Rightsizing the Army in Austere Times

Charles Hornick, Daniel Burkhart, and Dave Shunk

Abstract: Force reductions resulting from the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review significantly compromise the US Army's ability to maintain the global commitments and positioning necessary for managing strategic risks arising from multiple, unforeseen sources. In this article, the authors propose a return to 490,000 active-duty soldiers to reduce America's strategic risk.

During the upcoming decade, the United States will be challenged by a new strategic threat or worse, multiple strategic threats. How will the US Army respond if sequestration cuts continue? The near-future Army—for better or worse—will originate in this decade. The size and readiness of the near-future Army will offer one of two options, either reducing America's strategic risk or increasing it. So what would be the right size of the Army if we want to reduce America's strategic risk?

The results of 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) led to reducing the size of the Army to levels unseen since before World War II. Unfortunately, the current force reduction can only produce one result, the weakening of the joint force's ability to deter conflict, which accordingly increases America's strategic risk.

Since the publication of the 2014 QDR, numerous new threats have emerged to challenge the Army's reductions. Daesh captured large parts of Iraq and Syria. The Syrian Civil War escalated, causing a Middle East and European refugee crisis. Russia annexed Crimea, invaded Ukraine, and intervened alongside the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps to maintain the Assad regime in Syria. North Korea remained bellicose, testing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. China continued its territorial expansion in the South China Sea, and the Taliban continued to intensify offensive operations in Afghanistan. All of these events occurred in just the last several years; what might the next few years bring?

While acknowledging the indispensable roles of both the Army Reserve and Army National Guard as strategic reserves, their roles, missions, and sizing are beyond the scope and length of this article, which focuses on the size of the active duty Army. This discussion considers what the Army "brings to the fight" in relation to forward presence and deployable capabilities, the current and future demand on land forces, and examines two options for rightsizing the Army to reduce strategic risk. To set the stage for Army force sizing, we discuss the definition of strategic risk and five troubling assumptions about future war.

Strategic Risk

How does strategic risk relate to the size of the current and future US Army? Strategic risk is the probability of failure to achieve a strategic objective at an acceptable cost. The smaller the army, the higher the risk of failure to obtain a strategic objective at an acceptable cost.[1] Senior US Army leaders view today's Army at "high risk" in regards to the emerging threats and potential for future great-power conflict. High risk is the rating in which the Army would not be able to accomplish all its assigned tasks in the allotted time and level of casualties.[2]

Five Faulty Assumptions

While assessments of strategic risk, acceptable cost, and the size of the Army are complex, several false assumptions about future war and landpower have gained currency in defense circles. These assumptions increase national strategic risk by failing to appreciate Army capacity—capability with sufficient scale and endurance—as an essential element of national security. The risk is troubling because it threatens to consign the US military to a repetition of the mistakes of recent wars and the development of joint forces ill-prepared for future threats.

Forward-positioned land forces do not prevent conflict.

Deterrence depends on the demonstrated ability to prevent the enemy from accomplishing its objectives, and deterrence theory states deterring aggression is most likely to succeed when the potential aggressor believes the threats will be enacted.[3] Joint forces must operate with sufficient numbers and logistics to win, otherwise adversaries may become bolder and the effectiveness of forward deployed US Army forces to deter conflict, even with limited objectives, fails. The forward positioning of Army forces elevates the cost to an unacceptable level for the aggressor.

In 1990, some 213,000 soldiers assigned to US Army Europe contributed greatly to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) deterrence efforts and lowering strategic risk.[3] With the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, Army forces were reduced in Europe. In 2002, US Army Europe still offered a large, potent deterrent force that consisted of a corps headquarters, two heavy divisions, six combat brigades, and their supporting forces totaling about 70,000 troops.[4] Since 2008, US Army Europe has been cut to one Stryker brigade combat team and one light infantry brigade totaling 28,000 troops. This substantial reduction in US Army posture in Europe has resulted in increased strategic risk with regard to the ability of the United States and its allies to deter and to help US allies resist Russian aggression.

---

1 James F. Holcomb, "Managing Strategic Risk," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, July 2004), 119.

2 James D. Fearon, "Selection Effects and Deterrence," *International Interactions* 28, no. 1 (2002): 6, doi:10.1080/03050620210390.

