

**10th IFSAM World Congress
International Federation of
Scholarly Associations of Management**

**July 8 -10, 2010
Conservatoire National des Arts et
Métiers
PARIS, France
www.ifsam2010.org**



TRACK S13

HISTORY, FUTURES AND ACTION PROCESSES

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FRANCE'S LAND FORCES 2025: A FUTURES STUDY IN HUMAN RESOURCES

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France's Land Forces 2025: a Futures Study in Human Resources

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Abstract: *This paper explores the possible evolutions in the environment of the Land Forces of France 2025 and their impact on human resources to facilitate the long-term conception of future Army human resource policies. It is based on a futures study involving the relevant decision makers and initiators. This article lays out the principles chosen as a basis for the study, and its essential results. For the first part of this exploration of the possible futures for the HR system and its environment, a data base of past strategies was constructed, which served to create a reference scenario, including the possible trends and 11 break-ups deemed essential with regard to the importance of their HR consequences. The second step was to examine the HR consequences of the different possible futures in a global approach, which was then adapted to each specific HR field of activity, keeping the process closer to the concerns of the HR decision makers and managers.*

The current article presents elements from a study on « Future Land Forces 2025: a study of the mixed-gender military population »¹. The aim was to facilitate the long-term conception of future management policies by identifying possible evolutions in the environment of the Army by 2025 and their impact on human resources .

The entities in charge of defence – Defence Department and Defence Staff – must, of a necessity, anticipate for many reasons, the most obvious of which is the large portion of a state's budget allotted to military spending (Roubelat, 2000).. However, the results of our 2009 watch on human resource management in the armed forces of 10 western countries show that futures studies applied to HR are rare. In fact, we only found 2 countries to be concerned, Canada and the United States. It is also of note that the horizon line of said anticipation rarely goes beyond that set by budgetary preoccupations... which nevertheless represents a structured strategy over 3 or 4 years, depending on the country. Futures studies, in the case of an activity which needs both heavy, costly and sophisticated equipment and human resources, usually have a term of 15 years, at least. The two studies approached the problem in two very different ways: a scenario-based, HR oriented futures study, Canadian Forces 2020, and American abstract cases based on the possibilities offered by tomorrow's cutting edge technologies (Canadian Department of National Defence, 2002).

The objective of « Future Land Forces 2025 » is to respond to the necessity of integrating both the areas directly linked to HR (sociology, labour market, demography) and the indirectly linked (geopolitics, technology), and to carry the exercise beyond the usual, in HR, 4 or 5 years.

It is of note that the Army's HR policy makers were highly implicated in the process, which implication necessitated rapidly moving beyond the first elements of possible evolutions of the environment to a better understanding of the consequences to the main HR fields of activity of the French Land Forces: recruiting, training, career management, etc. The process needed to be firmly established both within the complex evolutions of the external environment and within those of HR actions, in a context of the profound reform initiated by the 2008 white paper, which will be pursued through to 2014.

To this end, it was necessary to build the process on a base of military and civilian expert work groups, as well as interviews, analyses and documentary research².

¹ Led by a group of experts familiar with this method and Futures studies: Régine Monti, Marc Mousli, and Patrice Leclerc. The DGA steered the project, which was commissioned mainly by the Army's Human Resources Branch, which provided many HR experts to participate in the group's work, namely during 3 seminars organized within the 10 months of the study. The project was driven by the DGA and a steering committee made up of representatives of the services most affected by the project. Two meetings were held with the Army's HR policy makers, at points where their opinion was necessary to structure the final stages of the process around the strategic aspect. Military capacity experts participated, as did civilian experts, sociologists and economists specialized in the evolutions of society, vocational Futures, and the labour market.

² To complete the process, two further studies were made : a 2009 watch on human resource management in the armed forces of 10 western countries, and a comprehensive survey of the problems caused by the "Army's feminization"

The core of the process emerged from 5 group efforts : 3 two to three day seminars, with Defence experts, and for one the addition of experts from outside Defence; and two meetings with the main policy makers to present the work, one at half point and one at the issue of « Conceiving HR policy : a Futures study ».

Half the members of the work group were from the Human Resource Department of the Defence staff, one third from bureaus in charge of capacity planning for the Defence Staff and General Staff, and the rest from various civilian organizations (in the domains of strategic analysis, training, sociology, etc.).

The group's input was essential to the futures approach, as their expertise in the specific subjects guaranteed both that the process would be grounded in the reality of the organization and its problematic, and that the results would be readily understood and accepted, as they were expressed in the organization's « language » and delivered by people who would participate in effecting the changes, both now, and in the future (Bootz, Monti, 2008). However valuable the results of the process, in order for them to induce decisions and actions, they must, of a necessity, be fully understood by the organization's key players.

Beyond the three seminars, we set up a repetitive process, going back and forth between group work and data collection in order to guarantee the quality of our results. The results of the expert's input during the work-groups were enhanced by additional data collecting, the satisfactory triangulation of which was ensured by regular input from all the parties (Wacheux, 1996): the data produced by the workgroup was benchmarked, the summaries validated by the expert groups, and submitted to outside experts for further validation through interviews or joint workgroups.

