

TRANSCRIPT

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LTG Luckey: I'll bring you up to date on some things that we're working on.

Part of it is, and I've said this to many folks, you know, one of the challenges that I have as the leader of America's Army Reserve is to lead a team that is ready enough to be relevant, to meet the requirements of the nation and the Army, from the ability to, if necessary, engage in combat operations. But not so ready that my soldiers, the preponderance of which have civilian jobs, can't maintain good high-quality civilian employment and maintain healthy, sustaining relationships in their own families. So there's a tension there between what we have to produce for the nation in terms of capabilities, and the requirement that the preponderance of our soldiers maintain those employment relationships outside the [public] sector, or at least outside of the military.

That has become, to your point, even a more pressing challenge given that the environment in which we find ourselves today, from the perspective of having to do what I call surge readiness, which means a significant portion of the Army Reserve, depending on what the requirement might be from a war plan perspective, has to be able to deploy quickly, and in a much less predictable fashion, perhaps, than going to a sustained operation that we've seen for the last 14-15 years, whether it's Afghanistan, Iraq, places like that. So this is a different requirement. It's driven us to a different paradigm from a readiness perspective, and it's a challenge.

I'll talk real briefly about sort of where we've come on that, but I wanted to start by

telling you I really do appreciate the opportunity to talk to you about this because I need you, I'm not going to tell you how to do your job. That's for you to decide. I understand that. But what I do need for you to do is to [inaudible] appropriate and when it resonates to you to help me message to America how important the partnership between employers across America, or the partnership with me, frankly, to [share] the best talent of America as part of the national security fabric of the United States. So that's trying to balance that employer relationship for my soldiers with their need to be ready enough to do what we need to do on short notice.

So where are we? Over the last year we have increased the fidelity on what types of capabilities we need to be able to move fairly quickly. I think I had more than just the two things articulated last December, but you're right. We've actually taken over the last year, to really take a look at what things do we need to do and how quickly would we need to do them. And really, it's not tied into any one particular contingency. So it isn't necessarily about something happening in Europe or something happening in the Pacific. It's really about if you look at the capabilities that are inside America's Army Reserve, and then you look at what the Army needs to do to field capabilities to support the joint warfighter, what things do we just know the Army Reserve is going to be expected to produce very quickly because of the way the Army's organized from a force structure perspective.

When we took a hard look at it, we realized wow, there's actually a lot of stuff in here that's even interconnected. So things that somebody else who thinks they want a capability may not be able to articulate until they actually talk to the experts who know how you have to fuse certain capabilities together to generate that effect. As we looked at that work we said actually, there's more to this than we initially thought.

The other thing I'll say is, we've really focused on not the number of formations or the number of soldiers, although there's rough numbers depending on what contingency we're talking about that would be brought into the RFX sort of basket of capabilities. The RFX, it's really for me to do two things. One, to see where we have risks potentially in our ability to generate capability quickly. In other words, if I have identified what I think I need to do and I know what units I have that are available to do that, and I can assess the readiness of those units, and my assessment is those units are not sufficiently ready today to be able to do this five days from now, they could do it 25 days from now but they can't do it five days from now, that really helps me look at my formations and figure out okay, so how do I fix that problem? Or in some cases, how do I explain that with a high degree of fidelity to the senior leadership of the Army so that everybody understands this is the risk of trying to do this at this speed. You can do it at this speed,

but if this is a higher velocity, you may have a problem. So it helps me to do that.

The other thing it does, it really enables us to take a look at where to address some of that risk. Do we prioritize our efforts, whether it's in changing manning policy, and I have changed some policies over the last year? Whether it's full-time support. Whether it's modernization of equipment. Whether it's who gets the net widget because this formation's going to need to have that widget today because there's not going to be time to get the widget later because we've got to train on that widget, and understand how to work that widget so we can get to it now. So it's really important to a lot of our processes.

I refer to RFX as an intellectual forcing function for activity based primarily on the premise that on a bad day if we have to do a lot of things very quickly, we just need to identify ahead of time what those things are going to be, how quickly we're going to have to do it, so we can anticipate and mitigate the risk associated with this sort of new threat paradigm.

I think last time I was here I talked a fair amount about the threat paradigm. If you want me to go into that I'm happy to talk about it, but I'll just say I think we've made a lot of progress. But I don't want anybody to leave this conversation thinking that A, we're now in a place where nobody has to worry about readiness. We've got it all figured out. My responsibility is to really be able to see our self with clarity in terms of where are we today, what does the requirement look like it might be, and then be able to mitigate the risk associated with that gap. And we're getting after it.

DWG: So at what point, or are you there today, will you have a ready force that is able to deploy combat ready forces in 90 days or less?

LTG Luckey: Well, again, I don't want to put too fine a point on this. I have requirements, depending on what somebody needs us to do, to do certain things very quickly, to do what we call port openings. So increasing the throughput capacity of whether they're commercial or military/commercial, ocean terminals in the United States to be able to move things out. So not just in terms of where it's going, but from whence is it coming so there's a move commodities, capabilities, all kinds of stuff out of ports of the United States.

The Army Reserve supports that. Not exclusively. There's other folks that do that as well, but we play a key role in that.

So some of the formations that we have, frankly, have to be able to do that in less than a week. Can we do that in less than a week today? The answer is yeah. But when we look at the whole gamut of things that we may be asked to do very quickly, it starts to add up in terms of the numbers of soldiers and types of units. My point is simply, I don't think I'll ever be at the place where I can sit down and tell everybody okay, every one of these units, whether it's 300, 400, 500, they're all at this level of manning, they're all at this level of equipment, they're all at this level of training. I don't think I'm ever going to get to the place where I can say yeah, yeah, we're good.

