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A US Army Officer – Commission, Service, and Professional Development: The Way Ahead for the Polish Armed Forces

I believe leaders are not born; they are developed.
BG (ret.) Donald C. Bolduc, US Army Special Operations Forces

Introduction

The substantial security threats emerged on the eastern Polish border in 21st century, with their peaks during Georgia's "five-day war" in 2008 and occupation of Crimea in 2014. That motivated Polish decision-makers to strengthen the operational capabilities of the Polish Armed Forces (PAF). The Minister of Defence signed a 10-year "Modernization Program of the PAF 2017–2026" in February 2019¹. The program lists top priorities and requirements, including the procurement of the major weapon systems, further enhancement of the key operational capabilities, and development of new military units, which is aligned with increasing the PAF's peace-time manpower limit to 200,000 soldiers².

¹ R. Wilk, *Poland Implements Modernisation Plan for 2017–26*, *Jane's* 360, 11.03.2019, <https://www.janes.com/article/87131/poland-implements-modernisation-plan-for-2017-26> [accessed: 9.06.2019].

² Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 19 lipca 2019 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy o przebudowie i modernizacji technicznej oraz finansowaniu Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, *Dz.U.* 2019, poz. 1453, § 3.1, <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20190001453/O/D20191453.pdf> [accessed: 1.10. 2019].

Based on the author's experience, the most important attribute for modern and capable armed forces is professionally educated and highly trained personnel. In particular, officers with deep knowledge and professional skills in planning and troop leading procedures are essential on a modern battlespace. The author thoroughly observed the recent initiatives of the Polish Ministry of Defence to recruit more soldiers and officers to the PAF. These initiatives included intensive recruitment campaign to the PAF (program "Become a soldier"), re-activation of the "Academic Legion" program (designed to recruit reserve officers), development of the Polish Territorial Defense Forces (POL TDF) with their AGRYKOLA³ program (for POL TDF officers) and SONDA program (for POL TDF non-commissioned officers). This article's major focus is placed on holistic understanding of the entire procurement and education system developed for US Army officers – the army which became All-Volunteer Force⁴ (AVF) more than 45 years ago in order to recover from post-Vietnam trauma. Based on that knowledge the author concludes the article with recommendations on recruitment, education, and retention of military personnel serving within the Polish Armed Forces, which became an AVF army only than 10 years ago. Due to limited space and a complex internal structure of the US Armed Forces, the author will focus exclusively on the policies and procedures appropriate for US Army officers and will not consider any other services (US Navy, US Air Force or US Marines)⁵.

Become a US Army officer

The raw data analysis shows a decreasing number of US Army military personnel within the last six years, starting from the Fiscal Year 2013 (FY 2013). In FY 2013, the overall number of US Army military personnel reached the level of 530,000 soldiers. But that number has decreased to only 475,000 soldiers in FY 2016. That means the number of soldiers dropped by 11% within only four years. After FY 2016, the number of US Army soldiers began growing again, and in FY 2018 the US Army had more than 476,000 soldiers within the ranks. Nonetheless, within the FY 2013 and FY 2016, the US Army lost more than 55,000 soldiers (equivalent to military personnel for more than 13 Brigade Combat Teams, BCT)⁶. According to the officially revealed US Army plans, in the second half of 2018, the US Army should grow to reach the limit

³ M. Kowalska-Sendek, 'Terytorialsi zdobywają oficerskie szlify', *Polska Zbrojna*, 21.12.2017, <http://polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/24394?t=Terytorialsi-zdobywaja-oficerskie-szlify#> and *Zostań podoficerem lub oficerem WOT*, Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej, <https://terytorialsi.wp.mil.pl/kursy> [accessed: 30.04.2019].

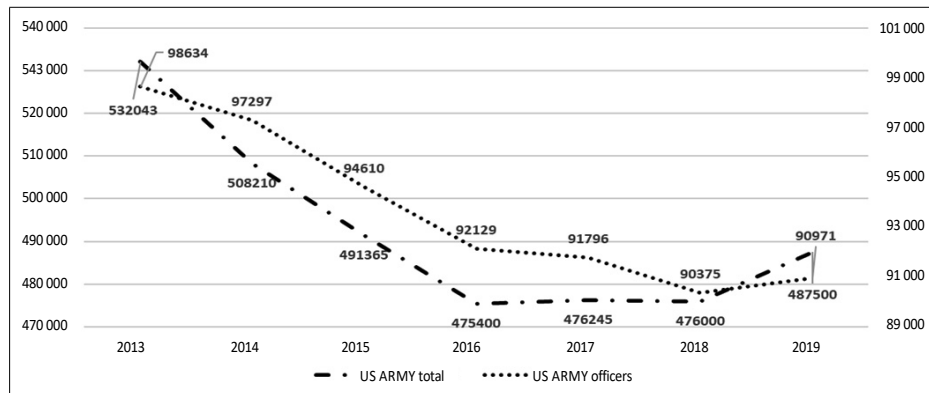
⁴ M. Janowitz, 'Volunteer Armed Forces and Military Purpose', *Foreign Affairs*, 1972, Vol. 50, no. 3, p. 427.

