



Soldiers and airmen with the New York Air National Guard provide relief support to Long Beach, New York following severe damage caused by Hurricane Sandy, 2 November 2012.  
(U.S. Air Force / Senior Airman Christopher S. Muncy)

# Sustaining the Army National Guard as an Operational Force

Col. Thomas M. Zubik, U.S. Army Reserve,  
Col. Paul C. Hastings, U.S. Army National Guard, Retired, and  
Col. Michael J. Glisson, U.S. Army National Guard

*The most difficult military problem to resolve is that of establishing a security system, as inexpensively as possible in peace, capable of transforming itself very rapidly into a powerful force in case of the danger of aggression.*

—Gen. André Beaufre, *Strategy for Tomorrow*, 1974

**T**he Army National Guard (ARNG) rightfully champions its designation as an operational force. For 10 years the ARNG has continuously deployed operational units all over the world using the Army force generation (ARFORGEN) rotational

cycle. The desire, commitment, and personal sacrifice of soldiers and visionary senior leaders together with vast supplemental appropriations enabled unit readiness.

The ARNG has demonstrated its capabilities not only in the wars of the past decade but also during domestic crises such as Hurricane Katrina and Super Storm Sandy. The Nation expects the ARNG to maintain its readiness as an operational force. The ongoing readiness of the ARNG is a strategic objective of the Department of Defense.<sup>1</sup> However, in an era where dollars are in short supply, fulfilling this

objective will be tough—but not impossible. The ARNG can meet the Nation's expectations by implementing the right imperatives.

Because of the accelerating decline of fiscal resources, Army leaders are adjusting how they apply the ARFORGEN model—to avoid paying for surplus readiness.<sup>2</sup> Using a “flattened” rotational cycle, National Guard units can be funded to maintain a platoon-level training proficiency rating of T3 (the unit can accomplish 55 to 69 percent of its mission essential tasks) and a personnel readiness rating of P3 (70 to 79 percent of required strength).<sup>3</sup>

A U.S. Army soldier assigned to 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard, participates in a convoy operations exercise 1 January 2010 at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, Hattiesburg, Miss., in preparation for a scheduled deployment to Iraq.

(U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika)



Notably, ARNG units will find it difficult to obtain a higher level of readiness without adequate resources.

Throughout history nations have let their military forces deteriorate for various reasons, later realizing the magnitude of their errors. The infamous Task Force Smith—a poorly prepared and ineffective U.S. operation in South Korea in 1950—remains a prime example of the consequences of inadequate military preparedness.<sup>4</sup> Many contemporary leaders have understood the principles of readiness in pragmatic terms. Former Secretary of Defense



Donald Rumsfeld (interviewed by Ray Suarez, *News Hour*, PBS, 9 December 2004) famously stated, “You go to war with the Army you have. They’re not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time.” When conflict begins, military forces are not always ready. In World War II, the U.S. Army needed almost one year to prepare before it engaged the enemy in ground combat during Operation Torch in North Africa and two and a half years before it was ready to execute D-Day.<sup>5</sup>

In Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, five ARNG brigades were mobilized—three maneuver brigades and two field artillery brigades.<sup>6</sup> Why only the field artillery brigades made it to the field of battle is debatable. However, the fact is that when maneuver brigades first were needed, they were not ready.

In 2008, the Israeli Winograd Commission released a critical review of Israel’s 2006 Lebanon Campaign (sometimes known as the Hezbollah-Israeli War).<sup>7</sup> U.S. Army historian Matt Matthews reports that the commission’s analysis attributed the Israeli Army’s poor showing partly to inadequately trained and equipped reserves.<sup>8</sup> In the Hezbollah-Israeli War, the Israeli Army failed to degrade the operational effectiveness of Hezbollah. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert stated, “the war was a national catastrophe and Israel suffered a critical blow.” Considering the potential consequences, military units that are not operationally ready have no business being on the battlefield.

