

# National Roofing Initiative Could Drastically Increase Need for RRCs® and RROs®

By Kristen Ammerman, Executive Editor, *Interface*

A program launched quietly five years ago to deal with excessive roof repair costs on buildings owned by the U.S. Army Reserves has the potential to cause demand for Registered Roof Observers (RROs), Registered Roof Consultants (RRCs), and potentially, eventually Registered Waterproofing Consultants (RWCs) to increase dramatically nationwide, according to a report to the RCI, Inc. Board of Directors in March.

In 2005, the U.S. Army Reserves initiated a program for life-cycle roof management of its myriad facilities, called the National Roofing Initiative (NRI). The NRI was based on the premise that consistent design, quality materials, and expert application could extend service life and reduce excessive roof maintenance and repair costs over time. Olan "Bud" Lewis, a member of RCI, Inc. since 2001, and past director of the NRI, noted that "the largest single expenditure" for maintenance and repair of the country's 700 Army reserve units had been maintenance and repair of its roofs. "The average age of replaced roofs [was] nine years," Lewis stated.

So the Reserve's Installation Management Command conducted an evaluation of roofing in partnership with the Louisville District Corps of Engineers, which implements, coordinates, and oversees construction for the Army in five states (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio) and executes a nationwide construction program for the Army Reserves. The goal of the NRI was to ensure good specifications, products, contractor work, and management oversight; to leverage existing Army expertise and tools; and to manage roofs on a 20-year life cycle.

Materials and warranties on

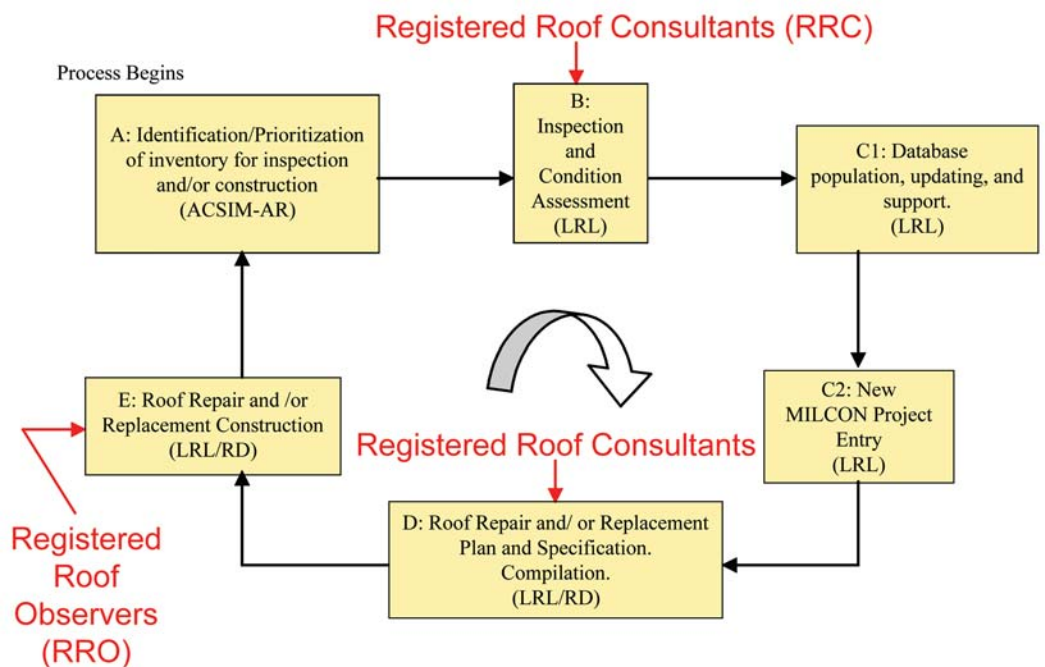
roofing projects had previously been to minimum standards, but the Army Reserves was seeking superior specification development, materials, and installation to ensure a 20-year useful life. Consequently, RCI Registered Roof Consultants were contracted to write guidelines for built-up, modified bitumen, EPDM, and PVC systems. Specifications now require high-performing roof systems with a 20-year, no-dollar-limit warranty, covering repair or replacement due to poor workmanship or defective materials. Detail drawings were developed exclusively for the Army Reserves and exceed manufacturers' requirements. To manage long-range planning, repairs, maintenance, inspections, and scheduling, Digital Facility's RoofPro 4.3 software is employed.

The Department of Defense's Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC), revised in 2006, states, "The cost and benefits of inspection

by a Registered Roof Consultant (RRC) or a Registered Roof Observer (RRO) should be considered for all military roofing projects" and "The design of the roof should be reviewed by a knowledgeable person such as an RRC."

In 2007, in recognition of his work to advance recognition of RCI credentials, RCI President Gary Cattel awarded the Michael DeFrancesco Volunteer of the Year Award to Bud Lewis, now retired as a lieutenant colonel from the Army Reserves.

Since its implementation and through 2009, the NRI has executed reroofing contracts of almost \$42 million, according to Jeffrey E. Bayers, PE, who presented a PowerPoint® report to RCI's Board of Directors during the association's Orlando convention. Bayers, program manager with the Army Corps of Engineers' Louisville District, said the Corps now requires that



**LEGEND:** ACSIM – Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management  
 LRL – Louisville Regional District  
 AR – Army Reserves  
 RD – Regional District

RRCs develop reroofing project details and specifications. Additionally, RROs will be utilized during construction to serve as roof installation quality control observers for the projects.

Eventually, Bayers opined, the use of RRCs and RROs on new design and construction will also be implemented by the Reserves. He stated that this could entail billions in new construction by the Army Reserves alone: "There are over 700 Army Reserves facilities throughout the U.S.,

totaling 30 million sq ft of roofing." Other branches of the service are considering adoption of the NRI standards as well, Wagdy Abdelmeseh, PE, assistant chief of staff for installation management for the Army Reserves and NRI program director, added. Abdelmeseh accompanied Bayers to the RCI convention in Orlando when the presentation was made to the RCI board.

The program has been deemed "perpetual" by the Corps. Plans are to expand the initiative to include other building envelope

issues and "new energy initiatives" involving holistic building energy management.

The U.S. Army Reserve manages only one-fifth of the total military complex in the U.S., Bud Lewis noted. If the active duty services comply with Department of Defense roofing policy (United Facilities Criteria) and adopt the National Roofing Initiative in all its roofing programs, and if the active Army adopts the National Roofing Initiative, the need for RRCs and RROs could virtually go through the roof. 