⁵ US Armed Forces consists of four separate services: US Army (pol. Wojska Lądowe), US Navy (pol. Marynarka Wojenna), US Air Force (pol. Siły Powietrzne) and US Marines.

⁶ Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) are the basic combined-arms formations of the US Army. They are permanent, stand-alone, self-sufficient, and standardized tactical forces consisting of between 3,900 to 4,100 soldiers. A. Feickert, *Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) Mobility, Reconnaissance, and Firepower Programs*, Congressional Research Service R44968, Washington 27.03.2019, p. 1.

of 487,500 soldiers⁷. Unsurprisingly, the decreasing number of US Army soldiers affected the overall number of US Army officers⁸. Their number decreased from 98,000 in FY 2013 to only 90,375 officers in FY 2018, which means a drop by 9% (8,259 officers) within the last six years⁹. The FY 2018 number of US Army officers have started growing again, reaching the level of almost 91,000 officers in October 2019¹⁰.

Figure 1. Number of US Army active duty officers in 2013–2019 and total number of US Army personnel



Source: Department of Defense Military Programs, *Military Personnel, Active and Reserve Forces*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/budget/fy2018/mil.pdf> [accessed: 28.04.2019].

Current security threats defined in the US National Security Strategy¹¹ allow the author to assume that number of soldiers and officers will progressively grow in the nearest future.

Having in mind these facts, the author presents the US Army policies and procedures regarding the commissioning of the civilian and enlisted personnel to constantly fill the officers' positions and keep the overall structure of the US Army in the highest possible readiness. The overall process is structured in a US Army Department Regulation AR 600-100: Personnel Procurement Appointment of Commissioned and Warrant Officers in the Regular Army. According to the AR 600-100, US Army commissioned officers could be obtained only from these four sources:

⁷ M. Myers, 'New in 2019: The Army's got a big end strength gap to fill this year', *Army Times*, 31.12.2018, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/12/31/new-in-2019-the-armys-got-a-big-end-strength-gap-to-fill-this-year> [accessed: 21.04.2019].

⁸ The analysis of data published on the United States Department of Defense (DoD) official websites show there are more than 230,000 active duty officers serving within the US Armed Forces. A majority of the US Armed Forces' active duty officers belong to the US Army (40%). Nearly every third officer serves in the US Air Force (27%), the other almost third serve in the US Navy (24%) and only one of ten serve in the US Marines (9%).

⁹ Department of Defense Military Programs. *Military Personnel, Active and Reserve Forces*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/budget/fy2018/mil.pdf> [accessed: 28.04.2019].

¹⁰ Nevertheless the decreasing number of soldiers and officers within the US Army within the last six years, ratio between officers and enlisted personnel is constantly kept on the level ca. 18%.

¹¹ National Security Strategy of the United States of America, December 2017, p.25.

1. Graduates of the US Military, Naval, and Air Force Academies who request an initial appointment in the US Army and who are acceptable to the Secretary of the Army;
2. Graduates of the Officer Candidate School (OCS);
3. Graduates of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC);
4. Civilians after the direct commission¹².

The author briefly characterizes all of the four ways to become a US Army officer. They are described in the US Army documents and information published on official US Army websites. In addition, the author utilizes his own experience, knowledge, and interviews with key personnel within the US Army.

US Army Military Academy (USMA) West Point

West Point¹³ is a medium-sized, highly residential baccalaureate college with a rigorous 47-month undergraduate program that emphasizes instruction in the arts, sciences, and professions with no graduate program. The main mission for USMA is to educate, train, and inspire cadets and prepare them for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the United States Army. There are only two admissions pipelines: congressional nomination and service-connected nomination. USMA holds each year more than 4,400 cadets representing 55 US states and territories, and up to 60 international cadets¹⁴. The cadets strictly follow the USMA code of conduct “A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do”. The West Point cadets, who do not pay any tuition for their education, are immersed in a military-oriented environment, gaining an unparalleled undergraduate education and leadership skills through a rigorous curriculum. In order to become a West Point cadet, a candidate must be at least 17 but not yet 23 years old on July 1st of the year admitted, a bearer of US citizenship, not married, not pregnant or with any legal obligation to support a child or children, congressionally nominated or have a service-connected nomination and receive high scores on college entrance exams (ACT, SAT¹⁵, and TOEFL for international cadets). The attrition rate reaches about 20% throughout the entire 4-year course. Upon completing the undergraduate degree requirements, cadets are commissioned to receive the gold bar of a second lieutenant and commence their military service in the active component, mostly as field-grade officers. The minimal mandatory service time reaches up to eight years (five years in active duty and three years in reserve).

