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WORTH REPEATING



I intend to focus on taking care of people, developing capabilities that prioritize emerging threats, and providing both the warfighter and the taxpayer with the equipment and value they demand.”
~ Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning in his message to the Army

Allyn, McFarland Visit Orlando to Officiate Leadership Change in Army Acquisition Corps

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Daniel B. Allyn, together with the Honorable Katrina McFarland, acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology) and Army Acquisition Executive, officiated a June 16 ceremony that transferred leadership in one of the Army’s 12 program executive offices.

Brig. Gen. William E. Cole became the new leader of the Program Executive Office, Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) in the ceremony hosted at Hagerty High School in Oviedo, Florida, a small town northeast of Orlando. Immediately following the change of charter, Maj. Gen. Jonathan A. Maddux, the outgoing program executive officer (PEO), was retired from the Army after 40 years of service.

PEO STRI’s mission is to increase Army readiness and optimize Soldier performance through the acquisition of simulation, training, testing and cyber technology. The organization fields more than 400,000 training devices worldwide, to include the Engagement Skills Trainer (EST) and Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES).

“Bill is an accomplished officer who is no stranger to the world of a program executive officer,” McFarland said during her comments. “He has outstanding leadership skills that will enable him to continue PEO STRI’s tradition of strong and effective leadership.”

She had high praise for the outgoing PEO for his service to the country and PEO STRI.



U.S. Army photo

Brigadier General William E. Cole addresses the audience after he was presented the charter as the program executive officer, for the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation.

“Jon, you can be as proud of your people as they are of you,” she said. “Together, you have done an incredible job strengthening the link and solidifying the trust between Soldiers and the training they require for mission success. Thank you for your dynamic and distinguished leadership of PEO STRI.”

McFarland also praised the PEO STRI team for the work they do in helping ensure the Army’s Soldiers are ready to win in any conflict.

“I want to recognize the exceptional women and men of PEO STRI who develop and deliver training and testing products and services that keep our military the most formidable and ready combat force on earth, while also improving the combat effectiveness of our partner and allied nations,” she said.

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PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER



BG WILLIAM E. COLE

To The PEO STRI Workforce,

As I said at the change of charter ceremony, I am both humbled and honored to have the opportunity to lead this great organization into the future.

It is certainly a major highlight of my career to be entrusted with leading such a storied organization that helps ensure we have the best trained fighting force in the world.

Throughout my Army career I have witnessed firsthand the importance and positive results of integrating modeling and simulation into our Soldiers' training regimen. Thanks in large part to your continued outstanding support of our Soldiers' training needs, they have had resounding success on and off the battlefield.

Our Army faces a multitude of challenges presented by an ongoing austere fiscal environment coupled with unknown readiness requirements brought about by an ever-changing dangerous and complex world. I have no doubt we will overcome any challenges our team may face.

As we move forward together to accomplish our vital mission, I look forward to meeting and working with each of you.

Regards from your program executive officer,
Brig. Gen. William E. Cole



U.S. Army photo

Brig. Gen. William E. Cole (right) hosts Maj. Gen. Bruce Crawford (center), commanding general, Communications-Electronics Command, during a June 23 official visit to PEO STRI. Sgt. Maj. Alan Higgs (left), PEO STRI senior enlisted advisor, participated in the visit.



HONORABLE ERIC FANNING,
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

I am deeply honored to return to America's Army. Our Army, Active, Guard, and Reserve, is the finest Army the world has ever known. While it is great to be back, the Army is not new to me. Over the course of 25 years, I have seen Army leaders from every seat at the table, including all three military departments, all four services, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Capitol Hill, and the White House. Through these interactions and the relationships developed as a result, I have earned an appreciation of the complexity of ground warfare and the challenge of sustaining and advancing a ready Army.

People – Soldiers, Civilians, and Families – are the strength of our Army. As your Secretary, I will demonstrate my commitment to our people through what you'll see me do, what I'll say, and where I'll say it. I commit to you that I will work every day to ensure you are trained, equipped, and ready to complete your mission. When you're deployed, you can be confident we are taking great care of your Families, and that you come home safely.

I will work closely with General Milley to ensure the readiness of our formation so that we have the right capabilities, and training and will prioritize those necessary actions today that guarantee our readiness for tomorrow. To accomplish each of these tasks, I have identified three broad focus areas:

TAKING CARE OF OUR SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Army's strength comes from the care and respect we show each other. Our Army must continue to be an institution that rewards merit, while placing equal value on diversity of our ideas, experiences, and backgrounds. We will support both Soldiers and Families while they are deployed, and take care of them when they return home. This means invigorating efforts to eradicate the cancer of sexual assault and harassment, doing more to recognize the warning signs and stressors associated with suicides in our ranks, and in particular, advance our understanding of, and care for, those with mental health issues.

