During Ramp-Up Year

Minimal consequences: loss of HRR benefits upon departure, no KD credit for incomplete assignment, 12-month cooling-off period before eligibility to return to any HRR unit. No negative notation in personnel record.

7.6.4 Voluntary Departure During T+30 Ready Year

The most consequential scenario. Consequences include loss of HRR benefits, no KD credit, 24-month cooling-off period, and documentation in a commander's memorandum that becomes part of the personnel file. The memorandum does not mandate negative board consideration, but it is visible. Even here, UCMJ action, bars to reenlistment, or administrative flags are counterproductive and are not imposed.

7.6.5 Cultural Mitigation

The most effective deterrent against mid-cycle departure is cultural, not administrative. If the HRR develops the esprit de corps the concept anticipates, social accountability within the unit will be far more powerful than any formal consequence. The service agreement soldiers sign when joining should clearly state the expectation of completing at least one full three-year cycle. This is not a legally binding service obligation but a statement of mutual expectation.

7.7 Promotion and Board Competitiveness

HRR soldiers compete on standard USAR promotion boards. No separate promotion pathway is created. However, HRR assignments should be recognized as career-enhancing by board policy. The training intensity, equipment exposure, and leadership opportunities in HRR formations are closer to active duty than anything else in the USAR. MILPER guidance should explicitly establish HRR command as equivalent to active duty key developmental positions for promotion purposes.

7.8 FTS Cadre Career Development

Active duty soldiers serving FTS tours must be assured that these assignments are career-enhancing. FTS tours should carry the same developmental credit as comparable active duty assignments — a captain commanding an HRR infantry company should receive the same KD credit as one commanding in an active BCT. Without explicit HRC support, the best officers and NCOs will avoid HRR FTS tours. FTS tours also serve as a structured career option for active duty soldiers who remain on active duty: post-command captains deciding whether to stay for

field grade, senior NCOs weighing retirement, and dual-military couples seeking collocation. The FTS tour provides breathing room within active duty rather than requiring separation from it.

7.9 FTS Model Broader Applicability

If validated by the HRR, the FTS model — active duty rotational tours replacing AGR positions, with mandatory overlap — could be selectively extended to key leadership and training positions in standard USAR TPUs: the battalion S3, the brigade training officer, the senior operations NCO, and similar positions where recent tactical experience outweighs institutional RC administrative knowledge. AGR personnel would be retained in administrative, logistics, and maintenance positions where institutional continuity outweighs tactical currency. A 30-day overlap period, rather than the HRR's 60–90 days, would be sufficient for standard TPU handoffs. This selective expansion would be a subsequent legislative initiative informed by HRR data on FTS cadre effectiveness, satisfaction, and retention, rather than part of the initial HRR authorization. The HRR proof of concept will generate the evidence base for future decisions about the relationship between AGR and FTS models across the reserve component.

7.10 Administrative Systems Continuity

T+30 readiness demands administrative interoperability with active component systems. When a T+30 battalion receives a mobilization order and must integrate with an active duty brigade within 30 days, every system translation between RC-specific and AC administrative platforms consumes time the formation cannot afford. If the gaining brigade's S1 cannot pull HRR personnel data without format conversion, if medical readiness records live in a different system, if training management data does not speak the same language, if logistics requisitions route through different channels — each of these adds days to the integration timeline. Individually they are minor; collectively they can consume a significant portion of the 30-day window.

HRR formations should operate on active component administrative, readiness reporting, and logistics systems wherever legally and technically feasible. Readiness data should feed to FORSCOM in the same format as active BCT data. Equipment readiness reporting should use the same metrics and dashboards. Training assessments should follow the same methodology. The HRR Division commander should brief readiness to the FORSCOM commander using the same products an active division commander would use. Where IPPS-A has RC-specific modules or workflows, the HRR should use the AC equivalents to the maximum extent permissible. Some accommodations will remain necessary for part-time soldier pay processing, duty status tracking, and TRICARE enrollment — the administrative reality that these soldiers serve part-time cannot be entirely eliminated — but the goal is to minimize the delta between HRR and active component administrative processes.

Reducing RC-specific administrative overhead also benefits the FTS cadre model. Active duty soldiers arriving at HRR units who find familiar systems require shorter orientation periods, experience less culture shock, and are more productive from the start of their tours. The HRR's experience with AC system usage will generate data on the feasibility and benefits of broader administrative system consolidation across the reserve component.

8. Institutional Considerations and Coalition Strategy

Force structure changes inevitably create institutional friction. The HRR places USAR combat arms formations into a space historically occupied exclusively by the Army National Guard, and it creates a new readiness tier that implicitly invites comparisons across the reserve component. This section addresses anticipated concerns with the goal of demonstrating that the HRR is additive and complementary rather than competitive.

8.1 Army National Guard Concerns

8.1.1 *The Combat Arms Compact*

Since the Total Force Policy era, the ARNG has held an effective monopoly on reserve component combat arms formations, while the USAR concentrated in combat support and combat service support roles. The HRR places three BCTs and an airborne battalion — pure combat arms — into the USAR. The Guard may frame this as a fundamental breach of the institutional compact.

The HRR does not take any formation from the Guard. Not a single ARNG BCT is converted, defunded, or reorganized. The HRR converts two active component BCTs and creates two new formations. Guard combat arms force structure is completely untouched. The compact was designed to preserve the Guard's combat role, not to permanently exclude the USAR from any combat mission. Moreover, the compact was a product of specific Cold War-era force structure decisions that do not bind future force design in perpetuity.

8.1.2 *Recruiting Competition*

The Guard may argue that ETS soldiers with combat MOSs represent a finite pool. This concern is overstated because the recruiting pools are substantially different. ARNG recruiting is heavily state-based: soldiers join their local Guard unit because of proximity, state tuition benefits, the dual federal-state mission, or a preference for traditional weekend-drill tempo. HRR recruiting is national and targets soldiers who want more than weekend drill but cannot continue active duty. Many of these soldiers currently leave military service entirely rather than joining any RC unit. The HRR captures talent the Guard was never going to get. The scale disparity is enormous: 27 Guard BCTs with tens of thousands of positions versus 3 HRR BCTs at fixed installations.

8.1.3 *The HRR as a Retention Pipeline*

The HRR should be understood as a retention bridge that ultimately benefits the entire reserve component. The retention flow is: Active Duty → HRR → ARNG or TPU, with the possibility of returning to HRR later. Without the HRR, the flow is: Active Duty → civilian life, lost to the force permanently. If 15–20% of departing HRR soldiers transfer to ARNG units rather than separating entirely, that represents a concrete recruitment benefit for the Guard that would not exist without the HRR.

8.1.4 *Precedent and Institutional Scope*

The “thin end of the wedge” concern — that the HRR establishes a precedent for future USAR combat arms expansion at Guard expense — is the most politically potent objection. The concept recommends explicit programmatic guardrails: authorizing legislation should include a

statutory cap on HRR combat formations (no more than one division equivalent without further congressional authorization), and future expansion must come exclusively from active-to-reserve conversions, never from Guard-to-USAR transfers. The Guard provides mass and depth (27 BCTs); the HRR provides a small number of high-readiness rapid-response formations. These are complementary, not competitive.

8.1.5 Readiness Comparisons

If HRR battalions operate at T+30 while Guard BCTs remain at T+180 or longer, the comparison becomes politically uncomfortable. The honest answer is that different readiness levels serve different strategic purposes. The HRR achieves its readiness through significantly higher per-soldier investment that would be unaffordable if applied to the entire Guard. The HRR model works precisely because it is small and selective; it is not scalable to 27 BCTs and is not intended to be.

8.1.6 Federal vs. State Mission

The Guard's constitutionally grounded dual federal-state mission gives it a domestic role the HRR does not share. The HRR does not affect the Guard's state mission in any way. HRR soldiers are geographically dispersed nationwide and commute to installations quarterly; they are not organized by state and could not serve a meaningful state emergency role. The two models serve entirely different constitutional and operational purposes.