Flattening the ARFORGEN cycle will not, by itself, help the ARNG adapt to being an

*Col. Thomas Zubik is an infantry officer in the U.S. Army Reserve and a graduate of the Air War College. He holds a B.A. in speech communication from Eastern Illinois University and an M.S.W. from the University of Illinois. He served on operational deployments in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Afghanistan.*

*Col. Paul C. Hastings, U.S. Army National Guard, Retired, commanded the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Illinois Army National Guard. He has deployed to Europe, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He holds a B.A. from Texas A & M University and an M.A. in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.*

*Col. Michael J. Glisson, U.S. Army National Guard, currently commands the 65th Troop Command Brigade. He has deployed in support of Operation Noble Eagle and Operation Enduring Freedom. He holds a B.F.A. from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and an M.A. in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.*

operational force in financially austere times. To remain ready, the National Guard should commit to a new approach. This article presents four imperatives that will ensure every dollar invested adds up to ARNG readiness:

- ◆ Retain our combat-experienced soldiers and leaders to sustain their *war dividend*.
- ◆ Generate and sustain individual and unit readiness through expert training management.
- ◆ Forge partnerships at every level and strengthen relationships to gain economies of effort through collaboration and shared resources.
- ◆ Hone the professionalism of our soldiers and leaders to maintain the force's discipline and character over time.

## Retain Our Combat-Experienced Soldiers and Leaders

The ARNG currently enjoys a war dividend of combat experience gained by thousands of its soldiers over the past decade. However, collective combat experience will decrease as these veterans leave the force, and fewer deployments will mean fewer combat-experienced soldiers fill the ranks of the ARNG.

Most captains and nearly all lieutenants and junior noncommissioned officers in the ARNG joined after 9/11. These men and women are astute and resilient. Today's junior leaders are more capable than ever, and they operate with far more autonomy.<sup>9</sup> The ARNG can ill afford to lose them; they are our future first sergeants, battalion and brigade commanders, and command sergeants major.

These men and women have stayed in the ranks for the past decade mainly because of their patriotism and allegiance to our country after the 9/11 attacks. However, they are likely to find numerous reasons to leave the service. Operational tempo has remained high while personal and professional accolades have diminished. In spite of planned downsizing and a flattened ARFORGEN, the ARNG expects major commitments of time and energy from our men and women. Senior commanders need these young leaders to meet more requirements than ever. Our young leaders must be technical experts on equipment that senior leaders have never used. Add in the citizen-soldiers' challenge of maintaining balance between their families and civilian occupations, and continued service in the ARNG is more difficult than ever.

To help retain these soldiers, senior ARNG leaders must exercise focused mentorship of their subordinates. Senior leaders must be directly involved in supporting their subordinates' ARNG and civilian careers. They must understand all their subordinates as whole persons—taking a broad and inclusive approach to mentoring. Leaders need to consider not just what subordinates' next military assignments will be but also what they want to achieve in their civilian careers and personal lives. Leaders must acknowledge that priorities of ARNG soldiers change based on challenges at home, at work, and in the military. Senior leaders who use an inclusive approach will help soldiers achieve success and balance in their personal and professional obligations.<sup>10</sup> If these young men and women are not given encouragement, positive direction, and understanding, we could lose the best of this generation.

Junior leaders deserve a personalized career roadmap so they can anticipate future assignments and coordinate their military and civilian careers. Many of our junior leaders consider their deployments the most challenging and rewarding time in their military careers. The absence of mentorship may make them think those careers have culminated when their deployments end. It is no wonder many begin to look solely toward advancement in their civilian careers.

A formal career management program can help reduce an individual's career uncertainty. Each state should be able to track leaders as they move from assignment to assignment. A career management program should incorporate information about previous assignments, qualifications, and performance. This type of program can help identify and exploit what RAND Corporation analysts Barak A. Salmoni, Jessica Hart, Renny McPherson, and Aidan Kirby Winn call "opportunity space."<sup>11</sup>

Opportunity space can be created by providing broadening experiences through professional opportunities outside standard professional military education. Examples include National Guard Title 10 (referring to the United States Code) assignments, educational and congressional fellowships, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) teaching positions, term service with the U.S. Army Reserve, and Active Component positions in the combatant commands or the First U.S. Army. Commissioned and noncommissioned officers must know about these opportunities to learn and grow in the profession of arms.



The war dividend of leadership, knowledge, and capabilities is critical to the future of the ARNG. We must protect our investment in our junior leaders by guiding, encouraging, and affirming them as they proceed up the ranks.

### Generate and Sustain Individual and Unit Readiness

At a minimum, ARNG soldiers must be individually ready (for example, qualified in their military occupational specialty [MOS], physically fit, and able to be away from their family). Units must be proficient at platoon level and staffs must be proficient at all levels. For our squads and platoons, this means mastering the fundamentals. Can they operate as a team? Can they shoot, move, and communicate? For staffs, proficiency means being masters of planning processes such as design and the military decisionmaking process, orders production, and especially of information networks and systems that support mission command.

