

NATIONAL RESERVE FORCES STATUS 2006

COUNTRY: THE NETHERLANDS

GENERAL INFO

When in active service, reserve personnel is regarded equal to regular career soldiers. All benefits are also treated equally (payment, medical care, equipment, uniform etc)

Since the end of 2005 a new reservist policy has been adopted by the parliament of the Netherlands, which implies revitalisation of the reservist population in the databases. The total of 60.000 (most of them inactive) reservists will be downsized to approximately 5.600 active reservist. The larger part will be utilised for home defence and national taskings. A relatively small amount of reservists will be used – if needed – in specific specialist tasks in missions out of area.

The number of regular military personnel totals: 59.000

The number of active reservists totals (as now foreseen): 5.600

In both groups the approximate number of females is 9%

BASIC ORGANISATIONAL PRINCIPLES

All active reservists perform their taskings on a voluntary basis. The reservist military tasks will mostly be on duty during weekends and occasionally during working hours. The reservist specialist tasks however, will in most cases be in active service for a longer period in time – and in many cases in out of area operations.

National tasks, reservist military tasks

The larger part of the future active reservist population will be utilised for home defence and national tasks, which also implies support to civil authorities in case of unforeseen catastrophies and upholding tradition related military exposure. The minimum of active service is set at 100 days yearly, including training.

Out of area tasks

The armed forces of the Netherlands played and play an important role in UN and NATO operations outside our Kingdom. Forces have been deployed in most rural areas of the world. Recently the focuss has shifted to Afghanistan – while still a large contingent upholds the fragile peace in Bosnia and smaller units in other parts of the world. During those operations there is a growing need for civilian experts in different fields to complement the military expertise that is already deployed. Mostly reservists specialist tasks are called for.

Reservist specialist tasks

Especially in developing operations specific tasks – other than military tasks in the strict sense – emerge to be fulfilled. Expert trauma teams are needed, operational analysts, administrative specialists in rebuilding government assets, specialised military surgeons, linguists, mediators, negotiators, engineers etc may be called for to effectively build on military success (in the Netherlands we adhere to the “hearts and minds” adagium). These specialists will in most cases be reservists, who are recruited beforehand with their operational deployment in mind. The kind of specialists needed will vary and filling the posts will be on demand, based on selecting people from a sufficiently military trained group of reservists.

MAIN LEGISLATION

- After dispensing the conscript system, mobilisable units have also been abolished. This means that reserve personnel is no longer under the legal obligation to participate in activities and training of armed forces.

INTERNET

<http://www.defensie.nl>

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

The transition from a large contingent of dormant reservists to a small contingent of active reservist has only recently been set into motion. By the end of 2006 this operation is expected to be finalised.