8.1.7 Training Resource Competition

HRR formations are stationed at installations with dedicated range and training infrastructure. Their CTC rotations are attachments to already-scheduled active rotations, not standalone rotations. TRIT school seats are separately funded and fenced. The resource competition is marginal, and the HRR's use of installation-based training minimizes overlap with Guard training requirements.

8.2 The TRICARE Compromise

The HRR legislative package should include a complementary provision eliminating TRICARE Reserve Select premiums for all reserve component soldiers — not just HRR personnel. This addresses one of the Guard's most persistent quality-of-life priorities and serves as a coalition-building mechanism.

8.2.1 Cost Options

Option	Net Add'l Annual Cost
Full TRICARE Prime for all ~508K non-HRR RC soldiers	~\$3.0–3.3 billion
Eliminate TRS premiums for all ~508K non-HRR RC soldiers	~\$1.2–1.5 billion

This paper recommends the premium elimination option as the more politically and fiscally achievable approach. Even with free TRS across the broader RC, the HRR retains a meaningful healthcare advantage: TRS still carries copays, deductibles, and network restrictions that TRICARE Prime eliminates. For a junior enlisted soldier with a family, the out-of-pocket difference can reach \$2,000–4,000 per year.

8.2.2 Preserved HRR Differentiation

Even with free TRS across the broader RC, the HRR retains a meaningful healthcare advantage. TRS — even without premiums — still carries copays for office visits, annual deductibles, cost-sharing for hospitalizations, prescription copays, and network restrictions. TRICARE Prime eliminates all of these. For the medical readiness mission specifically, the zero-cost-barrier of TRICARE Prime is still meaningfully superior to free TRS because it eliminates the copay friction that causes some soldiers to defer routine care. The HRR's full TRICARE Prime remains a genuine benefit differentiator even in a world where TRS premiums are eliminated.

8.2.3 Coalition Building

The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) is one of the most effective military lobbying organizations in Washington. Guard units are in every state and nearly every congressional district. If the NDAA package delivers premium elimination — something NGAUS has sought for years — alongside HRR authorization, it becomes difficult for the Guard establishment to mobilize against the overall package. The premium elimination should be framed as a standalone RC quality-of-life improvement that happens to be in the same legislative vehicle; the Guard should be encouraged to claim credit for it.

8.2.4 The Adjutants General (TAG) Community

State Adjutants General are the operational and political power brokers of the Guard at the state level. The TAG community is not monolithic. TAGs from states with large Guard BCT presences will be most sensitive; TAGs from states whose formations are primarily CS/CSS may be more receptive, particularly with TRS premium elimination. Early engagement with sympathetic TAGs, especially those with strong congressional relationships, could establish a bridgehead of support before NGAUS positions formally harden.

8.3 USAR Institutional Concerns

8.3.1 Two-Tier Reserve

Creating elite HRR combat formations may implicitly devalue standard TPUs. The HRR serves a different mission with a different readiness requirement. Theater sustainment commands, civil affairs groups, medical commands, and dozens of other USAR specialties remain essential and are not diminished by the HRR's existence. The Army does not consider the 82nd Airborne Division “better” than a sustainment brigade — they serve different purposes.

8.3.2 Administrative Complexity

USARC may resist the added burden of managing a fundamentally different model. The dedicated HRR Division headquarters addresses this by centralizing HRR-specific administration rather than distributing it across existing USARC staff.

8.3.3 Resource Priority

Existing USAR CS/CSS units may worry about disproportionate resource absorption. HRR funding is additive and separately appropriated, not redistributed from existing USAR accounts.

Command emphasis must reinforce that the HRR supplements, not supplants, existing USAR priorities.

PART II: APPLICATION — MANEUVER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAMS (VANGUARD STRIKE)

9. BCT Force Structure

9.1 Force Composition

The HRR maneuver component comprises three brigade combat teams and one independent airborne infantry battalion:

HRR Division Headquarters. Located at Fort Knox, Kentucky, co-located with HRC. Forward liaison elements (3–5 personnel) at each subordinate BCT installation provide day-to-day connectivity.

Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT). Converted from an existing active duty IBCT. Stationed at Fort Johnson, Louisiana. Organized per standard IBCT MTOE with three infantry battalions, a cavalry squadron, fires battalion, brigade engineer battalion, brigade support battalion, and brigade headquarters company. The converting IBCT retains its pre-conversion active duty regiment designation.

Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT). Converted from an existing active duty SBCT. Stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado. Organized per standard SBCT MTOE with three Stryker infantry battalions, cavalry squadron, fires battalion, brigade engineer battalion, brigade support battalion, and brigade headquarters company. The converting SBCT retains its pre-conversion active duty regiment designation.

Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT). Newly established formation. Stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Organized per standard ABCT MTOE with three combined arms battalions, cavalry squadron, fires battalion, brigade engineer battalion, brigade support battalion, and brigade headquarters company. Equipment drawn from one Army Prepositioned Stock (APS) set, with refurbishment and selective modernization. The ABCT reactivates an inactive active duty regiment historically associated with Fort Knox or the armor branch.

Airborne Infantry Battalion (ABN BN). Newly established formation. Stationed at Fort Liberty, North Carolina. Organized as an enlarged airborne infantry battalion with five rifle companies (rather than the standard four), a headquarters company, and organic support elements. The Airborne Battalion is additional to the 82nd Airborne Division's existing three Infantry Brigade Combat Teams (each with three maneuver battalions). It does not replace or augment any existing brigade's internal structure; rather, it increases the division's total deployable infantry by providing a division-level asset that can be task-organized to any brigade as the situation requires. The battalion reactivates an inactive regiment from the 82nd Airborne Division's historical order of battle.

9.2 Command Relationships

The three BCTs fall under the HRR Division through the ADC-BCT at Fort Liberty. For force generation and readiness reporting, the HRR Division coordinates directly with FORSCOM.

T+30 battalions identified for contingency employment are allocated through the Global Force Management (GFM) process, with gaining active duty divisions or corps identified in advance.

The Airborne Battalion is aligned directly with the 82nd Airborne Division under XVIII Airborne Corps. While administrative support and FTS management flow through USARC and the HRR Division, training standards, SOPs, and operational employment are governed by the 82nd Airborne Division, ensuring seamless integration with the division's warfighting processes and Global Response Force (GRF) mission set. The Airborne Battalion's relationship with the 82nd is analogous to a corps-level asset aligned to a division: it trains with the division, follows the division's standards, and deploys with or for the division, but it does not belong to any of the three existing brigades.

9.3 Enablers Integration

All organic enablers within each BCT — including fires, cavalry, engineers, and sustainment — follow the HRR model. The brigade support battalion (BSB) is of particular importance: the forward support company (FSC) aligned to the T+30 maneuver battalion must maintain the same readiness tier as its supported battalion. The BSB should maintain one FSC at T+30 readiness, rotating in sync with the maneuver battalion rotation, to ensure the T+30 battalion represents a genuinely deployable combined arms formation with its full sustainment slice.

10. BCT Training Model

10.1 Standard BCT Quarterly Schedule

Each HRR BCT unit conducts three quarterly drills of 8 days each (24 duty days total) plus 15 days of annual training. The 8-day format allows for a battalion-level field training exercise including movement to the field, establishment of operations, execution of tactical tasks, and structured after-action review. Drills are staggered across battalions within each BCT so that not all subordinate units are drilling simultaneously, enabling efficient use of installation training resources and FTS cadre.

A typical 8-day block follows this progression: Day 1 for reception, draw, and administrative actions; Days 2–3 for individual and crew-level gunnery or skills lanes; Days 4–6 for platoon and company collective training, including a live-fire exercise where applicable; Day 7 for a battalion-level field exercise integrating all warfighting functions; and Day 8 for after-action review, maintenance, and turn-in. This progression is impossible within the standard two-day battle assembly.

10.2 Airborne Battalion Training Schedule

The Airborne Battalion follows a modified schedule designed to maintain jump proficiency while achieving comparable collective training outcomes. Four quarterly drills of 5 days each (20 duty days), each incorporating one airborne operation with remaining days for ground tactical training, physical training, and collective tasks. One additional drill of 4 days provides training flexibility and an additional jump opportunity. Annual training of 15 days incorporates two airborne operations, including at least one battalion mass tactical operation and a subsequent jump later in the exercise period.