Meeting identified training objectives within a modified ARFORGEN cycle is crucial. Individual and unit readiness begin and end with the commander and depend on training. The commander is accountable for and must be the resident expert on training management. However, continuous deployments have limited opportunities for junior leaders to gain training management experience. Inexperienced commanders must learn to employ training methods for collective training events to mitigate the effects of fewer resources, fewer opportunities, and less combat experience.

First, the ARNG must acknowledge that requirements exceed training time available. Therefore, the ARNG and the state National Guards should prioritize training requirements and accept risk by waiving requirements that do not support the commander's unit status report—commanders prepare and submit unit status reports to document unit readiness, according to Army Regulation

U.S. Army soldiers assigned to Troop C, 1st Squadron 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard, participate in base defense operations and entry control point training, 4 January 2010.

(U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika)

Army Battlefield Command System	Manned (XX/XX)	Equipped (Y/N)	Commander's Training Status
Distributed Common Ground System – Army	XX/XX	Y/N	
Integrated Meteorological System	XX/XX	Y/N	
Command Post of the Future	XX/XX	Y/N	
Maneuver Control System	XX/XX	Y/N	
Digital Topographic Support System	XX/XX	Y/N	
Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System	XX/XX	Y/N	
Air and Missile Defense Workstation	XX/XX	Y/N	
Tactical Airspace Integration System	XX/XX	Y/N	
Blue Force Tracker	XX/XX	Y/N	
Battle Command Sustainment Support System	XX/XX	Y/N	
Battle Command Server	XX/XX	Y/N	
Integrated System Control	XX/XX	Y/N	
<b>Manned:</b> MOS Qualified (Assigned/Required)		<b>Trained:</b> Commander's Assessment	
<b>Equipped:</b> Equipment is on hand and functional (Yes/No)			

### Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) Army Battlefield Command System (ABCS) Status Chart Example

220-1, *Army Unit Status Reporting and Force Registration—Consolidated Policies* (2010). Business practices should reinforce the importance of using unit status reports for documenting strengths, capabilities, challenges, and opportunities. Commanders at all levels must apply full intellectual rigor in reviewing their subordinate commanders' reports. This review should ensure each commander's comments accurately depict a unit's training status—including items such as changes in equipment, training, or warfighting functions; improved proficiency in using information systems to support mission command; and results of completed collective training events. Unit leaders must

work relentlessly toward maintaining the standard of T3 readiness and accurately documenting the status of readiness in the unit status report.

National Guard commanders should prioritize training requirements based a unit's ARFORGEN force pool, the type of unit and its members' MOSs, and the available training time. The goal is to increase the net training time available for MOSs and unit collective training. State and brigade headquarters must train company commanders and first sergeants on effective training management skills, such as how to develop detailed training schedules, how to maximize the use of training aids, and how to plan for logistics that enable effective training.

Second, commanders and staffs must plan and prepare unit training that simulates real-world operations as closely as possible. Commanders must incorporate experiences and challenges faced in the counterinsurgency fight of the past 13 years into present-day unit training. This calls for innovative training events that use organic resources aimed at platoon and staff proficiency.

Besides developing proficiency in mission-essential tasks, a National Guard commander's responsibility includes ensuring each unit is prepared to conduct domestic operations. At any given time an ARNG unit may be tasked to provide support to civil authorities. Therefore, the commander's training emphasis must be balanced between the unit's mission-essential task list and domestic operational requirements.

Unit leaders and trainers must learn to use modeling and simulations so they can reduce costs, train faster, and increase proficiency.<sup>12</sup> The use of live, virtual, constructive, and gaming training enables commanders to conduct low-cost, multi-echelon events in complex operational environments while at home station.<sup>13</sup> Digital training through modeling and simulations allows commanders to train on exercising mission command while integrating all of the warfighting tactical systems in realistic combat situations. National Guard leaders at all levels must be able to employ training models and simulations that support decision making, course-of-action development, mission planning, rehearsals, and operations.

In addition, National Guard commanders must embrace distance learning (DL) as a cost-saving measure. Currently, access to DL is a significant challenge for many ARNG soldiers; the National Guard Bureau must continue to expand access to DL opportunities. Soldiers must realize that advancement opportunities depend on personal initiative that includes DL, and commanders must seek out ways to accommodate soldiers who are pursuing DL requirements.