And the fundamental reason is this. Remember, your Army Reserve, this is America's Army Reserve, this your Army Reserve. Your Army Reserve recruits and retains soldiers and retains families where they live and work. We don't call somebody up and say send us 100 more soldiers, you know, we'll move these people here or there. This is an all-volunteer force and its strength is predicated, in our case, on leveraging soldiers that are out there across America doing great stuff, primarily in the private sector, or other aspects of the public sector.

So my challenge is always going to be, and this is the appropriate challenge to have. I'm only going to get so good at this. My challenge is to be as well-positioned as I can from a force structure allocation perspective, to be able to capture that talent across America. Part of what I'm looking at as we talk about the future, is do we have force structure in a place that's no longer appropriate for that level of effort from a structure perspective. What do I mean by that?

If I have a formation. My favorite formation, and this is a joke, just so you know, write this down but give me credit for kidding about it. I call it an underwater mess kit repair battalion. Okay? So if I have an underwater mess kit repair battalion and it's located in State X. I'm not going to pick on any state because I don't want to get in trouble. The reality is, the population in State X is not what it was, or the predisposition of Americans in that state to continue to join the military has decreased over time. I may have a hard time manning those formations to a high degree because there aren't really the right folks, or the folks that are there aren't really interested in joining the Army Reserve.

So part of what I've got to do is figure out where are those people and where is there a predisposition to serve, the capabilities we need to go after. Then move force structure that's more proximate to emerging maritime demographics. That's the only way I'm going to be able to build and maintain a high enough level of manning in those formations prior to a mobilization to be able to build the collective training readiness that we need to be able to move those formations quickly.

So part of what our effects does is say hey look, no one of these two units in and of itself is sufficiently well manned to be completely ready to train holistically together as a team all the time because they live in different parts of State X or State Y or they're spread across multiple states. State boundaries, frankly, are not all that germane to my challenge which is a federal force all the time.

So I look at those three formations, and I say okay, what we're going to do is we're going to take of the three formations the one that has the best manning today is yours, and so you're the lead piece of this formation, but the other formations are going to support our effort to build that readiness as quickly as possible.

So part of what happens in RFX is formations that are not normally affiliated with her battalion now support her and her readiness mission, training together from time to time so that her level of readiness is now better than it was.

But what I'm not doing is ordering these other commanders to give all their people to her, because I want to incentivize them to continue to recruit, retain, and [inaudible]. So it's a delicate balance. I don't want to give anybody the notion that this is all going to be solved in six months. This is a process. One of my officers who just recently retired from the Army, the G3 for USAREC, Mike [Wyant], used to say RFX is a verb. It's really not a noun. It's a verb. So it's a little bit of both, but I would encourage you to think about it as a verb. It's a way of looking at ourselves with a greater degree of fidelity [inaudible].

DWG: Thank you so much for being here today.

LTG Luckey: Thank you for being here.

DWG: I had a follow-up on Ready Force X actually. When we talked about this before AUSA you said that when you're taking a look at what you needed for this, you found that there are more capabilities than you thought that you needed for Ready Force X, and I was wondering what some of those examples were, what capabilities did you find that would be relevant.

LTG Luckey: This isn't going to change much. This was more about me not even understanding some of the capabilities that were in the Army Reserve that I'm responsible for producing quickly. And when I say that's not going to change, it means I am still on a journey. It's a journey of discovery. You talk about 200,000 soldiers

spread across 20 time zones doing all kinds of really, in some cases, niche cool things that as an Infantry officer I didn't even realize we necessarily did. We have movement control teams, we have teams that are focused primarily on moving petroleum as a commodity in theater. Many of these teams are actually very small, but they are extraordinarily important for efficacious movement of commodities, capabilities.

We have units in the Army Reserve that their fundamental responsibility is to understand the indigenous infrastructure from a rail perspective in another country and be able to essentially facilitate the Army's ability to leverage that infrastructure. I'm talking rail. To move stuff. I didn't know we did that. So we have teams that are focused on planning and orchestrating and understanding rail in another nation. Not in the United States. In a host nation country that's supportive of U.S. military operations, supporting rail movement.

We have engineer teams that are uniquely trained, manned and equipped to be able to facilitate us figuring out where and how do we install a fuel distribution system, or a water distribution system in terms of gravity. All these things. You are talking to an English major, from the University of Virginia, okay? So there's only so much I know about some of these things in terms of engineering. But there's all kinds of little niche capabilities that in many cases it really goes back to what I alluded to earlier. That are sort of these little key nodes that you may have a great capability here and a great capability here, but if you don't have a way to harmonize those or integrate them, you're going to have friction that you don't need. So to some extent what we have really are unique niches, and I just touched on a couple of them, of capabilities that integrate other things. I'm continually amazed at the number of things that we're doing that frankly, I didn't even know we did.

DWG: I want to follow up on some of the things you alluded to. Are there some, it seems as though there are certain specialties, certain specialized capabilities that are primarily resident in the Reserve. So as the Army sort of makes this shift toward a more high-end fight against a potential near peer, is there a concern that there will be greater stress on the Reserve or greater reliance on the Reserve as part of that [inaudible] requirement?

LTG Luckey: I would say, you're not going to like this answer, but it depends. Let me give you an example.