¹² Army Regulations (AR) 601-100: Appointment of Commissioned and Warrant Officers in the Regular Army, Department of the Army, Washington, November 21, 2006, p. 3.

¹³ A Brief History of the West Point, The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, <https://westpoint.edu/about/history-of-west-point> [accessed: 15.04.2019].

¹⁴ The author’s materials from meeting with USMA Superintendent LTG Darryl Williams on October 3, 2019.

¹⁵ The ACT (American College Testing) is the leading US admissions test, measuring what students learn in high school to determine academic readiness for college. The SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It is a multiple-choice, pencil-and-paper test administered by the College Board.

Officer Candidate School (OCS)

The regulations and policy for the Officer Candidate School (OCS) are defined in an Army Regulation 350-51: US Army Officer Candidate School. The school is open to qualified enlisted non-commissioned officers, along with civilians who hold at least a four-year college degree. To apply for the OCS, an applicant must be a US citizen, receive a high score on an entrance test (ACT or SAT), pass the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), have a SECRET security clearance, be at least 18 but less than 30 years of age at the time of enrollment, and fulfill many more criteria to pass¹⁶. The candidates, who complete the rigorous, but short twelve-week school, receive formal commissions as US Army officers and assume the ability to command soldiers. The Officer Candidate School is designed to give a framework for officers' role as a small unit commander (platoon, company). During the OCS, the candidates learn tactics training, how to deal with mental and emotional stress, and how to give orders. By the end of the course, the candidates know how to lead soldiers in combat¹⁷. While Army National Guard soldiers are eligible for the traditional route to OCS described above, they may also follow two additional routes: State Officer Candidate School¹⁸ (longer solution) and National Guard Bureau Accelerated Officer Candidate School¹⁹ (shorter solution).

Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC)

The regulations and policies for the ROTC are defined in the USACC Regulation 145-1: Reserve Officers' Training Corps²⁰. The ROTC program was formally established in 1916, but the early origins began in the 19th century. The ROTC offers scholarship opportunities, mostly on STEM majors (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), that can pay up to the full cost of tuition. The scholarship can vary from 30,000 USD up to 200,000 USD and is covered by the US Army or state (for students coming from the US National Guard). The students who join the program become cadets and fall under the US Cadet Command²¹ responsibility. Today the program is offered in more than 1,100 colleges and universities all over the USA for more than 22,000 cadets. To apply for the ROTC program, a candidate must be a US citizen, be between the ages of 17 and 26, have a high school GPA²² of at least 2.50, have a high school diploma or equivalent, score a minimum of 1,000 on the SAT (math/verbal) or 19 on the ACT (excluding the required writing test scores), and meet physical standards.

¹⁶ Army Regulation 350-51: US Army Officer Candidate School, Department of the Army, Washington, June 11, 2001, p. 1.

¹⁷ Careers & Jobs, U.S. Army, <https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/current-and-prior-service/advance-your-career/officer-candidate-school.html> [accessed: 25.04.2019].

¹⁸ This is the general method of becoming an officer in the National Guard. This training school is held at Regional Training Institutes (RTI) and takes place on the weekends for 16–18 months.

¹⁹ In this accelerated method, candidate attend an eight-week course either in the winter or the summer.

²⁰ USACC Regulation 145-1: Reserve Officers' Training Corps. Army ROTC incentives policy, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Cadet Command, Fort Knox, August 02, 2016, p. 7.

²¹ US Army Cadet Command, <https://www.cadetcommand.army.mil> [accessed: 7.10.2019].

²² GPA stands for Grade Point Average. It is a standard way of measuring academic achievement in the United States.

The student has to accept an officer's commission and serve in the active duty or in a reserve component (Army Reserve or Army National Guard) for an eight-year service commitment (serving full time for four years and four years within the reserve). Every year more than 70% of newly commissioned US Army active duty officers come from the ROTC program as well as more than 65% of US National Guard and US Army Reserve officers. Within the US Army active duty, more than 40% of general officers got their commission through the ROTC program²³. There is also a separate program called Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC)²⁴ designated for high schools students²⁵ (14 to 18-year-old cadets) with the overall mission "to develop citizens of character for a lifetime of commitment and service to the nation²⁶". Annually, more than 314,000 high-school cadets participate in the JROTC program all over the USA.

