

1997 Franks Award Winner Recognized at Armor Conference

*3d Annual Franks Award Recognizes
Individual For Outstanding Contributions
To Army's Ground Warfighting Capabilities*

by Captain Chip Banks

General William Hartzog, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, presented Colonel Thomas F. Metz, Director of the EXFOR Coordination Cell, with the Frederick M. Franks, Jr. Award during the recent 1997 Armor Conference at Fort Knox. The award recognized Colonel Metz for the remarkable work he has done over the past 14 months with the planning, coordination, and execution of the Army's Task Force XXI Advanced Warfighting Experiment. The experiment culminated this past March at the National Training Center in an unprecedented series of force-on-force battles between the technologically-enhanced 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division (EXFOR) and analog-based OPFOR. The intent of the AWE was to assess the impact of digitization on units' lethality, maneuverability, and survivability, and thus determine the future of modernization efforts in the Army.

In 1995, the Chief of Armor, Major General Larry Jordan, then Commander of the Armor Center and Fort Knox, created the Frederick M. Franks, Jr. Award to annually recognize an individual who has made a significant and lasting improvement to the Army's ground warfighting capabilities. The award's namesake, General (Retired) Franks was the TRADOC Commander from August 1991 to October 1994 and Commanded VII Corps during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. The award was named after him in recognition of the leadership values he embodied and the significant impact he had on shaping today's Army.

This year will be the third time the Franks Award has been presented. Previous recipients include Master Sergeant Bradley Guile, a detachment operations sergeant with the 5th Special Forces Group, and Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Wall, an instructor at the Command and General Staff College. Nominees for the award can be any Active Duty or Reserve Component officer, noncommissioned officer, enlisted soldier, or Department of the Army civilian. Thirteen individuals were submitted this year, with nominees coming from across the spectrum of the

Department of Defense, to include representatives from numerous Forces Command units, the National Training Center, Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command, Soldier Systems Command, Test and Evaluation Command, and the Army's Program Executive Offices. The selection committee is comprised of seven members representing all of the categories from which the nominees may come. The committee evaluates each person with respect to four qualities during the year or years prior to nomination. These are: offers a vision for the future of the mounted warfighting force that significantly improves combat survivability, lethality, or mobility; develops an innovation in equipment, materiel, or doctrine that significantly enhances the effectiveness of the mounted elements of the combat arms; exemplifies professional excellence in demeanor, correspondence, and leadership on issues relevant to mounted warfare; and displays a love of soldiering through leadership skills, recognition of the sacrifice and achievements of subordinates, and attention to the intent and directions of higher commanders. Recommendations are forwarded to the Chief of Armor for final approval.

Colonel Tom Metz is credited with organizing and leading the EXFOR Coordination Cell (ECC) which was created at Fort Hood, Texas, in May of 1995. The ECC has been the Army's focal point for making Force XXI a reality. As its director, he has been at the center of doctrinal, organizational, materiel, and training innovations Army-wide. Throughout the Army's Advanced Warfighting Experiment, Colonel Metz and his staff of 11 personnel, were responsible for synchronizing the efforts of over 3,000 industry participants, every major Army command, and numerous officials within the Defense Department and Congress. As a result, tomorrow's mounted force will be equipped with the state-of-the-art, precision information technologies that will allow it to continue its dominance across the entire spectrum of crisis. Colonel Metz has truly made a significant and lasting contribution to the warfighting capability of our Army, and thus is a fitting recipient of the 1997 Frederick M. Franks, Jr. Award.