

Like NATO, not all Warsaw Pact forces are stationed in close proximity to the inter-German border,³ nor are they maintained at full combat readiness. Warsaw Pact divisions are categorized according to three readiness levels.⁴ Category One units are completely equipped and can be fully manned within 24 hours. Category Two units also have complete equipment but are only 50-75% manned, requiring three days for mobilization. Category Three units may have complete equipment (older models retired from front-line forces) but maintain only 20% manpower; at least nine weeks are needed to raise the readiness of these units to the highest level. Table 3 summarizes the readiness and peacetime locations of Warsaw Pact forces committed to the Western TVD.

³ Warsaw Pact lines of communication extend overland from the Western Soviet Union to the Inter-German border; NATO links to North America cross the Atlantic Ocean. Thus, Soviet and East European reinforcements can travel overland to the front while those from the United States and Canada must travel by air and/or sea to West Germany. Prima facie, reinforcements should be less difficult for the Warsaw Pact than for NATO. However, other factors may offset this apparent advantage. For example, during the D-Day invasion and its aftermath in June-July 1944, Allied forces entered the Normandy bridgehead faster than German armoured forces could reach the front after their release from the operational reserve. German troop movement to the battlefield was slowed dramatically by complete Allied air superiority. Allied air forces destroyed bridges and rail lines, and attacked German columns moving along the roads to Normandy. At the same time, the Allied navies' local command of the sea prevented German naval forces from interfering with troop transports travelling from England to the coast of France. This is not to suggest that sea lines of communication are inherently superior to those on land. At most, this example illustrates the need to consider a variety of factors before judgements are made in this regard.

⁴ Unlike the Warsaw Pact, NATO forces are not categorized according to standard alliance readiness levels. Unit readiness is determined by the training and equipment standards for each national army, among other factors.