

MILITARY REFORM: TOWARD THE NEW LOOK OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY

VALDAI DISCUSSION CLUB
ANALYTICAL REPORT

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O. Introduction

In October 2008, Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov announced the launch of a new stage of military reform, aimed at transitioning the Russian Armed Forces to a new look. This rapid and intensive military reform has turned out to be the most radical transformation of the country's military since the creation of the Red Army in 1918.¹ The Defense Ministry has embarked on an active and vigorous campaign of reforms, most of which were completed on an organizational level by December 1, 2009. However, the reform process is still continuing on many fronts.

In an unprecedentedly short period for peacetime, the Russian Armed Forces have been given a new look that is radically different from the traditional form of the Red, Soviet and Russian armies

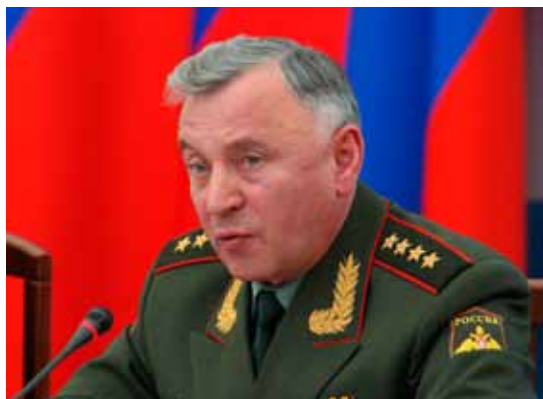
The changes affected all the main elements of Russia's Armed Forces – strength, command and control, organization, and officer training. It is not only the radical nature but also the speed of the reforms that is astonishing. In fact, in an unprecedentedly short period for peacetime, the Russian Armed Forces underwent a restructuring that was radically different from the traditional form of the Red, Soviet and Russian armies. Whether by intuition or consciously, Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces Nikolai Makarov in this respect seem to be following the principle once formulated

by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Empire Count Sergei Witte: “In Russia, you need to enact reforms quickly; otherwise they mostly do not work out and are inhibited.”

It should also be noted that the top political leadership fully supports the Serdyukov-Makarov military reform. It is this support that has played a significant role in stabilizing the reform, given the intense criticism by the military and the “expert community” of many aspects of the changes. This political support

has resulted in consistent increases in spending on the country's defense. Moreover, these increases have been forthcoming not only in periods of economic growth, but also during the acute phase of the 2008–2009 economic crisis.

The importance and the scale of transformations were noted in Vladimir Putin's report, published on the threshold of the presidential elections: “We have adopted and are implementing unprecedented development programs for our armed forces and for the modernisation of Russia's defense industry. All in all, we will allocate something like 23 trillion rubles for these purposes over the next decade. Frankly speaking, there have been plenty of discussions regarding the size and timeliness of such sizable allocations. I am convinced that they fully correspond to the country's potential and resources. And, most important, we cannot put off the goal of creating modern armed forces and of comprehensively strengthening our defensive potential.”²



It is too early to gauge the final outcome of the reform process. Although the organizational transformations have to a large extent already been made, two of the most time-consuming aspects of the reforms – strength acquisition and the training of new, professional and adequately motivated personnel (both officers and contract soldiers), and rearmament – are far from complete.

The results of the reforms in these two areas will not be visible before 2012–2015. It needs to be clearly understood that it is the preparation of the new officer and new soldier that

is of key importance. Success in personnel preparation will mean that the Russian Armed Forces can become Russia's most efficient public institution, against the backdrop of a generally rather inefficient and corrupt Russian bureaucracy. Failure will be tantamount to the failure of the entire military reform program overall.

¹ Some believe that the most radical transformation took place before and during World War II.

² Vladimir Putin's article "Being strong: National security guarantees for Russia" //Rossiiskaya Gazeta, February 20, 2012

1. Prerequisites for the Military Reform

1.1. *The Russian Armed Forces before the Reform in 2008*

On the eve of the radical changes, widely referred to as “giving the armed forces a new look”, the Russian Army was in fact still holding on to the main features of its Soviet predecessor. However, compared to the Soviet Army, it had deteriorated substantially in almost all the basic parameters – the quality of combat training and personnel, motivation, modern equipment, or even simply in terms of new weapons and military hardware. The main weaknesses of the Russian Army in the period before the reforms were:

On the eve of the radical changes the Russian Army had deteriorated substantially in almost all the basic parameters

1.1.1. Disproportionate echelons of command. While the total number of personnel in the Armed Forces was 1.35 million, there were 52,000 command-and-control personnel. At the same time, the actual strength of combat-ready forces, as shown by the experience of the two Chechen wars, was no more than 100,000. Consequently, there was one command-and-control professional for every two combat-ready soldiers and officers.

1.1.2. A disproportionately large proportion of officers and warrant officers – 50% of the

overall strength, while the structure of the officer personnel was well below standard. Instead of a “pyramid,” in which junior officers made up the majority of the personnel, there was an “egg” shape, with almost as many lieutenant colonels as there were captains, and even more majors.

1.1.3. A low proportion of stand-by combat-ready units, less than 13% of the total number of units. In the Army, this share reached 17%, in the Air Force it was no more than 7% (and none at all in the Anti-Aircraft Missile Troops) and in the Navy it was 70%. Only the Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) and the Airborne Forces were 100% ready for combat operations. A period of one year was needed to achieve full combat readiness and deployment of the Army, while the vast majority of armed conflicts of the past 20 years have been characterized by volatility and lack of a clearly defined period of threat.

1.1.4. In the period from 1992 to 2008, i.e. over 16 years, virtually no significant purchases of weapons and military equipment were made for general-purpose forces. As a result, at the outset of the reforms, the Army was equipped with obsolete and outdated weapons and military equipment, much of which was in out-of-commission status. The situation was particularly dire in one of the most hi-tech services of the Armed Forces, the Air Force, where up to 55% of the total equipment was out of commission.

Staffing of the armed forces of the Russian Federation until 2008

| | | STRUCTURE OF THE RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES UNTIL 2008. UNITS OF PERMANENT COMBAT READINESS | | FUNCTIONAL WEAPONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | | FUNCTIONAL WEAPONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT | | FUNCTIONAL WEAPONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT |
| Army | Formations and units | 17% | 75-85% | 100% | 85-90% |
| Air Force | Aviation units | 7% | 45-50% | 100% | 50-55% |
| | Air defense units | 0% | | 100% | |
| Navy | Ships and patrol boats | 70% | 75-80% | 100% | 75-80% |
| Strategic Missile Forces | Missile regiments | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Airborne Forces | Formations and units | 100% | 85% | 100% | 85% |
| Size of the Armed Forces | | 1,35 MIL in peacetime | | 4,20 MIL in wartime | |

Source: Russian Defense Ministry

1.2. Military, Political and Technical Prerequisites for the Reform

The essential features of the Soviet Army were retained for 15 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but the Russian Armed Forces were in a qualitatively new military-political, technological and resource (especially demographic and financial) environment, which naturally required them to adapt to a new context. Among the most significant changes that triggered the transformations are the following:

1.2.1. A radical change in the global military and political situation. The end of the ideological confrontation between the two systems

(due to the collapse of one of them) is believed to have reduced the probability of large-scale war, preparations for which had always been the main task of the Soviet Army. Even if we assume that the elimination of deep ideological contradictions and Russia's desire to build the same type of Western economic (market economy) and political system (open polyarchy, more commonly referred to today as "democracy") do not mean the end of military and political rivalry, it is clear that Moscow does not have sufficient resources to continue competing in the conventional field.