3 At the time, US Army Europe divisions included the 1st Armored Division, 3rd Brigade 2nd Armored Division, and the 3rd Armored Division, as well as the 1st, 3rd, and 8th Infantry Divisions (Mech), and the 2nd and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiments. See Vincent H. Demma, "Force Structure," chap. 7 in *Department of the Army Historical Summary, Fiscal Year 1989* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 1988), 64.

4 Timothy M. Bonds, Michael Johnson, and Paul S. Steinberg, *Limiting Regret, Building the Army We Will Need* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015), 9.

If deterring threats from offshore or across extended distance fails, retaliation or reaction can be insufficient because adversaries achieve rapid, low-cost objectives prior to US or allied response. Deterrence in Europe during the Cold War depended, in large measure, on the effects of a globally responsive and forward positioned joint force that included land forces capable of operating in sufficient size. Today the Army grapples with how to return to Europe to counter the latest Russian efforts in the Ukraine and to protect the Baltic nations.

The Army can rapidly generate required ground forces.

Generating ground forces for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) from 2001 to 2010 proved to be an extraordinarily difficult, long, and costly endeavor.[5] Different from the Army of the 1940s to 1960s, the all-volunteer Army of today and tomorrow requires personnel operating sophisticated modern weapons and communications equipment in complex missions, which in turn requires substantial and extended training, focused education, and established unit cohesion that takes years to build and to refine. One such example of this lesson drawn from OEF and OIF is that building an armor brigade combat team required a minimum of 32 months.[6]

Force structure decisions made in fiscally constrained environments today may be impossible to augment in a timely manner if they are based on flawed strategic assumptions. Decision-makers must maintain enough military power to handle all contingencies, even those involving major ground forces.

Future conflicts will not require significant landpower.

Many defense professionals significantly underestimated the ground force requirement for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq after September 11, 2001. Historically, landpower has been required to resolve a wide range of crises. Nothing indicates the pattern will change in this decade or the next. All major US operations—World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in Iraq—demonstrated significant ground forces are required not only to conduct major combat operations but also to consolidate gains and to sustain favorable outcomes. A total Army force of 297,000 personnel was deployed to Southwest Asia during Desert Storm. The main attacking force, VII Corps, included the 1st Armored Division, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, 3rd Armored Division, 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), 2nd Armored Division (Forward), 1st Cavalry Division (Detached), 2nd Cavalry Regiment, 11th Aviation Brigade, and four brigades of the VII Corps Artillery.[7] If the drawdown continues, the loss of capability to produce another contingency response on this level will increase strategic risk. Significant land forces will be required to win or engage in great power conflicts.

---

5 Bonds, Johnson, and Steinberg, "Limiting Regret," 16.

6 "Army Structure Memorandum—October 2015," Global Security, April 4, 2016, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/army/asm-2015.htm.

7 *Final Report to Congress: Conduct of the Persian Gulf War* (unofficial), April 1992, 285.

Enemy forces can be defeated through precision strikes or raids.

Human will and political aspects of war require landpower to achieve victory and sustainable outcomes. The enemy's will to fight is ultimately broken on the ground. Many thought that the March–August 2011 air campaign against Libya, for example, would yield far better political results than the chaotic situation in that country today. The campaign applied airpower to support indigenous forces, as in Afghanistan, while accepting continued turmoil in the country and the proliferation of weapons in the region as acceptable risks or outcomes too difficult or expensive to prevent with our own ground commitment.

Allies and partners can provide capable land forces.

Although advising and assisting other armies will continue to be an important mission, partners often lack the will or the capability to fight consistently for US interests; for example, in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2009, our allies planned troop reductions even as the Taliban gained control of territory and populations. Another significant factor is the landpower reductions of our longtime European allies. The French army has been reduced to less than 135,000 soldiers and the British army is even smaller; therefore, reliance on traditional allies to augment US landpower or advance American interests appears to be rapidly disappearing.

