



Spc. Beniam Clark, assigned to Bull Troop, 1st Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, dismounts from a Stryker during training Sunday at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany. (U.S. ARMY/KEVIN PAYNE)

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Readiness of Army earns high ratings

A new report on the strength of the U.S. military ranks the Army's readiness as "very strong," but the service's overall ranking is "marginal" because of concerns about capacity and capability.

Released Tuesday, the Heritage Foundation's 2023 Index of U.S. Military Strength ranks the Navy and Space Force as "weak" and the Air Force as "very weak." The Marine Corps was given a "strong" rating.

In 2022, the Heritage rankings also listed the Army as "marginal."

Heritage's analysts credit the Army for its sustained commitment to transforming the force for great-power competition, but they caution "significant challenges" have arisen that "call into question whether it will improve its

status in the year ahead."

"The Army is aging faster than it is modernizing," the report says. "Its modernization programs are still in their developmental phase, and it will be a few years before they are ready for acquisition and fielding."

The Army is too small, the report says, with "only 62% of the force it should have." However, it also credits the Army for having 25 brigade combat teams at the highest level of readiness, leading Heritage to rank Army readiness as "very strong" in comparison to the "very weak" readiness rating for the Air Force and Space Force.

The Army remains engaged around the world, including deploying thousands of troops to Europe to bolster America's NATO allies after Russia

invaded Ukraine, the report says. At the same time, it and the other services are under "extraordinary operational and financial pressure," the report says.

"The U.S. Army is currently the world's most powerful army, but it also is too small and insufficiently modern to meet even the modest requirements of the 2018 National Defense Strategy, much less to handle two major regional contingencies simultaneously, which many experts believe is essential," the report says.

However, the report "assesses only the active component of the service, albeit with full awareness that the Army also has Reserve and National Guard components."

The full report is available here.

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Report: Recruiter diversity needed as competition grows

Filling the ranks was a top focus of a recent Rand Corp. report on diversity in the military.

The report, “Leveraging Diversity for Military Effectiveness: Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging in the UK and US Armed Forces,” explores manning the future force, something today’s Army is finding difficult because fewer service-aged people meet Army standards, and even fewer of those who meet the basic requirements for intelligence, health and a clean criminal record express any interest in military service.

Rand suggests that a solution to the “increasingly competitive recruiting landscape” would be to widen eligibility, something that would be especially helpful in recruiting future cyber warriors.

The Army must “compete within the civilian labor market to recruit and retain personnel with in-demand technical cyber skills, using direct recruitment of enlisted personnel and direct commissioning of officers,” the report says.

Competition will become fiercer, the report says, citing Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts of a 33% increase in employment in computer and information systems by 2030, a 22% increase in jobs in software development, quality assurance and testing, and a 33% increase in infor-



New Army recruits and prospects visit Fort Drum, New York, to meet with 10th Mountain Division soldiers, tour facilities and learn more about the Army. (U.S. ARMY/PFC. SAMUEL BONNEY)

mation security analysis. This will happen while the workforce increases by just 8%.

“Given these projected dynamics in the U.S. labor market, the U.S. military is likely to face stiff competition in the recruitment of personnel with—or capable of learning—technical cyber skills, as well as increasing challenges in retaining them once they enter service,” the report says.

The private sector accepts applicants for cyber jobs who do not meet Army weight, vision, mobility, psychological or emotional health standards,

the report says. The Army might consider “more individualized assessment” when pre-screening for cyber personnel, the report suggests, saying this is a way to be competitive.

The report recommends case-by-case assessments instead of against blanket waivers. It also acknowledges that there could be resistance to relaxing standards “due to the Armed Forces’ culture.”

Rand also looks at diversity among military recruiters as an opportunity to attract more people to enlist. Recruiters who represent the age, gender, race and ethnic composition of a community might have a better chance of convincing people to join. Recruiters may do better if they experienced the local culture of their market area and reflect its demographic character, something the Army tried to embrace with its hometown recruiter program.

Rand notes motivating factors for joining often vary by region. In one area, patriotism may be the prime reason. In others, salary and benefits might be most important. Diversity in experience and occupations may also be helpful, the report says.

The report is available here.