Containment of NATO, if it is still relevant, can only be done with a nuclear deterrent. On the other hand, all the real evidence shows



that since 1979, the Soviet, and subsequently Russian, Army has been perpetually involved in local, counter-guerilla and counter-terrorism wars, and has also conducted numerous peacekeeping operations. It is clear that preparations for this type of conflict have far less stringent requirements in terms of army strength and mobilization capability, but at the same time call for a significant increase in professionalism and combat readiness.

Containment of NATO can only be done with a nuclear deterrent

1.2.2. The evolution of forms and methods of warfare. The Russian military hold that the theory of network-centric warfare, which has a profound theoretical basis and has had practical confirmation, dominates modern Western (primarily American) military thinking.

The “network” concept presupposes that the traditional linear, centralized and hierarchical principle of social systems (“center – periphery,” “trunk – branches”), which is characteristic of an industrial society, will be replaced with self-organizing, nonlinear and fundamentally non-structuralized systems suitable for a modern information society. It is assumed that in such “nonlinear” systems, there is no “core,” i.e. no clearly defined “center,” since every cell of such a set may, under certain circumstances, assume the function of the “center.” Consequently, modern military organization is conceived as a totality of highly professional

“elite” military units, combined into a single real-time “combat information network” that gives them access to unprecedentedly high levels of reconnaissance, situational data and target designation, and imparts to these combat units an unheard-of capacity for coordination. Network-centric military operations have a number of features that distinguish them qualitatively from the nature of war under the “deep-battle” theory which prevailed during the Second World War and for several decades thereafter. These special features include:

1.2.2.1. The development of command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems, as well as firepower leading to an increase in the importance of the actions and the combat effectiveness of relatively small groups of “combat units.” Units of even low tactical value are dispersed, which requires a good knowledge of the enemy, as well as knowledge and understanding of the intentions of one’s own higher command. Combat operations are conducted with the highest degree of autonomy and independence of units, with increased initiative of command among them.

1.2.2.2. Combat operations are carried out very rapidly, and are distinctive in their rapid and constant maneuvering, including “vertical” maneuvering.

1.2.2.3. The massing of forces and resources and fires, is no longer a decisive factor in military superiority. Furthermore, such massing

could actually have an adverse effect, since it makes it easier to find targets for destruction. There will be a tendency for the prevalence of smaller, highly mobile and agile forces.

1.2.2.4. Military operations are designed to not only defeat the enemy physically, but also to crush their morale, and not just of the troops but also of the people and the government. Factors such as the depth of support for the war among the general population play an increasingly important role and, accordingly, so does understanding and using culturally specific features of the enemy and his political system, including through exposure via the media.

The evolution of the external environment and the deterioration of the demographic situation make it absolutely imperative to transform a mass mobilization army into one that is more compact and professional

1.2.2.5. The distinction between “civilian” and “military” segments of society is disappearing. The aim of a military campaign is to impact not only the enemy army, but also its society, understood in terms of its cultural as well as its physical aspects. This trend makes it necessary to conduct joint “civilian-military” operations, rather than purely military ones.

1.2.3. Changes in the contribution of the services and combat arms of the Armed Forces in achieving the ultimate goal of combat operations. The military, political and doctrinal evolution, as well as unfavorable

demographic dynamics, have impacted on the traditional Russian military hierarchy of different services and combat arms. First of all, achieving the capability to conduct network-centric war presupposes a radical modernization of command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR), particularly at the tactical level, an area where the Soviet Army typically lagged behind. On the other hand, the demographic crisis and the declining quality of conscripts mean that the Russian Army will no longer be able to rely on its usual trump card of numerous motorized rifle and tank forces. Perhaps for

the first time in its military history, the Russian Army cannot count on a guaranteed numerical superiority over the enemy, and therefore needs to raise its technological level. Accordingly, hi-tech tools of “stand-off warfare,” such as aircraft and precision weapons, are becoming increasingly important. It goes without saying that maintaining the strategic balance, by definition,

requires the preservation of the primacy of all three components of the Strategic Nuclear Forces (SNF).

In addition, the active efforts of the U.S. to create new and effective means of high-precision conventional attack make it necessary to strengthen the Aerospace Defense Forces. In general, both the evolution of the external environment and the deterioration of the demographic situation make it absolutely imperative to transform a mass mobilization army into one that is more compact and professional.

2. Military-Political Context of Reform: Risks and Threats to Russia's Military Security

Any discussion of military reform will inevitably involve constructing a hierarchy of military risks and threats. This should proceed from the fact that the priorities publicly announced in a variety of doctrinal documents may differ significantly from the true hierarchy of threats which lies at the base of real military preparations. For example, there is no mention in official documents of a possible military threat from the China, while the actual military organizational development clearly cannot ignore such a threat. However, non-governmental observers may be freer to express their views on the priorities of military security. In building a hierarchy of military priorities for Russia, we should distinguish the probability of an armed conflict and the scale of threat that this conflict poses for the vital interests of the country. For example, the most probable scenario for today is the emergence in the medium term of conflicts in Central Asia, which may affect Russia's Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) allies, but it will not pose a threat to the vital interests of Russia itself (at least while Kazakh-

stan does not come under attack.) On the other hand, a conflict with NATO, which seems unlikely for now, could compromise the lives of most of Russia's population and the very existence of the Russian Federation as a state. If the main criterion is probability of armed conflicts with Russian involvement, the following hierarchy can be defined:

2.1. Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space

2.1.1. The entire Belavezha Accords system of state and territorial structure, which took shape as a result of the 1991 national disaster (the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991), is illegitimate, random, unstable and therefore fraught with conflict. The entire post-Soviet Eurasian space is an area with a complex combination of integration, separatist and irredentist tendencies. The system has been in a state of permanent crisis for almost all of the 20 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union,





and it is safe to say that in future it is doomed to more or less conflict-ridden transformation. Specific forms of this transformation can range from short-term revivals of currently frozen conflicts to the collapse of some of the post-Soviet states. In this case, any conflict in the post-Soviet space is highly likely, if not certain, to lead to Russia's intervention, including military intervention. After all, Russia is committed to ensuring the safety of the CSTO, as well as South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

will inevitably worsen in the case of withdrawal of Western coalition troops from the country, which will more than likely be followed by a return to the Taliban rule. Most likely, the authoritarian but weak Central Asian regimes will not independently provide effective resistance to a highly motivated and experienced Taliban force, and Russian intervention in one form or another will become all but inevitable, turning into an absolute certainty should Kazakhstan come under attack.

The entire Belavezha Accords system of state and territorial structure is illegitimate, random, unstable and therefore fraught with conflict

2.1.2. Today, the most likely threat is a dramatic aggravation of the situation in Central Asia. The fundamental cause of weakness of the states in the region is, in essence, their artificial nature: the current national territorial demarcation did not stem from a long historical evolution, but was the result of the discretionary decisions of the Bolshevik leadership in Moscow. Moreover, the proneness to conflict in Central Asia is both endogenous and can be encouraged from outside. The sources of internal conflict can be clan and regional rivalries (as has already happened in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and partly in the Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan), national and ethnic divisions (Kyrgyzstan; Uzbek-Tajik tensions in Uzbekistan) and social tensions. External threats emanating from Afghanistan

2.1.3. It is not a hypothetical, but a very real conflict in the North Caucasus that persists within the territory of Russia. The ethnic separatist rebellion in Chechnya at the turn of 2002–2003 was transformed into a pan-Caucasian Salafi underground, which is waging a subversive and terrorist “insurgency war.” The scale of military operations (up to 300 militants and a similar number of military and law enforcement officers are killed each year) is equivalent to a low-intensity conflict, and the spatial scale of the sabotage and zone affected by terrorism to that of a regional conflict.