Total annual jumps: 6 (4 quarterly + 2 AT). This exceeds the minimum proficiency requirement of one jump per 90 days, maintaining all personnel on jump status throughout the year. Total annual duty days: 39 (exclusive of individual training), with the high-readiness company potentially conducting additional funded training.

10.3 Annual Training

The 15-day annual training period enables a full Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation for the T+30 battalion in its ready year. All BCT elements converge for annual training, which constitutes the brigade-level collective training event — fire support coordination, brigade logistics operations, integration of the cavalry squadron, and brigade-level command and control. School attendance is not funded from AT allocations; AT is exclusively for collective training. The CTC rotation is the capstone validation event, confirming the battalion's ability to operate as a combined arms formation under realistic conditions.

10.4 CTC Attachment

The T+30 battalion in its readiness year attaches to an active duty BCT conducting a scheduled CTC rotation at JRTC or NTC, adding approximately 21 additional duty days. This provides external validation of readiness and integration experience with active component formations.

Total annual duty days for a soldier in the T+30 battalion during the readiness year: approximately 60 days, plus any planned exercises or deployments (see Section 13), plus individual training days utilized through TRIT.

10.5 Barracks and Lodging

HRR soldiers use on-post barracks during drill periods rather than Lodging in Kind (LIK) at off-post hotels, per the framework policy in Section 3.7. Barracks are more cost-effective, facilitate unit cohesion, and enable around-the-clock training access. All BCT installations (Johnson, Carson, Knox, Liberty) have existing barracks capacity. LIK is authorized only when barracks capacity is insufficient, with prior brigade commander approval.

10.6 Simulation and Training Aids

Each HRR installation maintains a robust simulation center to maximize training repetitions during drill periods. For the ABCT, Combined Arms Tactical Training (CATT) or equivalent simulation allows tank and Bradley crews to execute 20 or more engagements in a single day — training density that would require a week of live fire. For a formation that drills quarterly, this efficiency multiplier is essential. Fort Knox's range infrastructure, built to support the Armor School's gunnery programs, provides live-fire capability up to combined arms scale, though targetry modernization and range upgrades may be required. Virtual and constructive training supplements live training, particularly for gunnery tables, fire support coordination, and combined arms rehearsals.

11. Equipment and Readiness

11.1 Equipment Sourcing

IBCT and SBCT: Equipment transfers from the converting active formations. These sets are already on hand, maintained, and integrated with installation support infrastructure. The conversion process must ensure equipment accountability transfers cleanly and that no degradation occurs during the transition period.

ABCT: Equipment drawn from one Army Prepositioned Stock (APS) set. This represents a strategic trade: one prepositioned equipment set is exchanged for a manned, trained, and organized armored brigade. The APS set will require refurbishment and selective modernization upon transfer, estimated at \$500 million to \$1 billion over 2–3 years depending on equipment condition and generation. This investment is a fraction of the \$4–5 billion cost of new ABCT equipment procurement.

Airborne Battalion: Standard light infantry equipment plus airborne-specific items (parachutes, rigging equipment, heavy drop platforms). Equipment costs are modest and can be drawn from existing Army stocks.

11.2 Equipment Modernization Parity

HRR formations must be on the same equipment fielding timeline as active component units of the same type. If FORSCOM is to treat HRR T+30 battalions as strategic assets equivalent to active battalions, they must be equipped to the same standard. An ABCT fielding M1A1 tanks while active ABCTs operate M1A2 SEPv3 creates interoperability problems and undermines readiness certification credibility. Equipment modernization parity must be written into the Army's fielding plans from the outset.

11.3 Maintenance Between Drills

The mil-tech workforce is the primary mechanism for maintaining equipment readiness between quarterly drills. Mil-techs conduct scheduled maintenance, manage parts procurement, execute fault repairs, and ensure the fleet is ready for the next drill period. For the ABCT, this is the most demanding requirement: Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, and Paladin howitzers require continuous attention. The mil-tech density for the ABCT is set at 2–3 times that of the light infantry formations to account for this. HRR installations maintain organic maintenance capability through their assigned mil-tech workforce; Area Maintenance Support Activity (AMSA) facilities are not required because HRR equipment is consolidated at the duty installation and maintained continuously by on-site personnel.

Fort Knox's existing maintenance infrastructure — motor pools, covered maintenance bays, diagnostic equipment, and parts warehouses from its tenure as the Armor School — provides a strong foundation. Some modernization of facilities and diagnostic equipment may be required to support current-generation platforms.

12. Readiness Tiers, Definitions, and FORSCOM Integration

12.1 T+30 Readiness Definition

T+30 designates a formation capable of arriving at the port of debarkation (POD) or equivalent staging base, ready to conduct combat operations, within 30 calendar days of receipt of mobilization order (EXORD or equivalent). The 30-day window encompasses the following:

D+0: Alert notification.

D+1–D+5: Individual soldier recall and movement to installation.

D+5–D+15: Equipment draw, final preparation, and readiness confirmation.

D+15–D+25: Deployment processing (legal, finance, personnel actions) and staging.

D+25–D+30: Movement to POD.

Quantified readiness metrics for T+30 status:

Personnel: ≥90% fill of deployable soldiers (P-1/P-2 rating); ≥90% Individual Medical Readiness (IMR).

Equipment: ≥90% Fully Mission Capable (FMC) on mission-essential equipment; 10/20 maintenance standards met.

Training: All collective Mission Essential Task List (METL) tasks at T (Trained) or T- (Trained with minor deficiency) at company level; battalion-level METL at T- or above; externally validated by CTC rotation within the preceding 12 months.

Administrative: All deployment processing completable within 72 hours of alert; pre-positioned deployment packets (legal, financial, family care plans) maintained continuously during T+30 year.

12.2 T+90 Readiness Definition

T+90 designates a formation capable of arriving at the POD, ready to conduct combat operations, within 90 calendar days of mobilization order. The 90-day window allows for recall and assembly (D+1–10), individual and crew refresher training (D+10–30), company and battalion collective training (D+30–70), deployment processing and staging (D+70–85), and movement (D+85–90).

Quantified readiness metrics for T+90 status:

Personnel: ≥85% fill of deployable soldiers; ≥85% IMR.

Equipment: ≥85% FMC; services current.

Training: Company-level METL at P (Practiced) or above; battalion-level METL at P or above; platoon-level at T- or above. CTC rotation within the preceding 36 months.

A T+90 formation does not require a CTC rotation before deployment but should have completed one within the preceding 36 months. The 90-day window provides sufficient time for a compressed collective training cycle that brings the formation from practiced to trained status.

12.3 Three-Year Readiness Cycle

Each HRR BCT maneuver battalion rotates through a three-year cycle:

Ramp-Up Year: Individual and crew-level training emphasis. Personnel attend schools funded by TRIT. Equipment is brought to highest readiness standards. Medical and dental readiness confirmed via TRICARE access. The battalion builds the foundation for collective proficiency.

Ready Year (T+30): The battalion maintains T+30 readiness throughout the year. Drills focus on collective training at company and battalion level. The CTC rotation occurs early in this year to validate readiness. The aligned FSC from the BSB is at the same readiness level.

Recovery Year: Reduced collective training tempo. Focus on individual training, leader development, personnel turnover management, and equipment reset. This provides a sustainable recovery period before the next ramp-up.

12.4 Ready Force Portfolio

At any given time, FORSCOM has the following HRR assets available at T+30 readiness:

Formation	Type	Installation	Readiness
1x Infantry Battalion	Light	Fort Johnson	T+30
1x Stryker Battalion	Medium	Fort Carson	T+30
1x Combined Arms BN	Heavy	Fort Knox	T+30
1x Airborne Rifle Co	Airborne Light	Fort Liberty	T+30

This portfolio provides FORSCOM with light, medium, and heavy options across the full spectrum of conventional operations, plus an airborne element. The T+30 battalions and airborne company are tracked in the Global Force Management system alongside active component units.

