



ACTIVE COMPONENT OFFICERS

The commissioned officer corps is the senior leadership and management of the Armed Forces. This chapter presents a view of the demographic and social characteristics of the FY 2004 Active Component commissioned officer corps, including separate information regarding newly commissioned officers (i.e., those officers entering the corps for the first time, also known as officer accessions). [\[footnote 1\]](#) Also highlighted are longitudinal changes among officers. Figure 4.1 illustrates the trend in Active Component officer strength by Service since 1974. Supporting data are provided in Appendix [Table D-17](#).

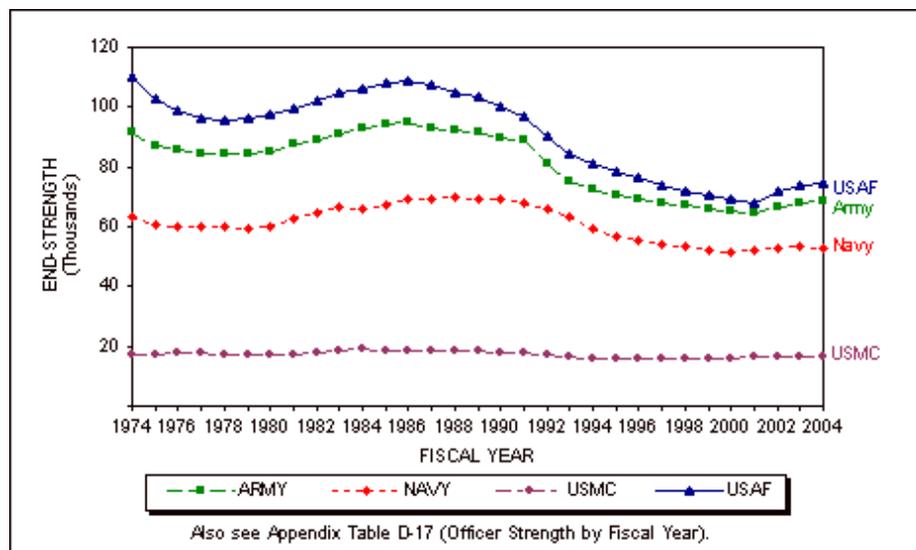


Figure 4.1. Active Component officer end-strength, by Service, FYs 1974–2004.

These data depict two drawdowns and one buildup in the Active Component officer corps. The changes in military strength can be attributed, at least partially, to changes in the world situation. The first decline, in the 1973 to 1979 period, occurred during the demobilization following the end of the Vietnam Conflict. The defense buildup of the 1980s was generated by the escalation of the Cold War, and the second drawdown, which lasted through the 1990s, resulted from the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War. The trend to a smaller Active Component officer corps ended in FY 2002. FY 2004 showed a slight increase of less than 1 percent in the number of Active Component officers. Almost all of the increase occurred in the Army and Air Force, with slight decreases in the Navy and Marine Corps.

The overall number of individuals commissioned by the Services increased approximately 1 percent in FY 2004, with 19,084 newly commissioned officers (Figure 4.2). All of the increase occurred in the Navy; the other Services experienced decreases in the number of officer accessions. The FY 2004 level is similar to the number of accessions in FYs 2000 and 2001.

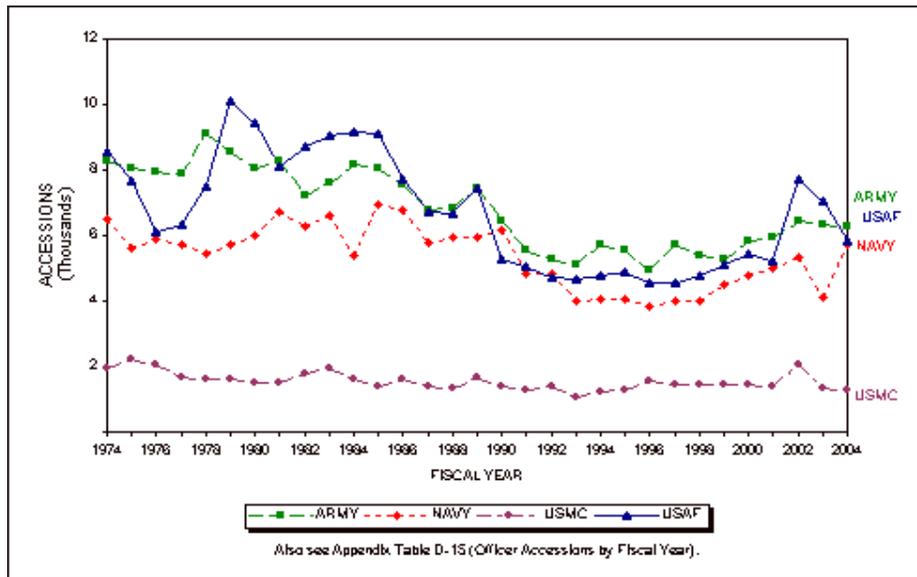


Figure 4.2. Active Component officer accessions, by Service, FYs 1974–2004.

[Footnote 1] Data are for commissioned officers; warrant officers are excluded. A brief sketch of warrant officers is presented at the end of this chapter. [back to paragraph](#)

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