

The Chart Page

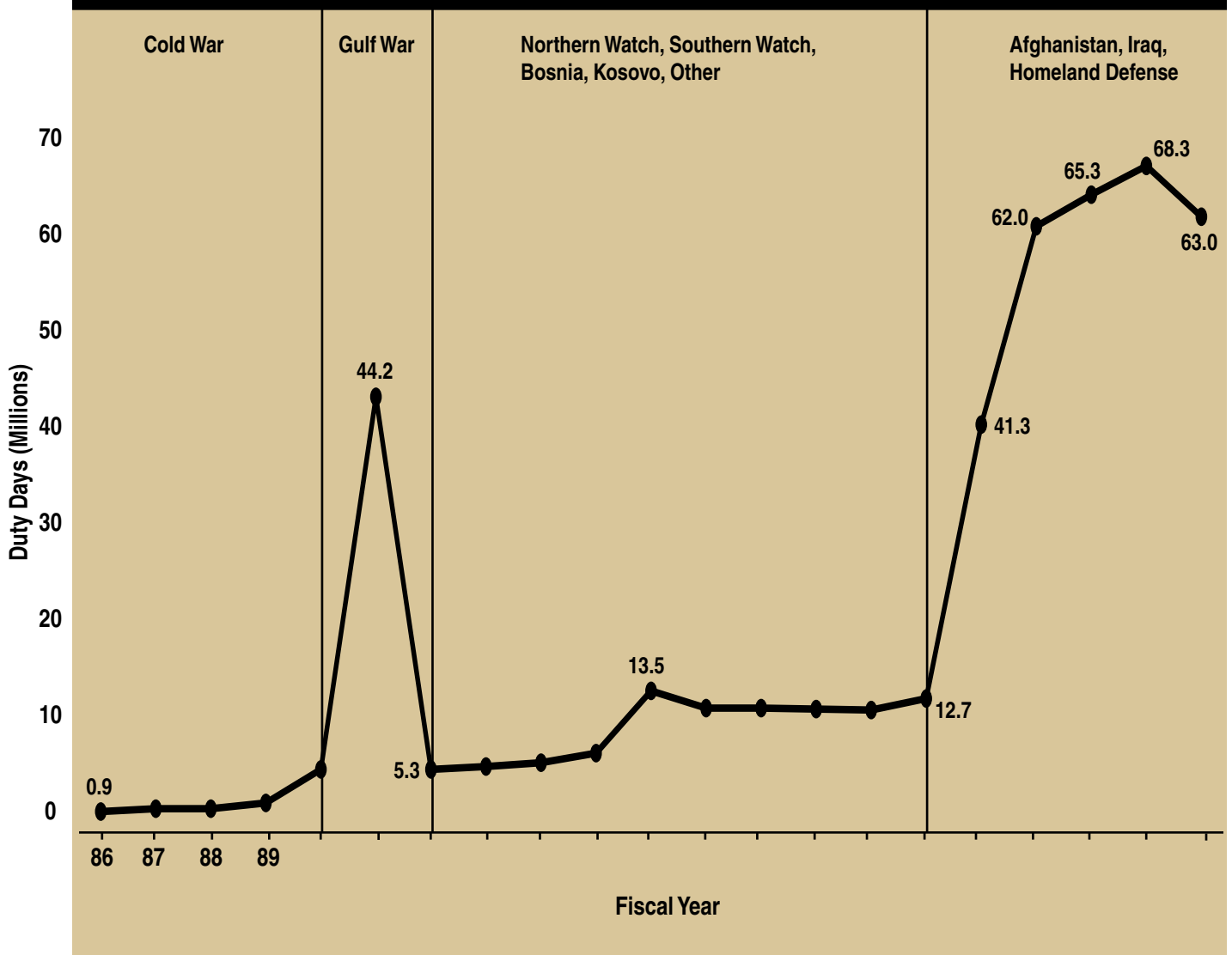
By Tamar A. Mehuron, Associate Editor

Guard and Reserve, Backups No More

The US military reserve has seven parts—Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve. In Cold War days, DOD fielded a large active force, and the reserve was a seldom-used backup. That changed with the 1991 Gulf War and involuntary call-ups, which continued in

the 1990s as the Total Force shrank and the reserve took on an increased role in operations. Since Sept. 11, 2001, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have sent reserve usage soaring, as seen in this chart. The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves recently warned, “The force cannot be sustained over the long term at this level of utilization.”

Reserve Component Contributions in Peace and War



Source: Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, “Strengthening America’s Defenses in the New Security Environment: Second Report to Congress,” March 1, 2007.