2.1.4. Russia is committed to ensuring the security of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which it has recognized as independent states and whose political sovereignty is challenged by Georgia. Although today the resumption of the Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian conflict seems unlikely, there is no doubt that the idea of revenge will continue to be central in Georgian political and military planning for decades to come, and these conflicts will be revived at the slightest weakening of Russia.



2.2. Other Threats

2.2.1. A “Falklands scenario” for the Kuril Islands. Japan is persisting in its open territorial claims against Russia, and has all the necessary military and technical tools for occupying the disputed Kuril Islands. Even the stagnant Japanese economy and the instability of its government could be catalysts

which, in view of the real balance of power between China and Russia, may, of course, only be achieved through the nuclear deterrent. Accordingly, the need to preserve and increase the effectiveness of the Strategic Nuclear Forces is dictated not only by the imperatives of maintaining strategic stability in relation to the U.S. and NATO, but also the need to contain China.

People’s Republic of China containment is becoming an ever more urgent task, which, in view of the real balance of power between China and Russia, may only be achieved through the nuclear deterrent

for hostile ambitions, just as it happened in Argentina in 1982. In this context, the priorities of Russia’s military planning should be the defense of the Kuril Islands, a counter-attack to recapture the islands in the case of Japanese occupation, and in the broader sense, general containment of Japan, including using the nuclear deterrent. Nevertheless, the size of Japan’s economy (second to third largest in the world), the continued development of its military technological capabilities make this task quite difficult.

2.2.2. Given the rapid growth of the economic, technological and military power of the People’s Republic of China, its containment is becoming an ever more urgent task,

2.2.3. “External” conflicts near Russia’s borders pose a genuine threat to Russian security – above all instability in the Middle East, and the situation in Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

2.2.4. Finally, the NATO operation in Yugoslavia, the United States’ and its allies’ invasion in Iraq, the French-British-Italian intervention in the civil war in Libya, as well as continuing territorial claims of some NATO countries against Russia and its ally Belarus are keeping the task of containing NATO a priority. This containment requires, above all, maintaining the effectiveness of the nuclear deterrent, especially in the context of the U.S. missile defense program. However, a direct military conflict between Russia and NATO in the foreseeable future seems extremely unlikely. The main trigger for such a conflict could be Western attempts to intervene in Russia’s relations with other former Soviet republics; however, as the experience of August 2008 has shown, NATO takes quite a cautious and restrained approach in these situations.

3. Demographic and Financial Resources

3.1. Demography

One of the main factors that will determine the nature of Russia's military organizational development in the short and medium term is the demographic crisis. This factor is likely to be even more important than the country's financial capabilities. Demography to a great extent defines the parameters of conscription,

It is thought that 700,000 men reach induction age in Russia each year, but with deferments and exemptions this figure is reduced to 550,000. Worse still, some demographers are predicting that in the coming years Russia is expected to enter a "demographic valley" – the consequence of a sharp decline in the birth rate during the national disaster (collapse of the Soviet Union) in the late 1980s

and early 1990s. The number of conscripts during this period is predicted to fall to 300,000 per year. However, the main limiting factor is not even the number of conscripts, but their quality. Above all, this is about the health of the young men called up for military service.

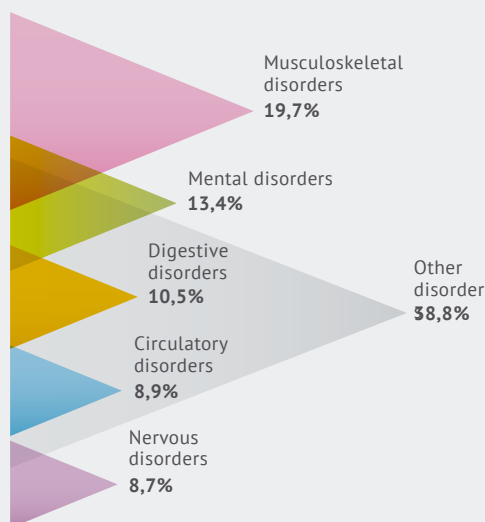
Hopes of achieving the announced army strength of one million is nothing more than a pipe dream

and, therefore, the ratio of conscripts to contract soldiers in the Armed Forces. Ultimately, demographic limitations will be the decisive factor in determining the actual size of the army. In all probability, hopes of achieving the announced army strength of one million are nothing more than a pipe dream.

The medical health of conscripts is at an all-time low and is declining still further. While at the end of 2007 the percentage of suitable recruits was 70.4%, by the end of 2009 it was already down to 68.4%. This suitability percentage has a clear inverse relationship with the level of urbanization and income in



Common medical conditions resulting in Russian citizens being exempted from the draft in 2009



Source: Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies

different regions across Russia. The lowest suitability percentage for recruits at the end of 2009 was observed in the Siberian (65.2%) and Moscow (66.9%) Military Districts, and the highest was in the North Caucasian (72.6%) and the Far Eastern (72.2%) Military Districts.

Another important indicator of the quality of conscripts is the level of civic loyalty among recruits from the North Caucasus region, especially those from Dagestan. Apart from the fact that soldiers from the North Caucasus are the principal instigators of bullying and crime in the Army, there are serious doubts about their loyalty to Russian national interests. Nevertheless, the Caucasus is where the most physically fit, best-trained and motivated recruits come from. Obviously, the resolution of this contradiction cannot be found at the level of the Armed Forces alone. This perspective covers issues that are fundamental to Russia's future, such as the modernization of the Caucasian republics, increasing the attractiveness of the pan-Russian national project and the

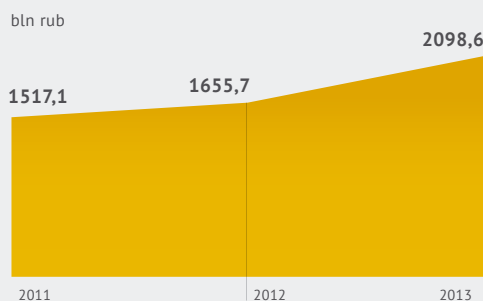
competitiveness of the broader Russian civic identity against Islamic religious or ethnic identity.

3.2. Financial and Economic Resources

Spending on national defense has been determined for 2011–2013.

The schedule (p.14) clearly shows that the next two years will be a time of intensive growth in military spending, which will increase in 2012 by 9.1%, and in 2013 by 26.8%. Growth in military spending is expected not only in absolute terms, but also as a percentage of the GDP – from 3.1% in 2011 to nearly 3.4% in 2013. If these plans are realized, Russia will be the third or fourth largest military spender in the world, behind only the United States, China, and possibly the UK. Significantly, the trend toward increased military spending goes against the trend of decline in most of the developed countries, but is in line with the general flow of the mainstream that can be

Schedule of budget allocations under the heading “National Defense”, 2011-2013



Source: Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies

The planned military spending formula can be defined as the maximum possible spending, taking into account the economic potential of Russia, and the minimum necessary to reconstruct an effective military machine

observed in countries with emerging markets, such as China, India, and to a lesser extent, Brazil.

Obviously, this places quite a high burden on the relatively small and weak Russian economy. We can assume that after 2013, implementing all the commitments to raising wages for servicemen, re-equipping the Army and inten-

sifying their combat training will require increasing the percentage share of the GDP spent on the military to 4% or even higher. This is the maximum permissible level of military spending – anything higher would have a detrimental effect on Russia’s economy. Even a prolonged period of 4% military spending is highly undesirable in a country that requires a radical overhaul of its infrastructure, healthcare and education. Nevertheless, that is the minimum level of funding needed to carry out the military reform and the modernization of the Armed Forces. Thus, the planned military spending formula can be defined as the maximum possible spending, taking into account the economic potential of Russia, and the minimum necessary to reconstruct an effective military machine.

