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WORTH REPEATING

“We're going to align our forces to the combatant commanders, based on their requirements, to help them shape and set the theaters that they are responsible for.”

– Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Ray Odierno, discusses the U.S. Army going “in the right direction” not only by strengthening its presence in the Asia-Pacific theater, but also about the regional alignments in theaters elsewhere, while speaking at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

Army Maj. Says LVC-IA is Like Going to the Field Without Having to Go to the Field

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

Rave reviews like the one in the headline have been pouring in from Soldiers since PEO STRI fielded the first Live, Virtual, Constructive-Integrating Architecture (LVC-IA).

The remark was made by Maj. Jon Meredith, training officer, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment at Fort Stewart, Ga., after his unit completed an exercise called “Operation Boar.” He also excitedly spoke about the realism of the virtual aspect of the system in an article published in the post newspaper.

“That Hellfire shot from the Apache helicopter simulator the first day was awesome,” he said. “As the helicopter was firing, the guys in the tank in the Close Combat Tactical Trainer were reporting that the helicopter had just fired above them. You could hear a little bit of strain in the pilot’s voice on the radio

as they were maneuvering around. It was very realistic.”

That is music to the ears of many past and present PEO STRI employees who have worked hard for more than 10 years to get LVC-IA into the hands of their number one customer – the Soldiers.

“It’s really exciting to see everything come together and work like we envisioned it working back in the infancy days of building the system,” said John Womack, deputy product manager for Warrior Training Integration, PM ConSim.

He added that the most rewarding aspect to him was observing the operations officer feel the stress and confusion while running the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) using LVC-IA assets.

“When you put a real person in a real simulator, that person is charged with making decisions,”

he explained. “Those decisions, right or wrong, create an impact to the guy in the TOC who now has to make a decision that may impact the other guy in the other simulator or the real Soldiers on the ground or in the air. If the decision is incorrect, such as taking a wrong turn, it can cause confusion in the TOC that must be immediately dealt with.”

Womack is quick to add that while there is a lot of talk about the successes of LVC-IA in the field, he also sees it as a PEO STRI team achievement.

“This is a great success due to the folks in PM ConSim, PM TRADE and PM CATT all working together over a long period of time for a common goal,” he said. “When all elements of LVC-IA are being integrated together, they all have to work. If one of them doesn’t, you are missing a critical element in the exercise. Thanks to the great teamwork, it is working as advertised. The Soldiers in the TOC have no idea which assets are live and which are simulated.”

First fielded to Fort Hood, Texas in late 2012, the LVC-IA systems are now in use at Forts Bliss, Texas, Campbell, Ky., Stewart, Ga., and Drum, N.Y., with plans to field one to Fort Riley, Kan., in March.

Rich Link, the assistant product manager for the program, said fielding LVC-IA at each post takes about six weeks.

“The first three weeks are busy putting the system on site,” he said. “After that, it takes about another three weeks to train the operators and maintainers and run a first-use



U.S. Army 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade Photo/Sgt. April Campbell

Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Fox shows Chief Warrant Officer 2 Steven Stage, left, how to use the GPS on their CH-47D simulator as they prepare for a tactical platoon air assault mission in the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (AVCATT) at Simmons Army Airfield.

PEO STRI Bids Farewell to Two of its Leaders

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

In early January, PEO STRI conducted ceremonies to bid farewell to two of its top leaders.

On Jan. 9, a retirement ceremony was held for Sgt. Maj. Patrick Ogden, PEO STRI's senior enlisted advisor, followed the next day by a departure ceremony for Ken Wheeler who left his position as the assistant program executive officer for business operations (APEO-BO) to pursue a career with industry.

Ogden, who joined PEO STRI in September 2010, had served in uniform for more than 36 years, first as an Iowa National Guardsman followed by 31 years on active duty. His assignments included three combat tours, two in Iraq and one in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Dr. Jim Blake, program executive officer, pinned the Legion of Merit award on the sergeant major and spoke to the audience about how Ogden will have a continued impact on the lives of Soldiers well into the future.

"Even as he trades in his Army uniform and dons civilian clothing, he is heavily invested in an ongoing Army Study Program called the Squad Overmatch Study that he started," Blake said. "Now in its second year, the study

is determining the viability of using training devices to build resiliency in Soldiers before they actually go into combat. Through this resiliency training, it is hoped that it would result in a reduced number of post traumatic stress disorder cases and help reduce the number of Soldier suicides. I have little doubt he will reach that goal."