In future conflicts, strategic objectives may be of lesser value to coalition partners and indigenous allies than they are to the United States. Consequently, other nations may be less willing to contribute the land forces that future missions require; ergo US leadership may have to demonstrate commitment through the deployment of land forces to move others to action, which was clearly the case in Desert Storm and Desert Shield. Our ability to help others in a region solve their own problems will often be contingent on our ability and willingness to deploy landpower. Though ground commitments are often costly, an early deployment of sizeable, professional, American land forces can control a situation before it spirals out of control as well as preserve our interests and allow others to take over long-term constabulary roles. The key question for American decision-makers is how much chaos are they willing to accept in the world, and where. If stability in a tumultuous region is deemed vital to our national interest, it will not be achieved with long-range strikes.

The 490,000 Army

An Army of 490,000 troops is a powerful force that is partly committed, partly deployable, and partly a generating force. The following section discusses what this force can and cannot do for current and future missions based on capacity, capabilities, and strategic risk.

Forward Deployed—186,000 Soldiers

The Army currently has 186,000 soldiers (38 percent of the total force) meeting global commitments and reducing strategic risk in more

than 140 countries.[8] In the European Theater of Operations, a rotational force of over 2,800 soldiers will augment approximately 30,000 soldiers in the mission of reducing strategic risk through forward presence and deterrence by 2017.[9] These forces assure allies of our continued NATO commitment and counter Russian operations that include the use of conventional and unconventional military capabilities to assert power and accomplish objectives below the normal threshold of war. In Asia, 80,000 soldiers support US Pacific Command, including 16,412 soldiers on the Korean peninsula who are critical to deterring North Korea—a dangerous and unpredictable nation that is expanding its nuclear arsenal and improving its ballistic missile force to complement a large conventional force.[10]

In addition to deterrence, soldiers deployed throughout the world lower strategic risk with other missions such as building relationships based on common interests, ensuring interoperability, and developing an enhanced understanding of the environment. These activities not only reduce threats of transnational terrorism and organized crime but also instill and reinforce leadership and civil-military relations norms with our partners.

Since armies are the dominant service in most allied and partner nations, combatant commanders—field commanders responsible to the president and secretary of defense for achieving national security objectives—look to the US Army to execute security force assistance and theater security cooperation activities. In fiscal year 2013 alone, the Army conducted nearly 6,000 security cooperation events.[11] US presence conveys a guarantee to support our allies if they are threatened and significantly diminishes concerns about regional security competition and armed conflict.

Forward-positioned and rotational Army forces not only demonstrate US resolve, they also provide unique land force capabilities to the joint force. As the executive agent for 42 other Department of Defense components, the Army supplies critical communications, intelligence, rotary wing aviation, theater missile defense, logistics, and engineering capabilities and support equal to all the other assigned component agents combined. The secretary of defense and combatant commanders rely on these irreplaceable Army capabilities; for example, highly deployable Patriot missile units that assure allies, deter adversaries, and represent a key component of regional defense plans. In 2016, over 50 percent of the Army's air and missile defense force was either forward assigned or

8 *Current State of Readiness of the U.S. Forces in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, Before the US Senate Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support*, 114th Cong. 1 (March 15, 2016) (statement of General Daniel Allyn, Vice Chief of Staff, US Army).

9 Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, Headquarters, "US Army Europe by the Numbers," US Army Europe, October 3, 2014, http://www.eur.army.mil/pdf/USAREURBytheNumbers.pdf.

10 Ibid.

11 Colonel John Evans, *Getting It Right: Determining the Optimal Active Component End Strength of the All-Volunteer Army to Meet the Demands of the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, June 2015), 14.

deployed.[12] This high percentage demonstrates the growing demand for these and other Army capabilities.

The 186,000 forces that are committed are proving the difficulty of disengaging forces once soldiers are committed to a national security mission. At the height of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, Army forces remained committed in Europe, Korea, the Balkans, the Sinai Peninsula, Japan, and the Philippines, as well as Central, North, and South America. The size of the Army, therefore, must not only allow our nation to sustain committed forces but also expand for unexpected operations.