Direct commission

A direct commission is the last way to become a US Army officer. But this career model requires distinctive skills and abilities. Only if the candidate has a background in the medical, legal, cyber, or chaplaincy fields, he can earn the direct officer's commission. That allows him to serve in the four US Army branches: the US Army Medical Department, the US Army Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps, the US Army Chaplain Corps, and the US Army Cyber. Those who gain the direct commission receive the rank determined by their career branch and will serve in the US Army, the US Army Reserve, or the US Army National Guard (more about these career opportunities in the next chapter).

In summation, the US Army commissions about 6,000 officers annually. Only 15% of them graduate from the USMA West Point (ca. 1,000 officers per year). Another 15% are commissioned from OCS and direct commission. The majority of the US Army officers, more than 70% each year, graduate from different ROTC programs²⁷. Interviewing US Army officers and faculty members from USMA and ROTC programs, two additional important factors ought to be considered: the ROTC

²³ Author's interview with the ROTC North Eastern Pennsylvania (NEPA) Battalion cadre in Scranton University on 02 October 2019, The University of Scranton, Department Mission, <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/cas/military-science/mission.shtml> [accessed: 8.10.2019].

²⁴ The U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) is one of the largest character development and citizenship programs for youth in the world. The U.S. Army's JROTC program currently operates in more than 1,700 public and private high schools, military institutions, and correctional centers throughout the United States and overseas. The JROTC faculty is led by nearly 4,000 instructors who are retired from active duty, reserve duty, or Army National Guard service.

²⁵ The US education system based on state-by-state policy. If the state operates a middle school structure, then students will progress to high school at around age 14. In the junior high system, students move to the senior high school a year later, usually around age 15. In both cases, the school runs through to age 18, although some states allow children to leave school earlier, if they have the permission of their parents. More about the US Education system: Transfer Wise, *The American Education System: An Overview*, 31.08.2017, <https://transferwise.com/us/blog/american-education-overview> [accessed: 24.06.2019].

²⁶ The US Cadet Command mission for the JROTC Program.

²⁷ Army Officer Commissioning, U.S. Army, 10.05.2019, <https://www.army.mil/standto/2019-05-10> [accessed: 7.06.2019].

program allows the US Army, as an All-Volunteer Force (AFV)²⁸, to keep a link between soldiers (“green-suiters”)²⁹ and civilian society. The ROTC programs also enable the necessary diversity within the US Army officers and avoid creating the elite “officers’ caste”. Moreover, the West Point is unable to rapidly increase “production” of commissioned officers, when more than 1,100 colleges and universities spread all over the USA, can easily start the “mass production” of young officers, in case of a major war or other serious national requirements.

Serve as a US Army officer

The active US Army, the US Army Reserve (USAR), and the US Army National Guard (ARNG) are three equally important components of the total US Army structure. The USMA West Point delivers mainly active-duty officers; the ROTC program delivers the reserve or National Guard officers where they can serve as part-time soldiers. Due to the Federal Law US Code Title 10 §651³⁰, the minimum military service obligation for officers differs between six and eight years (normally five years active duty plus three years in reserve). According to the recently published Department of Defense data, more than 62% of the US Army officers serve in the active duty, while little more than 20% serve part-time in the US Army National Guard, and approximately 17% serve within the US Army Reserve. That ratio has remained constant for the last three years.

The US Army active duty³¹

The officers belonging to the active-duty component fall under the Army Regulation 350-100: Officer Active Duty Service Obligations³². All the responsibilities regarding the Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) are described in very great detail. The US Army heavily depends on active-duty officers for day-to-day operations. Most of the US Army officer and their families live within the military bases. The active-duty officers serve in the US Army 24-hours a day, seven days a week, for the duration of their service commitment. That is like working a full-time job and very similar to the Polish Armed Forces officers.

²⁸ United States eliminated the draft and moved to All-Volunteer Force in 1972. More about the problem in the RAND report: B.D. Rostker, *The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force*, 2006, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9195.html [accessed: 7.10.2019].

²⁹ In USA only the 1% of the population currently serve in the Armed Forces and the number of veterans is declining. Data from the US Army Recruiting Command, *Facts And Figures*, https://recruiting.army.mil/pao/facts_figures [accessed: 7.10.2019].

³⁰ RAND Corporation. Objectives Analysis. Effective Solutions, *Military Service Obligation and Active Duty Service Obligation*, <http://dopma-ropma.rand.org/military-service-obligation.html> [accessed: 7.04.2019].