Structured self-development is part of the Army's strategy to reinforce the Noncommissioned Officer Education System, but inadequate funding for individual qualification training will continue to limit opportunities. Regardless, commanders must remain committed to making MOS qualification and required professional military education a high priority. Soldiers

who attend a qualification school will not always receive funding to attend annual training during the same training year. Commanders must consider this when planning training, but they should allow soldiers to attend school programs to advance their careers.

In conjunction with the unit status report, the ARNG also should measure the readiness of a brigade's digital systems. The unit status report should provide senior commanders a snapshot of a unit's digital capability.

Commanders can assess capabilities using the standard *man, equip, and train* model. For manning, does the unit have 90 percent of the required MOSs for that section? For equipping, does the unit have all necessary equipment and is it functional? Finally, the unit commander can estimate how proficient the unit is with the equipment and how well it can support mission command. The figure (Status Chart Example) provides an example of one way an infantry brigade combat team could use a simple chart to represent an overview of the status of its digital systems.

Tracking the status of each brigade combat team's digital systems is crucial to maintaining the ARNG as an operational force. Individual commanders and the force as a whole need a standard approach to monitoring and reporting on digital capabilities. The ARNG has no standard quantitative or qualitative method for brigade commanders to track the status of *all* their digital systems in relation to overall readiness. The ARNG should host a planning conference with brigade-level commanders to determine the components that require measurement and tracking. Each brigade-level commander should brief the ARNG commander—or the aligned-for-training division commander—annually on the overall status of the brigade's digital systems. This practice will help ensure there is enough time to rectify readiness issues before they become critical.

True readiness can only be achieved through training that replicates real-world problems, stresses the mastery of mission command, exercises the expert application of lethal force, and reinforces standards and discipline. Innovative, resolute commanders who anticipate needs and become experts in training management—from planning training to writing unit status report comments—will help their units thrive in an era of fiscal austerity.

## Forge Partnerships at Every Level and Strengthen Relationships

The ARNG needs partnerships that will help it accomplish missions as an operational force. Effective partnerships are mutually beneficial partnerships. Partnering provides economies of effort through shared resources and expanded awareness through collaboration. This is especially important in the Guard's functions during domestic operations.

The top priority of the ARNG is the security and defense of our homeland. The Guard prides itself in its capability to cooperate with the joint force and with state and federal agencies to respond to domestic emergencies.<sup>14</sup> The ARNG needs to cultivate its relationships with all military, governmental, and civilian partners to carry out its responsibilities effectively. The Guard has singular capabilities for homeland security and the great responsibility of being the military's closest connection with the American public. ARNG leaders have the moral and professional obligation to develop subordinate leaders who understand and embrace their grass-roots responsibility as citizen-soldiers.

An example of the importance of partnering is the response to the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, when National Guard assets supported local, state, and federal efforts from the moments of detonation. Any national security event will demonstrate the same type of critical collective effort. However, partnering is just the beginning. As important, but much more challenging to understand and foster, is how these partnerships enhance our connection with the American people.

Internal partnering includes personnel reassignments between brigades and other major subordinate commands. These reassignments can be for a full tour of duty or only for two weeks during a mutually supporting training exercise. For example, sustainment brigades and forward support battalions exist within many states: one is operational, the other tactical. Assigning personnel from one to another as a broadening assignment benefits the soldiers, units, and the ARNG. Another opportunity would be having special forces personnel train alongside conventional units.<sup>15</sup> Special forces units can be incorporated into field training and staff exercises. Training events could be small or large, direct action, or humanitarian assistance, but in all cases they

would be mutually beneficial. Similar internal partnership possibilities are abundant across the ARNG and should be actively pursued.

External partnering can be categorized as training, support, and mission opportunities. Training partnerships include assignments to and support of the Air National Guard, the U.S. Army Reserve, ROTC, other services, and nonmilitary partners. Increasingly, ARNG units are sharing training facilities with the U.S. Army Reserve. Units in these shared-used facilities need to observe and participate in each other's training. This practice should be expanded upon at every opportunity, to increase efficiencies in cost, time, and performance.