Meet the AUSA headquarters staff

Alison French

Chief Human Resources Officer

Alison French has been with AUSA for almost six years. Prior to joining the association, Alison was the chief human resources officer and vice president for a larger scientific association in Washington, D.C. Alison is also a classical musician (flutist) who played with a number of symphonies and ensembles and continues to love all things music.



Army releases 5-year plan to reduce threat, impacts of climate change



Paul Farnan, the Army's principal deputy assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment, speaks at a groundbreaking ceremony for an energy resilience project at Joint Forces Training Base in Los Alamitos, California. (AIR NATIONAL GUARD/STAFF SGT. CRYSTAL HOUSMAN)

Climate change and its effect on military installations will have critical impacts on the Army's readiness and warfighting abilities, a top Army climate leader said.

"The battle starts here," said Paul Farnan, the Army's principal deputy assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment. "[Climate change] is going to impede our ability to get our forces to the battlefield, be it a natural disaster or a cyberattack that takes the grid down. Our installations still have to be able to operate."

The Army Climate Strategy, which was published Feb. 8, established the Army's long-term goals for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. On Oct. 5, the Army released its accompanying implementation plan, which focuses on installations, acquisition, logistics and training over the next five fiscal years.

On the battlefield, reducing the Army's dependence on fuel will save soldiers' lives, Farnan said during a recent event to discuss the implementation plan, hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"All of those fuel lines [in Iraq and Afghanistan] needed to be guarded by combat forces. We took casualties, and we pulled combat forces away from

the fight guarding logistics lines," he said. "If we can reduce the amount of fuel our vehicles use by 30, 40, 50%, that's half of the fuel convoys we now have to protect."

In terms of its installations, the Army is working to build more modern, resilient installations with a less vulnerable energy source.

"Portable diesel generators, which the military traditionally always uses as a backup source of power, that's great for the seven days that we'd have the diesel fuel on the base, but then what happens on day eight?" Farnan said. "We have a goal that every one of our installations will have a microgrid installed by 2035."

Moving forward, the Army is offering climate-related training for soldiers to ensure that the Army will continue to lead on climate change.

"The Army is leading DoD in addressing the climate issue," Farnan said. "It's about educating the force on the impact that climate has on our operations, and the impact our operations have on the climate. So, we're working with [Army] Training and Doctrine Command ... [on] educating soldiers in boot camp and ... throughout their career."

Read the Army's implementation plan here.

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Water supplies pose tricky challenge for Army leaders

The Army has water on the brain, facing climate-related problems of having too much water in some places and not enough in others.

This mix results in the threat of storm-driven disasters in some areas, while some projections say that half of the world's population will face severe water shortages by 2030, said Rachel Jacobson, the Army's assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment.

Speaking Oct. 11 during a Warriors Corner presentation at the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition, Jacobson said water presents a global crisis, although the exact problem varies by region, seen by there being too little water in Southern California but history-making floods in other areas.

The Army needs to act, Jacobson said.



Pfc. Adrian Shifflett with the Kentucky Army National Guard opens the water spout on his vehicle during a mission in response to a water shortage in Marion, Kentucky. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. 1ST CLASS BENJAMIN CRANE)

For future battlefields, where soldiers will need water, the Army is looking at what it calls Heat-Driven Atmosphere Water Generation, a

way of pulling water from hot air that may not be drinkable but can be used for other needs, said David Pittman, a director for research and development at the Army Corps of Engineers. His is called the "HEAT-DAWG" program.

Action is needed on installations to both reduce potential damage from flooding while also ensuring the supply of water. Lt. Gen. Omar Jones, Army Installation Management Command's commanding general, said many efforts are underway aimed at resilience, affordability and efficiency. The Army is trying to move water and store water, he said, pointing to Fort Carson, Colorado, and Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. Fort Carson is a good example of efforts to improve water storage, while Aberdeen looks at harvesting rainwater.



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National Guard transformation must be carefully monitored

As it has done for more than 380 years, the Army National Guard will meet the mission, but the author of a new paper cautions that citizen-soldiers could be “overworked” if the component is made to mirror the Regular Army.

Examining National Guard 4.0, a program launched in 2016, author Maj. Royce Locklear Jr. lays out the evolution of the Guard’s organizational framework since 1636 and the modern-day challenges faced by the Army’s second-largest component.