³¹ About the Army, U.S. Army, <https://www.goarmy.com/about/serving-in-the-army/serve-your-way/active-duty.html> [accessed: 25.04.2019].

³² Army Regulation 350–100: Officer Active Duty Service Obligations, Department of the Army, Washington, September 26, 2017.

The US Army National Guard³³

The ARNG officers (as well as US Army Reserve officers) remain under the Army Regulation 135-155: Army National Guard and Army Reserve, Promotion of Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers Other Than General Officers³⁴. But the US Army National Guard (ARNG) has a unique dual mission. Domestically, it serves at a state level to protect communities on United States territory. The National Guard's soldiers could be "federalized" to support the active-duty military forces in responding to the threats abroad, serious humanitarian disasters, or other federal missions. The ARNG officers hold civilian jobs or attend a school while maintaining their part-time military training and are always ready to serve their community in the event of an emergency. Typically, the ARNG officers live with their families in their homes, rather than on a military base. The service is part-time, allowing them to pursue their educational and civilian career goals. At a minimum, they would train one weekend a month and two weeks a year³⁵. The POL TDF part-time officers serve on a similar bases.

The US Army Reserve³⁶

The Army Reserve is the US Army's pool of extra resources and personnel. The reserve soldiers perform critical jobs for the US Army on a part-time basis. Unlike active duty, the Army Reserve soldiers serve part-time, allowing them to earn an extra paycheck, go to school, or work a civilian job while still maintaining many of the benefits of military service. The officers in the US Army Reserve spend one weekend a month on duty and two weeks a year in training. They may also be called to active duty to provide their expertise. The total service contract length in the US Army Reserve may range from three to six years, depending on the US Army Reserve military occupation. Even though they will spend a limited amount of time on duty, the US Army Reserve officers earn competitive salaries and have access to a wide range of benefits³⁷. The Polish Armed Forces reserve officers serve on a similar bases, but their duty schedule is much lighter and they are called for duty quite seldom.

The Professional Development Education (PME) system for the US Army officers

The pursuit of the US Army leader development strategy employs the three domains of leader development: institutional, operational, and self-development. These

³³ Army National Guard, U.S. Army, <https://www.goarmy.com/about/serving-in-the-army/serve-your-way/army-national-guard.html> [accessed: 28.04.2019].

³⁴ Army Regulation 135–155: Army National Guard and Army Reserve, Promotion of Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers Other Than General Officers, Department of the Army, Washington, July 13, 2004.

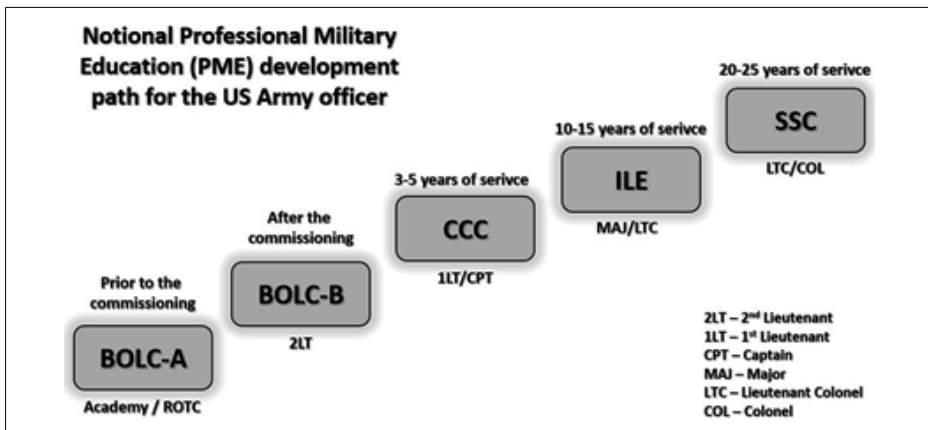
³⁵ The service in the US ARNG can be compare with the Polish Territoial Defense Forces (POL TDF) (pol. Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej).

³⁶ About the Army. Serving in the Army Reserve, U.S. Army, <https://www.goarmy.com/about/serving-in-the-army/serve-your-way/army-reserve.html> [accessed: 25.04.2019].

³⁷ As a second lieutenant, one could make more than \$6,500 a year, and receive health care, retirement and education benefits.

domains define and engage a continuous cycle of education, training, selection, experience, assessment, feedback, reinforcement, and evaluation³⁸. In this article, the author discusses only the institutional domain of the PME. The PME within the US Army is defined as “a progressive system that prepares leaders for increased responsibilities and successful performance at the next, higher level by developing the key knowledge, skills, and attributes they require to operate successfully at that level in any environment³⁹”. The PME is strictly linked to promotions and future assignments. It applies to all officers, warrant officers, and non-commissioned officers (NCO) of the US Army. The PME consists of the Non-Commissioned Officer’s education system (NCOES) and the Officer Education System (OES). Concerning the overall scope of the article, the author focuses only on the Officers’ Education System.