ON JAN. 9, A RETIREMENT CEREMONY WAS HELD FOR SGT. MAJ. PATRICK OGDEN, PEO STRI'S SENIOR ENLISTED ADVISOR, FOLLOWED THE NEXT DAY BY A DEPARTURE CEREMONY FOR KEN WHEELER WHO LEFT HIS POSITION AS THE ASSISTANT PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS (APEO-BO) TO PURSUE A CAREER WITH INDUSTRY.

The PEO took to the stage again the next day to officiate the departure ceremony for Wheeler who served at PEO STRI both as an Army officer and a government civilian.

His assignments with PEO STRI included being the assistant product manager for PM Combat Support Training Systems; assistant project manager for PM TRADE; secretary general staff for STRICOM; assistant project

manager for OneSAF, PM WARSIM; product manager for Live Training Systems; project manager for Constructive Simulation; and the military deputy to the PEO.

After his retirement from the Army in September 2010, Wheeler returned to PEO STRI to take over the role of APEO-BO.

During the ceremony, Blake awarded Wheeler with the Superior Civilian Service Award and gave high praise for his accomplishments.

"In every single one of the projects he has been tasked with, he has excelled and our Soldiers have benefitted from his dedication to the mission at hand," Blake said. "Regardless of the time of day or the day of the week, Ken met each challenge with a calm resolve to complete it in a way that would have the least detrimental impact on PEO STRI's workforce and the Soldiers we serve."

Ogden's former position as the PEO STRI senior enlisted advisor has been filled by Sgt. Maj. Alan Higgs, while recruitment actions are still underway to fill the chief of staff role, formerly called the APEO-BO prior to the organization's realignment to a G-staff.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Dr. Jim Blake, PEO STRI program executive officer, congratulates Sgt. Maj. Patrick Ogden on his retirement.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Ken Wheeler, former assistant program executive officer for business operations, addresses the audience during his departure ceremony.

'Risk' Discussed Following Army Budget Request

By David Vergun, Army News Service

At what point does the Army become a hollow and ineffective fighting force if the drawdown and budget cuts continue?

Army leaders were asked that question during a media roundtable at the Pentagon just a day after the Army's proposed fiscal year 2015 budget was revealed.

Weighing in on the question was Brig. Gen. John G. Ferrari, deputy director of the Army program for analysis and evaluation.

At some point, the Army's ability to sustain combat in strategic depth would be eroded, he said, describing it not in terms of a magic number but as a continuum of risk level.

By sustained combat, he meant a protracted conflict where forces deploy, say for a year, rotating back to reset, retrain and redeploy. As they rotate back from the fight, other units would then backfill them in theater.

At a certain point, if manpower is reduced enough, those forces held in reset would simply not be there and the forces in the fight would theoretically need to remain there indefinitely or until the war is over, however many years that would take.

The other equally bad option, he pointed out, is that the size of the force could be reduced, so half of it remains in reset and retraining to rotate in at a later time. The risk to that is that the size of the force in the fight might be inadequate to accomplish the mission depending on the size of the operation and the capabilities of the opposing force.

If the assumption of risk is wrong and the force level is inadequate or troops are not properly trained or equipped, "the cost would be to the nation and to those troops," he said.

Maj. Gen. Karen E. Dyson, director, Army Budget, who was also at the media roundtable, weighed in on the risk factor.

"We've been at war so long now, we've got leaders whose only experience is counterinsurgency and not combined arms maneuver," she said, explaining that their training needs to be broadened to include more full-spectrum, decisive combat operations to build that capability that will reduce risk.

To demonstrate the shift to combined arms maneuver training, the Army has gone from



U.S. Army Photo

Senior Army leaders discuss the implications of the force drawdown and fiscal year 2015 budget cuts.

seven decisive action combat training center rotations in fiscal year 2013 to a planned 13 in fiscal year 2014 to a planned 17 in fiscal year 2015, she said.

Another area the Army is working on to prevent risk, she said, is building partner capacity and shaping regional interests through regional alignment.

There is also a focus on risk reduction in building readiness in the Army's contingency force and prioritizing funding there, she said.

This funding "will allow the contingency force to conduct progressive training through combat training center rotations that validate combined arms maneuver capabilities and comprehensive readiness," she said.

That does not remove risk, however, since those not in the contingency force will

train only to company or battalion level as affordability levels allow, she added.

Roy A. Wallace, assistant deputy chief of staff, G-1, added his take to the risk factor.