Once we have presented the principles and steps of the Futures approach, we will examine its main results: first the Futures framework of reference (reference scenario, HR consequences and break-ups), then threats and opportunities in the main HR fields of activity.

1. The Futures' HR framework of reference « Future Land Forces 2025 »

In the first part of the study, we explored the Futures. In order to structure the Futures information base, we represented the Army's HR system within its environment. Using data gathered from brain-storming sessions throughout the army, from the questioning of experts, from documentary research, we proposed a reference scenario based on trend evolution towards 2025, and covered the geopolitical, technological, sociological and economic aspects. To complete these analyses, we had a look at other possible futures by identifying the break-ups with the most important issues.

Building this Futures framework of reference was particular in that it was necessary, in order not to "drown out" these dimensions which are ruled by the exogenous data, to take into account the possible evolutions and their HR consequences from the start.

The main steps of the process, its construction principles and extracts from its main results are presented here below.

1.1. Defining the system: a delicate stage

Conducting a Futures study on a system such as human resource management of one of the country's largest organizations, which is furthermore directly linked to global evolution, is interesting... and complicated. There are many cross-over points with the surrounding environment, and in order to remain efficient, it is necessary to construct a model of the system being studied³.

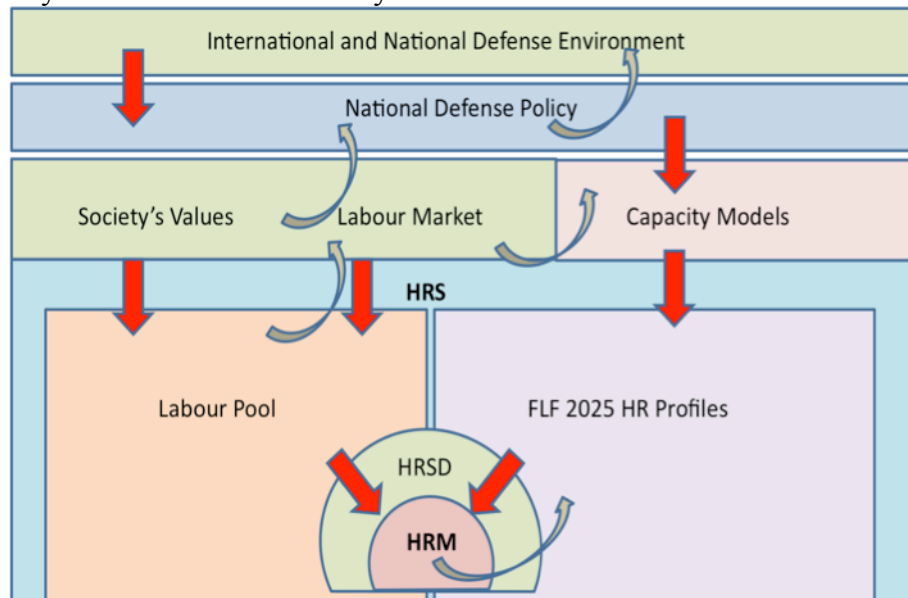
The model, as represented here below, shows that we are faced with a highly hierarchical set of sub-systems, four layers through which influence travels nearly exclusively downwards, from the topmost, geopolitical layer, to the lowest (HR System).

³ « In systems modelling, the most important task is not to solve the problem itself, but to solve the problem of defining the problem. (Le Moigne, 1990).

This hierarchy dependant system is typical of systems centred on HR variables (Godet, Monti, 2006) They are very dependant variables, for which a systems analysis would show that they are literally “overcome” by all other variables, which are highly active by comparison.

This modelling shows that the HRSD at best ensures human resource management (HRM), and only applies national policy in which it has no say.

Therefore, we suppose HRM to influence the HR system effectively, but it alone. This ”mille-feuille” has nearly no action on the three layers above it.



