



Rhode Island Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Matt Hayden and Sgt. 1st Class Edward Rose, members of the 115th Military Police Company, are completing their year of Operation Iraqi Freedom duty in Qatar. Photo by Army Master Sgt. Bob Haskell.



December 2003 - The guided missile frigate USS Stephen W. Groves (FFG 29) pulls into Panama City, Panama. Steven Groves is homeported in Pascagoula, Miss., and assigned to Commander, Destroyer Squadron Six. Groves is an Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate, and is one of four ships in the Atlantic Fleet that has the distinction of serving as a training platform for Naval Reservists. U.S. Navy photo by Lt j.g. Ken Shade.

“Our nation has called upon the reserves more in the global war on terrorism than any other time in our recent history.”

*Adm. Vern Clark
Chief of Naval Operations*

Editor’s Notebook:

In this issue, the focus is on training and education with articles from Navy Knowledge Online, the Naval Postgraduate School, the Information Resources Management College and the Navy General Library Program. The continuing learning programs and resources of these institutions sparked by the Revolution in Navy Training have been the catalysts for sweeping innovation in delivering training and education through online and traditional classroom formats. With so many course choices, so many learning sources to choose from, and so many convenient ways to take a course — there is no reason not to be the best you can be through continuing education.

By late spring, nearly 40 percent of the combat forces in Iraq and Afghanistan will be drawn from the reserves and National Guard. The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, an agency within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, was established to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers, and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee’s military commitment.

The ESGR educates the reserves and National Guard members through their 4,500 volunteers located in each state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Europe. Volunteers provide seminars to units and employers regarding the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and ESGR services, so that both employers and reservists will understand the reemployment rights of returning Guard and Reserve members. Volunteers also provide training at mobilization sites. For example, if there is a mobilization at Fort Dix or Fort Bragg, volunteers provide fact sheets and counseling on ESGR benefits. Training is also provided while Guard and Reserve members are in theater operations and again at demobilization upon request.

The ESGR has an Ombudsmen Services Program to assist reservists and Guard members. It provides information, counseling and informal mediation of issues relating to compliance with USERRA. I was introduced to the ESGR by a Virginia volunteer and wanted to find out more. Army Lt. Col. Bill Du Pont, Director of Marketing and Public Affairs for ESGR told me, *“We receive about 400 calls per month, out of that 400, 70 percent are requests for information and 25 percent require some form of informal mediation between the service member and the employer. Five percent of the calls are referred to the Department of Labor for resolution. The DOL is the actual enforcer of the law. In most cases, resolution is relatively simple because we find that employers may be misinformed regarding the law’s requirements.”*

Eighty-five percent of Total Force Military Sealift Command personnel are Naval Reservists and 50 percent of strategic airlift crews are found in the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Ninety-seven percent of Army civil affairs units and 100 percent of Marine Corps civil affairs units are in the Reserve. Additionally, three of the 11 Marine Corps infantry regiments are in the Reserve; 100 percent of the deployable port security units are in the Coast Guard Reserve. Lt. Col. Du Pont said, *“The Army National Guard and Reserve — and all our reserve forces are so important to our warfighting capability; we literally can’t go to war without them. Many of them have skills that do not exist in the active ranks, for example, our civil affairs people in theater, who coordinate with local authorities and people — they are instrumental in nation building. Ninety-seven percent of our current civil affairs people in theater are made up of mobilized Army National Guard and Reserve, with 85 percent making up the medical force and 66 percent making up the military police force.”*

For assistance, Lt. Col. Du Pont can be reached at william.dupont@osd.mil or 1-800-336-4590, ext. 540 or go to <http://www.esgr.org/>.

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Sharon Anderson