12.5 Gaining Unit Coordination

T+30 battalions are pre-coordinated with their most likely gaining active duty formations. The T+30 battalion trains to the gaining brigade's SOPs, uses compatible digital systems, and sends liaison officers to the active brigade's planning exercises. This pre-coordination ensures that when a mobilization order is issued, the integration process does not start from zero. The HRR Division commander is responsible for certifying T+30 readiness and coordinating directly with gaining unit commanders.

Each T+30 battalion conducts at least one digital and communications interoperability check with the gaining unit per year, scheduled during a quarterly battle assembly. This event verifies that AFATDS, JBC-P, and other mission command systems are configured to the gaining unit's network architecture and that the battalion's signal personnel can establish connectivity without

delay. Identifying and resolving interoperability issues during a routine drill is far preferable to discovering them during the 30-day mobilization window.

13. BCT Employment and Deployment Framework

13.1 Design Principle

The HRR's value proposition is speed and readiness, not sustained rotational presence. T+30 battalions exist for short-notice contingencies and crisis response. Using them for predictable 9-month rotational deployments — missions with 12+ month lead times — would waste the rapid-response capability, remove the formation from its primary mission, and create unnecessary competition with ARNG formations that need rotational deployments for their own readiness justification and political viability.

Predictable rotational deployments with long lead times remain the province of active component BCTs and ARNG formations. The HRR fills a different role: the force FORSCOM calls when it needs a capable battalion-level element faster than the Guard can mobilize and when active forces are committed or unavailable.

13.2 Contingency Response Scenarios

T+30 battalions are optimized for the following employment scenarios:

Crisis response augmentation. A regional crisis escalates faster than expected — Taiwan Strait tensions spike, a Baltic state provocation occurs, a Middle Eastern conflict widens. Active BCTs already deployed are stretched. FORSCOM needs an additional battalion-level element in theater within 30–60 days.

Surge capacity. If the Army is running two simultaneous commitments and a third contingency emerges, active forces may not have a deployable battalion available. The T+30 portfolio — light, Stryker, armored — gives FORSCOM options across the weight spectrum.

Named operations below the threshold of major war. NEO, embassy reinforcement, humanitarian assistance with a security dimension, peacekeeping insertion. The T+30 airborne company is particularly suited here, aligned with the 82nd's GRF mission.

Early entry in major operations. The T+30 battalion deploys as part of the initial force package while the rest of the HRR BCT mobilizes at T+90 and the Guard begins its longer cycle.

13.3 Full BCT Employment

In anything short of major combat operations, full HRR BCTs should not deploy as BCTs. Full BCT deployment occurs at T+90 for large-scale combat operations where Guard BCTs, active reserves, and potentially the IRR would also be mobilized. For lesser contingencies, deploying T+30 battalions or companies independently makes more operational and political sense. With only three BCTs, the HRR cannot afford to have one tied up in a routine rotation — it would lose a third of its T+30 capacity for 9–12 months.

13.4 Annual Employment Calendar

Each T+30 battalion follows a dual-purpose annual calendar: planned exercises sustain readiness, morale, and operational credibility, but they are scheduled in the second half of the fiscal year (April–September) and structured so they can be shed if the unit receives a contingency tasking. The first half is dedicated to readiness validation through the CTC rotation.

13.4.1 Notional Calendar Structure

October–November (Q1): Enter T+30 status. Complete final readiness certification. First quarterly drill (8 days) focused on deployment preparation, alert procedures, and integration with gaining unit SOPs.

December–February: CTC attachment — the readiness validation event. The battalion attaches to an active duty BCT at JRTC or NTC.

March (Q2 Drill): Second quarterly drill (8 days). Recovery from CTC, sustain proficiency, individual skill refreshment.

April–August: Planned exercise or deployment window. One significant exercise or training deployment (2–4 weeks), tailored to formation type. Annual training (15 days) with the full HRR BCT also falls in this window.

September (Q3 Drill): Third quarterly drill (8 days). Available for contingency through end of FY. Transition planning to hand off T+30 status in October.

13.4.2 Planned Exercises by Formation Type

T+30 Infantry Battalion (Fort Johnson): Bilateral training exchanges with partner nations in austere environments. Light infantry is suited for jungle, mountain, or tropical settings — Central America, the Philippines, Indonesia, Pacific island nations. Pacific Pathways or SOUTHCOM/INDOPACOM security cooperation exercises.

T+30 Stryker Battalion (Fort Carson): Defender Europe participation — deploying to Poland or the Baltics for a month-long NATO exercise. High-visibility, operationally meaningful, and demonstrates rapid deployment to allies.

T+30 Combined Arms Battalion (Fort Knox): Gunnery exercises at Grafenwöhr, bilateral armor training with allied armored forces (Poland, Republic of Korea), or deployment to Kuwait for combined arms training.

T+30 Airborne Company (Fort Liberty): Allied Spirit or Swift Response exercises in Europe; bilateral jumps with partner airborne forces (UK, French, German, Italian, Japanese paratroopers). The company's smaller size enables two or three short-duration deployments in the spring/summer window.

13.5 Contingency Backfill Protocol

Each planned exercise has an identified active duty alternate unit — typically a battalion from the gaining unit's division. The alternate is aware of the exercise, has received planning documents, and has conducted cursory preparation. If the HRR battalion receives a contingency tasking, the alternate steps in. This arrangement benefits all parties: the alternate receives an unplanned but funded training deployment; the exercise host still receives a participant;

FORSCOM's schedule is undisrupted; and the HRR battalion executes its designed mission. FORSCOM must actively manage this process — the HRR Division cannot arrange backfills independently.

13.6 Soldier Morale and Deployment Expectations

In a given T+30 year, a soldier can expect: a CTC rotation (21 days of the highest-intensity training available), a planned real-world exercise or deployment (2–4 weeks), plus quarterly drills and AT. That experience is more operationally meaningful than what most active duty battalions do in a non-deployment year. Soldiers in ramp-up and recovery years see the T+30 year approaching and are preparing for it — the three-year cycle provides sustainable variation.

The most corrosive threat to morale is not the absence of combat deployments — it is readiness theater: the perception that the T+30 designation is performative and that FORSCOM would never actually mobilize the unit. FORSCOM must include HRR T+30 battalions in genuine contingency planning, conduct realistic alert exercises, and ensure soldiers see evidence that their readiness matters.

13.7 Deconfliction from Guard Rotational Missions

The employment framework explicitly deconflicts HRR employment from Guard rotational missions. T+30 battalions are not available for predictable rotational deployments with 6+ month lead times. Full HRR BCTs deploy only for major combat operations. Preserving Guard rotational equities and preserving HRR rapid-response capability are the same objective.

PART III: APPLICATION — IAMD CREW ROTATION (PERSISTENT SHIELD)

14. IAMD Problem Statement

14.1 The IAMD Demand Signal

The global demand for U.S. Army IAMD capabilities has grown steadily and shows no sign of abating. Combatant commanders across CENTCOM, EUCOM, and INDOPACOM maintain persistent requirements for THAAD and Patriot coverage. The missile threat environment has expanded dramatically: ballistic missile arsenals in Iran, North Korea, and China have grown in size and sophistication; non-state actors in Yemen have demonstrated theater ballistic missile capabilities that have directly engaged U.S. THAAD and Patriot systems in combat; and the proliferation of advanced anti-ship ballistic missiles threatens naval forces across multiple theaters.

14.2 Current Force Posture and OPTEMPO

The Army has 8 THAAD batteries under 11th ADA Brigade. At least 4 are deployed at any given time: 2 on long-term commitment to Guam and South Korea, and 2 or more in the Middle East. THAAD dwell is approximately 1:1. The Army maintains 15 Patriot battalions fielding approximately 60–70 batteries, of which 8–10 maintain persistent forward presence across CENTCOM and EUCOM on 9-month rotations with dwell consistently below 1:3. M-SHORAD battalions face growing rotational pressure from their first day of fielding.

14.3 Equipment as the Binding Constraint

A THAAD battery represents approximately \$2.7 billion in procurement costs. Patriot batteries represent \$1–1.5 billion. There is no realistic path to doubling these fleets within the FYDP. The Army must maximize the deployable utility of existing batteries by generating additional crew capacity. The equipment is the binding constraint; additional crews are the force multiplier.

