

High Readiness Reserve — Executive Summary

Combined Concept Paper v6.2 — Vanguard Strike + Persistent Shield

DRAFT — February 2026 — For Discussion Purposes

The Concept

The HRR creates a new category of USAR formations operating at near-active readiness for substantially less cost. Key features: quarterly 8-day training blocks (replacing weekend drills), full TRICARE Prime for all soldiers and dependents, guaranteed 30 days/year individual training (TRIT) as statutory entitlement, IDT travel at 150% as statutory entitlement with 30-day reimbursement, active duty FTS cadre on 24-month rotational tours, 110% overmanning authorization, 12 additional funded duty days for command/key staff positions, Voluntary Training Augmentation (VTA) entitlement of 15 days/year for non-T+30 soldiers (available but not guaranteed for broader RC), barracks-first lodging with expanded GOV fleet and airport shuttle support, and Post-9/11 GI Bill accrual under §12301(b).

Application 1: Vanguard Strike (Maneuver BCTs)

Converts 1 IBCT (Ft Johnson) and 1 SBCT (Ft Carson) from active to reserve. Creates 1 new ABCT (Ft Knox, from APS) and 1 ABN BN (Ft Liberty, additional to 82nd ABN's existing 3 IBCTs). At FOC: 3 BCTs + 1 ABN BN with 3 maneuver battalions and 1 airborne rifle company at T+30 readiness at all times. T+30 = at POD within 30 days of EXORD ($\geq 90\%$ fill, $\geq 90\%$ IMR, $\geq 90\%$ FMC, METL at T/T-, CTC within 12 months). T+90 = at POD within 90 days ($\geq 85\%$ fill/IMR/FMC, METL at P+). Three-year rotation: ramp-up → ready (T+30) → recovery. Net savings: ~\$233–243M/year while adding an ABCT and ABN BN. Converting BCTs retain pre-conversion regiment lineage; new formations reactivate inactive AD regiment lineages.

Application 2: Persistent Shield (IAMD Crew Rotation)

Creates integrated active-reserve crew rotation for persistently deployed THAAD, Patriot, and M-SHORAD. 1:1 alternation between active and reserve crew pools. At IOC (2:3): active dwell 1:3, reserve dwell 1:5 — transforms THAAD from 1:1 and Patriot from ~1:2. At FOC (2:4): reserve dwell improves to 1:7. IOC positions: 4 THAAD, 10 Patriot, 4 M-SHORAD (54 USAR detachments, ~5,975 soldiers). Requires ~1,810 active end strength growth for second active crews (offset by BCT conversion). AAMDC certifies all USAR crews before deployment.

Metric	BCT Component	IAMD Component	Combined
Net Annual Cost	+\$233–243M savings	–\$350–420M	–\$107–187M/yr
USAR Soldiers	~16,150	~6,175 (IOC)	~22,325
Active End Strength	Reduces several thousand	Adds ~1,810	Strongly net negative
Key Readiness Effect	Adds ABCT + ABN BN	THAAD: 1:1→1:3	Both missions improved

Command Architecture

5th Infantry Division (Red Diamond) (★★) at Fort Knox, KY (co-located with HRC and ABCT). **ADC-IAMD (★)** at Fort Bliss, TX (co-located with active ADA enterprise). **ADC-BCT (★)** at Fort Liberty, NC (co-located with USARC). Maneuver program: 'Vanguard Strike' (independent of division — covers all HRR maneuver formations including 82nd-aligned ABN BN and potential future expansions). IAMD program: 'Persistent Shield.'

Implementation Timeline

Phase	BCT Track	IAMD Track
Yr 1–2 Proof of Concept	Convert 1 INF BN at Johnson. Stand up ABN BN at Liberty. Validate model.	Stand up 2 THAAD + 3 Patriot USAR detachments. First USAR crew deploys.
Yr 3–4 IOC	Complete IBCT + SBCT conversions. First T+30 BN rotation + CTC.	4 THAAD + 10 Patriot + 4 M-SHORAD at 2:3 IOC.
Yr 4–6 Scale	Stand up ABCT at Knox (APS). All 3 BCTs in rotation.	IOC sustained. Begin growth toward 2:4.
Yr 6–8 FOC	Full Division at FOC. Mature exercise program.	2:4 FOC. Reserve dwell 1:7. Full surge capacity.

Legislative Requirements

HRR enabling legislation (FTS authority, TRIT guarantee, TRICARE Prime eligibility, IDT travel entitlement at 150%) • VTA entitlement for HRR / available for broader RC • TRS premium elimination for all RC soldiers (~\$1.2–1.5B/yr) • HRR force structure cap (one division equivalent) • Active duty service credit for HRR service (5-year return window, 5-year post-return obligation) • ~1,810 active ADA end strength growth • Employer tax credit • Programmatic rotational mobilization authority for IAMD • Annual congressional reporting requirement

Recruiting Strategy

Primary: AD ETS soldiers seeking structured career pause. Secondary: high-performing USAR TPU soldiers. Targeted: trailing spouses of active duty, FSO, and FBI — HRR's fly-in model eliminates geographic churn as a barrier. Defense industry employees (Lockheed Martin, RTX, Northrop) for IAMD positions.

Proven Models

USN Blue/Gold (SSBN dual crews) • USAF Active Associate (reserve aircrew on active aircraft) • IDF Reserve Air Defense (combat-proven Iron Dome reserve crews) • NATO Patriot (allied interoperability) • British Army Reserve (extended continuous training)

Bottom Line

More combat power from fewer resources. BCT conversions save ~\$233–243M/year while adding force structure. Persistent Shield solves the IAMD OPTEMPO crisis at ~15% of the cost of new batteries. VTA channels motivated soldiers into additional training across the total force. Net active end strength is strongly negative. Net readiness is strongly positive. Career pause with service credit retains soldiers the Army can least afford to lose. Phased implementation validates before committing. Coalition strategy bundles Guard benefits (TRS premium elimination, VTA Tier 2) with HRR authorization.