Figure 2. The Professional Military Education (PME) development path for the US Army officer



Source: the author’s data.

The OES for officers starts well before the commissioning. This first part is the **Basic Officer Leaders Course Phase A (BOLC A)**. For almost all the US Army officers, phase A of the BOLC consists of pre-commissioning training, either through the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, the Officer Candidate School, or the USMA West Point. The BOLC A’s main purpose is to develop the technically competent field-grade officer on a platoon level. He must be grounded in leadership, basic

³⁸ Officer Professional Development and Career Management, Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, Washington 2017, p. 6.

³⁹ Definition taken from official materials presented by US Army National Guard to Undersecretary of State in the Polish Ministry of Defense Mr. Tomasz Zdzikot in December 2018. See: Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, ‘We Develop Polish-American Cooperation In ...’, *Public. Press Release*, 12.12.2018, <http://www.publicnow.com/view/2246345FE22243F28B740B42538F4702A36DED33?2018-12-12-10:00:19+00:00-xxx6498> and *Rozwijamy współpracę polsko – amerykańską w obszarze cyberbezpieczeństwa i edukacji wojskowej*, Cyber.mil.pl, 10.12.2018, <https://www.cyber.mil.pl/articles/aktualnosci-y/2018-12-108-rozwijamy-wspoprace-polsko-amerykanska-w-obszarze-cyberbezpieczenstwa-i-edukacji-wojskowej/> [accessed: 26.04.2019].

technical and tactical skill proficiency, physically and mentally strong, and express the warrior ethos. To achieve these objectives, the BOLC A phase capitalizes on experience-based training, logically structured to build upon and reinforce previous lessons. Immediately after the commissioning, the young US Army officers advance to the second phase called a Basic Officer Leaders Course Phase B (BOLC B).

The Basic Officer Leaders Course B (BOLC B) is conducted in proponent schools, where officers receive common core and technical training associated with their specific branch. The BOLC B phase can last up to eight months and is designed to produce technically and tactically proficient commissioned officers. The BOLC B is a common block of instruction designed to further develop the all-new US Army lieutenants into the competent small-unit leaders with a common warfighting focus and warrior ethos combined with branch-specific technical and tactical training conducted at branch school locations. Additionally, the course provides officers with a detailed understanding of equipment, tactics, organization, and administration at the company, battery, or troop level⁴⁰. Following the BOLC B course, senior lieutenants and captains can apply for subsequent training in their military careers.

The next level of training is called a **Captain Career Course (CCC)** and prepares company-grade officers to command soldiers at the company, troop, or battery level, and to serve as staff officers at a battalion, or brigade level. The officers attend CCC following selection for promotion to the grade of captain, normally before the company-level command. Through the selection process, the officers who have demonstrated superior performance in their basic branches might be selected to receive the CCC training at schools other than their branch (for example, a field artillery officer may attend the CCC for armor officers). The officers seeking admission into specialized branches as Civil Affairs (CA), Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), and Special Forces (SF) will attend the Special Operations Center of Excellence (SOCoE) CCC. The course focuses on the technical, tactical, and leadership competencies needed for the success in subsequent assignments, and last four to six months depending on the branch. For the reserve component officers, the course could last from one to two years with several phases, again depending on the branch.

The Intermediate Level Education (ILE) is the US Army's formal education program for majors. It is a tailored resident education program designed to prepare new field grade officers for their next ten years of service. It produces the field grade officers with a warrior ethos and joint, expeditionary mindset, who are grounded in warfighting doctrine, and who have the technical, tactical, and leadership competencies to be successful at the more senior levels in their respective branch. The ILE is taught in Command and General Staff College (CGSC) for more than 1,000 officers annually and tailors the education phase to the technical

⁴⁰ BOLC B consists of branch-specific technical and tactical training conducted at branch school locations e.g. Aviation Center of Excellence (Fort Rucker), Army Medical Department (Fort Sam Houston), Cyber Center of Excellence (Fort Gordon), Fires Center of Excellence (Fort Sill), U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (Fort Bragg).

requirements of the officer's branches⁴¹. The National Guard and the reserve component also have a tailored distributed learning ILE program⁴².