15. Allied Models and Precedent

15.1 Israel Defense Forces: Reserve Air Defense Crews

The most direct international precedent is the IDF's extensive use of reserve air defense operators for Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow. Reserve crews have been tested repeatedly in actual combat — Operations Pillar of Defense (2012), Protective Edge (2014), Guardian of the Walls (2021), and sustained operations beginning October 2023 — with reserve crews consistently performing at the standard required for real-time missile defense. The IDF experience demonstrates conclusively that reserve personnel can maintain the proficiency required for operationally consequential air defense missions.

15.2 NATO Patriot Operators

Several NATO allies operate Patriot, including Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Spain, Sweden, Romania, and Poland. Allied Patriot operators create interoperability opportunities for USAR IAMD crews during sustainment years through bilateral and multilateral exercises.

15.3 USAF Active Associate Squadrons

The Air Force has operated active associate squadrons since the early 1970s, pairing reserve and Guard aircrew with active duty-owned aircraft across dozens of platforms. Key lessons: the model works best when reserve crews operate under the active unit's chain of command, training standardization is essential, and robust administrative support for reserve personnel's unique status is required.

15.4 U.S. Navy SSBN Blue/Gold

The Navy's Blue/Gold crew system for Ohio-class SSBNs enables a patrol rate of approximately 70% by maintaining two complete crews per hull. The IAMD adaptation uses more crew sets per platform and alternates between active and reserve sub-pools, but the fundamental logic is identical: the platform is the expensive, constrained asset, and additional crew capacity maximizes availability.

16. IAMD Concept of Operations

16.1 The 1:1 Alternation Model

The central design feature of Persistent Shield is the 1:1 alternation of active and reserve crews through each persistently deployed battery position. Deployment slots alternate strictly between the active crew pool and the reserve crew pool. At the 2:3 IOC ratio (2 active crews A and B, 3 reserve crews 1, 2, and 3), the full rotation cycle with 9-month deployments is:

A → 1 → B → 2 → A → 3 → B → 1 → A → 2 → B → 3 → [cycle repeats]

Twelve rotation slots complete one full cycle (108 months / 9 years). Active crews cover six slots (three each); reserve crews cover six slots (two each).

16.2 Dwell Time Arithmetic

Each active crew deploys for 9 months once every 36 months, producing a 1:3 deployment-to-dwell ratio. For THAAD soldiers currently experiencing 1:1, this is a threefold improvement. Each reserve crew deploys for 9 months once every 54 months, producing a 1:5 ratio — one deployment every 4.5 years, genuinely compatible with a serious civilian career.

16.3 Why Two Active Crews

The second active crew per position provides: equipment maintenance continuity (always an active crew at home station), career progression for active officers and NCOs (deployments at 1:3 remain frequent enough for promotion competitiveness), and redundancy if one crew has a readiness problem.

16.4 THAAD Application

The 4 persistently deployed THAAD positions are designated for crew rotation, each gaining 1 additional active crew and 3 USAR crew detachments at IOC. THAAD detachments are manned at approximately 90 soldiers with 110% HRR authorization. The remaining 4 batteries maintain single-crew posture as the strategic contingency reserve, freed from the rotational treadmill.

16.5 Patriot Application

Approximately 10 persistently deployed Patriot positions are designated, each gaining 1 additional active crew and 3 USAR crew detachments at IOC (30 total). Patriot detachments are manned at approximately 125 soldiers. IBCS is the critical enabler for position-based flexibility: once universal, a USAR crew trained on IBCS can fall in on any IBCS-equipped position regardless of theater.

16.6 M-SHORAD Application

Approximately 4 persistent M-SHORAD positions at IOC, each gaining 1 additional active crew and 3 USAR crew detachments (12 total, ~50 soldiers each). The M-SHORAD application is

explicitly limited to active component batteries under active ADA brigades and does not affect Guard SHORAD formations.

The USAR M-SHORAD crew rotation addresses the current gap in which only active formations are equipped to fill persistent requirements. As the Guard fields next-generation SHORAD capabilities, Guard formations would be integrated into the rotational base, with a corresponding reduction in USAR M-SHORAD structure. The program explicitly anticipates and welcomes a shared active-Guard-Reserve SHORAD rotation model as Guard capabilities mature.

16.7 FOC at 2:4

At FOC, the reserve pool grows to 4 crews per position. Under strict 1:1 alternation, active crews remain at 1:3 while reserve crews improve to 1:7 (once every 6 years). Alternatively, the alternation pattern can shift to 1:2 (one active rotation per two reserve), equalizing everyone at 1:5. The choice can be deferred to operational experience at IOC.

16.8 The Non-Blue/Gold Force

The approximately 50 Patriot batteries and remaining THAAD and M-SHORAD batteries not designated for persistent rotation benefit significantly: freed from the rotational treadmill, they can focus on high-end contingency training, restoring a meaningful IAMD warfighting reserve.

17. IAMD Organizational Design

17.1 USAR IAMD Group

All USAR IAMD crew detachments are organized under the USAR IAMD Group, subordinate to the ADC-IAMD at Fort Bliss. The Group is commanded by an O-6 in a USAR TPU billet and handles personnel actions, pay, individual training management, medical readiness, promotions, retention, and administrative requirements.

17.2 Subordinate Structure

The USAR THAAD Battalion manages 12 detachments at IOC (~1,190 soldiers), growing to 16 at FOC (~1,585). The USAR Patriot Battalion manages 30 detachments at IOC (~4,125 soldiers), growing to 40 at FOC (~5,500); at FOC, the Patriot element may warrant subdivision into two battalions by supported theater. The USAR M-SHORAD Battalion manages 12 detachments at IOC (~660 soldiers), growing to 24 at FOC covering 6 positions (~1,320).

17.3 AAMDC Relationship

AAMDC serves as the training and readiness oversight authority for all USAR IAMD crews. AAMDC establishes crew certification standards, provides or coordinates active cadre, conducts formal certification evaluations before each deployment rotation, coordinates the rotation schedule across all positions and theaters, and integrates USAR crews into the theater IAMD architecture during deployment. The AAMDC certification evaluation is the operational gate: no USAR crew deploys without it.

17.4 Active Cadre and Second Active Crew

Each USAR detachment includes embedded active cadre of 5–8 soldiers for THAAD and Patriot (3–5 for M-SHORAD) on 24-month tours. The second active crew per position is created through targeted active end strength growth of approximately 1,810 soldiers (360 THAAD, 1,250 Patriot, 200 M-SHORAD). This growth is less than 0.4% of total active Army end strength and is substantially offset by the net active reduction from HRR BCT conversions. The net HRR portfolio effect on active end strength is strongly negative.

18. IAMD Rotation Cycle and Readiness Model

18.1 Deployment Length

The standard deployment is 9 months, aligned with current Patriot practice. This length efficiently amortizes the 2–3 week left-seat/right-seat handover and minimizes annual handovers per position (1.33 vs. 2 for 6-month rotations).

18.2 USAR Crew Training Cycle

Post-Deployment (Months 1–12): Block leave, health assessments, personnel turnover. Soldiers reintegrate into civilian employment. Remaining quarters resume HRR drill calendar with skills sustainment.

Sustainment (Months 13–36): Full HRR training calendar. Quarterly 8-day blocks with maximum equipment access. Optimal window for bilateral and multilateral exercise participation with NATO allied Patriot operators.

Pre-Deployment (Months 37–45): Training intensifies toward deployment readiness. AAMDC certification evaluation. Intensive pre-deployment block, mobilization preparation, and movement to theater.

18.3 IBCS as Force Multiplier

IBCS replaces disparate command-and-control systems with a unified backbone. For the crew rotation program, IBCS maturation is transformative: once universal, a USAR crew trained on IBCS can fall in on any IBCS-equipped position regardless of theater. Pre-IBCS, USAR Patriot crews must be associated with specific batteries. THAAD and M-SHORAD, operating single variants, are unaffected. The program functions fully without IBCS; IBCS is an enhancer, not a prerequisite.