"It takes 18 years to grow a lieutenant colonel to take a battalion" into those types of high-intensity operations Ferrari mentioned," he said.

"So I'll have a finite number of lieutenant colonels to take over battalions as we move down to [an end strength of] 450,000. So if I lose one of [those lieutenant colonels] I don't have another.

"And it takes a certain amount of experience to do that job and if I start promoting ahead of schedule massively, then I get the wrong kind of individual with the wrong kind of experiences."

Falcon Paratroopers Pilot OneTESS System

By Sgt. William Reinier, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Officer

During simulation training exercises like those held on Fort Bragg, N.C., the visual effects of indirect fire support leave a void in realistic training due to the present limitations of the technology available.

Soldiers currently wear the Instrumental-Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (I-MILES) gear that has a sensor able to detect signals from a device mounted on an opposing force's weapon.

When Soldiers' I-MILES beep, it lets everyone know who has been hit.

Because mortars are not a direct-fire weapon, they are unable to send that signal to the Soldiers they're firing on.

First Lt. Chris Cox, a mortar platoon leader assigned to 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, says that the old way took away from any realism the training provided.

"It use to be that we would shoot our fire mission and we would send a supervisor out there and they would assign a casualty around the area," Cox said.

Because of the new One Tactical Engagement Simulation System (OneTESS), that will no longer be the case. Currently in the final stages of testing, paratroopers from across the Falcon Brigade spent last week training on the equipment.

Lt. Col. Scott Tufts, the PEO STRI product manager for the OneTESS system, said the new equipment fills an important need for mortar teams to train in the field.

"This is a training gap that we have," he said. "Mortars don't get to train because there's no way to do the fires in a safe environment."

OneTESS is a device that attaches to the current mortar systems used by infantry mortarmen. They can input the type of round to be fired, as well as the information they receive from forward observers who communicate where opposing forces are located. The information is then transmitted by radio from the Soldier's gear to a Homestation Instrumentation Training System that broadcasts a signal across the training area. Any Soldier located in the area where the simulated rounds hit receives a signal on their I-MILES that informs them that they are out of play.

The system not only increases the training benefits for the mortar team, but it also brings together the forward observers and the fire-and-effects coordination cell, ensuring all elements of a fire mission run smoothly.

"This system is designed to reinforce



U.S. Army 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Photo/ Sgt. William Reinier

Sgt. Dustin Jeffries, a fire support specialist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, uses a forward observer tablet to pinpoint the location of simulated round impacts during the brigade's testing of the new One Tactical Engagement Simulation System (OneTESS) at Fort Bragg, N.C., Jan. 16. The OneTESS system allows units to simulate the effects of indirect fire using the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System.

techniques, tactics and practices and allows Soldiers to train together to build teamwork," Tufts said.

The new training system provides immediate feedback of where the round hits and the damage it caused.

"Bottom line is there is no force-on-force training devices for the forward observers or indirect firers at all," Vic Elsey, military analyst for the OneTESS system, said. "They do a lot of dry-fire missions to simulate fire missions, but there is no visual effects and no feedback mechanism."

OneTESS is the first of its kind and will change the way mortar teams train in the field.

"Now a mortar crew will be able to fire the weapon and achieve effects on force-on-force targets," Elsey said. "We've never been able to do that.

"It's revolutionizing the training for indirect fire guys."

In addition to enhancing training at the unit level, the OneTESS system will have a major impact on the training used at the Advanced Individual Training School for infantry mortarmen.

"Right now, they go and fire three to five rounds at the artillery school," Elsey said.

"Imagine being able to fire hundreds of rounds using this system.

"Imagine the confidence level that Soldier is going to achieve." As the confidence levels go up, Army spending on live mortar rounds goes down.

"Instead of using live ammunition, they can call for fires with this system," Tufts said. "They can get accurate feedback and practice so when they qualify, they use fewer rounds."

Feedback from the Soldiers has been positive. Not only does the OneTESS system bring the mortars into the I-MILES fight, but it makes the paratroopers on the front lines better able to visualize the immediate effects of a call for fire mission.

"Now, the line guys are going to be more prone to using the fire support assets because they're going to put down real notional casualties in the field," Cox said. "It brings the forward observers and the mortars into the fight and allows us to better train."

If no issues with the system are found during the operational tests at Fort Bragg, the OneTESS system will go to the Pentagon for final approval before it is produced for use Army-wide.