The « mille feuille » model

1.2. Using trend hypotheses to build a reference scenario and integrating HR consequences

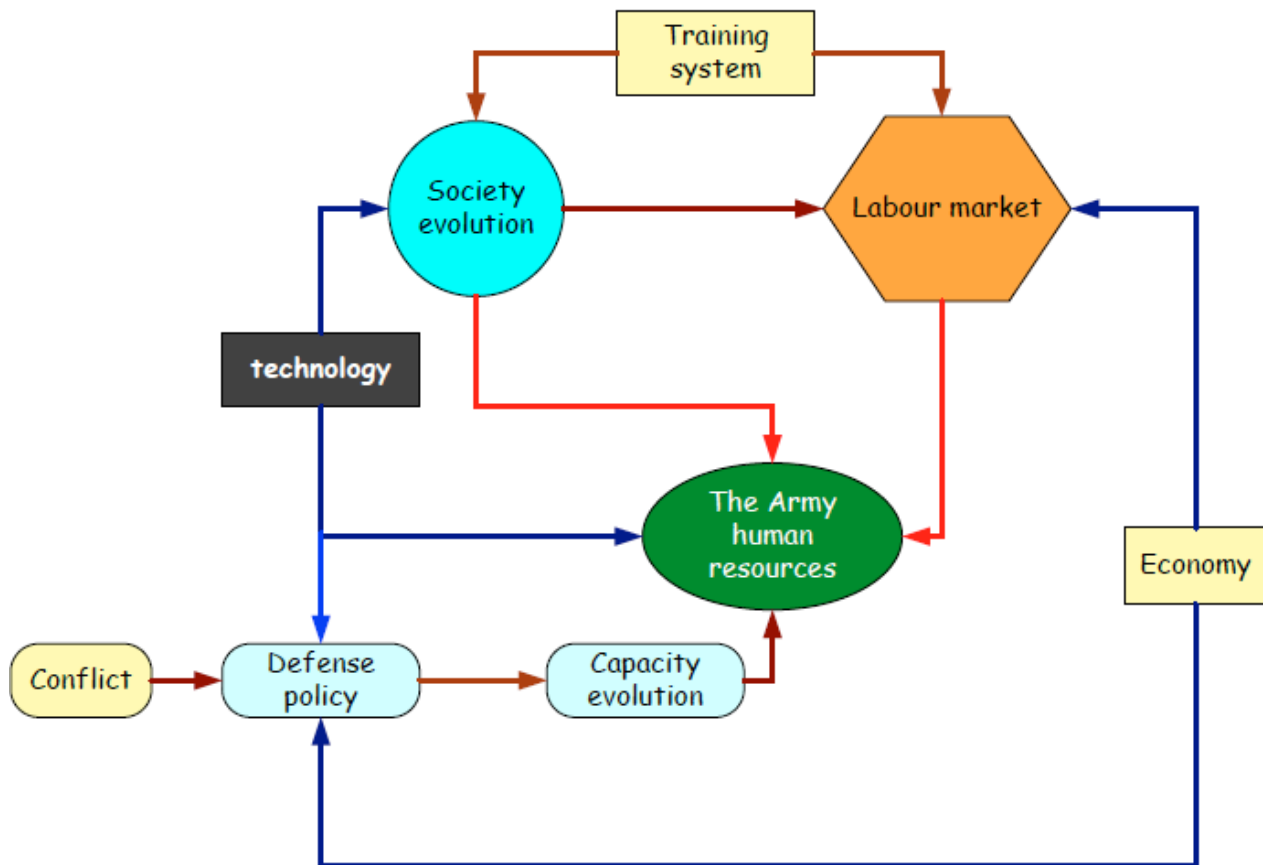
The chosen method for the exploratory phase of the process was to build a reference scenario using 2025 trend hypotheses (Durance, Godet, 2008). The scenario is said to be a “reference” because it describes a “core” future which it is reasonable to prepare for while keeping in mind possible break-ups which will certainly modify this vision of the evolutions of the FLF’s environment by 2025. The HR consequences of this scenario are a fundamental part of its construction since we needed to verify, at an early stage, that the chosen hypotheses would impact the HR system in particular and not the “Army” system in general.

1.2.1. The method

Trend hypotheses should never be reduced to the level of projections. In a projection, the structural parameters of a phenomenon are identified, then its past evolutions studied, and prolonged to the desired term. In a trend hypothesis, it is the current dynamics which are of interest, and lead to questions on their evolution within the process’ time frame.

It is not a projection but a Futures study, the complexity of which is increased by the reform the land forces are already engaged in, the details of which are set until 2014. The group needed to base its work on the situation in 2015, not their current daily situation. Hard to do!

The following diagram shows the dynamics of the scenario, which led to the possible consequences on the human resources of the Future Land Forces.



Even if it appeared obvious from the start that the evolution of society's values and the labour market, and to a lesser degree that of the capacity models, were essential to human resource management, it was essential to include the geopolitical (international and national environment) elements, and Defence policy, in the scope of our study. It was easy for the military experts to provide data and hypotheses for these evolutions, since the President had just approved a « white paper »⁴ of their strategic orientations until 2025. It might have been intellectually stimulating to question some of the hypotheses, but because of the operational nature of the process, we chose to use most of them, those which are being used as a basis for the Army's current reorganization. After working on coherence, and to fully understand those of the orientations which directly influence HR management, we focused on the 3 main areas which impact our study.

1.1.2. Illustration: Societal aspects and consequences of the reference scenario (extract)

a- Reference scenario: « Youthful behaviour which is not adapted to the demands of a traditional army »

One of the difficulties employers find when trying to recruit robust employees is the physical fitness of the young. For years they have been using essentially mechanical means to get from one place to another, from tramways to elevators and ski-lifts, through cars, motorcycles, the metro, etc. and the time spent on sport is limited for most of them. In addition to this lack of physical effort, most of their leisure activities are stationary (TV, internet, video games, telecommunications systems of all types, etc.) and their diet unbalanced. It is thus unsurprising to note an important deterioration of their physical fitness.