DEVELOPING CAPABILITIES TO COUNTER EMERGING THREATS

The Army's value is not measured solely by past victories. Tomorrow's Army depends on its success in exploiting the best technology today. As global threats evolve, the Army must accelerate its own capabilities in areas like cyber, electronic warfare, and protecting our communication networks. Today, and in the future, our Army depends on maintaining a technological edge over our adversaries.

MEANINGFUL ACQUISITION REFORM

The decision to send Soldiers into combat is the most difficult decision a leader will ever make. We ask our Soldiers and Civilians to do incredible things, and part of that basic bargain demands that our units have the best equipment when they need it. This requires an adaptive and agile acquisition process. I will take immediate steps to improve Army acquisition so we can rapidly provide the force with the equipment it needs to get the job done, on time, and within budget.

As I travel the world during the next few months, I'll be looking forward to meeting many of you and hearing your stories – learning about how you are making our Army, and as a result, our Nation, stronger. America's Army has a long and storied history. As we write the next chapter together, I am confident we will continue to advance the sacred trust the American people have bestowed upon us.

Hon. Eric Fanning
Secretary of the Army

“ **THE ARMY'S STRENGTH COMES FROM THE CARE AND RESPECT WE SHOW EACH OTHER. OUR ARMY MUST CONTINUE TO BE AN INSTITUTION THAT REWARDS MERIT, WHILE PLACING EQUAL VALUE ON DIVERSITY OF OUR IDEAS, EXPERIENCES, AND BACKGROUNDS.**”

— Hon. Eric Fanning

“ **IT IS CERTAINLY A MAJOR HIGHLIGHT OF MY CAREER TO BE ENTRUSTED WITH LEADING SUCH A STORIED ORGANIZATION.**”

— Brig. Gen. William E. Cole

Industry Day Provides Insights On Enhancing Acquisition Procedures

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

Five members from industry, who all previously served in PEO STRI leadership positions, participated in a panel discussion recently with employees of PEO STRI and the Army Contracting Command – Orlando.

During their discussions, they provided their insights on how both industry and government can better achieve their shared goal of quickly getting the best training products at the fairest cost in the hands of Soldiers.

Hosted by PM TRADE, the panel of retired Army officers included Maj. Gen. Bill Bond, industry consultant; Col. Matt Fair, Tactical Micro; Col. Mike Flanagan, CACI, Inc.; Col. Jim Ralph, industry consultant; and Col. De Voorhees, General Dynamics.

Three takeaways from their presentations were: “Timing is everything ... and time is money,” “Training is a tough sell,” and “Tell it like it is!”

TIMING IS EVERYTHING ... AND TIME IS MONEY

Flanagan, who was previously project manager for PM TRADE, emphasized to the audience of acquisition professionals how important it is to give as firm a date as possible for requests for proposals (RFPs) and contract awards.

He said that many companies work on different fiscal years, with his being on a July 1 through June 30 cycle. With bid and proposal (B&P) money only good for that particular year, that is where issues can and do arise if the RFP or contract award dates shift.

“Let’s just say, for example, that last year I convinced my boss to go after a contract that had a stated RFP date of April and I need \$300,000 B&P,” he explained. “Next thing I am told the RFP date has slipped to August. Three months may not seem like a lot, but you have now moved into a new fiscal year for me. That \$300,000 I had this year I may not get next year because my boss may think they are just going to move it again.”

Bond, who served as commander of the Simulation, Training and Instrumentation Command (now PEO STRI), also stressed the importance of firm dates during the contracting process.

“If those dates slip, it means increased costs. That ends up affecting the industrial base,” he said. “You’re going to have fewer contactors who are going to be competitive, fewer who are going to bid and, consequently, you are going to have less technology from which to choose.”

TRAINING IS A TOUGH SELL

All of the panel members agreed that convincing their companies to invest in dollars for the training market is a tough sell that is made more difficult when timelines slip.

“The training market just doesn’t have big visibility,” said Ralph, another former PM TRADE project manager. “When I go to fight for independent research and development (IRAD) dollars in a training market, the negatives are that the profitability margins are low, the programs are small and in a lot of cases they are slipping to the right so buying behaviors make it difficult to go after this type of money.”

He said when he does try to go after IRAD money for training, he is hit with questions on return on investment, the viability of the program, the availability of funding and the firmness of the timeline.

“Those are difficult questions and the things we have to wrestle with,” he said. “Early, stable customer requirements are imperative to making it happen.”

Bond weighed in on the difficulties of getting money for training research and development.