I would agree with you that if we predicate the requirement for me to generate this underwater mess kit repair attack on no notice, and you need, so you're the battalion

commander. What I told you is I need you to do be able to deploy your capability anywhere. It could be Europe, it could be the Pacific, it could be Planet Mongo. It doesn't matter. I need you to be able to do these things and be prepared to bring this capability to bear in [the continent], very lethal, and we talked about this last time, I'm not sure, but very lethal, very contested, full spectrum contest. But I need you to be able to do it in 32 days. You look at your manning, your training, your equipping, and you may say boss, I can do it. I've assessed myself. I can do it. We may take a look and double check to make sure that I'm not over-advertising or over-exaggerating your capability to the Army. But if you say you can do it, then I think I would say that's a place where we're relatively low risk in terms of force structure balance because we can do it on that time line, if that's the requirement.

If, on the other hand, the requirements for me to be able to produce in 32 days, whatever it was, our assessment is because of the complexity of what it takes to actually do what I'm asking you to do, you're going to need 70 days to be able to bring that capability to bear. Then we get into a conversation about okay, if you need to be able to do it in 32 days from when I tell you go, and the reality is it's going to take you twice as long as that to be able to generate that capability, then the conversation gets to when do I tell you to go? So now we get into what I would regard as a much larger strategic conversation about when would you mobilize the Army Reserve or some piece of it? That is not for me to decide. It is simply for me to articulate as best I can risk associated with when you would make a decision to deploy capability and to employ it.

Because what I said earlier, about we recruit and retain our soldiers where they live and where they work and bring them into units, and in many cases that makes our manning challenge in certain places in particular hard because we just can't get ourselves to a high enough level of manning day in and day out. All of those concerns get mitigated. If you remember the caveat, upon mobilization, then there's a lot of different authorities. So there's the sort of collaborative relationship pre-mobilization to have several other units support you in your effort of building a higher level of readiness steady state, what I call phase zero. All of a sudden this is no longer, it doesn't have to be a collaborative relationship in the same way. Now I have the authority to actually deploy certain aspects of those capabilities to augment yours so you've got a whole battalion, if you will. So that is a unique aspect, legally, of mobilization authority. And before we get to mobilization authority, there's only so much we're going to be able to do to get to a higher level of readiness.

It's a very long-winded way of saying I think the force structure rebalance conversation, which is what you're really touching up, it needs to be informed by what I think is the

larger conversation which is really as a matter of policy, do we think we would or would not mobilize the Reserve and the Guard, frankly, prior to these certain series of events that may put us in a place where we have to do it.

If the answer is we don't think we would, as a matter of national policy, and again, that's not for me to decide. If we decide we wouldn't do it as a matter of national policy, then I would say we need to take a look at, let's identify the fact that it's going to take you twice as long to actually be able to do this as we need you to do it, then we've got to think okay, so maybe some of this capability shouldn't be in [COP 03], the Army Reserve, it should be in [COP 01], the active force, because we're going to need it that fast.

I don't know if that helps you, but I think that's really the way you have to look at this problem set. It's not just about force structure. It's about timing.

DWG: A quick budget question.

LTG Luckey: Budget question? I did tell you I was an English major.

DWG: We're obviously operating under yet another Continuing Resolution, and I'm just wondering whether the particular objectives for [inaudible] that are on hold or are particularly challenged as a result of that instability right now.

LTG Luckey: Well, you said instability, I didn't say that. I think it's fair to say that any time we go for, the longer we go with a CR, without an appropriation, I think you all know the rule set better than I do. The reality is as you get closer and closer to the end of a fiscal year from an execution perspective, sometimes things get more challenging.

If you're asking me to list out things today that I don't think I'm going to be able to do unless we get something other than a CR, I'm not prepared to do that. I'm happy to answer if there are specific things you want to drill on. I'm happy to see what we can do to support you. But on the top of my head, I don't have a list of things. I am more concerned about, as time goes on, our ability to execute certain things. But I [inaudible] speculate [inaudible].

DWG: [Inaudible] recruiting is hard because so many of the target population is obese or didn't graduate or has too many problems. Do you have those kinds of [inaudible] in recruiting and retaining? Do you have anything in particular that goes [inaudible]?

LTG Luckey: To address?

DWG: Anything you're [inaudible] obese.

LTG Luckey: Yeah, I plan to make them run. [Laughter]. We were going to do that this morning, but I had to come here. No. We'll do it tomorrow morning.

I am taking a bunch of the generals, just so you know, to Fort Knox, Kentucky in a couple of weeks. These guys are all laughing about it. I'm going to take them out for a run. Actually it's this Saturday morning, and it's supposed to be 37 degrees and raining. So everybody's laughing, thinking that I'm going to kill a bunch of them. But I -- which is not my intent. I do intend to continue the message to the force how important this is.

I will say this, and I'll answer your question the best I can. But part of the fundamental building block, we all talk about RFX, but at the end of the day, this is about the individual soldier, right? So your question's a fair one. The individual soldier has to be ready quickly as an individual soldier. In other words, it doesn't do me any good to have a unit, so she's got our underwater mess kit repair battalion, but most of it's non-deployable because the soldiers are too big, they can't do what they need to be able to do in combat physically, et cetera. So this doesn't do me any good. It doesn't do us any good. I've got to have ready, fit soldiers that are manning these formations. That's the one thing that can't just be figured out in 17 days. There's a lot of stuff from a training perspective that she can do. We go to 24-hour ops, do night live fires, do all kinds of stuff in a very compressed time frame to get the last touches from a training perspective on formations that have got to go out the door, but I've got to be able to start with soldiers that are physically able to do the things, the tasks that they need to be able to do to accomplish in combat, so your question's a fair one.

