

# Resident Training Detachment: A Captain's Perspective — Two Years Hence

by Captain (P) Leon I. Smith IV

*"The deployment requirements of the modern Army mean that we have fully integrated force packages, each containing high priority Reserve Components (RC) units. We must tailor our training and readiness policies to prepare the Total Force to meet these new requirements. Bold Shift is the vehicle to accomplish this most important task."*<sup>1</sup>

The phone rings in my office (it's March, 1992), and it's Armor Branch... it's the captain's assignment officer, who gives me a WARNORD for my next assignment. I'm informed that my next assignment is in support of a congressionally mandated Active Component full-time support to ARNG (Army National Guard) as part of the

Bold Shift initiative. My mission will be to advise and assist the commander to implement training programs that will maximize the use of limited time available to enhance pre-mobilization training readiness.

"The Bold Shift effort is a top priority throughout the Total Army. Its intent is to design those policies, procedures and execution techniques that will ensure high levels of training and readiness. The year 1992 is a pilot year in which selected high priority Reserve Component units, at least one ARNG unit per state and one USAR unit per Major U.S. Army Reserve Command (MUSARC), will participate in Bold Shift. We will then assess performance and develop a formal concept and implementation action plan that will produce and sustain

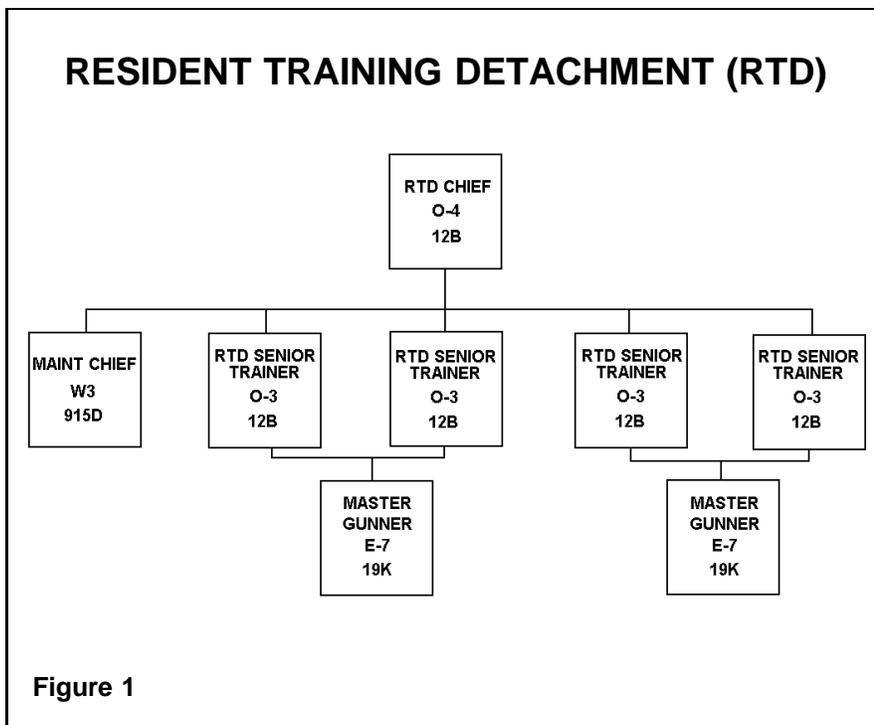
these higher levels of training and readiness."<sup>2</sup>

September 1992, I PCS to become a "Resident Training Detachment (RTD) Senior Trainer" for an M1A1 tank battalion. Because this is a pilot program, I begin to lay the groundwork for the implementation of the Bold Shift initiative. I write my duty description:

Senior Army Company Trainer for a Roundout MTO&E M1A1 tank battalion assigned to 1st ID(M). Responsible for planning, conducting, and evaluating pre-mobilization tasks for a tank company, battalion mortar platoon, and the battalion S3 section. Assists in identifying and defining training goals and ensures the training principles found in FM 25-100/101 are instilled and utilized. Ensures technical and tactical proficiency of leaders at all levels is met through rigorous training exercise and AARs. Upon mobilization, assist in post-mobilization and deployment of unit.