Deployable—148,000 Soldiers

Combatant commanders require land forces prepared to respond globally; the Army currently has a deployable force of 148,000 soldiers (30 percent of the total force) that plays this pivotal role in joint force operations.[13] Although long-range strike and offshore capabilities will remain important to joint force deterrence, deployable land forces will be critical to joint force planning and operations if deterrence fails. The demands on rotational forces affect the active Army because, in essence, three rotational land forces must be maintained in sufficient scale and capability to meet current and future commitments, to operate for the duration of war plans, to respond to unfolding contingency missions, and to allow units to refit at a home station.[14]

Generating Force—156,000 Soldiers

Trainers, educators, and students primarily compose the generating force of 156,000 soldiers (32 percent of the total force) whose capacity ensures the readiness of Army forces to sustain commitments overseas as well as expand forces to win in combat, respond to crises, and fulfill combatant command commitments. One of the most important roles for the 93,000 person training force, training and leader development, provides the foundation for today's all-volunteer professional Army and maintains the Army's competitive advantage over future enemies.[15] Members of other services, our allies, and international military partners are trained and educated with the remaining 63,000 soldiers in the generating force; for example, all US Marine Corps tankers and field artillerymen complete Army training.[16]

Because the size of the generating force, as well as the entire active duty Army, has a critical effect on the Army's ability to mobilize and expand in wartime, reductions in the generating force directly impact intervention and expansion capacity risks. These factors in turn impact

---

12 *Ballistic Missile Defense Programs in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program Hearings, Before the US Senate Committee on Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee*, 114th Cong. 16 (April 13, 2016) (statement of LTG David L. Mann, Commanding General of the US Army Space and Missile Defense Command).

13 Bonds, Johnson, and Steinberg, "Limiting Regret," 4.

14 The US Army currently rotates soldiers on a 1:2 deployment ratio, which equates to a nine-month deployment followed by 18 months at a home station. This ratio requires a rotational force of 120,000 troops to keep 40,000 troops deployed in the field—40,000 conducting operations, 40,000 returning from operations, and 40,000 preparing to conduct operations. Decisions on Army capacity, therefore, must consider what it takes to sustain these commitments and readiness over time.

15 Evans, "Getting It Right," 16.

16 The training pipeline includes trainees, transients, holdees, and students (TTHS). See Bonds, Johnson, and Steinberg, "Limiting Regret," 4.

the joint force's ability to deter conflict, lower strategic risk, and fight and win against increasingly capable enemies when required.

Increasing Demand, Historical and Future

In predicting the Army's future size, planners have never correctly forecast the character or scale of anticipated conflicts nor the demands of other missions. Across the last three decades, US leaders committed land forces to at least 50 named operations, many with little or no notice, which included a wide range of missions:

- Invasions to defeat enemy militaries and unseat hostile regimes in Panama (1989), Haiti (1994), Afghanistan (2001), and Iraq (2003)
- Humanitarian interventions in Bosnia (1993), Somalia (1993), and Kosovo (1999)
- Response to natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina (2005), the Haiti earthquake (2010), and Superstorm Sandy (2012)
- Restoration of the territorial integrity of an occupied nation (Operation Desert Storm 1991)

Additionally, between September 2001 and December 2012, the Army provided 1.65 million cumulative troop-years to overseas operations in support of OEF and OIF, more than the other services combined.[17] Those conflicts, which were not large by historical standards, stressed the Army's ability to meet commitments and demonstrated that landpower requires forces for both quick response and long-lasting operations. With this requirement in mind and the plan to cut personnel to 450,000 soldiers, the joint force will be unable to surge forces to fight another Operation Desert Shield or conduct operations on the scale of Operation Desert Storm without accepting significant risk in other theaters.

Since World War II, history reveals the need to retain not only the ability to intervene with land forces at the outset of a conflict but to also expand forces to sustain efforts. Both capabilities are critical to retaining the initiative over determined enemies and during the consolidation period that follows. Post-World War II reductions saw the Army go from eight million soldiers and 89 divisions in 1945 to 591,000 soldiers and 10 divisions by 1950—a 93 percent reduction in manpower over five years.[18] This drastic reduction was based on the pre-Korean War theory that the offset capability of atomic weapons would prevent a large-scale land conflict. Yet, after North Korea's invasion of South Korea in June 1950, the 8th Army in Korea grew by over 300,000 personnel. Many US units were unprepared for the demands of combat and casualties were high.[19] The situation grew so grim at one point that it was not clear if South Korea could keep its toehold on the peninsula.