4. Strategic Objectives of the Serdyukov-Makarov Reform

In general, as has already been stated, the ultimate goal of the reforms is to create modern, well-trained Armed Forces equipped with the latest weapons and military equipment.

Specific areas of ongoing reform as of October 2008 are:

- Reducing the strength of the Russian Armed Forces from 1.35 million in 2007 to 1 million in 2012.
- Eliminating reduced-strength combined units in the Army and the conversion of all combined units to Permanent Readiness Forces, while reducing the number of units and combined units in the Armed Forces, as well as military bases. In other words, it is the de facto renunciation of a mass mobilization army in favor of a more professional and combat-ready outfit.
- Changing the personnel structure to the normal “pyramid” structure. Reducing the number of officers from 335,000 to 150,000 (this threshold was subsequently raised to 220,000). Dissolution of the warrant officer corps.
- Forming a brand new command and control system for the Armed Forces. Instead of six Military Districts, establishing four inter-service United Strategic Commands, while retaining several combat arms – the Strategic Missile Forces, the Aerospace Defense Forces, and the Airborne Forces – under central command.
- Transitioning the Army to brigade organization and abolishing the divisional, corps and army levels.
- Reorganizing the Air Force and Air Defense; abolishing armies, corps, divisions and air regiments and transitioning to a system of air bases and aerospace defense brigades.
- Centralizing the personnel training system through the transformation of 65 military educational institutions into 10 “system-wide” military universities.
- Significantly reducing the Central Administrative Staff and the military command and control authority of the Defense Minis-



Goals and objectives of Armed Forces reforms

The purpose of the reforms is to create mobile and well-trained armed forces equipped with modern equipment and weapons

Priorities

- 1 Re-deployment of all formations and units for permanent combat readiness, 100% staffing for a state of war
- 2 Re-equipment of the Armed Forces with modern armaments, military and special equipment to meet modern requirements
- 3 Revision of program statutory documents for instruction, training and conduct of military operations of the Armed Forces, as well as planning and guidance documents to ensure the vital functions of troops and forces
- 4 Training of new officers and non-commissioned officers, compiling of new training programs, creation of a modern network of military schools
- 5 Ensuring decent military pay, fulfillment of permanent and service housing requirements and resolution of complex social security problems

Source: Russian Defense Ministry

The goal of the reforms is to create modern, well-trained Armed Forces equipped with the latest weapons and military equipment

try, as well as support and service support units from 51,300 to 13,400 personnel in total.

- Outsourcing logistic support and material welfare to civilian contract organizations.

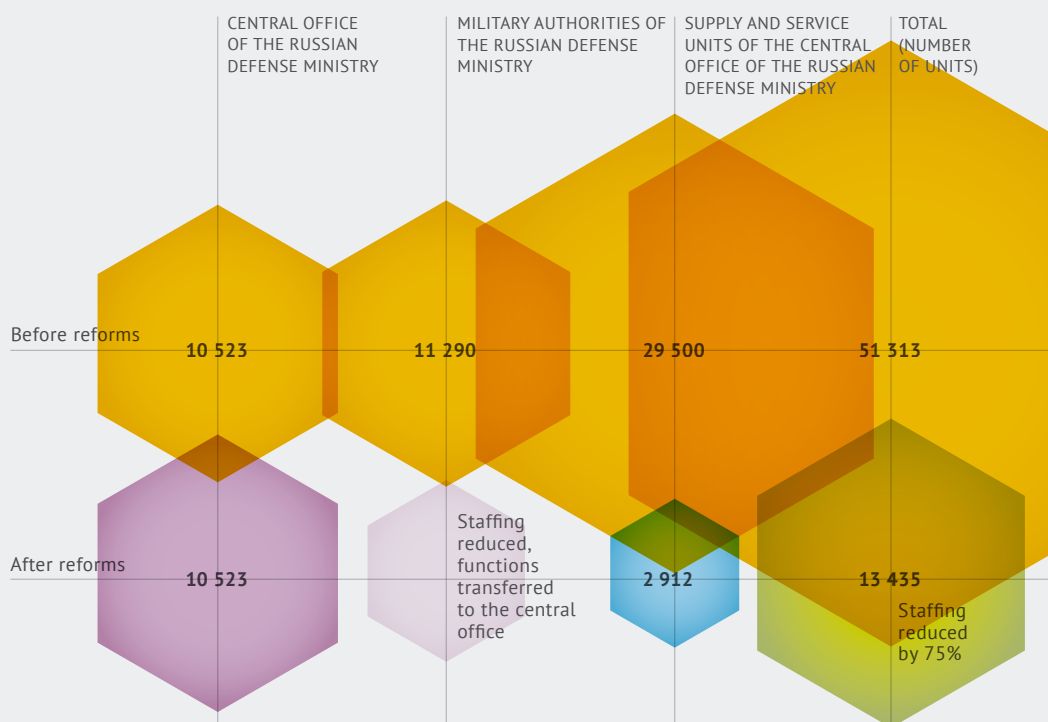
- Significantly intensifying combat training, radically increasing the number of exercises at all levels – from the individual and tactical level to the annual carrying out of exercises on a strategic scale.

- Adopting a new State Armament Program for the period 2011–2020, in the course of

which forces would be almost completely rearmed with new and 70% modern weapons and military equipment.

- Significantly increasing pay and allowances for members of the military and resolving

Changing the number of staff at the Central Office of the Russian Defense Ministry and supply and security units



Source: Russian Defense Ministry

the housing problem with the aim of vastly raising the prestige of military service.

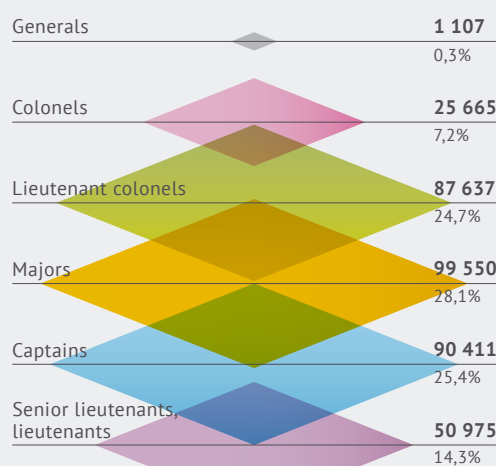
Let us look at some of these areas, primarily related to structural changes in the Russian Armed Forces.

4.1. Reducing the Strength of the Armed Forces, Including Reduction of the Number of Officers

One of the most obvious, though certainly not the most important, manifestations of the reforms is a marked reduction in the strength of the Armed Forces, including the officer corps. It was previously planned to bring the number down to one million personnel by 2016 (down from 1.35 million at

the start of the reforms), but this figure has already been reached by 2012. The officer corps was originally planned at 150,000 personnel (from 335,000 officer positions in 2008), and then the bar was raised to 220,000. Nevertheless, the actual reduction in the number of officers was less: 40,000 out of these 355,000 officer positions were in fact vacant and eliminated before the end of 2009. In addition, by the end of 2008, 26,700 officers had reached the age limit for military service and were subject to compulsory dismissal on age grounds, and in 2009, a further 9,100 officers were due to reach the age limit. As of 2008, there were 7,500 officers commissioned for two years after graduation from civilian colleges: they should also have been dismissed at the end of their terms of service, and from now on, such professionals will no longer be recruited.

