

NATIONAL RESERVE FORCES STATUS



COUNTRY : BELGIUM

GENERAL INFO

The former “mass Reserve” concept has been replaced by a “small-scale Reserve” as much as possible integrated within the Forces, well trained and deployable as early as peacetime either on a voluntary basis or within the framework of special commitments (under the status of “Immediate Available Reserve” or “Voluntary Staff Duties”) and possibly also on a compulsory basis ordered by the Government.

BASIC ORGANIZATION PRINCIPLES

The need for Reservists necessary to complete and reinforce our Armed Forces in peacetime and wartime has been assessed at a maximum of 7 000 posts. The number of Reservists will be limited at 6 000 posts in 2015 (end phase for the reorganization). These Reservists are former regular soldiers (with 10 years period of military liabilities after the end of service), retired regular servicemen (until maximum 60 years) and new voluntary Reservists, (all male or female). This number covers the posts “Reserve” integrated in active units and at Staff level, in addition to the posts for active personnel. The Reserve personnel is integrated in the peacetime and wartime establishment in order to facilitate the functioning and to reinforce units in all circumstances.

MAIN LEGAL LEGISLATION

Law dated 16 May 2001

Royal Decree dated 03 May 2003

Regulations dated 01 Nov 2003

Regulation dated 18 Nov 2004 (social contribution)

Directive dated 16 Nov 2005 (making use of the Reserve)

FUNCTIONS OF RESERVES

In a normal peacetime situation, the missions for the Reserve consist in preparing itself for crisis situations and wartime through instruction and training, and in completing and reinforcing the regular Armed Forces on a voluntary basis for Crisis Response Operations.

In a crisis situation and by Government decision, the Reserve progressively participates in the build-up of the Main Defence Forces.

The Reserve’s tasks in wartime, after a Royal Decree for Mobilization, consist in completing and reinforcing the Armed Forces to make it possible for them to carry out their missions 24 hours a day.

CATEGORIZATION/READINESS

Consequently the Reserve consists of the following :

The Voluntary Reserve is made up of about 3 000 men and women, either former ex-regular servicemen with military experience who want to continue in the Reserve on a voluntary basis, or some civilians without military experience who are volunteers to receive a military instruction and training and to take part in the active Reserve (until maximum 60 years).

To meet the emergency intervention requirements, an Immediate Available Reserve is set up. It includes Reservists who voluntarily apply for an additional enlistment for a well-defined period of time, making them ready to be engaged in peacetime operations during the period considered. The Ordinary Reserve is made up of a compulsory Reserve consisting of former ex-regular servicemen who want to stay in the Reserve but DON'T participate in training and instruction.

FUNDING

All the needed funding is planned to cover the basic training for the new voluntary Reservists (about 3 000 active Reservists).

TRAINING

The training level must be optimal to avoid useless constraints for the Reservists. This level has been fixed at MINIMUM 7 days/year for the cadre and 5 days/year for the ranks. In addition to this training, extra activities can also be authorized according to the need.

The members of the Immediate Available Reserve have a training level of MINIMUM 14 days/year.

The personnel referred to as "out of training" are NOT allowed to carry out additional duties and to participate in promotion during that period. These personnel will nevertheless continue to be liable to call-out in a crisis situation and in wartime.

INTERNET

<http://www.mil.be/reserve>

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

The law dated 16 May 2001 limits the annual duties without the employer's consent to some extent. It is actually a question of protecting the Reservist towards his employer without however jeopardizing too much the company's productivity.

As to employer support, Belgium has consequently opted for a compromise based on both the goodwill and motivation of the Reservists and their employers, and on a legislation offering a sufficient social protection. Employer support has been taken into account by our Staff since a few years. A few positive initiatives have been developed that are the skeleton of a genuine "Employer Support" policy.