



NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE  
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD



13 March 2012

MC 0441/2 (Final)

**FINAL DECISION ON MC 0441/2**

**NATO FRAMEWORK POLICY ON RESERVES**

1. On 17 Feb 2012, the North Atlantic Council noted MC 0441/2. PO(2012)0040-AS1 refers.
2. This document supersedes MC 0441/1 (Final).

**FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bornemann'.

J. BORNEMANN  
Lieutenant General, DEUAR  
Director General  
International Military Staff

NOTE: This Final Decision Sheet shall now be attached to MC 0441/2 as the top sheet. Page numbering of the complete document when decision is attached is as follows:

MC 0441/2 (Final)	- Page 1
MC 0441/2 (Military Decision)	- 1 page
MC 0441/2	- 5 pages

Distribution As for basic document



NORTH ATLANTIC MILITARY COMMITTEE  
COMITE MILITAIRE DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD



19 January 2012

MC-441/2 (Military Decision)

SECRETARY GENERAL, NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

**MILITARY DECISION ON MC 441/2 – NATO FRAMEWORK POLICY ON RESERVES**

1. A request has been received from the NATO Reserve Forces Committee (NRFC) in combination with Confederation Interalliee des Officiers de Reserve (CIOR) for MC 441/1 to be revised in order to reflect the new strategic environment, to reflect the new NATO Strategic Concept, the new Political Guidance [C-M(2011)0022] and other relevant documents.
2. On 16 January 2012 the Military Committee (MC) approved the revised MC 441/2 which is submitted to Council for notation, a copy of which is attached at Enclosure 1.
3. Once noted by Council, MC 441/2 NATO Framework Policy on Reserves will supersede MC 441/1, 25 June 2001.
4. This document clears IMSWM-0099-2011.

**FOR THE MILITARY COMMITTEE:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Bornemann".

J. BORNEMANN  
Lieutenant General, DEUAR  
Director General  
International Military Staff

Enclosure:

1. MC 441/2 NATO Framework Policy on Reserves

Copy to SDL T

Action Officer: Col. J. Otta, P&P (5726)

ENCLOSURE 1 TO  
MC-441/2 (FINAL)

MC 0441/2

NATO FRAMEWORK POLICY ON RESERVES

# **NATO FRAMEWORK POLICY ON RESERVES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Reserve Forces consist of various categories of personnel coming from civilian life and not normally employed on full-time military service. Personnel may be Voluntary, Ex-Regular or Conscript. They may be assigned to organized units or serve as individuals supporting Regular units.

2. After the radical political changes at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) faces a complex security environment. As the global security environment now presents less definable threats, the spectrum of missions which NATO may face is more wide-ranging and challenging than ever. Economic challenges are also compounding this threat environment by simultaneously exacerbating operational problems whilst constraining Allied means of addressing them.

3. As many nations increasingly make use of professional soldiers in their Regular Forces, whilst simultaneously reducing them in size, the need for Reservists will be even greater. Reservist's skills and experience are universally considered to be of value to their Armed Forces.

4. The availability of Reserves, whether for NATO missions, national commitments or for their periodic training, depends heavily upon national policy, legislation and socio-economic factors; such as the encouragement and assistance of the family; the community and the employer, whose support and assistance are all vital.

## **AIM**

5. The aim of this document is to provide NATO with the policy framework for contribution of Reserve Forces to achieving NATO's objectives, including Force Development, Force Generation and Force Employment. This document promotes the value that Reserve Forces bring to NATO, and the measures needed to ensure that Reserve Forces are able to meet their potential. NATO recognizes the prerogative of individual nations in all these areas.

## **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

6. Changes within the strategic, political and economic environment have highlighted the requirement for a new and diverse array of defence capabilities to cope with an increasingly complex operational environment. Several Alliance nations have considerably reduced their Regular Forces, and are increasingly implementing professional units while reducing or removing their conscript systems. The unique capabilities available through modern Reserve Forces and skilled Reservists provide great opportunities for effective support or augmentation to Regular Forces. These changes could potentially help balance and improve the relationship between national populations and the Armed Forces, as well as facilitating unique capabilities in many

types of operations. It is logical therefore, that in filling the gap left by the contraction of Regular Forces, Reserves are now of more critical importance to NATO. There is a compelling requirement to better understand and exploit the inherent potential of Reservists and Reserve Forces, for example in the perspective of a Comprehensive Approach.

7. There are substantially differing national approaches to the structure, quantity, type, funding, availability, training, call-up and utilisation of Reserves. Their roles and potential employment flows directly from the strategic concept and particularly from the three essential core NATO tasks: Collective Defence, Crisis Management and Cooperative Security. With Allied forces requiring differing readiness and scales of augmentation, it has become more important that Reservists participate in scheduled individual and collective training and exercises in order to ensure that required quality is achieved in support of NATO operational ambitions. Effective integration and use of Reserve personnel and units should be aimed at enhancing the capability of the total force and to fit the spectrum of operations described in NATO Political Guidance and overarching MC documents.