The Senior Service College (SSC) provides senior-level PME and leader development training. The Army's SSC course is run in the US Army War College (USAWC). The course prepares military, civilian, and international leaders to assume the strategic leadership responsibilities in the military or national security organizations. It educates students about the employment of the US Army as part of a unified, joint, or multinational force in support of national military strategy. The SSC requires research into the operational and strategic issues, and conducts outreach programs that benefit the nation. Each year, approximately 800 students attend at any one time, half in a full-time resident program lasting ten months, and the other half in a two-year-long distance learning program (mostly designed for the National Guard and the reserve component officers). Upon completion, the USAWC grants its graduates a master's degree in Strategic Studies.

Conclusions

In a recently published article⁴³, a retired US Special Operations Forces general, BG Donald C. Bolduc, stated that there is a serious crisis in the development and education of military leaders. He strongly emphasized the fact that leaders are not born, they are developed. General Bolduc presented a quite negative opinion on current education programs for young military leaders because they differ in a level of military training and academic education. The cadets are also selected from different pools of available candidates. In the article, General Bolduc insisted on creating unified learning system to deliver better opportunities for selecting and educating the best future military leaders. This is a perfect example of even a very well-developed military education system struggling with social challenges present in modern societies.

In the author's opinion, the situation within the Polish selection and education system of the future military leaders requires significant changes. Poland currently faces security challenges, rapidly increases its Armed Forces, and will require well-trained officers (active-duty officers as well as reserve officers) to lead the soldiers. These future leaders have to be academically and professionally educated for joint, multi-domain operations, but also prepared to face interagency cooperation with their colleagues from the civilian domain. Without an effective and flexible military

⁴¹ Command and General Staff School (CGSS) in Fort Leavenworth (Kansas) provides Intermediate Level Education (ILE) for the US Army and sister service officers, interagency representatives, and international military officers. ILE is a ten-month graduate-level program; the curriculum includes instruction on leadership philosophy, military history, and the military planning and decision-making processes. For the National Guard or reserve component, ILE in the CGSC might last up to two years of a Distant Learning course.

⁴² ILE Common Core Course is a prerequisite for promotion to lieutenant colonel in the reserve component.

⁴³ D.C. Bolduc, 'On Leadership and Being a Role Model', *Small Wars Journal*, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/leadership-and-being-role-model> [accessed: 11.05.2019].

education system, the PAF might not have enough manpower to manage future threats. Thus, some changes must be made to create an effective selection and education system. The author points out some of the measures necessary to enhance the current capabilities of the PAF.

First, the selection process for candidates to the PAF ought to start much sooner than currently. The high school's students (in the Polish system: liceum and technikum) should have the opportunity to participate in the programs similar to the JROTC. The cadre and instructors for a "Polish JROTC" might stem from the retired officers and non-commissioned officers pool with a broad tactical experience and appropriate educational skills. The main missions of this program would be to deliver the basic military skills (to include topography, shooting, non-military crisis response skills, basic medical skills, leadership), as well as "pursuit" for talented teenagers willing to serve in the PAF as officers or NCOs. The programs currently implemented by the Polish Bureau for Pro-defense Cooperation⁴⁴ might be an excellent starting point. The ROTC-like program might be a method to commission officers for the Territorial Defense Forces. The cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Defense could result in launching the program in selected universities all over Poland. That program should encompass the education and training of reserve officers as well as the TDF officers, allowing them to maintain the same standards and interpersonal contacts.

Second, develop the web-based information platform delivering overall knowledge about all aspects of the military service. The US Army website (<https://www.go.army.com>) might be used as a model of how to present and effectively advertise military service. The recently placed website of the PAF (<https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl>) is also an excellent starting point for further upgrades.

Third, the military recruitment offices (in the Polish system: Wojskowa Komenda Uzupełnień) should be reorganized and prepared to run very pro-active, locally-focused recruitment campaigns. They ought to start using modern techniques with web-based tools to get into the schools, academies, and universities, but also reach private companies and small businesses. Their main goal should be to deliver flexible options for all candidates willing to join the PAF (as an active-duty soldier, but also as a part-time soldier in POL TDF, as well as as reserve forces soldier). The recruiters have to carefully analyze their area of responsibility and meet the annual recruitment criteria. Their overall assessment must be based on effectiveness (number of recruits), not on the time they spend on the process. The criteria must be developed on the Polish Armed Forces General Staff level up to the overall needs of the PAF.