“Industry has about \$3 billion every year to do research and development,” he pointed out. “Last year, I told you that I know of no company that is spending any money to find anything for training. I think some of that has changed during the past year, but it’s still not where it should be.”

De Vorhees, another former project manager for PM TRADE, also commented on the challenge of getting companies to invest in the training market.

“We have to decide if this is something we go after,” he said. “It is even tougher in publicly traded companies that have stockholders who are investing. They are leery of guys like me who are business developers.”

TELL IT LIKE IT IS!

The panelists also urged the attendees to be detailed, realistic and upfront when they begin the communication process on upcoming projects.

“I would rather you give us a conservative timeline, rather than an optimistic one,” De Vorhees said. “I’d rather you say, ‘I would really like to get it out in the first quarter, but realistically it will probably be the second,’ so my company doesn’t lose money.”

Fair, a former deputy program executive officer as well as a project manager for ITTS, put it a bit more bluntly.

“Industry is only going to give you a better project that you want if we know what it is that you want,” he said. “We don’t like guessing what you want because then all this money goes to waste.”

“We look to make sure what you say at the Procurement Administrative Lead Time (PALT) meetings and the Training and Simulation Industry Symposium (TSIS) sessions match what the documents say when they come out,” he continued. “Consistency from the draft proposal to the final RFP is important. If you have big changes between the two, the draft didn’t do you any good anyway.”

Bond summed it up by saying the better information they receive the more productive the PALT will be.

“You have to write what you want because this is what you are going to get,” the retired general said. “If you are saying you would like to have A, but what we get in the proposal is B, you are going to get B. Inconsistencies cost industry a lot of money and time.”

De Vorhees added that “What we in industry want to give you is the best product we can and that’s exactly what you want to see. It’s a symbiotic relationship.”



U.S. Army photo

Mr. Tom Coffman (center), PM TRADE, speaks with Mr. Mike Flanagan (left), a retired colonel and former project manager for PM TRADE, while Mr. Bob Wolfinger, G3, looks on.



U.S. Army photo

Mr. Rob Wolf, PM TRADE's strategic requirements integrator, opens the Industry Day session by introducing the panel and the subject matter each would be addressing.



U.S. Army photo

The Industry Day panel prepares for the start of their presentations. They are, from left, Col. (ret.) Mike Flanagan, Col. (ret.) Jim Ralph, Col. (ret.) De Vorhees, Col. (ret.) Matt Fair, and Maj. Gen. (ret.) Bill Bond.



U.S. Army photo

Col. (ret.) Jim Ralph speaks to the audience during the Industry Day presentations.

PEO STRI CHANGE OF CHARTER, RETIREMENT CEREMONY



U.S. Army photo

The Honorable Katrina McFarland, acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology) and Army Acquisition Executive, addresses the attendees at the change of charter ceremony for the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation.



U.S. Army photo

The official party walks across the stage to begin the change of charter and retirement ceremony.



U.S. Army photo

Maj. Gen. Jonathan A. Maddux speaks to the audience following his retirement ceremony marking 40 years of service.



U.S. Army photo

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Daniel B. Allyn (left) presents the certificate of retirement to Maj. Gen. Jonathan A. Maddux, the outgoing program executive officer for the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation.



U.S. Army photo

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Daniel B. Allyn addresses the audience after the retirement ceremony for Maj. Gen. Jonathan A. Maddux.

JUNE 16, 2016



U.S. Army photo

The Honor Guard prepares to post the colors during the ceremony. From left are, Sgt. 1st Class Victor Huston, Sgt. 1st Class John Hardwick, Sgt. 1st Class Patricia Ward and Sgt. 1st Class Larin Harris.



U.S. Army photo

Brig. Gen. William E. Cole and his wife, Midge, take time for a photo prior to the start of the change of charter ceremony.



U.S. Army photo

Mrs. Liz Maddux, the wife of outgoing PEO Maj. Gen. Jonathan A. Maddux, receives a certificate of appreciation signed by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley from Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Daniel B. Allyn.

ALLYN, MCFARLAND OFFICIATE LEADERSHIP CHANGE IN ARMY ACQUISITION CORPS

continued from page 1

Cole said he was “honored and incredibly humbled” to assume the PEO STRI charter.

“PEO STRI is a fantastic organization, executing a critical mission for the Army during a challenging period for our country,” he said. “This is certainly a major highlight of my career to be entrusted with leading such a storied organization that helps ensure we have the best trained fighting force in the world.

“To the PEO STRI workforce, I promise that I will be your servant leader, doing all that I can to help you continue to excel as we develop, field and sustain world class training and instrumentation systems for our Soldiers.”

During the retirement ceremony, Allyn praised Maddux and his wife, Liz, for their dedicated service to the Army and the country.

