

## 2014-2015: HQDA Comprehensive Review

**Study:** HQDA Comprehensive Review (Lt. Gen. Thomas Spoehr, et al, “Reducing the Size of Headquarters, Department of the Army: An After-Action Review,” *Military Review* (Jan-Feb 2017); *Department of the Army Historical Summary, Fiscal Year 2015*; CMH files.)

**Purpose:** A July 2013 secretary of defense directive for a 20 percent reduction in the Department of Defense’s management headquarters spending initiated headquarters reductions for the Army. On 17 July 2014, following the completion of the headquarters reduction study done by the Focused Area Review Group, Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh directed the under secretary of the Army, in coordination with the vice chief of staff of the Army, to oversee a comprehensive review of Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), to optimize its size, roles, functions, missions, and organizational structure. The Office of Business Transformation and a commercial business consultant—the Boston Consulting Group—led the review itself. The review had two distinct phases—first, a fact-finding review that looked at strength over time, mission-to-workforce analysis, and comparison to similar organizations; and second an implementation period. The review used organizational delayering techniques to meet the 25 percent reduction targets through Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 set by the Focused Area Review Group and to improve staff communication and responsiveness.

**Outcome:** The comprehensive review team completed their work in March 2015. Among their findings were that numerous agencies had an excessive number of echelons between action officers and senior decision makers, and that too many managers had too few employees to manage. Their guidance, therefore, recommended organizational changes intended to flatten HQDA: reducing the number of managers and increasing their span of control, eliminating reporting echelons, reducing same grade reporting, and reducing the use of deputies. These changes were intended to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of HQDA, placing it on par with other large corporate headquarters. The review also identified some 2,100 personnel authorizations (approximately 1,900 civilian and 300 military) for reduction by FY 2019—ideally through attrition or hiring freezes. On 11 June 2015, Secretary McHugh and General Odierno formally approved the redesign recommended by the review, with HQDA provisionally reorganizing no later than the end of FY 2016 as a preparatory step and full implementation no later than the start of FY 2019. Secretary McHugh also chartered an Implementation and Review Council, co-chaired by the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army and the Director of the Army Staff, to implement the recommendations served as a forum to adjudicate issues not addressed or fully developed during the review.

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