Support partnering includes relationships with civilian, government, and community agencies. Interactions with organizations such as the United Services Organization (known as the USO), the Veterans Administration, and private foundations can be less formal and require relatively few resources. However, they provide great benefits, not just for deployed and redeploying soldiers but also in other areas the Department of Defense cannot serve. For example, in Illinois the prestigious Pritzker Military Library has cooperated with the Illinois ARNG on numerous historical and mutually beneficial projects. The states and territories all have organizations to record and enhance their history. Partnering with organizations such as these helps the Guard and the American people.

Mission partnering includes the Guard's vital State Partnership Program and deployments in support of combatant commanders' theater security cooperation efforts.<sup>16</sup> Participation in these opportunities is mutually beneficial. They increase unit readiness and also increase the capabilities available to combatant commanders by providing specialized civilian skill sets inherent in Guard units. The State Partnership Program, along with the other partnering programs, also provides those broadening opportunities so critical for professional development to sustain the war dividend.

## Hone the Professionalism of Our Soldiers and Leaders

Members of the profession of arms must exhibit a high level of personal character and professional competency. Any sustained lapse in the values, morals, and ethics of the profession will quickly erode America's



Spc. Cory Grogan - Oregon National Guard Public Affairs Office

A soldier from the Royal Army of Oman's 11th Brigade, Western Frontier Regiment, learns about a .50-caliber machine gun from U.S. soldiers at the Rubkut Training Range in Oman, 21 January 2012, during the first day of a two-week training exercise sponsored by U.S. Army Central. The Oregon National Guard's 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment and a platoon from the 125th Forward Support Company, 1st Battalion, 194th Field Artillery Regiment joined Omani soldiers to share knowledge and build diplomatic relations.

trust and confidence in the Guard. Therefore, the ARNG must make great efforts to hone professionalism within its ranks every day and at all levels of leadership.

A Gallup poll reports that as of 2013, Americans surveyed continue to have more confidence in the military than in other U.S. institutions.<sup>17</sup> However, time and again, serious breaches in conduct have damaged the total force's professional identity. Sexual assaults have dramatically increased.<sup>18</sup> In 2013 there were 5,061

reported sexual assaults in the Army.<sup>19</sup> This is especially troubling given that sexual assault is the most under-reported crime in the Nation; many believe it is much more so in the Army.

Even general officers have been found guilty of extramarital affairs, sexual misconduct, and the misuse of funds. If the standard-bearers of our professional values are failing, how can we expect our soldiers to want to remain in the service?

Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman's landmark book, *First Break All the Rules*, examines why people stay with organizations. Their main answer, after interviewing thousands, is that people stay with an organization because they have a great boss.<sup>20</sup> Leaders of excellent personal character make great bosses for many reasons. Among those reasons is that they do not abuse their subordinates or their positions.

We must prove that the force values leaders of character and enforces professional standards. If the behavior of Army leaders violates professional standards, they must be held accountable immediately. The punishment of senior leaders found guilty of misconduct should be severe enough to be a deterrent. The trials of convicted senior officers should be videotaped and publicly broadcast. A milquetoast response to criminal acts undermines the trust of the American people.

The obligation to maintain the professionalism in the ARNG falls on all Guard personnel, from the highest leaders to the grassroots. Units need more than an "awareness month" or policy statements pinned to orderly room bulletin boards to eliminate criminal and unprofessional actions. Every soldier must refuse to tolerate misconduct. The discussion of how to solve problems such as sexual harassment and assault cannot just take place within the inner courtyard of the Pentagon. Leaders must develop innovative strategies that inculcate professionalism across the ranks. Such strategies will not be effective if they are simply crammed into an already full training schedule as part of professional development. Time must be made to conduct training that is deliberate, thought provoking, and meaningful. Conducting lane training where ethical vignettes are woven into situation is a good start.

To hone professionalism in the ARNG, leaders must find the time to mentor subordinates. At brigade level and below in the ARNG, a mentoring challenge is

maintaining consistent contact with soldiers who are geographically dispersed across a state, without significantly increasing operational tempo. To meet this challenge, commanders and sergeant majors should consider using technological tools to mentor junior leaders. One technique is holding periodic telephone conference calls or using Defense Connect Online sessions to target specific audiences (e.g., company commanders, squad leaders, or medics). Participants at a typical meeting could discuss a preselected professional development topic, emailed along with supporting material in advance. Round-table discussion will increase lines of communication, foster a stronger relationship between the different levels of command, and expand professionalism.