Virtual Combat Training: Simulators Allow for Lifelike and Effective Training

By Wendy Brown, Fort Bliss Bugle Staff

For a combat training exercise, the room was surprisingly quiet. Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, rarely spoke as they stood on circular pads in a large, black room with two large projection screens.

Wearing combat helmets equipped with what appeared to be a black visor covering their eyes, the Soldiers looked in random directions and occasionally stood, knelt down or lay prone for seemingly no apparent reason. They carried weapons, which they pointed and fired – silently – on occasion.

For an uninitiated observer, the training might seem peculiar. For someone who knows almost all the action at the Fort Bliss Dismounted Soldier Training Center takes place within the Soldiers' helmets and the video-game-like scenarios on the room's projection screens, the Jan. 8 training session followed standard operating procedures.

The center at Fort Bliss is one of 28 Army installations to have one of the virtual training centers available for Soldiers to train for an endless variety of possible scenarios, said Alan Allcock, the center's training and simulation trainer. The system, a creation of the Intelligent Decisions Company of Ashburn, Va., has been available at Fort Bliss since August 2012.

"It's another training tool, and it's free,"

Allcock said, "You don't expend any money on bullets, but you're getting the training."

For the training exercise with 2nd Platoon, the center's employees created a scenario that involved clearing a village of improvised explosive devices, said 1st Lt. Brandon Rickard, 2nd Platoon leader.

"We can do it right here and do it the way we want," Rickard said. "It makes it easier on us."

For a similar exercise in the field, members of the company would have had to plan it 90 days in advance and spend a considerable amount of money on ammunition, food and water, Rickard said.

Rickard said he recommends the training facility.

"You can come in and do any scenario you want to do. It's really beneficial," he said.

The platoon's Jan. 8 training session was not all quiet, even to someone not completely privy to the action going on within the helmets. When a series of trucks drove into the scenario, the Soldiers warned each other and began an attack. The amount of talk, stress and movement between the digital warfighters increased significantly.

Spc. Matthew Klink, a member of the unit, said the virtual training exercise was the first he had participated in, but he found it lifelike and useful.

"It's a really good simulator that helps you develop skills you can transfer into real life," Klink said.

Last year the center developed 46 scenarios for various units, Allcock said.

"We have limitless scenarios," Allcock said. "Whatever the unit wants to do for training, we can design a scenario."

Soldiers who train on the system don a 26-pound backpack containing computer equipment, arm and leg sensors and an Advanced Combat Helmet outfitted with a visual display, a microphone and headphones. Everyone in the room can see the training scenario on the room's projection screens and hear the company's leaders giving commands from computer stations.

Soldiers are issued one of three weapons – an M4 assault rifle, an M4 assault rifle with an M320 grenade launcher attached or a M249 squad automatic rifle, Allcock said.

After suiting up, the Soldiers stand on a black pad (there are 18) and go through the scenario. If all of the 18 slots for suited Soldiers are taken, or if a Soldier has a profile and cannot suit up, the system has 10 work stations that allow Soldiers to participate from a computer screen, Allcock said.

The arm and leg sensors register the scenario movements, Allcock said. For example, if a Soldier kneels down on the pad, the Soldier's avatar in the scenario kneels down.

A joystick is connected to each weapon, and Soldiers use it to move their avatar forward in

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Pvt. Luis Germangarcia, 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, participates in a training exercise clearing a village of improvised explosive devices at the Fort Bliss Dismounted Soldier Training Center Jan. 8.



Fort Bliss Bugle Photo/ Wendy Brown

From left, Sgt. Jason Carlson, 1st Lt. Brandon Rickard, platoon leader of 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and Staff Sgt. Tyjuan Atkins, guide Soldiers through a training scenario at the Fort Bliss Dismounted Soldier Training Center Jan. 8.

Project Support Group Lives up to its Middle Name

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

With more than 330 government civilians and nearly 60 contracted employees, the Project Support Group (PSG) makes up more than one-third of PEO STRI's workforce.

Led by Traci Jones, the assistant program executive officer for project support, their mission is to ensure the workforce has the proper skills, processes and procedures to efficiently and successfully accomplish the mission of the organization.

The team consists of four directorates: engineering, finance, acquisition logistics and workforce development. Together, she said, they work hard to live up to the group's middle name.

Rob Miller, chief systems engineer, is charged with providing an agile, highly efficient workforce that ensures the technical relevance and superiority of training and testing solutions across the acquisition lifecycle support the needs of Soldiers.

John Kirch oversees financial matters as the chief financial manager. He and his team support project managers and customers in executing and managing financial processes and ensuring finances are properly coordinated.