Now as far as what do we do to maintain a level of readiness in the Army Reserve once soldiers have gone through basic training and come into the Army Reserve? The answer is a lot of things, not the least of which is I really do try to message every day to every one, which is part of why these are important opportunities for me to talk about it, how incredibly important it is for our soldiers to understand what we're doing. We're building the most capable combat ready and lethal federal reserve force in the history of the nation and this is predicated fundamentally on them understanding it and it becoming part of their ethos. This is who they are. They're part of this team. They're part of this enterprise.

So I am very much trying to focus from a messaging perspective every day in every way, part of being on this road to awesome, is making sure our soldiers are getting after it,

taking care of themselves, and getting themselves physically ready for the rigors of combat.

That said, I would acknowledge, I did spend some time years ago in the Army Reserve as a commanding both a basic combat training brigade, a basic combat training battalion before that. I would acknowledge that there are challenges in terms of who is eligible to enlist in the Army. I would expand it simply from a conversation about physical fitness or body mass index and that sort of thing to all kinds of other challenges that we have, as a nation. But I would paint this as a national challenge. Not as a what's the Army Reserve doing to make people more fit. This should be looked at as a national challenge. I don't remember the stats. These guys can correct the record later so I'm going to spitball this one a little bit. But I'll just tell you, my guess is right now if you looked at it, of that cohort of young Americans between the ages of 18 and 23 that are eligible to enlist in the United States Army, whether it's to be an Infantryman or an Armor officer or whatever. I'm not talking about gender, I'm not talking about sexual orientation or interest or anything. Just the entire cohort. My guess is somewhere between 70 percent of that entire cohort is not eligible to enlist in the United States Army.

What I would tell you is, and I don't want to be dismissive of that, but is it a challenge for all of us to work in that environment? Sure. But at the end of the day that's a national conversation. That's not my problem, that's our problem, and that's the way I think we ought to look at it.

Part of what I would just, that's a conversation that goes way beyond the military in my opinion. Obviously it has implications for us, but that's a bigger conversation.

DWG: [Inaudible] one way to sort of get around some of this is for certain specialties, such as computers, maybe they don't need to be able to run five miles because they're sitting in front of a computer doing cyber security all day. What are your thoughts on relaxing some of the physical fitness standards for certain MOSes?

LTG Luckey: I've actually give this a fair amount of thought, slightly differently. Part of what we're doing in the Army Reserve, I touched on this a little bit earlier. I look at demographics in America and I look at flow of human capital in the nation. Where do we need to move force structure to be able to capture that talent? Ones that I'm looking very closely at are places I call digital [inaudible]. Those are places where we know, by we I don't mean the Army Reserve, I mean America knows there are certain places in the United States where you're going to have a higher density of certain types of folks that have a certain type of skill. So if we talk about high end digital whether it's

[inaudible] computing, cyber stuff, artificial intelligence, et cetera, et cetera. There are certain places in America where there's a lot of stuff going on and there's concentrations or pockets where there's a lot of energy. Silicon Valley is not [inaudible]. There's a whole list, I'll leave somebody out and get in trouble for that. One of the things we are doing is when some force structure out in certain locations in America, sort of test the waters and look for places to capture talent that we may not have focused before. The talent that is, in my opinion, very analogous to how we started in 1908.

So in 1908 your Army Reserve started off fundamentally looking at medicine as a place where we needed to grow the Army's capacity, and we wanted to do it at a significant discount, and we wanted to bring in extraordinarily capable technical medical folks. These were not just docs, but nurses and other specialists. But we wanted to do it in a way that we were able to essentially massively increase the capacity of the Army, do battlefield medicine and other medical services, but do it at a significant cost savings to the taxpayer.

So what did we do? We leveraged doctors that were already out there in America. We leveraged nurses already out there in America. It's extrapolated obviously now to everything from PAs and ER techs and everything else, to be able to tap into the excellent talent and capability in places like Mass General Hospital or Columbia Presbyterian or, I'll get in trouble for not listing every hospital in America, but you get the idea. But the idea was simply, let's go find these folks that are already out there. They're doing this every day, and frankly, they're getting a lot more exposure and experience than folks that are in the Army because they're working in emergency rooms in Atlantic City, New Jersey. No offense to Atlantic City. So they're really busy and they're really proficient. We're going to bring in the new Army, we're going to teach them how to use a weapon and wear a uniform and maybe they cut their hair a little bit, not too much, all this other jazz. We're going to bring them into the Army and we're going to use them and we're going to surge them as needed, when needed, and bring tremendous capability and readiness to the Army at a significant discount. That's how we started in 1908.

So my view is look at the emerging domain of, I'll just call it all things digital. I think Luckey's personal view is, there's a clear line that runs from 1908 in medicine to where we are today in terms of high end emerging technologies, moving at an incredible velocity.

Do you have soldiers in America's Army Reserve that are employees at very, very high-end tech companies in America? You betcha. They're working there right now,

this morning, and they're also Army Reserve soldiers. Do they're a part of this team. And what I'm trying to do is make sure I understand what opportunity space that creates for America and for the Army.

That brings me to your question, which is okay, so we find some person who's extraordinarily talented but there's X, Y, Z thing from a soldier's perspective. Whether it's physical infirmity or it's a height/weight thing or they can't do pushups or whatever it is. At what point do we bend the rules?