Despite this record, the United States continued to undervalue the need for ready land forces in interwar years. Since the Korean War, the

---

17 Caolionn O'Connell, Jennie W. Wenger, and Michael L. Hansen, *Measuring and Retaining the U.S. Army's Deployment Experience* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014), 1.

18 Andrew Feickert, *Army Drawdown and Restructuring: Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, January 3, 2013), 5.

19 Donald W. Boose, *US Army Forces in the Korean War 1950–53* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2005), 5.

complexity of weapon systems and combined arms operations have hindered the rapid generation of forces and increased the risk to soldiers who were required to fight without proper training or skilled leaders. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 demonstrates how quickly a major problem cannot be solved by anything other than a significant ground force. Moreover, an overview of the VII Corps Desert Storm battle plan illustrates the complexity of weapons, combined arms, and leadership used during the conflict.

The ground campaign plan envisioned a main attack against the Iraqi Army's right flank by armor-heavy forces to attack one of Saddam Hussein's centers of gravity—the Republican Guard armored and mechanized divisions. Crucial factors in the success of the ground campaign were overwhelming combat power, rapid maneuver, deception, a sound combined arms approach, a well-trained, highly motivated body of troops, and a skilled team of combat leaders.[20] This action would not have been possible if the Army needed 32 months to create an armor brigade combat team or additional units for a long-term response.

Our most recent military experience highlights the need for the US government to maintain ready joint forces capable of operating in sufficient scale and duration to accomplish its missions. Prior to September 2001, the Department of Defense planned significant reductions in the Army, erroneously believing that the next war would be fought mainly with long-range precision weapons. This error had consequences.

During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the active Army grew from 476,289 to 570,000 soldiers. The US Army's requirement to sustain other NATO commitments overseas in areas such as Europe, Japan, and Korea; remain prepared for unforeseen contingencies; and sustain an Army capable of manning, training, and equipping the force compounded the challenge of this extraordinarily difficult expansion.

Demands on the Army's capabilities are increasing. Strategic risk is not declining. With the rise of multiple near-peer adversaries and regional hegemons, a smaller Army may only encourage adventurism. Recent world events have invalidated the force reduction plans of only three years ago, resulting in the demand for land forces to increase, not decrease as postulated. Since the 2013 Department of Defense Strategic Choices and Management Review and the National Defense Panel review calling for Army force reductions the world chose another path. Instead of a peaceful Europe, a diminishing commitment in Afghanistan, and no US forces returning to Iraq, the world went into unforeseen conflict. Russia invaded Crimea and Ukraine, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant established a protostate in Syria and Iraq, Yemen collapsed, and the security environment in Africa and the Middle East worsened.

Instead of drawing down the 7,200 Army forces in Afghanistan in 2017 as originally planned, they will be maintained. Over 5,000 soldiers are now in Kuwait and Iraq to sustain the campaign against the Islamic State.[21] Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter announced on July

---

20 *Final Report to Congress*, 123.

21 Jon Harper, "1,000 Soldiers from 82nd Airborne Headed to Iraq," *Stars and Stripes*, December 19, 2014; David Burge, "3rd Brigade from Fort Bliss to Deploy," *Army Times*, March 15, 2016; and Kristina Wong, "Army Sending 450 Troops to Kuwait in Fight Against ISIS," *The Hill*, August 5, 2015.

11, 2016 that an additional 560 troops will deploy to Iraq.[22] Discussions to increase Army forces in Europe by the addition of another rotational or permanent brigade are ongoing, and the Army is seeking to expand the Pacific Pathways mission for the Guard and Reserve.[23]

These increasing commitments overseas and reductions in the size of the Army have significantly decreased the pool of land forces available to decision-makers, in turn limiting options and increasing strategic risk. Because the location, scale, and duration of future conflicts are impossible to predict, calculating intervention and expansion capacity requires intellectual rigor, outstanding judgment, and humility about how much we know.