The ratio of military rank categories in the structure of the armed forces until 2008



Source: Russian Defense Ministry

One of the most obvious manifestations of the reforms is a marked reduction in the strength of the Armed Forces, including the officer corps. In parallel the organization and establishment of the Army is being restructured in terms of job categories

In parallel with the downsizing of the army, its organization and establishment is being restructured in terms of job categories, from the pre-reform “egg-shaped” structure, dominated by colonels and lieutenant-colonels, who outnumbered junior officers, into the standard “pyramid” structure. As of September 1, 2008, there were 1,107 generals and admirals in the Russian Armed Forces; by 2012, this number was reduced to 610. The number of colonels is being reduced to 7,700; majors are down to 25,000, and captains are down from 90,000 to 42,000. In contrast, the

number of lieutenants and senior lieutenants should increase from 50,000 to 62,000. In 2009, the warrant officer corps was all but eliminated, their numbers falling from 142,000 to 118,700. At the same time, up to 20,000 warrant officers, who were in command positions, were commissioned as officers, and the rest were dismissed or switched to non-commissioned officer roles.

4.2. Establishing Unified Strategic Commands

The most significant administrative and organizational reform was the abolition of the “traditional” Military Districts in 2010. The six “old” Military Districts have been replaced by four new “large” Military Districts and the corresponding four Joint Strategic Commands (JSC).

Changes to the military administrative division of Russia



Under the new model, service commands and combat-arm commands are actually transformed into appropriate combat-arm headquarters, while retaining all the basic functions in organizational development, strength acquisition, and combat training, but losing direct operational control of them

The Western Military District (West JSC, commanded from St. Petersburg) was formed from the old Moscow and Leningrad Military Districts and is made up of forces from the two former Military Districts, as well as the Northern and Baltic Fleets. The former North-Caucasian Military District is being transformed into the Southern Military Dis-

trict (South JSC, commanded from Rostov-on-Don) and includes the Black Sea Fleet. The Volga-Urals Military District and the western part of the Siberian Military District were reincorporated into the Central Military District (Center JSC, commanded from Yekaterinburg). The remaining part of the Siberian Military District and the former Far Eastern Military District are being merged to form the Eastern Military District (East JSC, commanded from Khabarovsk), which also includes the Pacific Fleet.

These four commands correspond to the major strategic areas that the modern Russian military thought considers to be the main areas of potential threat and potential theaters of military operations (West, South, East), while

the Center JSC will apparently play the role of “continental reserve.”

The idea of establishing JSCs is based on the formation of unified, joint, integrated and different-service force groupings in the independent strategic sectors (theaters of operations). The composition of these force groupings under a unified command should include all the forces of the Army, the Airborne Forces, the Air Force, Air Defense and the Navy that are stationed on the territory of a JSC. Forming a system of coordination between different-service forces and materiel in modern warfare requires that permanent joint command-and-control agencies should

All the new look combined units must be fully manned and constitute permanently combat-ready forces

be created at the operational and strategic levels, as well as the establishment of permanent different-service joint forces at the same levels. The new JSCs are designed to reflect precisely these requirements.

Under the new model, service commands and combat-arm commands are actually transformed into appropriate combat-arm headquarters, while retaining all the basic functions in organizational development, strength acquisition, and combat training, but losing direct operational control of them.

4.3. Reorganizing the Army

The basic philosophy of the reorganization of the Army is to renounce the traditional Russian and Soviet model of a mass mobilization army (that is, one mostly composed of combined units which are subject to full deployment only upon mobilization) and to transit to a fully manned army based on units in a permanent state of combat-readiness in peacetime. The Soviet Army of the 1980s had four categories of armored and motorized rifle divisions, depending on their peacetime manning levels. Moreover, only around 50 out of 200 or so divisions were deemed Grade A, meaning they had 100% manning levels and were ready for

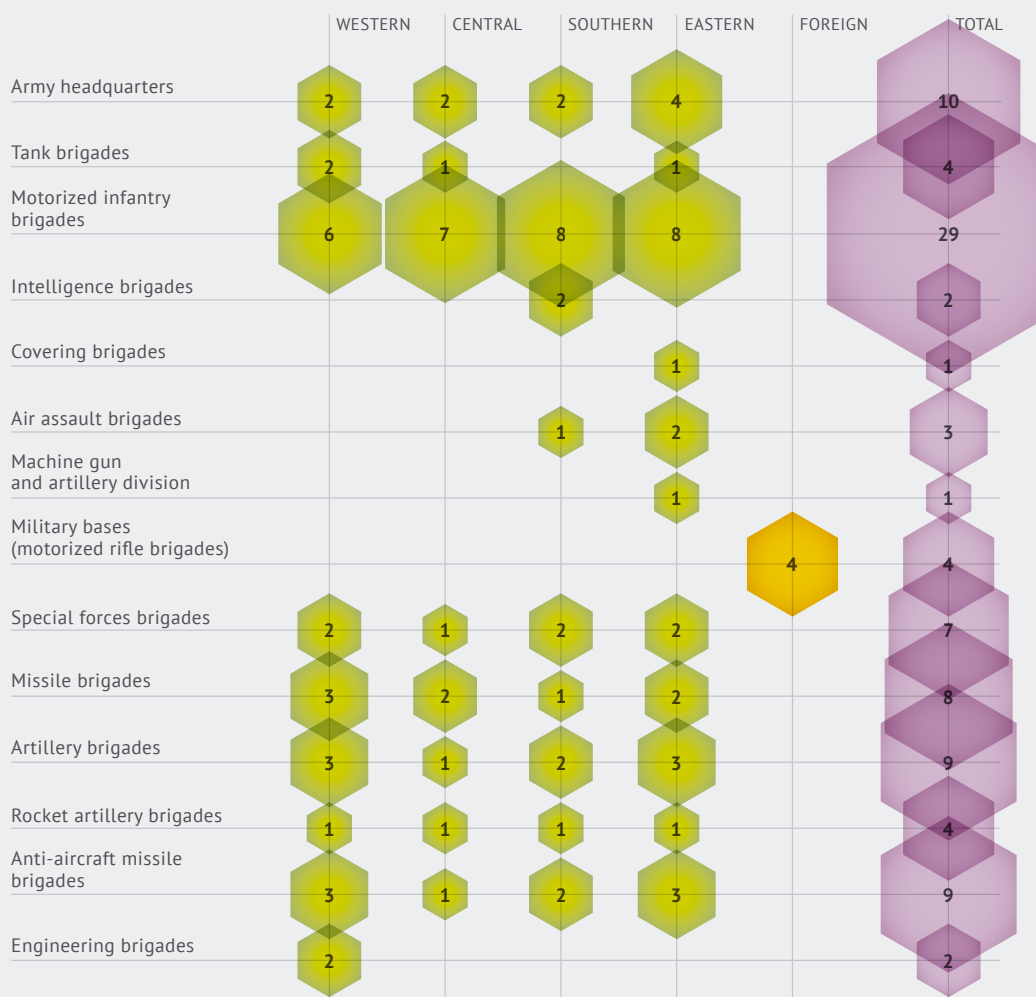
immediate commitment to battle. The remaining 150 divisions (at Grades B, C and D) required partial or full manning with mobilized reservists and a long lead time for wartime deployment. In addition, there were also reserve divisions that were completely “scaled down” in terms of their strength (after 1989, they were

analogous to division- or brigade-level weapons and equipment storage bases). This combination of permanently combat-ready units and ones that required additional mobilization (“scaled down” to varying degrees) remained in force in Russia until 2009. Consequently, all the reduced-strength units were subject to disbandment during the reforms. All the new look combined units must be fully manned and constitute permanently combat-ready forces.