I list my performance objectives:

- Be the expert on FM 25-100/101.
- Assist in developing soldier, leader, collective, and battle staff training.
- Assist in the preparation and execution of collective training with emphasis on tank platoons and crews.
- Teach leaders how to identify individual and collective tasks and integrate them into training.
- Assist in the development of the company METL and training strategy based on last year's Annual Training TAM results.
- Be able to support and observe training and deliver an effective AAR.



## RTD RATING SCHEME (FOR THIS UNIT ONLY)

	RATER	INTERMEDIATE RATER	SENIOR RATER
RTD CHIEF, MAJOR	RTD CDR LTC	*LETTER INPUT GUARD BN CDR	ADC(M) BG
RTD SENIOR TRAINER, CPT	RTD CHIEF MAJ	N/A	RTD CDR LTC
MAINT OFFICER, W-3	RTD CHIEF MAJ	N/A	RTD CDR LTC
MASTER GUNNER, E-7	RTD SR. TRAINER CPT	N/A	RTD SR. TRAINER CPT

\*Letter input may be provided to Senior Rater by individuals holding position as RTD Chief.

**Figure 2**

- Prepare tank gunnery in the conduct of tank maneuver/gunnery simulation training.
- Plan for exercising mobilization plans and assist in mobilization review.
- Assist in coordinating and certifying gunnery-related matters.
- Ensure gunnery training follows the guidelines IAW 17-12-RC (Reserve Component Tank Gunnery Training Program).
- Assist to make all Operational Readiness Evaluations (OREs) successful.
- Assist the battalion commander and staff in functional and tactical training.
- Plan, evaluate and assess "Platoon Lanes" for the armor platoons and the battalion mortar platoon.
- Assist in the implementation of all MCOFT/UCOFT training programs.
- Plan and write MOIs for the tank platoons and mortar platoon.
- Ensure training is always done to standard.
- Ensure training meetings are conducted IAW TC 25-30 "A Leader's Guide To Company Training Meetings."

Initially, the RTD was a skeleton detachment. After six months, our manning distribution to support the Guard battalion is pictured in Figure 1 and our rating scheme in Figure 2.

To avoid confusion and lack of information throughout the Active

Army, let me explain the RTD role (from a captain's standpoint), as I know it.

First, an RTD quickly learns the RC acronyms and the RC guidance and directives described in FMs 25-100/101. Initially, I reviewed the assessment of the previous year's training and the existing year's training calendar with the battalion. Most of the METL tasks were assessed as a "P."

The yearly training calendar is shown in Figure 3.

### Expectations:

You will be assigned specifically to train one or two tank companies and, possibly, one of the special platoons in the HHC Company. Additionally, you can be expected to assist the bat-

talion commander in the battle staff training areas of emphasis.

Expect to train anyone from the company commander down to the lowest private in the company. Plan to train more than one level down and evaluate two levels down. Prepare yourself to train company commanders, XO's, PL's, PSG's, TC's, and privates. At the same time, prepare yourself to assist in evaluating tank crews during TCGST, TCPC, STX's, etc. You will be asked to demonstrate your skills to anyone and everyone in the company. The skill level of the soldiers varies greatly and is not always dependent on their grade. Some of the areas in which you may be expected to train and/or evaluate are:

- Plan for an STX (Co Cdrs, PL's, PSG's, and TC's)
- Write OPORD's (Co Cdrs and PL's)
- How to tank (everyone in the company, i.e. boresighting, maneuver techniques, radio procedures, map reading)
- How to prepare for an inspection (full-time personnel).

Do not expect to be an advisor to the unit. Keep in mind the word "advisor" is no longer a word used by the RTD.

Yearly Training Calendar			
1st Qtr	2d Qtr	3d Qtr	4th Qtr
100% Small Arms Qual	ORE	APFT (Record)	Annual Training (Ft. Stewart)
	MCOFT	TCPC	Post AT Inventory
	Legal Briefs	AAC	Plt STXs (Ft. Stewart)
	Conduct of Fire Classes	TTV	SIMNET Exercise
	Tgt Acq Drills	TTVIII Rock Drills	
	TCGST Train-up	Load for Annual Tng	
APFT (Diagnostic)	TCGST		
Maint Training			

**Figure 3**

As an RTD, the staff will quickly learn to use the word "assist" in lieu of the old cliché "advisor." You are the person who has the expertise! You have the answers to assist leaders and soldiers in the entire company. You can help the company or platoon in the planning phase, which will aid in their Inactive Duty Training (IDT) weekend. By providing your hands-on knowledge from your previous assignments, you can enhance the goals and accomplishments of the Guard. For example, you can demonstrate the effective use of rehearsals and rock drills, which allows soldiers to increase their chance of success during the initial iteration of a collective task.