At the program’s launch, retired Lt. Gen. Timothy Kadavy, then-director of the Army National Guard, explained that National Guard 4.0 was an evolutionary leap from the days of the Vietnam War and operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, to a coming era in which the U.S. expects to be in persistent conflict overseas.



Soldiers from the Idaho National Guard depart for a deployment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (NATIONAL GUARD/THOMAS ALVAREZ)

The expectation, Kadavy said at the time, would require some Guard units to be ready and able to deploy in as few as 30 days.

In his paper, “Army National Guard 4.0: A Transformation,” published by the Association of the U.S. Army as part of its Land Warfare series, Locklear notes the importance of the Guard’s adaptability and flex-

ibility over time to be “ever present and ready to respond to the needs of the state and the nation.”

The foundational principle of Guard 4.0 is the availability of National Guard units on a predictable and rotational basis. Readiness both in personnel and training proficiency is key to the success of the Army Na-

See **National Guard**, Page 8

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AUSA family forums highlight resiliency, connections

Which comes first, balancing life or building connections?

Balancing competing priorities takes resiliency and grit, especially in military life.

But how do you do that if you don't make connections to build a support system for yourself and your family? Wouldn't you also need to know what resources and programs are available to help you do this?

These were the subjects of discussion last week during the military family forums at the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition.

During the first family forum, "My Army Life—Grit, Growth and Balance," Maria Mc-

Conville, spouse of the Army chief of staff, and Alexandra Grinston, spouse of the sergeant major of the Army, opened with introductory remarks and laid the foundation for the forum's theme.

Army spouse Tawni Dixon, a Soldier and Family Readiness support assistant for the 82nd Airborne Division, shared her personal story on finding balance and building an Army and community support system no matter where you live. She also stressed the importance of building a self-care routine.

Dixon moderated a panel of subject-matter experts who shared insights about building and enhancing grit, growth and balance to thrive in Army life.

If you missed this phenomenal discussion or want to see it again, click here to learn about the programs and resources available to assist you in your journey.

"Building Connections: Strengthening Personal, Family and Community Relationships" was the second family forum in the series—and just as important as the first.

"Going through the pandemic has proven the importance of connections.



Holly Dailey, right, AUSA's Family Readiness director, and deputy director Thea Green, left, stand with Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Tomasura and his family. The Tomasuras are the AUSA 2022 Volunteer Family of the Year. (AUSA PHOTO)

There were years of social isolation, which proved to us how important human connections and community really is. Connections are extremely important for Army families because of the unique lifestyle that we live," AUSA Senior Fellow Karen Halverson said as she introduced the forum.

We heard about programs and resources that could assist with connections and positive relationships from retired Col. Steve Lewis, the business development manager for military and veterans health solu-

tions with Leidos.

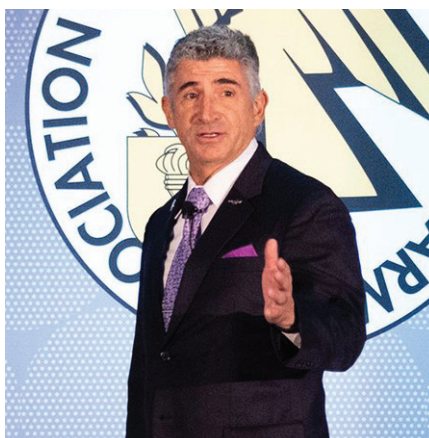
Click here to view this robust and educational forum.

Our 2022 AUSA Volunteer Family of the Year—the family of Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Tomasura—was recognized during the Annual Meeting for their dedication to volunteer service, promoting the well-being of soldiers and families and their positive impact in their local communities.

Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston addressed military families during the Senior Leaders Town Hall. They fielded questions from the in-person and online audiences on housing, spouse employment, health care, inflation and much more.

All three of the family forums were in line with AUSA's overall mission to educate, inform and connect. The association's Family Readiness directorate continues to support our Army as it remains committed to placing people first and ensuring the best quality of life.

Holly Dailey is AUSA's Family Readiness director.



Retired Col. Steve Lewis discusses programs and resources for military families during a forum at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

National Guard

From Page 6

tional Guard's transformation, Locklear writes.