An essential part of the reforms is to convert the Army to brigade structure and three-level



The approximate composition of the Army's units of permanent combat readiness in new Russian military districts as of the beginning of 2011 (excluding training and reserve units)



Source: Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies

command and control organization: military district – operational command – brigade. Instead of the existing divisions and combined-arms armies (and army corps), brigades based on the original reform concept were meant to unite under the Operational Commands. The plan was to assemble eight Operational Commands using the available nine combined-arms armies. However, in

2009–2010, these arrangements for the formation of Operational Commands were not implemented, and in the end it was decided to retain command-and-control headquarters of the armies.

During 2009, 23 divisions were disbanded, and 40 deployed brigades and brigade-level military bases were established to replace

the old divisions and brigades: a total of four armored brigades, 35 motorized rifle brigades and one protective cover brigade (in essence, a fortified area). Only two division-level units were retained: the 18th Machine-Gun and Artillery Division in the Southern Kurils (reorganized into a brigade in 2011) and the 201st Military Base in Tajikistan (reorganized into a brigade in late 2010). Out of the 35 motorized rifle brigades, 10 were brigades that existed before 2008, 21 were formed as brigades on the basis of motorized rifle divisions, and another four were deployed from storage bases. In 2010, plans were announced for the formation of an additional six motorized rifle brigades, as well as at least one engineers and one anti-aircraft missile brigade.

ment. By 2015, it is planned to reorganize the current brigades into three different types: heavy, medium and light motorized rifle brigades. The heavy brigade should be the main permanently combat-ready combined unit of the Army and will be equipped with tracked vehicles. The medium (mobile) brigade must be fully equipped with wheeled armored vehicles and serve as a rapid response unit. The light brigade must be highly mobile and move around in light armored vehicles.

Experimental testing of the heavy, medium and light brigades began in 2010. The results will influence the second phase of reorganization of all the brigades. A new type of brigade is the reconnaissance brigade, the first of which (the 100th) was formed in late 2009 in Mozdok.

The combined Air Force and Air Defense of Russia have undergone radical organizational changes and been subjected to severe cutbacks

All the new brigades are in a full state of permanent combat readiness. In this way, the number of permanently combat-ready units nominally increased from 13% to 100% in the space of one year. The actual manning levels of brigades range from 95% to 100%, with 100% reserves of military equipment and other types of materiel.

By the end of 2009, a total of 85 brigades had been established. In addition to the aforementioned 40 combined-arms brigades, they include nine missile, nine artillery, four rocket artillery and nine air defense missile brigades, one engineers' brigade, as well as signal, electronic warfare, and other types of brigades. Seven special forces brigades are under special provision, and a reconnaissance brigade was established as an experimental unit in Mozdok in the North Caucasus.

It should be noted that the reorganization at the brigade level was split into two stages. At the first stage, for the most part completed by December 1, 2009, the new brigades were formed with compromise staffing levels on the basis of available weapons and military equip-

The main reserve component of the Army is the existing storage and maintenance facilities for weapons and military equipment, which are warehouses where sets of equipment are stored. In 2009, more than 60

storage bases were established, most of which were brigade-level, including 15 combined-arms brigades (one armored and 14 motorized rifle). At the same time, military educational institutions and district training centers are the new look mobilization centers.

4.4. Reorganizing the Air Force, Air Defense and Navy

The combined Air Force and Air Defense of Russia have also undergone radical organizational changes and been subjected to severe cutbacks. The basis for the radical restructuring of the Russian Air Force was the abolition of the Soviet regimental structure of air units that had existed since 1938. Instead of the air regiment, the new basic unit of the Air Force is the air base, which includes a command element, between one and seven air squadrons, an airfield maintenance battalion and signal elements.

The idea is to integrate all air and ground elements under a single airbase command. This



structure has long been in place in the Belarusian Air Force, from where, according to some, it was borrowed.

The 2009-type air bases are divided into three categories: 1st (equivalent to the former air division), 2nd (equivalent to the former air regiment), and 3rd (equivalent to a detached

and corps were disbanded and replaced by 13 aerospace defense brigades, combining airbases of fighter aviation, air defense missile regiments and radio electronic engineering regiments. These 13 brigades were divided between the Operational-Strategic Command of Aerospace Defense and the four Air Force and Air Defense Commands.

There were no radical organizational changes to the Russian Navy, but a number of steps were taken to simplify its organization and reduce the number of units

squadron). At the first stage, by the end of 2009, 52 air bases were established in Russia, replacing the 72 air regiments, 14 air bases and 12 detached air squadrons and detachments formerly existing in the Air Force and Air Defense Forces. The total number of units and combined units in the Air Force and Air Defense Forces has been reduced from 340 to 180.

Looking ahead, by 2012, there will be only 10 air bases (including two naval air bases). Each airbase (all will be the 1st category) will include two to three airfields, making a total of 27 airbase airfields (possibly excluding the army aviation).

The Russian Air Force's Air Defense Forces have undergone a major reorganization as well. In 2009, all the old air defense divisions

There were no radical organizational changes to the Russian Navy in 2009–2010, but a number of steps were taken to simplify its organization and reduce the number of units. The overall plan is to reduce them by half, from 240 to 123 units. Joint Commands of the Submarine Forces have been established in

the Northern and Pacific Fleets. The greatest reduction was in the Navy's Marine Corps: the only Marine Division (the Pacific 55th) was reorganized into a brigade, the 77th Brigade stationed in the Caspian Sea was disbanded, and the remaining four brigades in the Marine Corps were reorganized into regiments. Reforms of the basic structures of the Navy were only launched in late 2011.

4.5. Establishing Aerospace Defense Forces

The next important step in reforming the Air Force and Air Defense was the formation on December 1, 2011, of a new component service of the Russian Armed Forces, the Aerospace Defense Forces (ASD), representing the



Russia's Strategic Missile Forces did not undergo any major changes during the early stages of the military reform and maintained their existing structure, although they did experience some reductions at the command level

fusion of the Space Forces, Antimissile and Air Defense Forces from the former Air Force and Air Defense. Accordingly, the ASD forces are now comprised of the Space Command and the Air and Missile Defense Command. In actual fact, this organization essentially looks like a return to the Soviet Air Defense Forces as a separate service of the Armed Forces.

4.6. Strategic Missile Forces

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces did not undergo any major changes during the early stages of the military reform and maintained their existing structure (missile army – missile division – missile regiment), although they did experience some reductions at the command level. The SMF strength is mainly determined by the relevant international agreements with the U.S., especially the New START Treaty, signed in Prague in 2010. At the same time, the Strategic Missile Forces (and, in general, the Strategic Nuclear Forces, including the air and naval components) are a significant priority for government weapons procurement programs, thus allowing for the planned mod-

ernization of technical equipment. In this way, purchases of silo-based and mobile Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missiles have been ongoing since 1997, and 2010 saw the deployment of the RS-24 Yars mobile ballistic missile, a MIRVed version of the Topol-M. Work is underway to develop new types of missiles and warheads.

4.7. Reforming Military Education Systems

The military education system is undergoing major changes in terms of greater centralization and reduction, which is closely related to the downsizing of the officer corps. In 2008, there were 65 military institutions of higher learning (15 military academies, four military universities, 46 military schools and military institutes). As part of the Armed Forces of Russia, 10 “system-wide” schools are being created in 2012: three military training and research centers, six military academies and one military university. The new “system-wide” schools will meet the challenges of officer training, and also conduct research. All currently available teaching staff will be concentrated in these schools. The military schools and military institutions that existed in 2008 are being transformed into branches of these centers. At a later date, it will be determined which of the existing higher educational establishments will be phased out. The new centers will be established on a territorial basis rather than on the service principle.