Plan on being the "battalion commander, company commander, platoon leader, supply sergeant, IG...etc." You will wear many hats during your time in an RTD. Don't get tunnel vision and cause yourself to miss implied tasks! Remember, you are the expert when you arrive at this assignment; thus, the unit will expect you to provide them with the correct answers.

Start preparing yourself now. You want to be the guy who can walk a tank crew through the TTVIII Rock Drills IAW 17-12-RC. Know the Reserve/Guard roles and standards in conjunction with Army Regulations.

Be prepared to plan and execute an event in 1-2 months. There will be times when you have limited resources, but must help plan a task to be executed the following month. Expect to represent the "Senior Leadership" during many of the weekend drills. You will be writing many AARs during your tour, as you observe training. Periodically, your input will be orally briefed to the Brigade commander. The brigade commander may expect you to be his "eyes and ears" for training, as well as giving him a pulse reading sometime during the training year.

One thing will always remain the same. Don't ever lower the standards adopted for the training event (i.e. state or Army regulation). Maintain focus, direction, and vision in everything you do as an RTD and don't allow anyone to use shortcuts. Always be the leader and mentor to those who expect nothing but the best from you. Remember, you represent the qualifications of a typical active duty armor

captain in the U.S. Army. "The role of the RTD is to enhance the chain of command, not replace it, and building a strong leader training program is the key to building strong units."<sup>3</sup>

#### **Accomplishments:**

They will be small. Small accomplishments are your best measure for your success; don't expect to change everything. If you can improve planning areas, i.e. leaders use "TC 25-30," then you are on the right track for success. Never allow a training event to be trained without a measurable standard. Enforce task, conditions, and standards and don't allow soldiers to be satisfied with marginal "Go's." If you accept this, you will be allowing soldiers to train to die in combat.

Work on soldier and junior leader development. Take the time to show the company commanders how to train their platoon leaders. This is where you can make a difference. You may see inexperienced company commanders; but remember, no one took the time to train them. Do not be afraid to train the company commander on the duties. The commander may be too shy to ask you openly for assistance, so take the initiative and fix the problem.

As I depart my two years as an RTD captain with a Guard tank battalion, I think of my significant contributions (remembering my small accomplishments are sometimes the biggest to conquer). Some of my small accomplishments are:

- Teaching company-level junior leaders how to execute training meetings IAW TC 25-30.
- Enforcement of FMs 25-100/101 during the year.
- Pushing leaders to have physical training during every drill weekend.
- Providing a basic background to leaders on tactics, techniques, and procedures.
- Executing training to standard, the way it was planned.
- Flexibility as changes occur.

Your assignment will be rewarding. Small accomplishments are RTD achievable; don't try to defeat the

world. Leave with a feeling of accomplishment. There will be soldiers who will maintain those skills passed down by you. Someday, when the RTD goes away, our job will not be left behind. There will be RC/Guard soldiers assisting the Army as part of a fully integrated force package.

#### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Memorandum for Total Army Commanders, Subject: BOLD SHIFT Information letter, para. 4, dated 10 August 1992, written by GEN Edwin H. Burba, Jr., former FORSCOM commander.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., para. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Active Army Orientation Course, Booklet H, Resident Training Detachment Information Packet, National Guard Education Center, MOI, Subject: RTD, dated 20 July 1992, p. 2, written by COL Michael G. Jones, CofS, 4th ID(M).

Captain (P) Leon I. Smith IV was commissioned in 1983 through Officer Candidate School and has attended AOBC, JOMC, Airborne, AOAC, and CAS<sup>3</sup>. He holds a BS Degree in management from the University of South Carolina and a MA Degree in management from Webster University. He served with 1st Squadron, 11th ACR as a tank platoon leader, scout platoon leader, and company XO; commanded a tank company with 4-40 (now 2-35) Armor, 4th ID(M); was a tactics instructor for the Engineer Officer Advanced Course; and served as a tactical advisor for 3d Army for breaching operations during DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM. He recently served as an RTD for 1st ID(M) with 218th SHB(M). He is currently attending the Command and General Staff College.