18.4 Surge Employment

The crew depth provides significant surge capacity. At IOC, the Army can simultaneously man all 8 THAAD batteries for an extended period by mobilizing additional USAR crews. This strategic hedge does not exist in the current force structure.

PART IV: CROSS-CUTTING

19. Phased Implementation

19.1 Parallel Tracks

The BCT conversion and IAMD crew rotation programs proceed on parallel timelines. Both share the same enabling legislation, benefits framework, and command architecture, but their proof-of-concept formations, training validation, and scaling milestones are tracked independently. This allows either track to adjust pace without delaying the other.

19.2 Implementation Timeline

Year	BCT Track	IAMD Track
1–2	Convert 1x INF BN at Johnson (proof of concept). Validate training model, TRIT, TRICARE, travel. Stand up ABN BN at Liberty.	Stand up 2 THAAD + 3 Patriot USAR detachments (proof of concept). Begin AAMDC certification pipeline. First USAR crew deploys.
3–4	Complete IBCT conversion at Johnson. Begin SBCT conversion at Carson. First T+30 BN rotation. First CTC attachment.	Scale to 4 THAAD + 10 Patriot + 4 M-SHORAD positions at 2:3 IOC. USAR IAMD Group at IOC.
4–6	Complete SBCT conversion. Stand up ABCT at Knox (APS draw, refurb). HRR Division HQ at IOC. All 3 BCTs in T+30 rotation.	IOC sustained. Collect dwell/retention data. Begin reserve pool growth toward 2:4.
6–8	ABCT at FOC. Full HRR Division at FOC. Mature exercise program.	Scale to 2:4 FOC across all positions. Reserve dwell improves to 1:7. Full surge capacity available.

19.3 Year 1–2 Proof of Concept — Key Validation Points

The proof-of-concept phase must validate the following before scaling:

Training effectiveness: Comparison of collective training proficiency (METL assessments) between the HRR battalion and comparable standard USAR infantry battalions after one full training cycle.

Recruiting viability: Ability to recruit to 105% strength primarily from the AD ETS population within the first year.

Travel funding adequacy: Whether the 150% travel allowance and GOV shuttle model are sufficient to support nationwide recruiting, or whether adjustments are needed.

TRIT utilization: Actual utilization rate of guaranteed individual training days and administrative feasibility of the protected funding model.

Medical readiness: Achievement of 90%+ IMR through full TRICARE enrollment, compared to standard USAR formations.

FTS cadre model: Effectiveness of the active duty rotation model, orientation course, and 60–90 day overlap in maintaining unit continuity.

Retention: Whether the quarterly drill model, benefits package, and unit culture achieve retention rates above standard USAR formations.

Pipeline tracking: Establishment of data collection on soldier transitions from HRR to ARNG and TPU units, to validate the retention pipeline hypothesis.

IAMD crew certification: Whether USAR IAMD crews achieve AAMDC certification standards within the planned timeline and maintain proficiency through the sustainment cycle.

20. Cost Analysis

20.1 Baseline Assumptions

All figures are approximate FY26 all-inclusive costs per person annually:

Personnel Category	Annual Cost
Active Duty Soldier (all-in: pay, BAH, BAS, healthcare, PCS)	~\$140,000
HRR Part-Time Soldier (39 duty days, full TRICARE, 150% travel)	~\$30,000–\$36,000
HRR FTS Cadre (active duty on rotation)	~\$140,000
Military Technician (Mil-Tech)	~\$95,000
DA Civilian (GS-equivalent)	~\$90,000

HRR part-time soldier cost is higher than standard USAR TPU costs due to full TRICARE Prime coverage and TRIT funding allocation.

20.2 BCT Conversion Savings

Formation	Active Cost	HRR Cost	Net Savings
IBCT (Johnson)	\$616M	\$250M	\$366M
SBCT (Carson)	\$630M	\$265M	\$365M
Total Conversions	\$1.246B	\$515M	\$731M

20.3 New BCT Formation Costs

New Cost Category	Annual Cost
ABCT Operating Cost (Knox), incl. TRICARE + TRIT	\$330M
ABN BN Operating Cost (Liberty), incl. TRICARE + TRIT	\$65M
HRR Division Headquarters (Knox/Liberty/Bliss)	\$25M
CTC Attachments (3/year)	\$25M
FTS Orientation Course Pipeline	\$8M
Installation Upgrades (amortized)	\$15M
Medical Readiness Administration	\$5M
VTa Tier 1 (HRR Guaranteed)	\$15–25M
Total New BCT/HRR Costs	\$488–498M

20.4 BCT Implementation Options

The \$731 million in annual conversion savings and \$488–498 million in new costs can be applied under three models:

Option A — Cost Savings Model. The approximately 9,000 active duty end-strength billets freed by the IBCT and SBCT conversions are eliminated. Net annual savings: approximately \$233–243 million. The Army receives the same or better combat capability for significantly less money.

Option B — Force Rebalancing Model. The ~9,000 freed billets are repurposed to other priorities (cyber, space, SOF, MDTFs). The conversion savings are fully consumed. Net annual cost increase: \$488–498 million, but the Army gains HRR force structure plus ~9,000 active billets for other uses.

Option C — Hybrid Model. Some billets repurposed, some savings retained. For example, repurposing 5,000 billets consumes approximately \$700 million in savings. Net annual cost: approximately \$457–467 million, but the Army gains the HRR plus 5,000 active billets.

20.5 IAMD Incremental Costs (IOC at 2:3)

IAMD costs represent the incremental cost above what the Army already spends on the batteries that rotate. The USAR crew detachments, their TRICARE/TRIT/travel benefits, active cadre embedded in each detachment, AAMDC certification infrastructure, and the ~1,810 active end strength growth for second active crews constitute the IAMD program cost. At IOC with 18 positions (4 THAAD, 10 Patriot, 4 M-SHORAD) at 2:3 ratio, estimated annual cost is approximately \$350–420 million.

20.6 Combined HRR Portfolio

Metric	BCT Component	IAMD Component	Combined
Net Annual Cost	+\$233–243M savings	-\$350–420M	-\$107–187M
USAR Soldiers	~16,150	~6,175 (IOC)	~22,325
Active End Strength	Reduces several thousand	Adds ~1,810	Strongly net negative
Dwell Improvement	N/A (new capability)	THAAD: 1:1 → 1:3	Both missions improved

20.7 One-Time Equipment Costs

The ABCT equipment set drawn from APS requires an estimated \$500 million to \$1 billion in refurbishment and selective modernization over 2–3 years. IAMD positions use existing equipment; the crew rotation does not require additional batteries. Phased implementation generates cumulative savings that partially offset the one-time ABCT equipment cost.

20.8 Phased Cost Profile (Option A)

Year	Action	Incremental Cost	Net Effect
1	1x INF BN + IAMD proof of concept	~\$100M	~\$10M savings
2	Full IBCT + ABN BN + IAMD scale-up	~\$400M	~\$150M net savings

3	Add SBCT + IAMD IOC	~\$530M	~\$500M cumulative
4	ABCT at Knox + IAMD steady state	~\$750M + equip	~\$90–160M annual

20.9 RC-Wide TRS Premium Elimination and VTA Tier 2

The complementary proposal to eliminate TRS premiums for all non-HRR RC soldiers adds approximately \$1.2–1.5 billion per year. VTA Tier 2 (non-guaranteed, available to the broader Selected Reserve) adds an estimated \$50–100 million per year at moderate utilization rates, growing as the program validates. These costs are separate from HRR-specific costs and are presented as standalone RC improvements in the same legislative package for coalition-building purposes.

21. Legislative and Administrative Requirements

21.1 HRR Enabling Legislation

The following provisions are required in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA):

FTS Cadre Authority. A provision authorizing active duty soldiers to fill what are currently AGR billets within HRR formations, ensuring benefits, career progression, and legal authorities are preserved.

Guaranteed Individual Training Funding. A statutory right to 30 days of TRIT funding per fiscal year for all HRR soldiers, separately appropriated and fenced from other training accounts. Modeled on the existing AT entitlement.

