



19 April 2004



Personnel Policy and Our Changing Army

1. The Army at war is undergoing immense change as it transforms into a more expeditionary force. This transformation and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) require the Army to reallocate resources, redesign systems, and create entirely new tactics, techniques, and procedures. Significant Army-wide changes to personnel policies are required to create, foster, and enable necessary cultural change. All our Soldiers must be “riflemen” imbued with the Warrior Ethos, understanding that joint capability is more lethal and important than the Army alone. In moving to the future, the following will likely influence and characterize our force.

- Tomorrow’s force will use a stabilized, unit-centric manning policy. It will involve selected augmentation by individual replacements in certain areas to improve combat readiness.
- The number of PCS moves a Soldier makes will be reduced. Soldiers will enjoy periods of force stabilization at a Homebase. The Homebase / Advanced Assignment Program will change, and emphasis will be placed on stabilizing families (with the Soldier coming from and returning to a “home base” as needed) instead of moving the entire family unit to a new location.
- While the well-being of Soldiers will remain a vital focus, as always readiness to meet world missions will be our main concern. In the past, Soldier assignments were determined to a certain extent by individual preference, and Soldiers generally were notified of upcoming assignments 12 months in advance. In the future, Soldiers may have as little as 90 days’ advance notice of a deployment; however, the family could remain stabilized at the Soldiers’ Homebase.
- We will continue to see targeted reenlistment initiatives instead of an across-the-board retention-incentives program. These initiatives include bonuses and other changes, such as the recent retention control point (RCP) adjustment for staff sergeants, to keep experienced noncommissioned officers and support deployed forces.

2. Soldiers based in the continental United States are already beginning to see changes in the way the Army will operate. Soldiers in the Army in Europe must be aware of and prepared for these changes. Nonetheless and regardless of location of assignment, tomorrow’s Soldiers will need to be flexible, independent, innovative, multi-skilled, and comfortable with a high OPTEMPO.

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3. The future may bring several other changes designed to field and support a more expeditionary force. The changes being considered involve a wide range of initiatives, including pay incentives, assignment and retention options, and family programs.

- Unit stability will involve a home-based force with fewer PCS moves. Soldiers on short tours in overseas areas may be offered incentives to extend their tours. (We are already seeing this in Korea).
- New pay incentives may be offered to make deployments more attractive (for example, warrior pay may be provided for deployments, and could increase according to the length and frequency of deployments [similar to Navy sea pay]).
- Soldiers may be able to view and apply for available duty assignments through Army Knowledge Online (AKO).
- The personnel structure—from DA down to personnel detachment level—will likely be reorganized to enable greater visibility and coordination of the combat force.
- New policy will also likely be implemented to reduce the number of nondeployable Soldiers.
- The number of PCS moves for professional development courses may be reduced.
- Retention teams in the field may be augmented to better meet unit needs. These teams will work closely with Soldiers and commanders, and adjust retention programs according to unit requirements. Variable enlistment length (VEL) contracts may be expanded to support unit stability. This initiative would further reduce unit turbulence, increase cohesion, and ensure new Soldiers meet the 36-month “life-cycle” requirement of the unit.

4. Our Army is fighting a war, while reorganizing and transforming. Changes to personnel policy are needed to help us stay relevant and be ready. The changes mentioned in this message are not all-inclusive; more will follow as we integrate the lessons we learn during the transformation process and the GWOT. I will periodically update you on specifics of Personnel Policy Changes. In all this, Soldiers need to be ready for these changes and be prepared to adapt as we continue to accomplish Any Mission, Anywhere!



B. B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