The acquisition logistics directorate, led by Al Evangelista, has the responsibility of maintaining a highly trained acquisition logistics workforce to manage the materiel fielding of cost-effective and supportable systems.

Jean Burmester, who is set to retire at the end of March, is currently the chief of the Workforce Development Office that oversees training and career development across all of PEO STRI.

Another major area that falls within PSG is overseeing the SETA and Wounded Warrior contracts. Cheryl Spears is the project director and contracting officer's representative for both. These contracts augment the workforce with skills and abilities that cannot be filled by Department of the Army civilians.

While each function comes with its own challenges, collectively Jones sees the biggest hurdle is ensuring the workforce has the necessary tools to develop competent leaders.

"It goes beyond the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) certification requirements for the functional career fields," she explained. "Employees want and need the opportunity to learn and grow so

they can develop into PEO STRI leaders in the future. Giving them those opportunities is vital to the organization's success."

One opportunity she is passionate about the workforce taking advantage of is seeking out a mentor to help them in their growth. Though PEO STRI doesn't have a formal mentoring program, she said all leaders should stand ready to be mentors.

"One of the keys to professional success for any employee is to purposely seek out a leader they are comfortable with, who can give guidance and lessons learned in how to navigate their



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Traci Jones, assistant program executive officer for Project Support, receives her award and pin for 30 years of government service from Mr. Rob Reyenga, DPEO.

careers," she said. "The honest feedback and advice that a mentor can offer is invaluable for growth and self improvement."

Along with finding a mentor, she also encourages everyone in the workforce to take advantage of the many opportunities available for education, training and development.

She said the organization has had a generous tuition reimbursement program, emphasizing that courses that directly relate to the employee's position description are highly considered for approval.

"The Army Civilian Education System courses are open to all Army employees and several are available online," she added. "Also, the PEO STRI Leadership Development Seminars offer an excellent opportunity for all employees

to learn about relevant and timely issues related to PEO STRI."

While her group has received many kudos, one that she is particularly proud of is PEO STRI recently winning the Gold Award in the annual Defense Acquisition Workforce Development award program, a Department of Defense-wide competition. She credits PEO STRI's starting and continuing the Acquisition Academy (A2) program as a main impetus behind winning the award.

Started in 2008, seven classes have graduated A2, with 113 PEO STRI employees now at different stages in their careers. Jones said the recruiting and hiring process is rigorous, taking several months before the chosen candidates start their first day of the academy.

The process, she said, starts with recruitment from 10 or more universities and USAJOBS announcements. The rigor begins when they begin reviewing the more than 2,500 applications they receive, on average, for each class. Those then have to be narrowed down to less than 20.

That process is handled by a select, independent panel who reviews the applications based on specific criteria for each career field. The top candidates are then interviewed and the best qualified are selected for employment. Jones said the A2 program has been a resounding success.

"Those 113 employees who are graduates of A2 are extremely motivated, highly functioning employees who will carry PEO STRI into the future," Jones said. "The PEO is very proud of the bench that we have recruited who will be the future leaders of the organization."

Jones, who has been in her current role for 10 years, said she gets great satisfaction in seeing PEO STRI employees advance in their careers.

"There is nothing more rewarding than mentoring employees to help them achieve their career and life goals," she said. "I enjoy watching our future leaders of the Army rise to their greatest capability to serve our Soldiers."

Her main message to the workforce is that PSG is here to live up to their middle name – support.

"The PSG is here to support the PMs and other PEO staff elements to ensure that the organization has the right people with the right skills at the right time. I am so proud of our group, and I know we will continue to provide outstanding support to the PEO and the Army."



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

John Kirch, chief financial officer, accepts an award from Dr. Jim Blake, PEO.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Rob Miller, chief systems engineer, speaks at the annual Training and Simulation Industry Symposium.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Jean Burmester, chief of the Workforce Development Office, addresses the graduates of the Acquisition Academy Class of 2013.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

AI Evangelista is the chief acquisition logistics manager.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

The Acquisition Academy Class of 2013 pose for a photo after their graduation.



Flight Simulator Gets Soldiers Back to Basics

By Staff Sgt. April Campbell, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade

For many, young and old alike, the idea of going to school or work and playing video games all day with their peers might be a dream come true.

That scenario describes a good day of training, in fact, for pilots at Simmons Army Airfield, N.C.

The 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade has spent the last few weeks getting back to basics in Army aviation doctrine as they practiced tactical platoon air assault missions in the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (AVCATT) at the Southeastern Regional Simulation Complex.