Furthermore, the French demand « complete coverage of risk in nearly all the domains of their existence », which leads them to feel a real aversion to danger, which is accrued, for those who contemplate a military career, by their parents' even stronger reticence. This aversion is

⁴ Défense et Sécurité nationale, Le Livre blanc, 2008.

strengthened by the army's working conditions (sustained pace of operational activities, asymmetric conflicts which are dangerous and unpredictable).

In short, while physical effort and risk are not precisely scorned, they are not one of society's ordinary values.

As an additional problem in a world where « the main strength of the Army » is discipline, the individual of 2025 refuses to obey without understanding. The young, in particular, have a strong sense of human decency, and expect each person to be respected at all times. The demand for a high level of ethics extends to all domains. The coherence of values, words and acts is even more of a fundamental of command than now.

Furthermore, in civilian organizations, management includes a share of « managerial negotiation » that is difficult to accept for the managers of organizations for which « passive and immediate »⁵ obedience is a value.

Finally, in 2025, digital and automated technologies and their practical applications are ever present in all facets of daily life in France, whether personal or professional⁶. The virtual and real worlds interlock, especially for digital natives, the second generation of which has been reached in 2025.

The relatively recent contribution of domestic robots should be added to the previous description, which dates back to 2000's (Prensky, 2001). In 2025, a (growing) minority of the young lives with one or several robots in their environment, of various types, from household appliances to home automation though android servants who care for their grand-parents.

b- Illustration: HR consequences of the societal evolutions of the reference scenario

Considering the evolutions described here below, three important consequences flow from the societal evolutions described in the reference scenario.

First is the impact of a general mistrust of « traditional » authority on several areas of HRM (recruiting, training...). Approval and obedience will only be obtained if the leader is beyond reproach, an example of coherent behaviour, and truly respects the men and women under his command. This is nothing new, but the level of demand is much higher. A population who questions what leaders say, at all levels, and a steadily decreasing acceptance of traditional sanctions, increase the challenge considerably. Finding and training highly capable people to command, and who also truly lead, is a necessity at all levels of the hierarchy.

The « one who commands » is vested with authority, the right to give orders, he has « power over ». The « one who leads » has true power, the power to make things happen, to act with others, the « power with » (Follet, 2002), which implies competence and charisma. With charisma, the group plays a major role: hierarchy designates the one who commands, but the leader is determined by the group. Max Weber, a renowned German sociologist, showed that (charismatic) leadership needs « *recognition, freely given by those who are dominated* » (Weber, 1947)

So, in 2025, there should be first rate leaders in each unit, a tremendously ambitious goal.

The second consequence is to two fundamental elements of quality: cost and deadlines. Building the « soldier of 2025 » from recruits whom research shows will be for the most part lacking physically and psychologically will be a costly and time-consuming process.

Last, the Army recruits from a society whose relations with technologies are complex. They are omnipresent, but mastery depends on the level training and education of the person using them. Furthermore, some of their aspects, such as the way in which the real and the virtual are interlocked may be poorly understood and controlled. Not to overestimate their impact, research shows the need to be vigilant. In the United-States, where cutting edge technologies are much in demand, whether for the campaigns in Iraq or Afghanistan, these questions are the subject of heated debate.

⁵ Expression found in the general security rules of the French Railways (SNCF, 1951)

⁶ In 2007, Bill Gates claimed that by 2025, robots would have the same importance in daily life as the internet today. The term is open to debate, but the forecast is well on its way to being fulfilled in several regions of the world ; (in order of advancement) South Korea, Japan, North America (United States and Canada), and several European countries (France, United Kingdom, Germany). In France, Cap Robotique, a specialized branch of the Cap Digital business cluster, plans to market its first humanoid robot in 2015.

1.3. 11 break-ups to broaden the framework of reference

It was important to have a look at the possibilities outside the reference scenario, so the group proposed 11 break-ups.

1.3.1. The method

Most authors have a radical vision of break-up, which they construe as « an abrupt and irreversible discontinuity which causes the founding and regulating principles of a set of interdependent systems to decompose and recompose », « a “point” in time which splits a “length” of time » (Méric, 2009 p.191)

Break-ups need not be so radical. HRM is a forced activity, which follows and adapts to situations. Break-ups need to be anticipated, but only because they will help the decision makers reflect on to adapt their HRM practices

Within this process, a « breakup » is simply an event or the evolution of one of the variables, which diverges significantly from the reference scenario, and implies considerable changes to the army's HR policy⁷. The divergence or discontinuity may be either brutal or progressive, and may be considered by the stakeholders to be either of benefit, detrimental or disastrous. It is important to the futures study process in that it offers an alternative which promotes thought as to possible practice or goal modifications.

The possible breakups, with a 15 year timeline, are of course innumerable. Those we selected present the following characteristics:

- They are at least possible,
- The group felt they were sufficiently important and preoccupying to be retained,
- If they came to be, they could entail significant consequences to the Army's HR, such as it is important to be prepared for.