## **CONCEPTS ON RESERVES**

8. NATO nations have different approaches to the structuring of their Armed Forces. Most NATO nations use Reserves as a part of their national military capability. The Reserve can be composed of various categories of personnel and/or units that are mobilised as required. The Reservist is any serviceman or servicewoman not normally on full-time service that may be called for temporary military activities. They may be volunteers, ex-regulars or conscripts. Based on national legislation and Reserve system, the Reservist may have an obligation to serve, or serve on a voluntary basis.

9. Reserves may be deployed with Regular Forces to a theatre of operations, and can be used either individually and/or collectively to undertake the duties of Regulars. National policy may be to back-fill Regular units with Reserve personnel or, in some cases, Reserve units may be back-filled with Regulars.

10. In addition to their military experience, Reservists can add value by virtue of both their civilian expertise and the relationships that they help NATO nations to establish between the military and the civilian communities. Many Reservists have specialized skills such as medicine, engineering, logistics, law, foreign languages and cultures, public relations, information management systems, governance and development that may be required in for example stabilization and reconstruction operations. At the same time, military service returns substantial benefits to the Reservist, and their employer may benefit from the considerable leadership, educational and training programmes provided to the Reservist while on duty, all of which are directly transferable to their civilian role and environment.

## **TRAINING AND READINESS**

11. In order for Reserve units or individual Reservists to deploy in support of national or NATO operations, it is important that they are trained and prepared to execute the military missions assigned to them. As a consequence, national training policy should seek to train Reserve personnel so that prior to operational deployment they are appropriately qualified for their mission.

12. Reservists should only replace active personnel or reinforce active units, and Reserve units should only replace or reinforce active units in NATO missions when they are able to achieve the required readiness states. Training programmes for individual and collective training that enable the Reserves to meet those readiness states remain a purely national responsibility.

13. National and NATO education or training programmes aimed at improving the individual and common skills of Regular military personnel should be accessible also to Reservists as determined by national regulations.

14. Nations should encourage Reservist participation in joint and combined (multinational) individual training and exercise opportunities by exchanging information on the availability of relevant training opportunities. Co-operation in individual and collective training is encouraged also with Partners, for example with nations participating in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme.

## **OPERATIONS**

15. NATO does not distinguish between Regular and Reserve forces or personnel since it is a national responsibility to provide capable and ready forces and individuals to NATO operations. Several NATO nations employ Reserves on national and combined missions along with Regular personnel. For personnel in deployed units or headquarters, the operational environment provides an invaluable school of experience for both Regular and Reserve personnel – there is no substitute for experience acquired in the field.

16. Reservists may fill national manning requirements at unit or headquarters level. Additionally, the specialised Reservist, whose qualifications may not be readily available in the regular units and staffs, may be of crucial importance to NATO, particularly in the context of missions the Alliance is likely to undertake in the future.

## **ADVISORY AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS ON RESERVE MATTERS**

17. The National Reserve Forces Committee (NRFC) is recognized under MC 392 and serves formally to provide policy advice on Reserve issues to the MC. The Committee comprises delegates representing member nations' Chiefs of Defence. Moreover, NRFC seeks to strengthen the preparedness of Reserve Forces and Reservists by providing a forum for exchange of best practices and lessons learned regarding all

relevant Reserve matters. The NRFC liaises with organizations and associations that have an interest in Reserve matters in order to maintain an awareness of their activities that may be of interest and support to Alliance Reserves.

18. The Confederation Interalliee des Officiers de Reserve (CIOR) is recognized under MC 248/1. CIOR is an independent confederation of National Reserve Officer Associations which advocates for and promotes capabilities and skills of Reserve Officers, and on request provides advice to the MC on Reservist matters based on the perspectives and experiences of National Reserve Officers Associations, while inspiring each member nation to develop its Reserve Forces.

19. It is in NATO's and nations' interest that NRFC, CIOR and other relevant organizations and associations contribute actively in securing the quality of Reserve Forces. It would benefit each organization to maintain situational awareness of the other's activities in order to identify areas of mutual interest and potential cooperation.

## **SUPPORTING THE RESERVES**

20. The availability of Reservists, whether for NATO or National missions or for their periodic training, depends on many important factors, such as political willingness, community encouragement, family and employer support. National legislation should seek not only to clarify issues regarding Reservists' status and obligations, rights, social and military benefits, but also to cover family support and civilian employment protection.

21. In particular, with the active backing of employers, whether national or multinational, Reservists are better able to meet their reporting and training objectives, and to focus on their contribution in missions.

22. Employer support programmes enhance civil-military co-ordination and cooperation. Nations are encouraged to develop employer support programmes tailored to their specific culture and needs. NATO authorities have the opportunity to play an important and active role in this respect, by representing the views of all the nations of the Alliance, at international level, whenever this may be required.

23. The Reservists' important mix of military and civilian skills is not only of substantial benefit to the Alliance in supporting NATO missions, but also to the Reservist, the community and his/her employer.