Unlike most simulators, which are dedicated to representing a single aircraft, the modular rooms in the AVCATT can be reconfigured to represent different aircraft and act as a collective trainer for larger missions.

“The AVCATT gives us a chance to practice our contingency and emergency procedures while also allowing us to fly in formation like we would

during an actual mission,” 1st Lt. Benjamin Wise, who took on the role of air mission commander during the training, said.

Wise, who flies the CH-47 Chinook helicopter, and other pilots spent several days preparing for the mission, in which the pilots transported 115 notional Soldiers across the forward line of troops and then flew artillery guns to them via slingload.

“This is training at the leadership level,” Chief Warrant Officer 4 Carlos Legoas, a tactical operations officer, said. “We want the pilots to learn how to plan and what decisions to make in different situations.”

While they are experts at flying in support of combat operations, conventional planning and decision making is new to many of these pilots.

“Most of my platoon is very practiced in Afghanistan, where planning can be done on an accelerated timeline due to our air superiority and known flight routes,” Wise said. “This training

is helping us to learn how to properly plan a conventional air assault down to the second.”

With Operation Enduring Freedom already in its second decade, many new pilots have been understandably focused on succeeding in Afghanistan where Army aviation doctrine has been tailored to meet the needs of an asymmetrical environment the troops have had a number of years to study. Going back to raw doctrine and starting from scratch is an important part of creating a well-rounded and responsive aviation force.

“Some folks have never done it. Some folks haven’t done it in more than 10 years,” Lt. Col. William Braman, commander of the 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade said. “But, no matter what division we are working for or who we are fighting alongside, the only thing we have in common is doctrine.”



U.S. Army 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs/Sgt. April Campbell

Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Fox, a CH-47F Chinook pilot assigned to the 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, gets ready to take off during a tactical platoon air assault mission in the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (AVCATT) at Simmons Army Airfield, N.C.





Sgt. 1st Class William O'Neal, armored tank commander, Company D, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, updates information on the Blue Force Tracker in his M1-Abrams tank simulator during the fielding of the Live, Virtual, Constructive-Integrating Architecture Dec. 18 at Evans Army Airfield just outside of Fort Stewart, Ga.



U.S. Army 3rd CAB Public Affairs Photo/Sgt. Sgt. William Begley

Chief Warrant Officer 2 William Letunic, CH-47 Chinook pilot, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, participates in the fielding of the Live, Virtual, Constructive-Integrating Architecture from the virtual cockpit of the CH-47 Chinook at the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer on Hunter Army Airfield Dec. 17.

Fort Stewart Unit Participates in Live, Virtual, Constructive Training Exercise

By Sgt. William Begley, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade

Soldiers from Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., participated in a training event Dec. 16 through Dec. 19 that fielded the Live, Virtual, Constructive-Integrating Architecture.

LVC-IA is part of the Army's Integrated Training Environment, putting together the Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (AVCATT), the Close Combat Tactical Trainer (CCTT) and the Mission Training Complex to provide the virtual environment for "Operation Boar."

The fruits of all three assets were combined, and provided leaders with the ability to deliver virtual training to aviators, boots-on-the-ground infantry Soldiers using the Homestation Instrumentation Training System (HITS) and tankers. The training gave the Soldiers the opportunity to test their mental agility, versatility and adaptability in a safe environment.

Maj. John Culpepper, simulations operations officer, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, was excited about fielding the training on Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield.

"We'll now have the capability here at Fort Stewart to incorporate training that involves live Soldiers wearing HITS gear, which provides the location of the Soldier, and the Soldier's location can be translated into the virtual world," Culpepper said. "Now those operators that are operating tanks or helicopters in a virtual environment can see that live Soldier moving around. Until now, all you could see in the AVCATT was other aircraft. We now have the capability to link together these two virtual systems where you will have live Soldiers flying aircraft, and live Soldiers on the ground operating armored vehicles, and they can begin to coordinate and work together."

While Culpepper believes that live training is always preferred, there are advantages to virtual training; advantages like saving on the cost of training and being able to have the virtual equivalent of a live-fire exercise, but in a much safer and controlled environment.

"Not only is it safer, now we are not limited by the live environment. We are not affected by weather," Culpepper continued. "Virtual

[training] has a number of advantages that allow it to be used not only in a fiscally strained environment, but also just in routine training. Specifically, the ability to record what's going on for after-action review purposes. You have video and audio playback so the commander can hear how the crews are commanding and controlling their elements."

