

# COMMANDER'S HATCH



## Training for Tomorrow

by MG George H. Harmeyer, Commanding General, U.S. Army Armor Center

The challenges of training the U.S. Army's mounted forces in the post-Cold War strategic environment are tremendous. We must train and sustain readiness for full spectrum conflict and expect to deploy anywhere in the world on short notice. These deployments will feature tailored packages of forces, to include the Reserve Component, and will require us to employ Information Age technology against multiple and asymmetric threats. The increased deployments of the Army's mounted forces in an era of fixed and constrained resources means, at least in the near term, a dramatic decrease in available training dollars for non-deployed units.

In recent years, every Armor and Cavalry unit in the Army has used virtual and constructive training devices in concert with live training exercises to offset this curtailment of available training dollars. However, the training unit has borne the burden, to some degree, of managing the installation/institution training plan, as well as the unit's tactical proficiency plan, derived from its METL.

Managing decreasing and turbulent resources is the central focus of an emerging Mounted Training Strategy (MTS) that we have initiated here at the Armor Center. This training strategy will include a workable model that will allow unit commanders to execute well resourced training given today's constrained resources. Moreover, the different training environments in CONUS, USAREUR, and Korea require that the Mounted Training Strategy be tailored to meet each MACOM's demands — its mission, training environment, and training resources.

The central tenet of the new training strategy is simply this: The Army's core

competency is developing combat ready soldiers, competent and well-skilled staffs, tactically proficient and confident leaders, and finally, "killer" platoons and companies that are able to dominate any threat across the spectrum of conflict. Small unit excellence is the key component of our strategy as they establish the basis for success on future battlefields. With that as our focus, the Mounted Training Strategy must:

- focus on resourcing pre-deployment combat proficiency levels
- include Training Support Packages after receipt of mission and mission rehearsals
- plan for sustainment training while deployed
- place renewed emphasis on the conduct of annual unit EXEVALS
- identify core tasks to be trained and the number of annual iterations to prevent atrophy
- account for personnel turbulence
- maximize the training potential of all training environments - live, virtual, and constructive
- support AC and RC environments
- support Campaign Plan XXI - Warfighter, Warrior, and WarMOD
- justify training resources
- be tailored for each MACOM

The Mounted Training Strategy will define a pre-deployment training readiness level that is achievable within current training resources and incorporates Training Aids, Devices, Simulators, and Simulations (TADSS). The methodology incorporated into the Mounted Training Strategy is based on core tasks that are

trained quarterly, either in the virtual or live environment at the platoon and company level. The MTS will allow commanders to conduct multi-echelon training so that platoons and companies train as the battalion and brigade staffs and leaders are trained in the constructive, virtual, and live environments by maximizing the training environment based on available resources. The goal of this strategy is to develop soldiers, staffs, leaders, and units proficient in the core tasks. This is paramount to sustaining and maintaining training readiness in preparation for receipt of a mission order. The strategy is the same for the Active Component and the Army National Guard, with the required level of training readiness based on time available to execute the strategy. By integrating core tasks, this strategy is able to apply new training technologies and approaches, justify the resources required to maintain training readiness, and to support the development and acquisition of new materiel and information systems capabilities. The MTS enables us to describe how and where to use TADSS and the training required to maintain readiness — both pre- and post-mobilization.

As our new training strategy emerges, several new training technologies currently being fielded will greatly assist our training efforts. These systems are the Close Combat Tactical Trainer (CCTT) and the Tank Weapons Gunnery Simulator System and Precision Gunnery System (TWGSS/PGS). The CCTT provides a virtual environment for our units to train, sustain, and rehearse, which greatly complements that training conducted in

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the live environment. CCTT is the next step in a unit-level training system, a significant improvement in our SIMNET capability. TWGSS and PGS provide the tank and Bradley force with precision engagement capability utilizing the M1 or M2/M3 fire control system. This is significant to the commander who must assess the readiness of his crews and their maintenance of fire control systems during both gunnery and maneuver training. TWGSS/PGS offers us the one best system for crews to use for training at home station, the CTCs, and while deployed.

Of course, the MTS is not solely focused on virtual and constructive gunnery training. Live gunnery is still what allows crews and platoons to maintain their finely honed edge. To that end, we recognize that the overall capabilities of our weapons systems have outpaced the ability of our live fire ranges to challenge them. We have drafted an Operational Requirements Document (ORD) for the Digital Multi-Purpose Range Complex (D-MPRC). Significant elements of the D-MPRC ORD call for expanded width and depth, incorporation of next-generation target systems, and numerous technical innovations. The most significant improvement, however, would be the integration of information systems into the range. These will provide the situational awareness to train staffs, leaders, and units to use information dominance to attain precision maneuver as well as fires to shape the battlefield.

Besides these new technologies, there are new training approaches that have evolved, the Force XXI Training Program and the Three Step Digital Learning Strategy which will greatly complement our Mounted Training Strategy. The Force XXI Training Program uses structured training support packages to develop competency and synchronization skills at the brigade and battalion staff leader level before expending resources on more expensive training events. These products follow a structured training methodology and have been developed to focus on the most common deficiencies, as reported by CALL and the CTCs. These Force XXI training products are all scheduled to be fielded during FY 99 and will make a tremendous vehicle to train future staff officers.

The Three Step Digital Training Strategy provides a context for commanders to understand and focus their training programs utilizing the information sys-

tems currently being fielded. The Digital Training Strategy follows these three steps:

Step 1 - basic competency in the staff position, staff section, staff group, and then integration of the entire staff;

Step 2 - learning the hardware and software of digital information systems;

Step 3 - total immersion in a tactical environment created in the virtual and constructive simulation using Training Support Packages (TSPs) to drive the exercise. Constructive simulation allows us to train repetitively, but it isn't until we have units in the field that staffs fully appreciate the "friction" of mounted training and operations. We have significant challenges in this area that make it essential for the Mounted Training Strategy to include the resources required to train and maintain the highly perishable skills associated with digital Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Information (C4I).

### Final thoughts:

The changing global environment requires Army trainers to consider what missions to train for, what pre-deployment standards must be met, and how this training can most efficiently and effectively be accomplished for both AC and RC units. The Mounted Training Strategy is the catalyst for units to plan and execute that effective training across the spectrum of live, virtual, and constructive simulation. It will allow commanders to focus on individual, staff, and unit proficiency in selected "core" tasks across the full spectrum of conflict. The Mounted Training Strategy will exploit the potential of the Force XXI training products, maximize the benefits of the latest developments in TADSS, and capitalize on the proven doctrinal training concepts. The result of this effort will be combat ready soldiers, competent staffs, tactically proficient leaders, and finally, "killer" platoons and companies that will be successful against any type of threat across the spectrum of conflict. Lastly, I want you to know that we need your input in order to make the Mounted Training Strategy work for your unit. My point of contact for this effort is Colonel Bill Blankmeyer, Director of the Directorate of Training and Doctrine Development.

Forge the Thunderbolt!