TRICARE Prime Eligibility for HRR. Extension of full TRICARE Prime to all HRR soldiers and their dependents, requiring amendment to 10 U.S.C. Chapter 55.

IDT Travel as Statutory Entitlement. Establishes IDT travel for HRR soldiers at 150% of the currently authorized rate as a mandatory entitlement with payment within 30 days. Directs a 24-month study on extending to the broader RC.

TRS Premium Elimination for All RC. A complementary provision eliminating TRICARE Reserve Select premiums for all drilling RC soldiers.

HRR Force Structure Cap. A statutory limitation on HRR combat formations — no more than one division equivalent without further congressional authorization. Future expansion comes exclusively from active-to-reserve conversions.

Active Duty Service Credit for HRR Service. Amends Title 10 to credit HRR service as active duty time in service for soldiers returning to active duty within five years of their active separation date, with a five-year post-return obligation.

Active End Strength Growth (~1,810). Authorizes approximately 1,810 additional active ADA soldiers across THAAD (~360), Patriot (~1,250), and M-SHORAD (~200) for second active crews. Framed as reinvestment from BCT conversion savings.

Employer Tax Credit. A federal tax credit for employers of HRR soldiers to offset costs of quarterly absences. This reduces employer friction and supports the recruiting proposition.

Voluntary Training Augmentation (VTA). Establishes VTA as a new training category under Title 10, authorizing 15 days per fiscal year per soldier. Statutory entitlement for HRR soldiers not in T+30 or pre-deployment status. Authorized but not mandated for non-HRR Selected Reserve members at the discretion of the service secretaries, funded from a new RC VTA account. Directs a 36-month study on utilization, readiness impact, and cost-effectiveness.

21.2 Mobilization Authority

For BCT employment, existing voluntary and involuntary mobilization authorities under Title 10 apply. For IAMD rotational deployments, the initial legal basis is 12304a (Preplanned Missions in Support of Combatant Commands), the same authority currently used for RC Patriot rotations. HRR-specific legislation should ultimately create a programmatic rotational

mobilization authority that permits multi-year, predictable rotation schedules without annual reauthorization.

21.3 Duty Status and Selected Reserve Membership

HRR part-time soldiers perform duty under Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 12301(b) (voluntary active duty for training) for drill periods and annual training. HRR soldiers are members of the Selected Reserve, which establishes eligibility for Montgomery GI Bill — Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606), TRICARE Reserve Select (superseded by full TRICARE Prime for HRR), federal technician preference, and the full range of mobilization authorities available to Selected Reserve members. The T+30 readiness requirement and potential for rapid mobilization are clearly articulated in each soldier's service agreement.

21.4 Family Readiness

HRR families are geographically dispersed like traditional RC families but face near-active-duty deployment timelines during T+30 years (BCTs) or during pre-deployment cycles (IAMD). Virtual family readiness groups, pre-deployment preparation programs delivered remotely, and coordination with active duty installation family support resources are necessary adaptations. Full TRICARE Prime for dependents addresses one of the most common family readiness concerns.

21.5 Administrative Systems

T+30 readiness demands administrative interoperability with active component systems. When a T+30 battalion receives a mobilization order and must integrate with an active duty brigade within 30 days, every system translation between RC-specific and AC administrative platforms consumes time the formation cannot afford. If the gaining brigade's S1 cannot pull HRR personnel data without format conversion, if medical readiness records live in a different system, if training management data does not speak the same language, if logistics requisitions route through different channels — each of these adds days to the integration timeline.

HRR formations should operate on active component administrative, readiness reporting, and logistics systems wherever legally and technically feasible. Readiness data should feed to FORSCOM in the same format as active BCT data. Equipment readiness reporting should use the same metrics and dashboards. The HRR Division commander should brief readiness to the FORSCOM commander using the same products an active division commander would use. Where IPPS-A has RC-specific modules or workflows, the HRR should use the AC equivalents to the maximum extent permissible. Some accommodations remain necessary for part-time pay processing, duty status tracking, and TRICARE enrollment.

The HRR's experience with AC system usage will generate data on the feasibility of broader administrative system consolidation across the reserve component. If the HRR demonstrates that RC units can operate on AC systems with minimal accommodation, that evidence informs future decisions about reducing the parallel administrative infrastructure that currently separates the components.

21.6 Annual Congressional Reporting

The HRR Division submits an annual report to the Armed Services Committees covering: recruiting source breakdown (AD ETS, TPU transfer, trailing spouse, other) and fill rates by formation; retention rates by readiness cycle year (ramp-up, ready, recovery) and by component (BCT, IAMD); pipeline flow tracking (soldiers transitioning to ARNG, TPU, IMA, active duty return, or separation); medical readiness comparison versus standard USAR formations; T+30 and IAMD crew certification results; employer complaint and USERRA action rates; FTS cadre satisfaction and subsequent career outcomes; IAMD crew deployment proficiency evaluations; and cost-per-soldier comparisons with active and standard RC equivalents. This reporting requirement creates the transparency and evidence base necessary for congressional confidence in the program and informs future expansion decisions.

22. Risk Assessment

22.1 Recruiting Risk

Risk: The HRR may not attract sufficient numbers of high-quality personnel.

Mitigation: The benefits package is unprecedented in the RC. Phased implementation validates recruiting at battalion scale before full commitment. The self-selecting population generates positive word-of-mouth. Trailing spouse recruiting expands the pool.

22.2 ABCT Maintenance Risk

Risk: Heavy equipment fleet degrades between quarterly drills despite mil-tech support.

Mitigation: Robust mil-tech manning at 2–3x density. Fort Knox's existing maintenance infrastructure. Simulation-heavy training reduces equipment hours. Dedicated equipment readiness reporting chain. AMSA not needed — organic maintenance is on-site and continuous.

22.3 FTS Cadre Quality Risk

Risk: Active duty branch managers resist assigning competitive personnel.

Mitigation: Explicit MILPER policy establishing FTS tours as KD-equivalent. Senior leader emphasis. Inclusion as a broadening opportunity in professional development models.

22.4 Strategic Risk (APS Drawdown)

Risk: Drawing one APS set reduces theater reinforcement capability.

Mitigation: A manned, trained ABCT at T+90 (or T+30 for one battalion) is more operationally useful than an unmanned equipment set. APS draw units historically require extensive post-draw training. Remaining APS sets are maintained.

22.5 Integration Risk

Risk: Active commanders do not trust HRR T+30 battalions.

Mitigation: CTC rotation validation. Pre-coordination with gaining units. FTS cadre as cultural bridge. Carefully managed initial rotations to build institutional reputation.

22.6 Employer Relations Risk

Risk: Civilian employers resist the higher time commitment (39–60+ duty days).

Mitigation: Quarterly blocks are more employer-friendly than monthly drills in many respects — four predictable absences per year versus twelve. USERRA protections apply. Employer tax credit offsets costs. Voluntary self-selection ensures compatibility.

22.7 Political Risk

Risk: ARNG institutional opposition blocks or weakens authorization.

Mitigation: TRS premium elimination aligns Guard interests with the package. Statutory guardrails address precedent concerns. Retention pipeline reframes HRR as a net benefit to Guard recruiting. See Section 8.

22.8 Deployment Morale Risk

Risk: Soldiers train at high intensity but rarely deploy operationally.

Mitigation: Annual employment calendar (Section 13) ensures real-world exercises. FORSCOM includes T+30 battalions in genuine contingency planning. Three-year cycle provides sustainable variation.

22.9 Service Credit Abuse Risk

Risk: The service credit provision creates incentives for gaming.

Mitigation: Eligibility constraints bound the risk: direct transition required, five-year return window, five-year post-return obligation. A soldier using this path would need to serve 7–9 additional years. The HRR's demanding training tempo deters soldiers seeking an easy path.

22.10 IAMD Crew Proficiency Risk

Risk: Reserve IAMD crews cannot maintain proficiency between deployments.

Mitigation: Quarterly 8-day drill blocks at Fort Bliss or deploying installation with maximum system access. AAMDC certification is the operational gate — no crew deploys without passing. IDF precedent demonstrates reserve IAMD proficiency in actual combat.