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jesse Olmstead, a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot with Company A, 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment commented on the training he received in the AVCATT.

"It's a good way to incorporate everyone working together as a team," Olmstead said. "It's a really good integration tool. It's definitely valuable training in my opinion. It's something we don't get to do on a regular basis here at home in garrison."

Imagine the cost, the logistical nightmare and the risk assessment involved in having every type of aircraft in the brigade all flying at the same time loaded with personnel and Hellfire missiles

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CITIZEN STRI

QUESTION:

“New Year's Day has come and gone, but is your resolution still going strong?”



“My New Year resolution this year was to not eat french fries, which is a lot harder when you have three young Chick-fil-A loving kids at home. That resolution lasted about two weeks.”

Nauman A. Ansari,
Acquisition Center



“My resolution was to spend more time running. So far I have participated in three 5Ks since New Year's Day and plan to do several more. However, I have not been running as much after work as I wanted to. Let's hope daylight saving time changes that.”

Lisa J. Smith,
CIO



“My New Year resolution is to get chiseled, washboard abs; so far, not so good, still working on it though.”

Shi Deng,
PM TRADE

Want your opinion heard? Answer March/April's question!

If you won a big jackpot lottery, what's the first thing you'd do with all the money?

The question is open to the entire workforce. Send your response to Kristen.McCullough@us.army.mil and put *Citizen STRI* in the subject line.

HOLIDAYS Events

- March 14 Lt. Col. Freddie King's promotion ceremony
- March 17 St. Patrick's Day
- March 21 Col. Mike Zarbo's retirement ceremony
- March 27 Rose Phillips' retirement ceremony
- March 28 Jean Burmester's retirement ceremony
- April 1 April Fools' Day
- April 18 Col. Pat Connors' retirement ceremony
- April 20 Easter
- April 22 Jeans Day
- May 13 PEO STRI Change of Charter/ Dr. Blake's retirement ceremony

INSIDE PEO STRI

Inside STRI is an authorized publication for military and civilian members of the U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, Orlando, Fla. 32826. Inside STRI is published under the authority of AR 360-1 and applies the Associated Press Stylebook industry standard.

Contents of Inside STRI are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or PEO STRI.

Editorial material for publication should be submitted to PEO STRI Public Affairs Office, 12350 Research Parkway, Orlando, Fla. 32826. The PAO reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

For more information about PEO STRI or to view Inside STRI online, visit our website at www.peostri.army.mil

Editor:

Kristen Dooley McCullough, Editor-in-Chief
Kristen.McCullough@us.army.mil

Design:

Dwain Fletcher Co.
CGgraphics@peostri.army.mil



event. The first-use event target audience is those white-collar folks who will be running the training exercises.”

The goal of LVC-IA, Link explained, is to take the live, virtual and constructive information data and feed it through the mission command system to stimulate the organic equipment that the unit would use.

“From the unit leadership perspective, they are seeing the battle unfold as it normally would and then reacting to things that are occurring,” he explained. “They then conduct their own after-action review as to how they responded to all of these activities. There is also generally a technical review to determine how the systems performed.”

Womack stressed that the one advantage of the LVC-IA system is leaders can determine the size of the exercise to fit their needs. The exercise he observed at Fort Campbell was used to help an operations officer train his new TOC crew. He wanted them to get used to working together in the TOC by using just the virtual training assets associated with LVC-IA.

“He saved more than \$90,000 between the air costs, the fuel and repair parts by using LVC-IA,” Womack said. “He still got the benefit of real Soldiers in real simulators making real decisions on their own. He was so pleased that he brought his battalion commander and commanding general in to show them because they were preparing for a rotation at one of the Combat Training Centers.”

Plans for fielding version two of LVC-IA will include the gaming capability as well as the means of conducting joint exercises with units located at other bases.

“If you want to run an exercise at Fort Hood, but also want to involve Fort Bliss gaming and virtual assets while also tying in some other sites, you can do that, not just between sites that have LVC-IA, but also those without the



U.S. Army 3rd CAB Public Affairs Photo/Sgt. Sgt. William Begley

Maj. John Culpepper, simulations operations officer, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, watches the action during the fielding of the Live, Virtual, Constructive-Integrating Architecture, Dec. 17, 2013, at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

system,” Link said. “We have a remote kit that will allow those sites that don’t have LVC-IA to connect their virtual and gaming assets into the exercise so all of those units can now conduct a joint exercise.”