The one undeniable pattern for the future is that crises will materialize quickly, blindside the best defense forecasters, and demand a land-force response. Analysis informed by studies of emerging threats, joint force mission possibilities, historical insights, and the technological impacts on the character of future war all lead to the conclusion that mounting strategic risk is associated with reduced Army capacity. Accordingly, what options are available for limiting our strategic risk?

Rightsizing the Army

Like the defense planners, Army leadership is working toward informed decisions about rightsizing the Army. Recently, senior Army leaders found that operating under current National Security Strategy and defense planning guidance, an approximately 1.2 million person Army would be necessary to reduce significant risk.

As a short-term option, policymakers could stop the drawdown at the current force level, 490,000 soldiers, until existing strategic threats are fully analyzed and addressed. In the short term, the overseas contingency operations funding could be used until a permanent funding option is obtained.[24] While the Army's analysis to determine the optimum increase for the future is ongoing, at 490,000 troops the Army is potentially headed toward dangerously low levels of capabilities and will have difficulty meeting foreseeable challenges. Experience suggests the most obvious threats are not always the most likely. Precisely because planning occurs for foreseeable threats, we have an even smaller margin available to meet unforeseeable challenges; these may be more demanding and become much more problematic with a one campaign Army.[25]

Conclusion

Even the deep force cuts that reduced Army forces from 572,000 to 479,000 by the end of the Clinton administration as a result of the Bottom-Up Review in 1993 were less than current proposals.[26] The Soviet Union had collapsed, terrorist threats to the homeland were not

---

22 Michael S. Schmidt and Mark Landler, "U.S. Will Deploy 560 More Troops to Iraq to Help Retake Mosul from ISIS," *New York Times*, July 11, 2016.

23 Andrew Tilghman, "More U.S. Troops Deploying to Europe in 2017," Military Times, February 2, 2016.

24 Bonds, Johnson, and Steinberg, "Limiting Regret," 19.

25 Ibid.

26 US Department of Defense (DoD), *Report on the Bottom-Up Review* (Washington, DC: DoD, 1993).

apparent, and North Korea did not have nuclear weapons; therefore, the cuts seemed reasonable. In our increasingly interconnected world, however, Army forces must be prepared to respond to both overseas contingencies and threats to the homeland. Accordingly, the Army must develop and sustain ready forces capable of defeating our enemies and accomplishing missions under all conditions of combat. To accomplish assigned missions while confronting increasingly dangerous threats in complex operational environments, some military experts argue that the Army must possess both capability and capacity, which would require a force increase by well over 100,000 soldiers. Although further internal assessment is essential, wide-ranging external analysis supports this position.[27]

As leaders consider the appropriate size of America's land forces, they should understand the challenges of today's increasingly dangerous and rapidly changing security environment require greater landpower capacity. This point is underscored by the Army's current commitments and foundational role within the Joint Force, the value of surge capacity, and the investment required to generate, mobilize, and expand Army forces. Likewise, widely held, yet flawed, assumptions that mask risks associated with a smaller Army should be discarded. A capable Army of sufficient capacity is a prudent investment to protect our nation's interests, to defend our homeland, and to mitigate risk.

Charles Hornick

LTC Charles Hornick is an Army strategist (FA-59) serving as the special assistant to the UK Army's chief of the general staff in Andover, England. He holds a master of arts in international affairs from the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University.

Daniel Burkhart

MAJ Daniel Burkhart, is an Army strategist (FA-59). His operational experience includes deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to graduating from the Basic Strategic Art Program at the US Army War College, Burkhart holds a bachelor's degree from the United States Military Academy and a master's degree from Hawaii Pacific University.

Dave Shunk

COL Dave Shunk (USAF Ret.) is a Department of the Army civilian. He is a former B-52G pilot and Desert Storm combat veteran whose last military assignment was as the B-2 vice wing commander of the 509th Bomb Wing, Whitman Air Force Base, Missouri. Shunk has a master of arts in military art and science from the Army Command & General Staff College and a master of science in national security strategy from the National War College.

27 Dakota L Wood, ed., *2016 Index of U.S. Military Strength: Assessing America's Ability to Provide for the Common Defense* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2015).