The 11 break-ups

- A crisis exacerbates social cleavages including within the army
- Territorial allegiance is no longer to the country, but « local » and to Europe. French people join foreign armies
- The technologies necessary to Land Force are hard to master for the recruits.
- Most young people are fully qualified when they leave school, and have no trouble finding a job
- Policy imposes high recruitment quotas for women, minorities and the disadvantaged young.
- Civilian and military management methods converge, there are fewer corps, mobility between corps is facilitated and age limitations barred
- France's alliances pull it into an interstate war in the arc of crisis
- The HR managements of several armies merge
- Certain operational functions disappear through transfers or redeployment
- France and certain of its European allies form a common Army
- The French show a certain lack of interest in the army

1.3.2. Illustration: Break-up « Most of the young leave the school system with occupational skills and find a job easily »

Context:

There are far fewer unskilled jobs than in 2001 because:

- robotics have made spectacular progress,
- businesses and households demand higher quality and better traceability for products and services ; so a higher level of professionalism is necessary in all domains (including personal services and logistics)
- subsidies and programs of reduced social contributions for unskilled employees are put to an end.

The structural rigidity of the French labour market lessens, and the disadvantaged are better integrated into the market because:

⁷ The HR consequences (not just the hypotheses) of the reference scenario served to identify the break-ups.

- labour is in strong demand (the balance of migration is nil, even negative) In 2025, the majority of world growth is located in China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Africa. Labour shifts from Europe to these countries that lack specialists in many domains
- vocational guidance by a European network of local active vocational guidance combines anticipation and quick response⁸,
- powerful information systems match supply and demand efficiently, on the one hand, and all the stakeholders (businesses, private and public schools, « second chance »⁹ system, etc) participate actively, on the other.

Main Characteristics

Less than 5% of an age group leaves the school system without occupational skills. The educational system has undergone profound change, namely due to the massive implication of local communities in vocational training. This has become an acceptable alternative to general education.

In the 2020's, of the 18 to 29 age group, representing approximately 9 million men and women (9.4 million in 2008), 95% will be trained, educated, and able to take a job of their choice.

The young are quickly and easily find a job. The first part of their career is varied as they prefer to experiment different functions and occupations, and are very sensitive to working conditions contract term, wages, responsibility, work environment...).

HR consequences

The effects of the break-up are very different:

- 1) The gap between the initial relatively low-skilled jobs offered by the army (combat positions, since back office occupations have been redeployed) and the more highly qualified background of the young, who are just leaving the educational system, could widen considerably. The army's offer would then be much less attractive to the young.
- 2) Some of the recruits, since they are better trained, integrate the army easily. However, others, recruited from the 30 or 40 000 unskilled youths who arrive on the labour market every year, are very difficult to employ, since all of those who were able to receive instruction, education and training, have, thanks to the efficiency of the new system
- 3) Wages are no longer the essential argument in recruiting; there are more and more other criteria. Few of the skilled young choose a career by accident. They have high levels of expectations as to career management, contract content, working conditions, etc.
- 4) Training skilled recruits is easier, and the use of technically advanced equipment is not a problem. In the army, as elsewhere, automation has enormously progressed.

2. Structuring the futures study process around the areas of HR activity

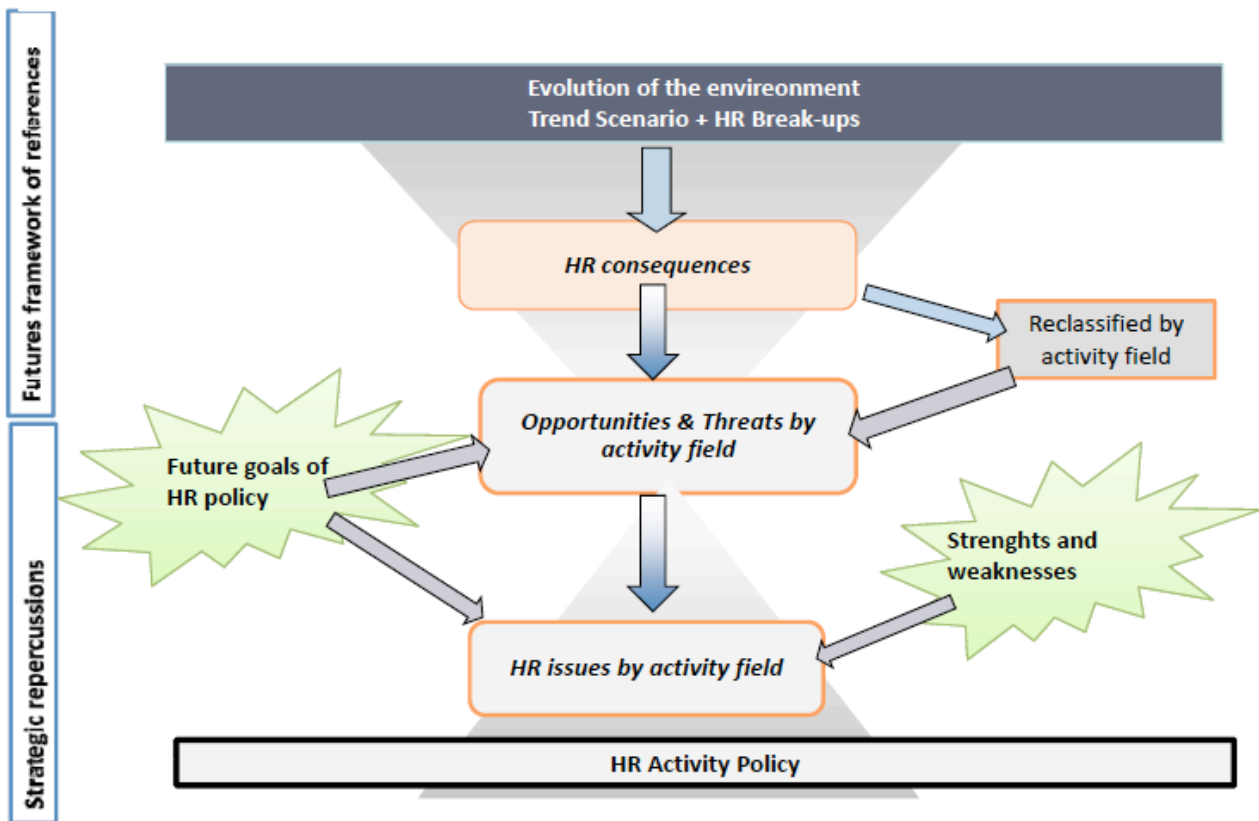
In order to structure the futures study process around the areas of HR activity we needed to first define the competences which would be needed for the core activity by 2025, and then deduce all