23. Future Expansion Opportunities

23.1 Hawaii and Alaska

Hawaii and Alaska present unique force posture opportunities for future HRR expansion. Both states host significant military installations with existing training infrastructure and are strategically positioned for INDOPACOM contingencies. Hawaii-based HRR formations could provide rapid INDOPACOM response without the inter-theater deployment timeline required from CONUS. Alaska-based formations could leverage extreme cold weather training facilities and Arctic-relevant capabilities. Both locations face higher cost-of-living environments that increase active duty basing costs, potentially amplifying the HRR cost advantage. Any expansion to these locations would require separate congressional authorization consistent with the force structure cap.

23.2 Additional Combat Arms Applications

If the HRR concept validates, potential future applications include additional BCT types (a second ABCT or additional IBCT), long-range fires formations, additional IAMD positions as the threat environment evolves, cyber and electronic warfare formations that benefit from civilian-sector technical expertise, and engineer or military police formations for specific contingency requirements.

23.3 Guard Integration of SHORAD

As Guard SHORAD capabilities mature with next-generation systems, the M-SHORAD crew rotation explicitly anticipates integration of Guard formations into the rotational base. The program would evolve toward a shared active-Guard-Reserve SHORAD rotation model, with a corresponding reduction in USAR M-SHORAD structure.

23.4 Broader RC Application of HRR Principles

Several HRR innovations — guaranteed TRIT funding, IDT travel as statutory entitlement, the FTS cadre model, administrative systems consolidation — have potential applicability beyond HRR formations. The HRR serves as the proof of concept; data collected during implementation informs future legislative proposals to extend validated innovations across the reserve component.

24. Conclusion

The High Readiness Reserve offers the United States Army a mechanism to expand available combat power while reducing active duty end-strength costs, and simultaneously to solve the IAMD OPTEMPO crisis that is breaking the air defense artillery community. By creating a third tier of readiness between active and traditional reserve formations, the HRR fills a gap that has existed since the end of the Cold War: the need for reserve combat units that can deploy on operationally relevant timelines without the six-month-plus post-mobilization training periods that characterize standard RC formations.

The BCT conversion component provides FORSCOM with three brigade combat teams and an independent airborne battalion — including an entirely new armored brigade and airborne capability that do not currently exist — at a net annual savings of up to \$233–243 million. The Persistent Shield IAMD component transforms THAAD dwell from 1:1 to 1:3 and Patriot dwell from approximately 1:2 to 1:3, generating approximately 6,175 trained USAR air defenders while effectively doubling the sustainable deployment capacity of 18 existing batteries at roughly 15% of the cost of a single new THAAD battery.

Equally important, the HRR addresses the Army's retention crisis by offering active duty soldiers a structured career pause that maintains tactical proficiency, military identity, and career progression while accommodating temporary life pressures. The active duty service credit provision eliminates the career penalty that makes temporary separation irreversible, transforming the HRR from a terminal reserve assignment into a flexible waypoint within a continuous military career. Combined with the IMA pathway for later-career staff service, the HRR anchors a reserve career continuum that keeps experienced soldiers contributing to the total force for 15–20 years after leaving active duty.

The concept is designed around a comprehensive investment in soldier readiness: full TRICARE healthcare eliminates the medical readiness failures that plague the reserve component; guaranteed individual training funding ensures professional development is never deferred; quarterly continuous training periods replace the ineffective weekend drill model; active duty cadre bring tactical currency; IDT travel as a statutory entitlement makes the commuter model viable; and administrative systems continuity ensures mobilization integration is measured in days, not weeks. The employment framework ensures that T+30 formations have meaningful, operationally relevant activities every year while preserving availability for contingency response.

The HRR is accompanied by a legislative strategy that addresses institutional friction through a coalition-building approach. By pairing HRR authorization with TRS premium elimination for the entire reserve component, the concept aligns Guard interests with the legislative package. Statutory guardrails on HRR scope provide reassurance that the concept is bounded and complementary.

The phased implementation — beginning with proof-of-concept formations for both BCT and IAMD tracks before scaling — minimizes risk and allows the Army to validate the model before committing to irreversible force structure changes. The concept leverages existing installations, available equipment, and the proven potential of America's experienced military professionals to maintain meaningful service in a format compatible with civilian careers and family life.

The HRR does not replace either the active component or the traditional reserve. It creates a new option in the force generation toolkit — one that is more ready than the reserve, less expensive than the active force, and designed from the ground up to attract and retain the experienced soldiers the Army can least afford to lose.

Change Log

Version	Changes
1.0	Initial BCT-only concept. Division HQ at Fort Liberty. Single training model. Three implementation options (A/B/C). 16 sections.
2.0	Added Airborne Infantry Battalion at Fort Liberty (5th rifle company, aligned to 82nd ABN). Expanded career management: early departure consequence framework, IMA integration pathway, FTS broader applicability. Added institutional considerations: ARNG concerns (7 subsections), TRICARE compromise (coalition building, TAG engagement), USAR institutional concerns. Added employment and deployment framework with annual calendar, exercise types, contingency backfill protocol. Expanded risk assessment to 9 specific risks.
3.0	Introduced Persistent Shield IAMD concept as standalone companion paper. Established 1:1 alternation between active and reserve crew pools. Defined 2:3 IOC and 2:4 FOC crew ratios. Covered THAAD, Patriot, and M-SHORAD applications. Described USAR IAMD Group organizational design and AAMDC certification relationship.
4.0	Corrected alternation model: active dwell 1:3, reserve dwell 1:5 at IOC (not 1:1 for both). Framed ~1,810 active end strength growth as reinvestment from BCT conversion savings. Elevated IDT travel to statutory entitlement (150%, mandatory funding, 30-day reimbursement) for all HRR soldiers. Added retroactive changelog.
5.0	Combined BCT and IAMD into single document. Restructured into four parts: Framework, BCTs, IAMD, Cross-Cutting. Moved Division HQ to Fort Knox (co-located with HRC). Established ADC-IAMD at Fort Bliss and ADC-BCT at Fort Liberty.
6.0	Added quantified T+30 and T+90 readiness definitions with metrics and D+0 through D+30/D+90 timelines. Added key position additional duty days (12/year for commanders and key staff, framework-wide). Corrected Airborne Battalion description (additional to 82nd's existing 3 IBCTs, not a fourth maneuver BN). Added GOV fleet/shuttle policy, rental car restrictions, POV mileage for long-distance commuters, barracks-first lodging. Added AMSA clarification (not required for HRR). Added trailing spouse recruiting strategy. Added education benefits (Chapter 1606 and Post-9/11 GI Bill accrual under §12301(b)). Added virtual readiness management concept. Added digital/comms interoperability check with gaining units at quarterly BA. Added annual congressional reporting requirements. Added Selected Reserve membership and duty status detail. Restored full TRIT course specificity, Preserved HRR Differentiation subsection, FTS broader applicability detail, and administrative systems continuity detail from v4 content. Fixed Division HQ location rationale to acknowledge co-location with ABCT at Knox. Fixed travel policy to allow POV mileage reimbursement for long-distance commuters.
6.1	Selected 5th Infantry Division (Red Diamond) as division identity. Designated BCT program "Red Diamond Ready" to match "Persistent Shield" for IAMD. Added Voluntary Training Augmentation (VTA) program: Tier 1 guaranteed (15 days/year for non-T+30 HRR soldiers), Tier 2 available (15 days/year for broader Selected Reserve, subject to funding). VTA added to legislative requirements and cost analysis. Updated BCT net savings to ~\$233–243M (from ~\$258M) and combined portfolio to ~\$107–187M to reflect VTA Tier 1 costs.
6.2	Replaced "Red Diamond Ready" with "Vanguard Strike" as the maneuver program name, designating it as a program identity independent of the 5th ID organizational structure. Vanguard Strike encompasses all HRR maneuver formations regardless of parent headquarters (5th ID BCTs, 82nd-aligned ABN BN, potential future 25th ID Hawaiian IBCT). This separation of program identity from divisional identity enables scalability without organizational reassignment.