5. Dynamics of Conscription and Enlistment

Approaches to how the army should be manned have varied considerably over the last three years, and, as far as one can tell, these approaches are based on three main factors: the assessment of the efforts of the previous leadership of the Defense Ministry to implement the Federal Targeted Program to convert the army to contract-based enlistment, the availability of financial resources (which in turn depends on the economic situation in the country and the priorities of the top political leadership), and demographic constraints.

Russia's military and political leadership have differed in their views on the place of contract service in the strength acquisition system and the possibility of a full transition to manning by contract

In the first phase, in 2008–2010, the Defense Ministry was leaning toward a rejection of the policy of increasing the number of contract soldiers in the Armed Forces, at least in the Army, and was in favor of a transition from the contract system that had already been adapted to staffing some units and combined units of the Army to a mixed system where conscripts were “returned” to the forces. Later on, in early 2011, this trend was reversed. The military, having received the appropriate political support and resource allocation guarantees from the President and the Government, announced plans to increase the number of new contract personnel.

Russia's military and political leadership have previously differed in their views on the place of contract service in the strength acquisition system and the possibility of a full transition to manning by contract. During his tenure as President, Boris Yelt-



sin made repeated demagogic declarations concerning a future transition to full contract manning of the Russian Armed Forces. The contract system of military service was developed quite extensively during this period, although it was hampered by economic constraints.

This trend was dominant under the new President, Vladimir Putin. In November 2001, President Putin endorsed the proposed government program (Mikhail Kasyanov was Prime Minister at the time) of a gradual transition of the Armed Forces to a contract-based strength acquisition system by 2010.

The Federal Targeted Program of Transition to the Contract Basis, which was implemented in 2004–2007, was a failure

The first step toward implementing this concept was the development of the Federal Targeted Program to transfer the Army to a contract basis, implemented in 2004–2007, which was conceived as a program of transition. During this time, a legal framework was to be established, financial issues resolved, and organizational issues worked through for each component of the armed forces under the new staffing conditions: one combined unit in each service was to be converted to contract-based enlistment. The Russian Armed Forces' first contract unit was the 76th Pskov Airborne

Assault Division, followed by a number of other permanently combat ready combined units, primarily detached motorized rifle brigades.

At the same time, since conscription service was still considered to be the most appropriate way to train reserves for Russia, the plan was to retain conscription but with a subsequent reduction in the term of service. Ultimately, the term of service under conscription was to be limited to a period of six months in training units. After finishing training, soldiers could either sign a contract or become reservists, joining the Trained Reserve. During the transition period, the enlistment-based manning levels in the army and navy should still be at least 30–50%.

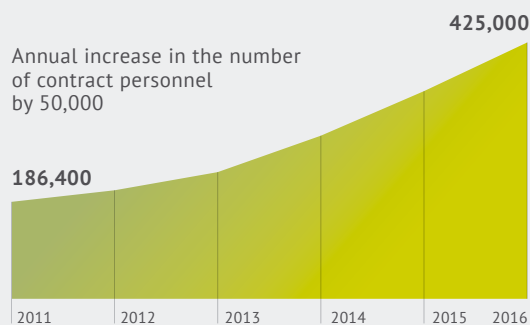
It is fair to say that, on the whole, the Federal Targeted Program of Transition to the Contract Basis, which was implemented in 2004–2007, was a failure. Given the program's stated goal of bringing the number of contract

personnel in the Armed Forces up to 400,000, the actual number of contract personnel at the beginning of 2009 was about 190,000 and, more to the point, the quality of the contract contingent was at rock bottom.

This was partly due to the fact that any attempt to change over to a professional army requires the presence of a professional corps of recruiters, which Russia has never had. The lack of professional recruiters is easily explained by the historical lack of a volunteer



Approaches to staffing the Russian Armed Forces with contract personnel



Priority

- Non-commissioned officer positions
- Navy shipboard personnel
- Formations and units stationed in the Caucasus
- Special forces units
- Truck and special vehicle drivers
- Positions that determine combat readiness

Source: Russian Defense Ministry

army in Russia. This type of strength acquisition existed in Russia only for a brief time after the Bolshevik revolution (November 1917). However, in the summer of 1918, the Bolshevik government was forced to abandon the principle of voluntary staffing of the Red Army and go back to conscription. It is the sum total of these circumstances – the relative failure of the federal program, the poor quality of the contract contingent, the absence of a body of professional recruiters and no history of a volunteer army – that apparently served as the reason for the initial orientation of the new leadership of the Defense Ministry to shifting the burden of military staffing back to conscription. Another reason, and perhaps the most important one, was the lack of resources, since it is held (though it is only partly true) that an enlistment-based army is much more expensive than conscription. In general, in the first two years of the reforms, it was planned that 150,000 officers

and as many sergeants and contract privates would serve in a million-strong army, which implied an annual conscription of 700,000 personnel.

During this period, the emphasis was placed on the creation of a professional NCO corps, to be established on a contract basis. Instead of the old units manned only with contract personnel, new look units would have a mixed composition of ordinary conscripts and the NCO corps. The first training center for non-commissioned officers was established at the Ryazan Airborne School. However, as previously planned, some “elite” forces, such as the Airborne Forces, or units and military specialties requiring more sophisticated training, were to be fully staffed by contract personnel.

In early 2011, new plans were quite unexpectedly announced for a gradual increase

in the contract contingent from 150,000 to 425,000 by 2016. The reason for this drastic change of direction is not completely clear, but one can assume that the Defense Ministry does not consider it possible to conscript 700,000 young men fit for service each year, given today's demographic context and looking ahead into the future. Another factor

Instead of the old units manned only with contract personnel, new look units would have a mixed composition of ordinary conscripts and the NCO corps

may have played a part: perhaps the military managed to convince the political leadership, who were aware of the acuteness of the social problems of conscription, to unlock the necessary funding to increase the number of con-

tract personnel on the eve of the new electoral cycle. Contrary to the popular belief that the "military bureaucracy" is strongly opposed to the transition to an enlistment-based army and is trying to retain "conscription slavery," the exact opposite is true: the military perfectly well understand that the strategic objective of the reforms is the establishment

of modern, effective and professional armed forces, which a priori presupposes that enlistment should go up and conscription down. Thus, by the end of 2011 it is assumed that the million-strong army will consist of 220,000 officers, 425,000 contract soldiers, and 350,000 conscripts. The latter figure is

much more realistic compared to the previously planned 700,000. However, it remains to be seen whether the Defense Ministry will be able to assemble a 400,000-strong corps of contract personnel.

6. Rearming the Army and the Navy

One of the most expensive and longterm tracks of reform is the modernization of the army and navy according to the State Armament Program for 2011–2020. If it is successfully executed, by 2020 the Russian Armed Forces will be 70% equipped with new (though not necessarily “modern”) weapons and military equipment.

