



MG Ansel M. Stroud Jr., President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THE DIFFICULTY OF DEALING WITH RETIREMENT ISSUES

Retirement benefits have become substantial incentives for National Guard service. Therefore, they have been jealously guarded and fiercely protected. The NGAUS has been in the vanguard of the protectors.

In the post-World War II years, the NGAUS General Conference frequently has been presented with resolutions seeking two improvements in Guard and Reserve retirement. One sought to lower the age for collecting title III retirement from 60 to 55 years old. The other sought to lift the "60-point ceiling," that provision of title III that limits the number of inactive duty for training (IDT) retirement points to 60 per year.

Since about 1975 however, the sentiment in Congress has been against making any improvements in military retirement. The trend has been all the other way, with our active component colleagues having suffered several reductions in retirement benefits. In the main, we in the Guard and Reserve have not suffered similarly.

Until the 1980s, the main pressure for lowering the title III retirement age to 55 came from our military technician officers. These officers, many of them forced to separate from the Guard after 28 years commissioned service and short of age 55, experienced reductions in their Civil Service retirement. Those reductions came to 2 percent for every year they were less than age 55. For the Guard officer in the excepted Civil Service (military technician), there usually is no choice but early retirement. He is out of the Guard upon completion of 28 years commissioned service unless promoted to full colonel, which many cannot be for lack of a unit vacancy. While it is possible to request a waiver from mandatory removal, these waivers infrequently are given.

Lack of support also generally involves uncertainties about the cost of

lowering the retirement age to 55, due to the lack of statistics about life expectancy and the numbers of eligibles; the cost effect on the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP); and the number of Guardsmen who would accrue points beyond 63 (yes 63).

As the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) program has gained in strength, the problems associated with the attritive provisions of the Reserve Officer Personnel Act (ROPA) for time in grade

The NGAUS will be reviewing and working the 6th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation recommendations on National Guard retirement in 1988.

are lessening. AGR officers may retire after 20 years active duty under title II with 50 percent of base pay. Many can and do—short of age 55.

The age-60 retirement date is a less critical factor for the drilling Guardsman because he generally will not be retired from his civilian job before then, so he has no particular need for or expectation of receiving retired pay earlier.

The question of the 60-point ceiling is rather different. For one thing, it affects everyone. Every drilling Guardsman, who performs all the training required by statute, loses a minimum of three retirement points a year because he earns 63 such points merely by attending 48 drill periods and receiving his automatic 15 points for being a member of a troop unit. For flight crew members, the situation

is far worse. Some perform up to 48 additional flight training periods (AFTP), but receive no retirement credit for them whatsoever.

Officers and senior NCOs who pursue their military education through the U.S. Army Reserve School System are similarly penalized. They may attend up to 24 evenings of classes in such courses as Command and General Staff College, but receive no retirement points.

A third category of unrecognized retirement points is that group of commanders, staff officers and senior NCOs who regularly perform additional training assemblies (ATA) for training preparation and readiness management assemblies (RMA) for similar purposes.

In the past, one of the reasons why repeal of the 60-point ceiling never advanced past the bill-drafting stage was the uncertainty about its cost. This factor is coming close to a solution with the advances in computerization of finance and accounting records and retirement entitlements.

The 6th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (6QRMC) is looking at the points system and other retirement benefits. Its report is expected this month. Its recommendations will guide the legislative direction of DoD in the second session of the 100th Congress.

The resolution adopted by our NGAUS General Conference in Portland does not tie us to any particular proposal. Rather, it suggests that some relief from the 60-point ceiling is badly needed as a matter of equity.

Loss of retirement points affects all members. Equitable computation becomes more important as changes in the retirement system are considered. The NGAUS will be reviewing the 6QRMC recommendations and working this issue in 1988.

National Guard

NATIONAL GUARD

NOVEMBER 1987 Volume XLI, Number 11

FEATURES

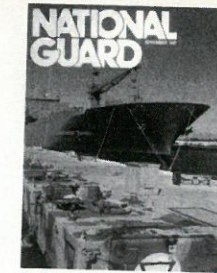
TEAM SPIRIT Envelops 40th Division 16
The 40th Infantry Division returned to the Republic of Korea to join arms with our allies for TEAM SPIRIT '87. A battalion task force displayed the infantry techniques required of soldiers before the 2d Infantry Division and the Korean army.

The Godsend of the Air National Guard 20
Prime Beef teams routinely deploy to Palmerola Air Base, Honduras, to make quality of life improvements and continue base build-up on a joint Honduran and U.S. airfield. The Prime Beef team from the 172d Civil Engineer Squadron, Mississippi Air Guard, was a welcomed sight.

A Road that Joins Two Nations 24
BLAZING TRAILS is moving into its final year after the 108th Support Battalion, Illinois Army National Guard, completed a successful deployment to the northern mountains of Honduras. The 108th supported the Army Reserve combat engineers while they built a road.

ABRIENDO RUTAS Opens Roads for Ecuador 28
Army National Guard engineers and support personnel from throughout the nation paved the way in the first year of building a road in central Ecuador. Heavy rains and mud-laden terrain made the task almost impossible. But not a single Guardsman would trade the experience for any money in the world.

East-West Border: Why We Serve NATO 36
After being assigned the 280th Signal Battalion commander, LTC Reid K. Beveridge went to Germany for two weeks for a battle book exercise. It was there that he and five of his soldiers visited "The Wall" and reported back the reason why the National Guard frequently deploys to Europe for training exercises.



COVER:

The National Guard assumed a world training mission once it was accepted in the Total Force. Overseas deployments are standard fare these days when it comes to training requirements for the Army and Air National Guard. Photo, MSG Cliff Ellison. Design, Johnson Design Group.

DEPARTMENTS

President's Message	2
Washington Tie-Line	4
Views from the Field	6
Membership List	7
Capital Focus	8
Newsbreaks	12
Guard Stars	15
People	44
Posting	50
Publisher's Notebook	54

PUBLICATION STAFF

MG Bruce Jacobs (ret.) <i>Publisher</i>
LTC Reid K. Beveridge <i>Editor</i>
1LT Pamela A. Kane <i>Managing Editor</i>
Capt Jean Marie Brawdgers <i>Assistant Editor</i>
Belinda Reilly <i>News Editor</i>
John E. Bibb <i>Business Manager</i>
Don DesJardins <i>Circulation Manager</i>

NATIONAL GUARD, November 1987. The NATIONAL GUARD Magazine (ISSN 0163-3945) is published monthly, by the National Guard Association of the United States, with editorial and advertising offices at One Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. Telephone (202) 789-0031. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1987 by the National Guard Association of the U.S. All rights reserved. All members of the NGAUS receive NATIONAL GUARD. Nonmember subscriptions: \$10 per year. The Editor welcomes original articles bearing on national defense, with emphasis on application to or implications for the National Guard. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to NATIONAL GUARD, One Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.