⁸ A direct descendant of the vocational guidance public service which was reorganized following the publication of the « Green paper on youth » (Youth Policy Consultation Committee, 2009),

⁹ A set of associations, NGOs and foundations created in the 1990-2000s at the initiative of major companies (Bolloré...) or politicians (Edith Cresson...) and networked in the 2010s.

the analyses of the impact of changes to the external environment with reference to the futures of the main areas of HR activity.

Structure: from anticipation to actual change



2.1. Designing the ideal profile for the soldier of 2025 for the « core activity »

The aim of the Land Forces HR management system is to provide operational managers with a permanent reservoir of competent personnel in sufficient quantities to ensure the missions entrusted to them as best as possible.

The amount of resources needed to fulfil the needs of Land Forces towards 2025 depends on the number of missions, their scope and their length, all of which are policy dependent, not determined by military operational managers. These elements are thus considered to be part of the “external environment” (see system description here above). The managers are however responsible for the quality of the resources, i.e. their competence.

Quality is « *the set of resource characteristics which confer the aptitude to fulfil its missions* ». The AFNOR’s¹⁰ definition inspired this one, usually completed by a reminder of the dimensions of quality *cost, time frame, mission suitability*. Cost and time frame are contingencies, whereas mission suitability is a fundamental, which depends on data external to the futures study process. The mission needs must be defined by the initiators and set into a framework of reference.

The description is essential to determine threats and opportunities in the different HR fields of activity (Igalens, 2007) .

¹⁰ French Standards Association.

Needs are defined by policy-makers and used by consultants to create a universal set of skills needed by the Land Forces. We decided to call this structured list of knowledge, know-how and behaviours « the soldier of 2025 ». The following table synthesizes the different documents used for the future study, was validated by the Land-forces HR policy makers when we presented the intermediate results, and from that point on, became the quality goal for the Land Forces HR management system, which will need to provide soldiers with these qualities to the leaders responsible, in 2025, for fulfilling the operational contract with the government.

Skills of the ideal soldier of 2025¹¹

KNOW-HOW	BEHAVIOUR	KNOWLEDGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage stress, fatigue and periods of wakefulness or tiredness. • Be reactive by adapting to new technologies • Quickly deal with events, think differently • Analyse situations and exploit information to preserve clarity of judgement and a sense of proportion in complex environments • Be able to learn, understand, and apply knowledge (from theory to practice), as these qualities are called upon more and more. • Have highly developed situation management and negotiation skills • Use highly advanced tools and manage a vast quantity of information. • Apply « rustic » know-how, a set of basic actions using limited technical and technological means • Be able to move with ease between the technologically advanced and « rustic » combat techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the most of intelligence in a timely manner • Make the most of technical means to ensure individual and group action traceability, s. • Apply procedures exactly, and still be capable of initiative • Use equipment and respond to attack with discretion, resorting to violence as little as possible. • Be capable of action at a distance the leader, think and act independently and be given sufficient latitude to promote initiate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden his knowledge-base and know-how so as to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be conversant with his equipment and weapons to make the most of them - Be familiar with his environment, the local situation, the players, and how they relate to each other - Constantly adapt to new technologies - Measure the risk of believing that technology can solve anything

2.2. Following through on the Futures framework of reference: threats, opportunities and HR issues 2025

HRM is responsible for many operations and tasks. These have been regrouped by “field of activity” in order to determine the practical, operational follow-through necessary to respond to the threats and opportunities of the scenario and the break-ups. Out of all the fields specific to Land Forces HRM, 7 underwent deeper analysis: recruiting, training, management style (ethics, values...), global knowledge management, wage management and working conditions, career management and end of career/contract management.