The first signs of a transition to serial purchases of conventional weapons appeared two years before the adoption of a new rear-

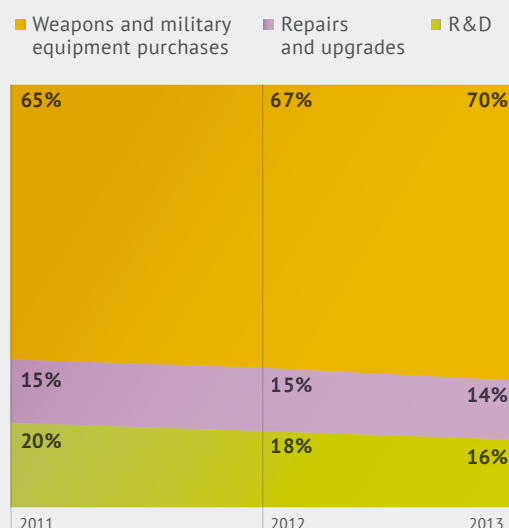
mament program in 2008, and focused on procurement for the Air Force. In December 2008, for the first time in the post-Soviet period, a five-year contract was signed for the purchase of 32 Sukhoi Su-34 fighters. The following year, the Air Force placed orders for 12 Su-27SM3s, four Su-30M2s and 48 advanced Su-35s, and bought back 34 former Algerian MiG-29SMT/UBT fighters. In this way, contracts were signed for 130 tactical fighter aircraft, which represents the volume of purchases of a large European

power such as Spain or Italy. In addition, before the adoption of the State Armament Program 2020, contracts were placed for the construction of Project 11357 frigates and Project 06363 submarines for the Russian Black Sea Fleet, undoubtedly the result of the military conflict in South Ossetia in 2008, which showed up the very weak capacity of the outdated Black Sea Fleet.

The priorities of the State Armament Program for the period 2011–2020 are to improve strategic systems: the Strategic Nuclear Forces and the deployment of the national Aerospace Defense



Structure of expenditures 2011-2013 provided in the State Weapon Program for 2011-2020



Source: Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies

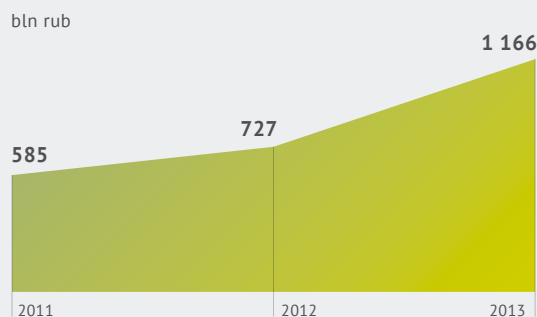
The main threat to the success of the State Armament Program 2020 is medium-term macroeconomic uncertainty

The State Armament Weapon Program for the period 2011–2020, adopted in 2010, provides for the purchase of 19.5 trillion rubles worth of weapons (\$616 billion U.S. dollars at the exchange rate in December 2011). Despite the start of high-volume purchases of conventional weapons, the priorities of the program are to improve strategic systems: the Strategic Nuclear Forces and the deployment of the national Aerospace Defense. The priorities of the conventional arms procurement program are command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems, and increased mobility of troops (which logically requires massive investment in the purchase of military transport aircraft). This hierarchy of priorities means that the

Russian Defense Ministry believes it is more important to counter a large-scale threat (in this case, a breach of the global strategic balance of military power), rather than the most likely threats (in our proposed hierarchy, a Taliban invasion in Central Asia and the aggravation of the situation in the North Caucasus).

A curious feature of the Program is the 10% of spending allocated to research and development, by global standards a very low figure. In 2011, this share was 20%, but then in 2013 it will fall back to 16%. The share of the actual budget allocated to procurement is planned to reach 80%. This means that the Defense Ministry is aiming for an early upgrading of the WME fleet with models ready for batch production, but is not prepared to take the technical risks inherent in R&D. In addition, this may indirectly indicate that the Defense Ministry considers the R&D funding sphere as very susceptible to corruption. Specific exam-

Expenditures for the purchase of arms and military equipment, including R&D costs, repair and modernization



Source: Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies

ples of this policy are purchases of weapon systems developed in the interest of export customers, like Project 11356/11357 frigates, Project 636 submarines, Mi-35M combat helicopters, and Su-30 fighter jets.

The main threat to the success of the State Armament Program 2020 is medium-term macroeconomic uncertainty. Most of the program costs are planned for the period after 2013; however, it is impossible to predict at this point what state the world economy will be in then, and, therefore, impossible to predict the trends in the main factor of economic development and financial well-being in Russia – hydrocarbon prices. It is highly probable that if the macroeconomic and financial situation in Russia becomes precarious, spending on arms purchases, rather than salaries, will be the primary means of making budgetary savings.

Another serious risk for the Program is the state of the Russian defense industry. The SAP 2020 envisages that industry will increase production for most items by several orders of magnitude. This growth is impossible without a large-scale modernization of defense industry companies. However, the specific mechanisms and funding of this rearmament

are not precisely defined at present. An important constraining factor will be the lack of skilled personnel and their high cost, as well as competition from the aerospace and nuclear industries for high-quality staff. All this applies not only to the worker and engineering professions, but also to the management of defense industry companies, which currently leaves much to be desired in some cases.

The transition to large-scale orders for the Defense Ministry, changing the export paradigm to one where the defense industry adopts the conventional model of preference given to domestic orders, and the stricter stance taken by the Defense Ministry on pricing in 2011 provoked a crisis in relations between the military and industrialists. The main subject of the dispute is the value of prospective major orders. At the end of 2011, this crisis seems to have been largely overcome, but more time will be needed to harmonize relations between the Defense Ministry and industry. In addition, the question remains of how adequate the price parameters agreed on in the long-term contracts signed in 2011 are and how much they will allow industry just to be able to fulfill the state defense orders, if not reach acceptable levels of profitability.

7. Interim Results of the Reform

The core of the military reform in Russia since autumn 2008 is the transformation of the Armed Forces from a conventional mobilization army to a permanently combat-ready force. The fundamental conceptual basis of the military reform is a reorientation of the new look Armed Forces to being involved mainly in limited conflicts, such as the five-day war in 2008 against

The core of the military reform in Russia since autumn 2008 is the transformation of the Armed Forces from a conventional mobilization army to a permanently combat-ready force

Georgia. The new structure of the Armed Forces is being molded for these tasks: they should be more flexible, mobile and perpetually combat-ready, capable of rapid response and becoming involved primarily in limited-scale conflicts in Russia and other former Soviet states, as well as adjacent territories. The direct defense of Russia from other great powers is now vested mainly in the Strategic Nuclear Forces.

Since 2008, Russia's Armed Forces have to a large extent been reorganized in accordance with this concept. Russia's military system was for the most part very quickly reduced to the new look that is radically different in many respects from the traditional image of the Red, Soviet and Russian armies. This result can be seen primarily as stemming from the unprecedented level of political will on the part of the Kremlin and Defense Ministry leadership. In consequence of

this extremely rapid process of reform, drastic changes have been made in the system of military command and control, in the structure and organization of forces, the strength of the Armed Forces, and in their deployment and designation.

The centralization of the training system, aimed at greater efficiency of the Armed Forces, has been implemented through the transformation of 65 military educational institutions into a small number of "system-wide" military schools, the reorganization of the system of reserves and training of reservists, and the outsourcing and commercialization of the support and catering systems for the Armed Forces.

Finally, military training and procurement of weapons and equipment has undergone thorough intensification. The scope of study and daily activities, as well as that of major annual exercises, is already roughly comparable with, and in some cases even better than, the best of the Soviet periods. The upgrades of technical equipment for the Armed Forces are already visible, as is the rapid growth of the State Defense Order in the defense industry. If the planned implementation of the approved State Armament Program for 2011–2020 succeeds, it will be a real breakthrough in the rearmament of the army, re-equipping it to a large extent with the latest hardware. However, serious political and macroeconomic risks leave open the question of whether the financially ambitious defense programs planned for the next decade and oriented to consistent increases in military spending can be realized in full.