

2018: Department of the Army Reform Initiative

Study: Department of the Army Reform Initiative (*Department of the Army Historical Summary, Fiscal Year 2018, Department of the Army Historical Summary, Fiscal Year 2019, CMH files.*)

Purpose: On 16 April 2018, Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper established the Army Reform Initiative to address his assessment that Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), had grown too large and assumed too much authority. This increase placed greater burdens on subordinate commands, narrowed the authority of leaders in the field, and unnecessarily delayed the completion of actions. The intent of the reform was to push authorities and responsibilities down to the lowest level capable of exercising them and place more decision-making authority in commands across the Army. A smaller HQDA could then focus on policy, enterprise-wide priorities, and matters of strategic importance. The under secretary and vice chief of staff served as co-chairs of the Army Reform Initiative, while the Office of Business Transformation led the reform working group, with support from across HQDA and the Department of the Army.

Outcome: By May 2018, the Army Reform Initiative working group received over 600 recommendations from HQDA and major commands—and ultimately received over 700 by March 2019. From May to June 2018 the working group assessed each as providing high value, medium value, or low value if implemented. It created categories for the recommendations. Category A addressed efficiencies, such as terminating unnecessary processes or realigning where certain tasks should be accomplished (some 440 proposals). Category B addressed manpower and risk analysis. Category C addressed headquarters' structural efficiencies (over 120 recommendations, later bundled into 33 initiatives). Category D addressed continuous process improvement and business process reengineering (approximately 190 suggestions). Throughout the remainder of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 and FY 2019, the working group reviewed and oversaw the completion of the first set of changes across all four categories—to include teeing up major decisions for Army Senior Leader approval. Two major headquarters reforms that resulted from Category C recommendations were the transfer of U.S. Army Installation Management Command from the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army to U.S. Material Command effective 1 March 2019 and the realignment of the U.S. Army Center of Military History from the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army to U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command effective 1 October 2019. Secretary Esper launched a second round of ARI in May 2019 with an emphasis on improving processes, procedures, and structure at the Army enterprise level in order to allow commands and staff organizations to continue internal reforms that empower lower-level commanders.

Mr. William M. Yarborough
Approved by: Dr. Peter Knight, GS-15