Like it or not, the total force is under the public microscope, and even Congress is irked at what it

sees.<sup>21</sup> The good news is that this microscope can help us identify and understand issues that need prompt correction. We must not jeopardize our bond with the American people. We must continue to hone our professionalism each and every day.

## Summary

The ARNG must sustain its ability to serve as an operational force. It must do this by retaining combat-experienced soldiers and leaders, generating and sustaining individual and unit readiness through expert training management, forging partnerships at every level and strengthening relationships, and honing the professionalism of its soldiers and leaders. By addressing each of these imperatives, the ARNG will be able to achieve its strategic objectives. ■

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## Notes

1. See Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 1200.17, "Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force," (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 29 October 2008); and National Guard Bureau white paper, "Implementing the Army Force Generation Model in the Army National Guard," 2011, [https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Featured%20News/Attachments/ARFORGEN\\_Whitepaper\\_1AUG11.pdf](https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Featured%20News/Attachments/ARFORGEN_Whitepaper_1AUG11.pdf).

2. See U.S. Army, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2013*, submitted by John M. McHugh and Raymond T. Odierno to the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, 1st Session, 113th Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], May 2013), 5, <http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/302970.pdf>.

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8. Ibid.

9. Thomas Freidman and Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used To Be Us* (New York: Picador, 2012).

10. For more about mentorship, see Army National Guard Directorate, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, *The Army National Guard Leader Development Strategy*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 6 November 2012), 10, [www.ngbpd.cba.army.mil/default.htm](http://www.ngbpd.cba.army.mil/default.htm).

11. Barak A. Salmoni, Jessica Hart, Renny McPherson, and Aidan Kirby Winn, "Growing Strategic Leaders for Future Conflict," *Parameters*, 40(1)(2010): 83.

12. For a discussion of training imperatives, see Robert Cone, "Building the New Culture of Training," *Military Review* (Jan-Feb 2013): 15.

13. See U.S. Army, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2013*, 10.

14. See National Guard Bureau, 2011, *National Guard Posture Statement: Adding Value to America*, by Craig R. McKinley, (Arlington, Virginia: National Guard Bureau, 2011), <http://www.nation-arguard.mil/portals/31/Documents/PostureStatements/2011%20National%20Guard%20Bureau%20Posture%20Statement.pdf>.

15. See U.S. Army, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2013*, 10.

16. Ibid., 10.

17. Gallup, Inc. "Confidence in Institutions" poll, 23 June 2013, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/163055/confidence-institutions-2013-pdf.aspx>.

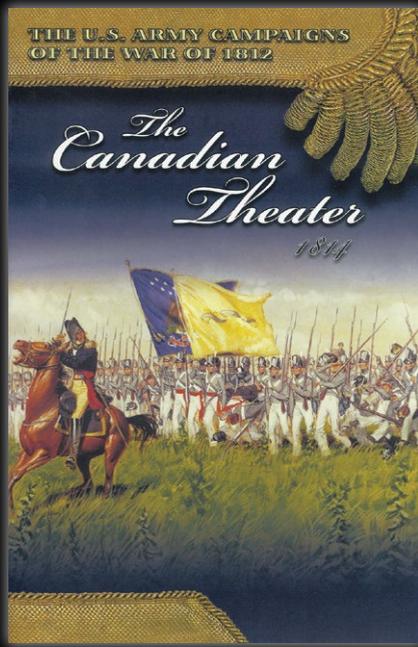
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## MR We Recommend



# The Canadian Theater, 1814

**Richard V. Barbuto, U.S. Army Center for Military History, Washington, D.C., 2014, 60 pages, \$8.00**

**T**he year 1814 would test whether the United States had learned enough from the disappointments of the past eighteen months to defeat the wave of British veterans that was about to reach North America. President Madison and his cabinet understood only too well that, if the United States was to win its war, victory would have to come quickly before the full might of Britain arrived on America's borders. To achieve

this end, the Army would need to be stronger. Congress attempted to expand the size of the Army by raising the enlistment bonus from \$40 to \$124 and by increasing the authorized strength to 62,500 men. It also augmented the numbers of regimental officers and noncommissioned officers to give regimental commanders more recruiters. Despite these measures, Army strength rose only to approximately forty thousand men by the time active campaigning began in 1814. This brochure covers a number of battles, including Oswego, Sandy Creek, Chippewa, and Lundy's Lane, among others. *From the publisher.*