Fourth, develop and expand the opportunities for the active-duty officers, part-time POL TDF officers, and reserve forces officers to implement their talents and skills during the service in the PAF. Fluctuating among these three ways

⁴⁴ Biuro do Spraw Proobronnych, *O programie MON*, <https://bdsp.wp.mil.pl/pl/pages/o-programie-mon-2018-01-11-7> [accessed: 11.05.2019] and the cadets commenced military service: Biuro do Spraw Proobronnych, *Absolwenci klas wojskowych wcieleni do wojska*, 30.07.2019, <https://bdsp.wp.mil.pl/pl/articles6-aktualnosci/2019-07-30e-absolwenci-klas-wojskowych-wcieleni-do-wojska> [accessed: 4.10.2019].

of military service ought to be quick, flexible, tailored to individual needs, and offers promotion capabilities up to individual potential and case-by-case policy. That mission might be cautiously supervised by the Personnel Department on the POL MOD level.

Fifth, the POL MOD together with the POL Ministry of Finance, should develop the system of the non-financial and financial bonuses to include, for example a tax exemption policy. The main subject for the financial bonuses is not only the military personnel but also the employers of the military personnel. That system should focus mostly on the part-time POL TDF soldiers and officers, as well as on reserve forces personnel. However, without the robust information campaign for employers and creating a common understanding among employers and military personnel, the frictions will always be present. When the draft to the US Army concluded in 1972, the US National Guard established unique program called Employer Support of The Guard and Reserve (ESGR)⁴⁵ to promote cooperation between military personnel and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of any conflicts that might arise. That issue must be considered by the interagency team led by the representatives from the Polish Ministry of Defense.

To conclude, only the multi-aspects, flexible, and user-friendly approach to recruitment and retention of military personnel will provide the candidates who are to serve as soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and officers in the modern PAF. That approach is crucial for sustaining the long-term process of creating the armed forces capable of supporting society and effectively deterring hostile aggression.

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Oficer Wojsk Lądowych USA – promocja, służba, edukacja. Wskazówki dla Sił Zbrojnych RP Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie ścieżki rozwoju zawodowego kandydatów na oficerów w Wojskach Lądowych Sił Zbrojnych USA (ang. US Army), a także sposobów pełnienia służby w ramach US Army. Autor poddał analizie możliwości doskonalenia zawodowego podczas kursów oraz studiów zawodowych. W podsumowaniu zdefiniowano szereg słabych punktów w systemie rekrutacji i edukacji wojskowej w Polsce i zarekomendowano rozwiązania możliwe do wprowadzenia w Siłach Zbrojnych RP.

Słowa kluczowe: Siły Zbrojne RP, rekrutacja, edukacja, JROTC, ROTC, Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej, OCS, BOLC, West Point, US Army

A US Army Officer – Commission, Service, and Professional Development: The Way Ahead for the Polish Armed Forces Abstract

The goal of this paper is to analyze the current personnel structure of the US Army and to describe recruitment options for candidates interested to serve in the US Army as

officers. The author portrays the possible service options for officers in the US Army and depicts the educational process required by the US Army for officers to get further promotions. In conclusion, the author defines weaknesses in the recruitment system and formulates possible recommendations for the Polish Armed Forces.

Key words: Polish Armed Forces, recruitment, education, JROTC, ROTC, Polish Territorial Defense Forces, OCS, BOLC, West Point, US Army

Offizier der US-Landstreitkräfte – Förderung, Dienst, Bildung. Hinweise für die Streitkräfte der Republik Polen Zusammenfassung

Das Ziel des Artikels war die Darstellung des beruflichen Entwicklungswegs der Kandidaten für die Offiziere in den US – Landstreitkräften (Eng. US Army), als auch der Arten des Dienstes, der im Rahmen von US Army getan wird. Der Autor analysierte Möglichkeiten der beruflichen Fortbildung während der Kurse und im Laufe des berufsbezogenen Studium. In der Zusammenfassung wurde eine Reihe von Gebieten in den Streitkräften der Republik Polen definiert, welche Verbesserung ihrer Funktionsweise bedürfen, es wurden auch Möglichkeiten ihrer Beseitigung angeboten.

Schlüsselwörter: Streitkräfte der Republik Polen, Personalanwerbung, Bildung, JROTC, ROTC, Streitkräfte der territorialen Verteidigung, OCS, BOLC, West Point, US Army

Офицер Сухопутных войск США, аттестация, служба, образование. Советы для Вооруженных сил Польши Резюме

В статье рассмотрены этапы профессионального развития кандидатов в офицеры Сухопутных войск Вооруженных сил США (англ. US Army), а также возможности прохождения службы в Армии США. Автор проанализировал возможности повышения квалификации во время прохождения курсов и обучения в вузах. В выводах автор указал ряд существующих в Вооруженных силах Польши проблем, нуждающихся в переменах и представил возможности устранения имеющихся недостатков.

Ключевые слова: Вооруженные силы Польши, набор в армию, образование, JROTC, ROTC, Войска территориальной обороны, OCS, BOLC, West Point, US Army