The transformation, however, "will come with its own challenges" due to a variety of social implications for the Guard's citizen-soldiers and the "new paradigm of maintaining parity, where required, with the Regular Army," he writes.

"These two areas pose the biggest risk to successful implementation because of their inherent importance to success and the level of uncertainty posed by changing social dynamics and government policy," writes Locklear, an Active Guard Reserve soldier with the Florida Army National Guard, who is battalion executive officer with the 927th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

While the momentum is positive, he writes, "the collective leadership across the Army National Guard must

remember that Guard forces are not the Regular Army and that Soldiers who serve in the Guard serve for distinct and different reasons from their active-duty counterparts."

While Guard service is not diminished by its difference to service in the Regular Army, Locklear writes that Guard soldiers' service is motivated by different expectations and desires. He reminds leadership to "never forget that this choice is a critical aspect to why Soldiers serve."

"Making the Army National Guard mirror the Regular Army in more ways gives recruits fewer reasons to choose the Army National Guard over the Regular Army," Locklear writes. More demands on Guard soldiers could curtail their reasons for joining, such as the ability to serve while attending college, holding jobs and working as productive members of their communities.

His paper identifies the periods



Sgt. Luis Pedromendoza of the Florida Army National Guard distributes supplies to residents impacted by Hurricane Ian. (ARMY NATIONAL GUARD/SGT. 1ST CLASS SHANE KLESTINSKI)

of inflection in which the National Guard transformed, improved and strengthened its organizations, pointing out that National Guard 4.0 can have the same effect.

However, he writes, there is a concern that, in the transformation, "the Guard may be overworked."

Read the full paper here.

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Chapter event focuses on NATO response to Russia

The Association of the U.S. Army's Central Texas chapter recently partnered with the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce Military Relations Council to host a discussion about the NATO response to Russian aggression.

During the Sept. 20 event at Central Texas College, attendees heard from retired Lt. Gen. John "J.T." Thomson, who retired in 2020 after commanding NATO's Allied Land Command, and British Maj. Gen. Michael Keating, the deputy commander of support for III Corps and Fort Hood.

"I'm a big advocate of NATO. It is not a perfect alliance, but it is the largest, oldest and most successful defense alliance in the history of the world. If we didn't have NATO today, we'd need something like it," Thomson said, according to the *Killeen Daily Herald*.

Russia is the greatest threat to allied security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, Thomson said, pointing to the war in Ukraine as an example.

"NATO's center of gravity is unity and cohesion. And [Russian President Vladimir Putin] is always looking for ways to foment distrust in the alliance and sow discord," Thomson said, as re-



Retired Lt. Gen. John 'J.T.' Thomson, right, and British Maj. Gen. Michael Keating discuss NATO and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. (AUSA PHOTO)

ported by the *Killeen Daily Herald*.

Together, NATO countries have more than 3.2 million active-duty military service members and generate 50% of the world's gross domestic product. "But instead of being a peaceful neighbor and a constructive economic partner, Putin has chosen to be a belligerent competitor, which always stokes the resolve and cohesion of the alliance," Thomson said.

After thanking the audience for their show of support after the death

of Queen Elizabeth II, Keating said that NATO can provide troops quickly, such as the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, if Russia moves against an ally. This force, stationed in the United Kingdom, is made up of service members from 23 NATO countries, including the U.S.

"I'm privileged to be sitting here as a deputy commander of the III U.S. Armored Corps—NATO has a standing force body of corps-level organizations, but never anywhere in the world will you find a corps as well-equipped as III Armored Corps in terms of the substance, the equipment it has to have," Keating said, according to the *Killeen Daily Herald*.

If needed, the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps "will fight with their sister corps, being III Armored Corps and obviously V Corps, which is forward based in Poland as we speak as well," he said.

During the event, six Vietnam veterans were recognized and pinned with the Vietnam Veteran lapel Pin. The III Corps and Fort Hood NCO of the Year, Sgt. Joshua Macias, and Soldier of the Year, Spc. Kole Vigilancia, were also honored.



Brig. Gen. Winston Brooks, right, deputy chief of staff for operations in NATO's Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, talks to a Polish soldier during exercise Dynamic Front 22 at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany. (U.S. ARMY/MARKUS RAUCHENBURGER)

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