So my answer is, I don't have a hard, fixed answer to it yet. But I will tell you this. I think that we need to think through what's the transition point between the civilian employees for the Army and the soldier? In other words, I think there may be a way to sort of get to the best of both worlds. You may not need to come into the Army Reserves as a soldier. I may want to bring that capability in in some other capacity and have some expectations of it, but not others, because I think my gut tells me if we get to a place where we're starting to dilute what it means to be a soldier, then I think we have a challenge.

I have encouraged this entire team to focus on the Soldier's Creed as the one sort of core, common narrative for the Army Reserve. I'm an American soldier, I'm a warrior, a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States. I live the Army values. Place the mission first, never accept defeat, never quit, never leave a fallen comrade, discipline, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior task and drills. Always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself. I'm an expert, a professional [inaudible] employ and engage and destroy the enemies of the United States of America. Close combat. Guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

So I'm concerned if we start playing around too much with what does that mean? We could create some challenges.

There's all kinds of places where the Army's made decisions as a matter of operational requirements to relax screening standards, let people wear different clothes, wear facial hair, do other things for other reasons. So I'm not saying that shouldn't be on the table, but when it comes to basic soldier capabilities and standards, my gut tells me you don't want to tinker around with that too much.

It's long winded answer but it's a great question and I wanted to honor it with sort of the nuance that I think is appropriate.

DWG: If I can just follow up on that, this is something the Army's been talking about for quite a long time, really. How to bring that expertise in. And you have, the active component I think is now doing the direct commission and bringing people in like they do for doctors and lawyers and things like that.

So when do you get to a solution? What gates do you need to go through? Or when can you say maybe definitively we are going to bring in so and so who wouldn't fit as a normal soldier and we'll make him an Army civilian who does cyber, or make him a half soldier. It sounds like you don't support that. But when do you get to a solution? What do you need to do?

LTG Luckey: Maybe it's because I'm getting old. I'm not sure a solution is the way I would characterize success. I think we've embarked on a journey of discovery in America's Army Reserve. I'm learning a lot by talking to people, primarily in the private sector, about what's going on, and I'm very, I am very cognizant of the potential that there is a velocity of change in the private sector, particularly when it comes to some of the things I just talked about, whether it's AI, quantum computing, some fusion of the two of those, the digital domain in general. And where we are is, that gap may be showing. And obviously a mitigation strategy in my opinion for the Army and for the Department of Defense, to make sure that we are staying [nested] and connected with what's going on out there.

In terms of what the silver bullet would be to fix that, or close that gap, I don't know. I think part of what I'm doing is to understand what is that gap? What are my particular capabilities inside the Army Reserve's unique ability and singular command and control structure to be able to move requirements from a manpower perspective to the places where I can capture that talent.

So I have moved force structure to places to begin to really tap into that. And I've stayed very much nested with the Department of Defense and where I've moved structure. How much structure and what the grades of those requirements will look like, it's too soon to say. So I'm not going to give you a hard date, because -- let me put it this way. A year ago I'm flying on an airplane with one of my colonels, a brilliant, brilliant colonel. He asked me, so this road to awesome that we're on, when do we get to awesome? I'm like dude, you don't get it. You don't ever get there. It's out there.

DWG: I know you don't want to leave any region out, but can you give us an example of where you have built up force structure in Silicon Valley or Austin or wherever that is?

LTG Luckey: Who said anything about Austin? Austin's one of the places that I've been to. Part of this, having this sensor array out there really is to help me have an informed opinion about where does it make sense to look. So we're looking at a lot of places, and I'm not going to leave any of the regions out. But as a matter of public record, we have moved some force structure to Silicon Valley, we've moved some force structure to Cambridge, Massachusetts. Am I looking at other places? You betcha. I'm probably looking at ten different places right now in terms of regional potential hot spots for emerging development from what I regard as [inaudible] the future.

Frankly, what I'm learning, this is why this is a journey, is this is a community of people who know each other. For instance, you go to Tesla Motor Corporation and the person you're talking to was hired away from Google a couple of weeks earlier because of X, Y, and Z, and then you find out this is a very fluid word of mouth, human capital sort of domain. And states that don't enforce a non-compete -- California happens to be one of them, apparently, I'm not a California lawyer, but I'm told they don't enforce non-competes in contracts, that's a big deal. If I can't hold you to an agreement to not compete with me next week, and you're clear to go work for him, that's a big deal because in other environments the court's probably going to enforce that agreement. So I'm learning as we go where we should [inaudible] talent.

DWG: Dan Parsons, then Sidney.

DWG: Sir, at AUSA General Milley made a pretty impassioned plea for synthetic training environments for as many soldiers as possible [in their missions]. Are there specific advantages that Army Reserve can reap from synthetic training? How would you [inaudible]?

LTG Luckey: The first answer is yes. Right now we're looking at sort of next generation, and so it's a level above as I'm sure you all understand the question, but just to make sure I clarify my answer in the context. When you talk synthetic, I'm thinking about simulation that enables us to save transportation costs, ammunition, don't need massive ranges, complex equipment, et cetera. It's a way to really cut down on overhead of folks we're training.

Obviously the ramifications of that environment for both the National Guard and the Reserve are potentially huge given the diffusion of our formations.

So one of the things we're looking at right now, as we move into the next level of collective training readiness in the Army, the subjective [T] which I'm sure some of you

are already tracking, and we've increased our requirements from a gunnery perspective and some other things. The Army Reserve is very aggressive about getting after crew [inaudible] weapons qualification.

