THE DIFFICULTY OF DEALING WITH RETIREMENT ISSUES

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

In the post-WWII era, the
NGAUS General Conference fre-
quently met to consider resolu-
tions seeking two improve-
ments in Guard and Reserve retire-
ment. 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
infectious duty for training (IDT) retire-
ment 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, the NGAUS and the
Guard and Reserve have not supported
this.

Until the 1980s, the main
pressure for lowering title III retirement age to 55 came from our military tech-
nicians. These officers, many of
them in their 20s and 30s, were
about to separate from the
Guard after 28 years commissioned
service and short of age 55, experi-
enced 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 Army National Guard, Photo, there
is usually no choice but early retire-
ment. The Guard officer is out of
the Guard upon completion of 28 years commissioned service unless pro-
moted to a different one, which many
cannot be for lack of a retirement
waiver. While it is possible to request a waiver from command, these waivers in-
frequently are given.

Lack of support also generally in-
volves uncertainties about the cost of
lowering the retirement age to 55, due
to the lack of statistics about life ex-
pectancy and the number of eligi-
bles, the cost effect on the Survivor
Benefit Plan (SBP), and the number of
Guardmen who would accrue points beyond 63 (yes 63). As the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) program has gained in strength, these problems associated with the attritive
provisions of the Reserve Officer Per-
sonnel Act (ROPA) for time in grade
are lessening. AGR officers may retire
after 20 years active duty under title II
with 50 percent of base pay. Many
can do—short of age 55.

The 60-point retirement date is a
less critical factor for the drilling Guards-
man 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
effects even Guard service. Every
Drilling Guardsman, who performs all
the training required by statute, loses
a minimum of three retirement points
a year because he earns 63 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 four
additional flight training periods (AFTP), but receive no retirement credit for them whatsoever.

Officers and senior NCOs who pur-
sue their military education through the U.S. Army Reserve School Sys-
tem are similarly penalized. They may
attend up to 24 evenings of classes in
such courses as Command and Gen-
eral Staff College, but receive no retire-
ment points.

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

In the past, one of the reasons
for the 60-point ceiling was
advanced past the biling stage. It
was the uncertainty about its cost. This factor is coming close to a solu-
tion with the advances in compu-
tization of finance and accounting
in recent years and the retirement benefits. Its report is expected this month. Its recommenda-
tions will guide the legislative de-
don of DoD in the next session of the
100th Congress.

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

Loss of retirement points affects all
members. Equitable comparison be-
tween the retirement system and other
systems becomes more important as
changes to the retirement system are
considered. The NGAUS is committed to
reviewing the need for, and impact of,
the SQRMC recommendations and mak-
ing this issue in 1988.

MG Ansel M. Stroud Jr., President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

THE NG AUS WILL BE REVIEWING AND WORKING THE 6TH

QUADRIENNALE REVIEW OF MILITARY COMPENSATION

RECOMMENDATIONS ON NATIONAL GUARD RETIREMENT IN 1988.

FEATURES

TEAM SPIRIT ENVELOPS 40TH DIVISION

The 82d Infantry Division returned to the Republic of Korea to join
arms with our allies for TEAM SPIRIT '87. A battalion task
force deployed the infantry technologies required for soldiers before
the 2d Infantry Division and the Korean army.

The Godselfs of the Air National Guard

From Beech teams recently deploy to Palomar Air Base, Hon-
dale, to make quality of life improvements and continue base
upkeep in a joint Hawaiian and U.S. airfield. The Prime Beech
was from the 172d Civil Engineer Squadron, Mississippi Air
Guard, was welcomed sight.

A ROAD THAT JOINS TWO NATIONS

BRAZIL TRAILS is moving into its final year after the 109th
Support Battalion, Illinois Army National Guard, completed a
successful deployment to the northern mountains of Honduras. The
BEECH supported the Army Reserve combat engineers while
they built a road.

R人身オ RUTAS OPENS ROADS FOR ECUADOR

The National Guard engineers and support personnel from
Guatemala on the way in the first year of building a
heavy equipment company. Heavy rain made the job almost impossible. But act a single Guardean would
make the job possible for any money in the world.

East-West Border: Why We Serve NATO

36

The 28th Signal Battalion commander, Major Joel N. K. Beveridge went to Germany for two weeks for a
Conference on the future of the 28th Signal Battalion. He discussed the importance of having a
signal system that was there and that be five of his soldiers
The "Wolf" and reported back the reason why the Na-
guard frequently deploys to Europe for training exercises.

National Guard

November 1987

Cover:
The National Guard assumed a world
training mission once it was accepted in
the Final Force. Overseas deployments
are standard fare these days when it comes
to training requirements for the Army
and Air National Guard. Photo, MSG Chief

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