One major benefit of LVC-IA, besides the training aspect, is the ease of using the system.

“Before, when the units conducted an exercise and wanted to use virtual and constructive assets with their Soldiers in a blended environment, it was a cumbersome experience,” Link said. “We had to stand up an infrastructure, running wires and cables and setting up routers. When the exercise was over, we had to tear it down. When they wanted to do it again, we had to go through the whole process again. With LVC-IA, the capability is available at the location. Soldiers simply have to show up and train.”

The long-term goal for LVC-IA is to conduct joint exercises with the other military services.

“The Marines and Air Force have been formulating their requirements documents and asking us to review them and provide feedback in terms of what they are trying to achieve,” Link said.

FORT STEWART UNIT PARTICIPATES IN LIVE, VIRTUAL, CONSTRUCTIVE TRAINING EXERCISE *continued from page 9*

and other munitions supporting Soldiers on the ground in M1 Abrams tanks, Bradleys and other wheeled vehicles supporting a dismounted infantry battalion. With LVC-IA, it is now possible to do this in a virtual environment almost as often as the commander would like. Only now instead of worrying about budgeting for fuel, bullets and missiles, the commander can now just budget for time.

But some may wonder about how realistic the training can really be.

According to Maj. Jon Meredith, training officer, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, it’s very realistic. Meredith played the role of the tactical commander in the CCTT. His

team had a unique experience in the virtual training environment.

“That eight kilometer Hellfire shot from the Apache the first day was awesome,” Meredith excitedly said. “As the helicopter was firing, the guys in the tanks in the CCTT were reporting that the helicopter had just fired right above them. You could hear a little bit of strain in the pilot’s voices on the radio as they were maneuvering around. It was very realistic.”

How successful was the training? Meredith summed it up.

“It’s like going to the field without having to go to the field,” he said.

VIRTUAL COMBAT TRAINING: SIMULATORS ALLOW FOR LIFELIKE AND EFFECTIVE TRAINING

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the scenario, Allcock said. The avatars can be male or female, and all unit representatives have to do to receive the correct number of avatars of each gender is ask.

The center has scenarios that involve villages to foot patrols, as well as urban environments, Allcock said.

The scenarios also allow for units to call in artillery, a medical evacuation unit or vehicular support, Allcock said.

In addition, the center can record the training from start to finish so commanders can see every move the Soldiers make, Allcock said. There are also various views commanders can

“WE’RE ALL FORMER MILITARY AND WE KNOW THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF TRAINING SOLDIERS THE RIGHT WAY.”

- ALAN ALLCOCK

see, including an aerial view.

The system automatically records how many kills the Soldiers make, how many Soldiers would have died in an actual attack, how many friendly Soldiers are killed and how many vehicles are blown up, Allcock said.

After the training exercise, Soldiers hold an after-action review.

Allcock said he recommends unit representatives contact the center well in advance so center employees can develop the best training scenario possible.

Everyone who works at the center is familiar with military operations, Allcock said, and that helps when it comes to creating lifelike scenarios and productive training.

“We’re all former military and we know the trials and tribulations of training Soldiers the right way,” Allcock said.

TEAM ORLANDO IN PHOTOS



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Mr. Mick Hicks (right) of PM Field OPS receives his awards from Mr. Rob Reyenga, deputy program executive officer, for being named Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of fiscal year 2014.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Lt. Col. Mark Bliss, product manager for Air and Command Tactical Trainers (PM ACTT), presents Mike Younce, senior project manager for ACTT, his certificate of retirement Jan. 8, 2014.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Joe Giunta (left), director of the Acquisition Center, congratulates Ken Tedeschi, associate director of contracting operations, on his retirement Dec. 11, 2013.



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo/Doug Schaub

Mary Vick of PM TRADE receives her awards from Mr. Rob Reyenga, deputy program executive officer, for being named Employee of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2013.



Courtesy Photo

Scott Pulford, assistant program executive officer for acquisition and operations, and Fran Fierko, deputy project manager for PM CATT, brief more than 90 students at the University of Florida's Heavener School of Business Florida Leadership Academy as guest speakers. Fierko and Pulford provided an overview of PEO STRI, working as a Department of the Army civilian and the Army culture and values.



Courtesy Photo

Volunteers from Team Orlando's military agencies serve as judges at the Seminole County Regional Science Fair. The fair featured more than 257 projects from local area middle and high school students. PEO STRI participants include Glenn Dillard, Abdul Siddiqui, Rolando Lopez and Dave Grow.