In Cold Steel, I don't know if anybody's tracking Cold Steel. Last year we started, last spring, we combined the largest crew-served weapons gunnery exercise in the history of the Army Reserve, since 1980 until last April, we'd never done what we did. We've now doubled down and actually [inaudible]. We're now doing Cold Steel II, and we're replicating these capabilities and these requirements at multiple installations across America.

Part of what's nested into that is this getting after what's the best next thing from a synthetic training environment perspective to better increase our soldiers' ability once they get to a live fire, to already be trained at a high enough level proficiency that it takes relatively little time to get them where we need to get them. Whether it's base cluster defense, night live fire, or it's a convoy live fire, and those sorts of things.

So what I'm telling you is we're getting after it. I have not made and am not prepared to make or state -- I'm not prepared to make any sort of definitive investment decision on what's the next piece of [kit], and how far out would we disburse it. I'll be honest with you, as a grunt I am always skeptical of getting too, to move too quickly to get into simulation because my experience in it, and hopefully we've moved to a place where my experience is no longer valid. My experience is that while the technology's looks really exquisite and it's really cool on the show room floor, when you take it out for a test drive, put it in the box a few times, and move it around from one location to another, all of a sudden, it isn't just that the cables got lost, although that happens too, it's also that stuff breaks, or the person, whoever the supporting person is who's supposed to set this thing up to make sure your soldiers get great training, they're not there. So I don't want to have an overly ambitious notion, or an overly positive notion of how quickly we'll get to a very disbursed learning environment.

The other thing is, and this sounds kind of counter-intuitive maybe, but because of the rate of change in terms of technology and unless we're really smart about how we acquire and how much we acquire, what I don't want to do is make some major capital investment in capability that in three years is obsolete.

DWG: Are there any specific skills or missions where you see in the future it might be applicable?

LTG Luckey: I think it's applicable today. I'm not pooh-poohing it. I'm just saying that I'm not, I want to be judicious about making major investment decisions [inaudible]. There's a lot of stuff out there. Frankly, what I've seen is in many places, I was out at Fort Leavenworth not too long ago, they're doing some great work on really trying to, I'll just say keep the capability as simple and as inexpensive and as soldier-friendly as possible. That's really kind of where my head is on this. Not getting too exotic.

This is one where I don't think you want to let the perfect be [inaudible]. We want to get to good enough, keep costs down, keep soldier friendliness, durability, resilience, those sorts of things, and we're willing to lose a little bit in terms of cool factor or high end capability to be able to buy more, to disburse more, to have more survive.

DWG: Sidney Friedberg, Breaking Defense.

You mentioned already that you're changing how you plan to mobilize based on the shift from a rotational system of a steady state system to a wartime or crisis surge. That also of course changes the kind of environment people are going into [inaudible] a much more high-end threat or contested, and everything from physical to the [inaudible] spectrum. How are you changing your training for that? How are you changing the way perhaps even [inaudible] force structure for that? Or is it something a matter of hey, your job is to pipeline [inaudible]. It doesn't matter where the pipeline is against the Russians or against the Taliban, it's all the same [inaudible].

LTG Luckey: I would say the biggest, and this may not be the response that [inaudible]. The biggest [inaudible] is cultural change. This is, I'm just talking about the Army Reserve. My responsibility is to lead this component of the Army. This is a component of the Army that has for 15 years been expected to produce capabilities and has done a fantastic job of producing those capabilities for the nation, for the Army.

But to your point, there's been some level of stability, at least in terms of when you've got to go and predictability and time. So now we have to move and we are moving from the notion that you'll get notice, prepare year one, prepare year two, prepare year three. You'll have two or three years to get ready to go do this mission. There will be all kinds of people helping you get ready to go do this mission. You'll have time, and there will be a place you'll go and you'll get training, you'll have these exercises, people will give you all the latest equipment, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. It's essentially a readiness production assembly line, predicated on the notion that you've got time and you've identified the requirement [inaudible].

Now what I do is take a team that is used to that environment, and make sure everybody understands what you just said which is this is a whole different game. My concern is not making sure everybody understands the pipeline of activities or [inaudible], my concern is making sure that everybody who's working and doing pipelines understands doing pipelines in Iraq is a very different thing than doing pipelines in a high-end fight. If you're doing high-end fight pipelines, you're subject to operational fires [inaudible]. And what that means is you're not in the rear area. Where you thought before you can go back to a FOB and relax and have X, Y and Z creature comforts and all those jazz, which we've been doing this for the last 15 years. And there's nothing wrong with it. It's just that the environment we've been operating in didn't have the lethality of the one you're talking about. The one you're talking about subjects every soldier in America's Army Reserve to the same devastating effects of kinetic operations, or in some cases non-kinetic operations, of an adversary as everybody else on the battlefield. So that means that culturally my organization, this team, needs to be infused with a sense of getting ready for no-kidding, gloves off, high-end combat with an adversary that is very determined, very smart, extraordinarily capable. And that is a cultural shift. That's why I talked earlier about it starts with the individual soldier understanding the rigors of what they've got to be prepared to do. That is a fundamental shift. That's why we talk about lethalties, we talk about capabilities, that's why we talk about combat readiness. That's why I talk to my soldiers every day, in every way. Hey, this is about leadership, this is about energy, and this is about execution. It's about getting after the challenge of the day. It's not because I showed up as the leader of America's Army Reserve. This is because of the threatening environment which is different than it was ten years ago. That's really what's driving a lot of this.

So how do I get after it? Keep pounding. Driving cultural change for any organization is not easy. We all know that. But it's that old line from the Untouchables. I'm just a guy who happened to show up when the wheel turned. Okay? So the wheel's turning. We're in a new threat environment, and I'm the guy who showed up. So we're going to get after this.