¹¹ The ideal soldier 2025 as described by the documents of the Department of Defence. The following documents served to define the framework of reference: the National Defence white paper 2008 and its press kit; the Army’s 30 year Futures strategy plan, Tome 1, Part A; a DAS 2004 report on “ geostrategic and geopolitical Futures over the next 30 years” or “GT 30”; a DICOD document (June 2007): “preparing tomorrow’s commitments: 2035”; an EMA document (April 2009): “The combat soldier and his environment”; 3 EMAT documents: Founding principles of the project “Future Land Forces 2025” n°1 increasing the value of information in land conflicts”, n°2 operational versatility, approval le N°204 /DEF/EMAT/BCSF/DR, n°3 the synergy of effects, edited by EMAT/BCSF.

2.2.1. Method

As we have seen, the reference scenario's hypotheses and the possible break-points have consequences on the HRM of France's Land Forces. In an extra level of analysis, we examined the threats and opportunities implied by these consequences, by activity field, in order to identify the main issues for each HR field.

The skills deemed necessary by the decision-makers for the soldier of 2025 led to the main threats and opportunities expected, and the main issues for each HR activity. For each activity, threats and opportunities were determined: those elements of the environment's evolution which were liable to prevent reaching the army's goals (threats) or to help reaching them (opportunities).

Remember that the Army's goals, as applied to this part of the study, are as seen in the previous paragraph on the ideal soldier of 2025, the main skills of which are summarized in the above table.

Using the HR consequences of the reference scenario and break-ups as well as the policy makers' vision of the soldier of 2025 to determine the threats and opportunities for each HR field

Threats and opportunities are those elements which might hinder (threats) or help (opportunities) the Army in reaching its goals.

For each field, within the framework of the reference scenario, then within the break-ups, the work group identified the main threats and opportunities from now until 2025, thus contributing to implementing the "soldier of 2025" the policy makers felt was needed considering the HR consequences of the reference scenario..

Identifying the issues for each HR field of activity

An issue is "the system element we are trying to control. If we succeed (reach our goal), we win. If we fail (don't reach our goal), we lose.)".

The work group identified the main HR issues for the Army for 2025, using the threats and opportunities as a basis, and considering the main strength and weaknesses of the Army (now and in 2015) thus contributing to implementing the "soldier of 2025"

2.2.2. Illustration: Threats, opportunities and main issues in recruiting and career management

After determining the threats and opportunities for some of the HR activities analyzed, the group gave some thought to the issues, i.e. the elements that need to be controlled to reach the ideal soldier 2025 goal. A synthesis¹² of the elements is presented here below, following the threats and opportunities.

Recruiting

Concerning recruiting, demographic and labour market evolution show two main threats: first, serious competition for recruiting skilled youth, aggravated in the case of specific skill sets.

This competition may also appear in the case of less skilled young people, who have graduated from schools and colleges of middling renown, if businesses and organizations also develop a policy of recruiting on the sole basis of aptitude and training recruits in-house.

Secondly, there is a threat to the possibility of recruiting in any quantity. The possible candidates could be fewer than in 2010, because of the Army's increased requirements for its "soldier of 2025 ». The threat is in direct relation to the chosen framework of reference. If the "soldier of

¹² Some subjects will be looked at in depth in the second phase of the study.

2025” framework only refers a minority of personnel, those recruited for difficult but relatively few missions, the risk is minor.

Youth’s tendency to be less and less loyal to employers, especially at the beginning of their careers, when, for the most skilled, they want mobility, and the others are subjected to it, may aggravate the problem by accelerating turnover.

Societal evolution also offers a threat to recruitment. The weakened army-nation link, the appearance of military deserts, and a reduced attractiveness due to working conditions (frequent cross-border operations) considerably reduce interactions with the army. Furthermore, effort is less tolerated, as is distance from those the youths are close to (family, “tribe”) all of which is in direct opposition with the high rate of activity of the army.

Certain hypotheses which don’t seem favourable at first may in fact reveal opportunities: the quota on recruiting women and minorities break-up could also enlarge the recruitment pool if measures are set up to facilitate integration. Even if there is some resistance to this increased diversity, the opportunities created deserve attention to reduce the negative aspects.

In much the same way, hypotheses involving a merger between the French or European armies can be considered as threats, but also as opportunities since they bring in complementary skills and a wide range of experience through outsourcing, resorting to foreigners and aligning resources with other French forces.

A certain number of HR issues emerged from the previous step. We will give 3 examples to recruiting.

1 - Broadening the recruitment pool to increase quantity and quality. The army must find ways to select its personnel, in an « hourglass » society, in which it can neglect neither the upper tier : the qualified personnel with a potential and diploma, who will be able to become leaders or specialists, nor the lower : the unskilled, personnel with little potential or a potential unrecognized by the educational system, the « failures ».

