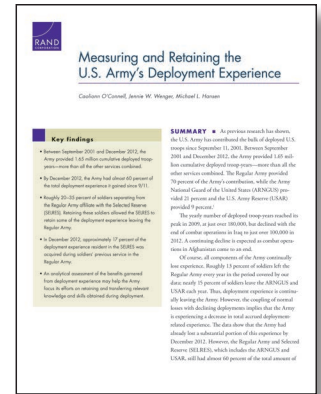




Measuring and Retaining the U.S. Army's Deployment Experience

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The Army has contributed the bulk of deployed U.S. troops since 9/11 and has accrued substantial deployment experience. However, as combat operations conclude, soldiers separate from service, and Regular Army endstrength is reduced, this experience may be lost. This report analyzes recent data on soldiers and deployments and the retention of Regular Army deployment experience through SELRES transitions.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How many soldiers have deployment experience and how much experience in theater have they accumulated?
- How much of the deployment experience accumulated in the Regular Army since 9/11 has been retained, either in the Regular Army or through transition to the Army National Guard of the United States or the U.S. Army Reserve?



KEY FINDINGS

The Army Has Accumulated Valuable Deployment Experience

- Between September 2001 and December 2012, the Army provided 1.65 million cumulative deployed troop-years—more than all the other services combined.
- The Regular Army provided 70 percent of the Army's contribution, while the Army National Guard provided 21 percent and the Army Reserve provided 9 percent.
- Roughly 20–35 percent of soldiers separating from the Regular Army affiliate with the Selected Reserve (SELRES) within two years. Retaining these soldiers allowed the SELRES to retain some of the deployment experience leaving the Regular Army.

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- By December 2012, approximately 17 percent of the deployment experience resident in the SELRES was acquired during soldiers' previous service in the Regular Army.

Deployment-Related Experience in the Army Is Declining

- The yearly number of deployed troop-years reached its peak in 2009, at just over 180,000, but declined to just over 100,000 in 2012.
- By December 2012, the Army had almost 60 percent of the total deployment experience it gained since 9/11.
- The bulk of soldiers with deployment-related experience leaving the Regular Army are not affiliating with the SELRES, and the percentage of soldiers who transition to the SELRES upon leaving the Regular Army is on the decline.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Determining the extent to which various types of deployment experience are valuable would assist the Army in strategically retaining this experience.
- An analytical assessment of the benefits garnered from deployment experience may also help the Army focus its efforts on retaining and transferring relevant knowledge and skills obtained during deployment.