DWG: Are there things in terms of training standards or transition, you mentioned crew weapon exercises. That sounds like an example of, you have somebody's primary MOS as a crew weapons operator, but [inaudible] adding that requirement.

LTG Luckey: You're spot on. When we started down this path, this Cold Steel I, the largest, as I said, crew served weapons gunnery exercise in the history of America's Army Reserve, there's three things I was really trying to get out of it. Hopefully this will

resonate and respond to your question.

One was simply getting more crews trained. So more soldiers, more training, more goodness, because there's a requirement to have trained crews, to have vehicle crew evaluators, to have what we call master gunners. So part of this was just developing, hitting the sort of tactical challenge of building more of this.

The next part of it was, that was sort of the close-in thing. That was the metric I could actually count which was number of soldiers that fired and qualified on these weapons. We did that. We actually did extraordinarily well.

And oh by the way, I'm not big on numbers of rounds fired, because to me that's an activity that's not an effect. The round that's fired is only good if it hits the target. People disagree with that because they think it suppresses [inaudible], which is fine. But you get the idea.

So the next thing was, in addition to exposing these soldiers and getting them trained, the next thing was just getting the non-commissioned officer corps of America's Army Reserve to get back to basics in terms of its ability to go out there and execute training to standard under tough conditions.

So we did this thing, Cold Steel, and we did it in March. And we did it at Fort McCoy. Now if you haven't been at Fort McCoy in March, it's not Fort Lauderdale in March. Okay? And I was the one going really, we're going to do this in March? And they're like sir, it's good, good training. I'm like, yeah, but it could be snowy, and it was snowy and everything else. But the reality is, the soldiers that went there and the non-commissioned officers that went out there for that training, they may not have known exactly why they were going there when they got there. Hey, Luckey says we've got to go do this. But they darn sure knew that they had done something really cool when they left. And the way that that message propagated takes me to the third point.

So think first of all, discreet function, trained crews, trained soldiers.

Next function, empower the non-commissioned officer corps of America's Army Reserve to do what it should have been doing for a long time but had to be doing other things because of the environment we were operating in from essentially a rotational readiness perspective.

And then the third thing is driving the message to the entire Army Reserve. I don't care

whether you're a pipeline person. I don't care if you're a medic or whatever. If you are going to be subject to operational fires of the enemy, you've got to be able to protect yourself and if necessary kill the enemy in combat. Frankly, we got a little bit, I won't say soft, but we've gotten a little bit behind on thinking [inaudible] individual soldier skills that we need to continue to master.

So I'd go out on vehicles in the middle of the night, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, I'm talking to E6s and E7s, so staff sergeants, sergeants first class, who told me this is the best retention thing they'd seen in the Army Reserve in the 18 years, 15 years that they'd been in the Army Reserve. I've got soldiers on weapons they said they hadn't touched since they left basic training 13 years ago, 14 years ago.

So part of this is nothing more than just helping everybody remember. This is the Army. It doesn't matter if you're a pipeline person. If you're a pipeline person who's getting shot at, you're still a soldier getting shot at.

And there's other examples. And as I said, we've moved Cold Steel I which was at Fort McCoy; Cold Steel II which was at Hunter Liggett. We're doing it at McCord, we're doing it at Knox, we're doing it at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey. And we've also got [inaudible] combat support training exercises as well, with a view towards getting at exactly what you asked the question about, which is making sure that we are constantly building additional readiness, additional confidence, into our formations. The formations that are going through the training are not exclusively inside the sort of RFX basket that we talked about at the beginning, but when it comes to me making choices about who needs to go to this training now as opposed to who should go or could go later, I will, again, back to what I said earlier about RFX being a verb, RFX helps me inform, if I have to rack and stack who goes to training, pick RFX formations sooner because they will have less time if they're mobilized than other formations in the Army Reserve.

DWG: We have five minutes remaining. Two questions. We'll go to the speed round.

LTG Luckey: Does that tell me to stop talking?

DWG: Finishing up with Rebecca and then Wesley.

DWG: I'll try to make it quick.

LTG Luckey: I'll try to be terse.

DWG: I was hoping you could talk about the effects of the shutdown. It seems like a shutdown that only lasts a weekend would be really hard on the Reserves since Reservists work a day job, can't just come in on a Tuesday to make up whatever training was canceled on the weekend. So was anything canceled? To what extent? And then what ripple effect does that have in terms of what you've been talking about all morning with your ability to provide a ready force?

LTG Luckey: I'm not going to dodge it. I'm not going to really respond very well to the second part of your question because I really don't know. It sounds cagey, but I'll explain why.

As to the first part of your question, so yes. We did have a number of soldiers that had been scheduled to have -- when I say number, I mean tens of thousands -- scheduled to have battle assembly last weekend. I gave guidance to those formations that depending on where they were in the potential timeline, pursuant to where they were in RFX, they may or may not be authorized by me, I guess arguably [inaudible] my decision-making, authorized by me to continue to train. Based on my assessment that it was a high enough operational necessity that we continued to train these formations, that I was willing to take the risk if somebody disagreed with that judgment.

Then the rest of them, I made the decision, no, this does not rise to that level. In my opinion as the commander. And I got some great guidance, by the way, from the Army, so I wasn't just dancing in the dark. But to the rest of them I said no, you're going to come in for your battle assembly, because I didn't know until you know, 2359 Friday night whether we were go or no go, and I've already got soldiers in some cases flying to battle assembly or driving to battle assembly so we couldn't anticipate anything until we found out we didn't have [inaudible] going on [inaudible].