2 - Contractualization, the extension of which poses quite a few problems, namely for the high potential personnel needed for the upper levels of the hierarchy

3 – The efficiency of the system and the recruitment process, for two reasons: excessive turnover increases the heat and disorganization and, in the somewhat delicate domain of corporate communication: with the physical absence of the army from several territories, its implication in conflicts in which the French have little interest, the Army’s notoriety and reputation is an issue, especially where recruitment is concerned,.

Career management

The concept of career management will need to be rebuilt from the ground up due to the very demanding profile for the ideal soldier of 2025 and to the continued evolution of what youth expects from their professional sphere.

First, the difference in status between enlisted personnel and officers might disappear due to the high level of competence demanded of the soldiers and the need that they be young, which, combined, could extend contractualisation to the « non-officer » corps as well as to junior officers, and for the same reasons: the need for young personnel, a steadily increasing demand for skilled personnel... In this case, the threat is to the capacity to recruit and retain personnel with a high potential, even though contractualisation is generalized.

Then, within the next few years, the mobility aspects of a military career will be strongly questioned. The young will seek a varied, enriching and value-enhancing experience for the first few years of their career, and then expect more geographic stability, with a position close to their families and their base, and reassuring prospects of evolution. These trends will reinforce the current threat of early departures, after 5 to 8 years, expanding it to an increasing population, since the protective status will disappear for nearly all personnel.

After this phase, in which we analysed the consequences of the evolutions of the environment by activity field, some extracts of which we have presented, the group of experts deemed that, if the level of skills expected of the ideal soldier 2025 was demanded throughout the forces, considering the environment from which the soldiers will be recruited and in which they will evolve, it would most certainly be necessary to entirely redefine the Army's HRM.

It is precisely redefining the Army's HR commitments which is the main HRM issue for the coming years : it will no longer be possible to keep officers motivated through a long term of service, but becomes necessary to guarantee new and attractive prospects in a context of extended contractualisation (training in several occupations, commitment to training for a civilian career, etc.), as well as to seek new ways to reconcile the demands for mobility and each person's individual aspirations (JM. Peretti, S. Arnaud, S. Frimousse, 2009).

Conclusion

This participative futures study involved military and civilian experts and specialists in Futures studies, which allowed us to structure the process around the elements of the environment outside the FLF which would most affect the dynamics of the different HR fields of activity. This structure which links the general process directly to local issues is particularly difficult in the case of Futures studies dealing with Human Resources (Roubelat, 1996). The process was set up along 3 lines, in order to respond to the double necessity (general/application):

1) Identifying the relevant internal elements of the Army's HR system to initiate the process. The normal tools of Futures studies, in particular structural analysis, would tend to "overwhelm" HR variables, which "disappear" from the system's representation as they are results-based, subject to the evolutions of both the environment and the organization's strategy (Monti, 2002). By representing the FLF 2025 system through a detailed description of the HR system, we were able to show up the subject's multiple dimensions, and determine the vaster environments which particularly influence the Army's HR, i.e. the Defence environment (national and international environment, Defence policy, capacity data) and the HR environment (evolutions of society and the labour market).

2) Building a « reference scenario » as a focus for analysing the consequences of the evolutions of the environment on the FLF's HR by 2025, and determining HR break-ups to complete it, in order to respond to a triple necessity:

- Adapt to the way the Army's represents the future, through broadly mutualised scenarios, part of processes which extend over several years (white paper, etc);
- Adapt to the way the Army conceives the future, as break-ups are they way in which the military and military strategy apprehend uncertainty;
- Remain operations-based without getting bogged down in story-type analyses (complete scenarios) which are time and energy consuming, and too divergent from the military's thought processes, especially that of the highly qualified French officers, whose training is extremely rationality oriented

3) Applying the results of the Futures study to the scope of HR activity by identifying the consequences of the framework of reference, first regardless of HR field of activity and the organization's goals, and then, using the skills objectives as determined by the decision-makers (Ideal Soldier 2025), and for each field of activity, identify the threats, opportunities and issues which will determine whether said objectives are met, or not.

Through these three approaches, the Army's policy-makers to whom we presented the results, twice during the process, and once at its conclusion, agreed that we had met the objective of this participative Futures study, i.e. to facilitate the conception of future Army human resource policies by identifying possible evolutions in the environment of France's Land Forces 2025 and their impact on human resources, and highlighting the most relevant factors. However, it was also collectively agreed that the approach remained too general, even though it was firmly rooted in the relevant HR activities. Alternatives to the threats and opportunities which emerged should most certainly be proposed either by type of occupation, or by category (officers, junior officers, enlisted personnel). One of the proposed follow-throughs is an additional analysis, by type of occupation, of the threats identified in the framework of reference. The "type of occupation" would be broken down into skill sets, with their level of reaction to the most relevant variables of the external environment, namely situation of the labour market at recruitment and end of career.

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