Okay, go in, sign in, we do the sort of orderly shutdown procedures and then soldiers who were not authorized to stay would return back home.

So I would say more returned home than were authorized by me to continue to train.

But your question as it pertains to readiness implications of that downstream, I'm not trying to be cagey. I don't really know. In other words, what I haven't done yet is to look down okay, I told all these formations, everybody knew this was a possibility. Okay, so come up with a mitigation strategy. If it turns out we don't get an appropriation and we've got to redo certain tasks, part of the guidance I gave them was

if there's a task we're committed to doing this weekend and we've already invested money in it, so if we have a medical readiness mass event to make sure that everybody's getting checked physically that needs to be checked, and we've already invested the money to make that happen, continue that mission. We've already spent the money. Do it.

So what I haven't done yet is gone back and said okay, so how many things did not get done that now we've either got to make up or not get done, it's just going to create more time later from a mobilization perspective. So I don't want to be, I'm not saying it doesn't have implications. I know it does. I've been through this before. Frankly, I think everybody's concerned about the message that I sent to all my civilian employees when I sent them a note, you know, yesterday morning before things changed saying I know you've got to come in and turn in all your stuff and go home and, you know, I've been through this before as the chief of staff of a combatant command, the last time we did this. I'm fully cognizant of the implications from a morale perspective. This is highly emotional for a lot of folks, for reasons which I completely understand. I don't want to be, I don't want to commit myself to any particular answer on what are the overall implications of this because I think the answer is time will tell.

Do I think there's some goodness in the fact that this last was shorter than longer? Sure. But I don't, I think it's always a challenge from a leadership perspective, it's always a challenge when you don't, when soldiers and civilians are concerned about, for lack of a better way of putting it, their jobs and their mission and how important is it, that kind of stuff.

But I'm not going to sit here and tell you that I thought it was devastating, because I don't think it was devastating. I just think it's something that it's my responsibility now to mitigate some of those impacts. And we'll do it.

DWG: Sir, when we're talking about moving force structure to Silicon Valley and places like that, can you give us a little more detail about what kind of force structure that is? [Inaudible] aware of?

LTG Luckey: What kind of force structure? It's really just, as I said earlier, from a grade perspective. You know, if non-commissioned officers, majors, lieutenant colonels, I don't know yet. We're still working our way through what is the actual coding, what would the structure look like? In other words, as you brought it to a higher level of operational occupancy, what are you really trying to build up? The answer is, I don't know yet.

What I know is I have the flexibility, and this is unique, by the way, to the Army Reserve, I don't want to sound like I'm bragging on my team, but I will. We have the agility, the flexibility and the coherent command and control to be able to just decide, you know, you're going to put in a requirement for 15 soldiers, grade undetermined, to basically have billets out in, tied in to the 63rd Readiness Division, Moffett Field, and right there in California, in Mountain View. I'm going to let the market out there identify this is an opportunity for us. So where we started is, so I've got a soldier right now, and this is hypothetical so don't write this as a fact. It's not a fact.

A soldier out there right now working at any number of high-end tech companies, whether it's Tesla Motors or Google or wherever. I don't want anybody to get offended that I didn't mention every company out there. But some company that's out there.

So I've already got a soldier out there. They're [inaudible]. So I've got Ken out there and in his Army job right now he's a strategic communications, public affairs, you know, wizard. So that's great. But he's also a, maybe he's an engineer for one of those companies I just listed or somebody else.

So he decides, you know, what, I like doing this public affairs stuff but you know what would be really cool is if I could bring some of the stuff that I'm doing in the private sector and basically get paid to help the Army get better at figuring some of this stuff out one weekend a month type thing.

So I cleared folks out in California to go find Ken and bring him in.

So what have I done? I've brought in a major into the structure. Now do I know the major's the right rank to have in that structure? No, I don't. I don't know that. But I know I need to tap into his network in the private sector, his capabilities, his skills, and learn from that what's the opportunity space out there for the Army Reserve?

That's why, at the risk of frustrating everybody here, this is really about learning, for me. This is about developing fluency, or some degree of fluency in terms of what's going on out there in the private sector in terms of stuff that's moving really, really fast.

So taking the same approach in Cambridge. I will say, I'll be the first to admit some of my decisions about moving structure, and I'm talking a dozen, I'm not talking about massive [inaudible], has been informed by an ongoing communication with DOIX, [Inaudible], other folks out there really helping me understand this terrain. We've

worked with ARL. We've worked with, as you said, DOIX, [inaudible]. Been out there talking to other folks about where should we look next for certain effects?

Somebody mentioned Austin earlier, Austin has come up for some reasons. You know, [inaudible]. Pittsburgh as [inaudible]. So there's all kinds of folks helping me start to think through places we need to go look at other opportunities.

I have asked a two-star general on our team to sort of help me from an operational perspective wrap our arms around some of the challenges that are presented by some of the questions you've asked here today to make sure that I'm not the only one doing this. I've actually got somebody full time helping us work our way through this.

And I'm trying to make sure that I don't get out in front of any other part of the federal government or Department of Defense in what we're doing. I do think I have a unique responsibility and opportunity to help [inaudible].

DWG: Who is [inaudible]?

LTG Luckey: Boe. B-O-E.

DWG: Thank you very much. We're out of time. Appreciate your thoughts, and we'd love to have you back again.

LTG Luckey: I'd love to be back again. It's good to see everybody. Thanks for being here. Have an awesome day. A great week. Keep pounding. Hooah.