“Today, we honor a family that has committed itself to a lifetime of service, always taking the toughest jobs, always leading from the front and always, by example,” he said. “Jon and Liz, your selfless service has shaped the course of our Army. Thank you for what you have given to our Nation.”

Maddux gave his farewell to the Army by thanking the many people who helped him throughout his career, including past leaders, noncommissioned officers, his family and the PEO STRI team.

“It has been an honor to work with the professionals at PEO STRI and other organizations these past two years,” he said. “We play a critical role in ensuring our great Soldiers are prepared to conduct and win in complex joint operations though a hybrid blend of simulated training. Great job, PEO STRI!”

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PEO STRI EMPLOYEES REACH MILESTONE CAREER SERVICE MARKS

During the PEO STRI town hall conducted on May 12, Maj. Gen. Jon Maddux, the now retired program executive officer, presented certificates to employees who had reached significant milestones in their careers.

40 YEARS



• LAWRENCE JOHNSON •



• TOM A. PETRILLO •



35 YEARS | FRANK E. SCHLEMMER



35 YEARS | RITA M. TEJEDA



35 YEARS | JOHN E. BISHOP, JR.



25 YEARS | STAN SLUPSKI



25 YEARS | JERRY P. HIGMAN



30 YEARS | ANTHONY L. HAMILTON



30 YEARS | PAUL M. SMITH



30 YEARS | CHERYL L. SPEARS



30 YEARS | JIM GOLDEN



30 YEARS | DANIEL E. SANTIAGO



30 YEARS | GLEN E. LOUPE

PEO STRI-Fielded Combat Convoy Simulator Readies Soldiers for Exercise

By Anna Ciccotti, U.S. Army Installation Management Command

The golden hue of the sunset shines upon pine-filled fields. Four Humvees slowly roll down a placid Bavarian country road, leaving a trail of dust behind. Sitting behind the steering wheel in the lead vehicle is a young private on his first exercise in Germany. A sergeant occupies the seat next to him. The convoy trolls along at about 5 mph, scanning the roadside and surrounding fields for anything suspicious. It looks like a routine patrol exercise, nothing out of the ordinary. Then, all of a sudden, there is an explosion; one vehicle is damaged and the other three are forced to stop. This is when it all begins.

This is one possible scenario that Vicenza-based Soldiers might face while honing their convoy live-fire skills in the realistic environment of the Reconfigurable Vehicle Tactical Trainer, or RVTT, that was positioned at Caserma Del Din from March 7 to March 25.

"This is an initial step in training (whereby) Soldiers can conduct repetitively in the simulator before advancing to live training," said James V. Matheson, chief, Regional Training Support Division South.

According to Matheson, Soldiers assigned to heavy weapons companies in infantry battalions and Soldiers in brigade support battalions are the ones who benefit the most from training in the RVTT. This is because the simulator can be configured to replicate the vehicles assigned to those units.

"The RVTT system consists of a series of trailers equipped with four life-sized replica Humvees surrounded by floor-to-ceiling, 360-degree movie screens," said Brunell Caudill, RVTT principal training and development specialist. "The suite provides an immersive virtual environment that can accommodate approximately 20 trainees per 90 minutes, training simultaneously on the same scenario," he said.

The vehicles have the look and feel of real vehicles, including all seats, driver controls, radio and turret ring mount. "The system database allows testing units on different terrains, to include Afghanistan, Iraq, Germany, many installations in the U.S. and Korea. Lighting and weather conditions can also be adjusted to add to the threat," Caudill said.



Photo by Anna Ciccotti, IMCOM

Soldiers assigned to the 2nd/503rd Battalion, 173rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) review convoy procedures with Brunell Caudill, training and development specialist for Reconfigurable Vehicle Tactical Trainer, before undergoing simulation training in Vicenza, Italy March 10.

"This training is very helpful and useful, and the scenario is very realistic, especially the way the trucks go down, the explosions and the firefight," said Sgt. Angel Santiago, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, who was the lead vehicle gunner for the exercise.

"I deployed to Afghanistan in 2011, and I do remember one mission where I was the gunner. The scenario that was presented to us today made me feel the same way as I did when downrange, with the tension that one may have in a mission. I think this will help out in lots of ways," Santiago said.

The 173rd Airborne Brigade was the first unit to use the simulated convoy training to prepare for an exercise in Germany.

"Normally, this simulator is based in Grafenwoehr, so the opportunity to have it in Vicenza for a few weeks eliminates the need to travel 800 km north of Vicenza to use the trainer. This is the first time we have had a convoy simulator here in the last couple of years so it is an infrequent training opportunity," Matheson said, emphasizing that during these tough economic times, the RVTT provides a cost-effective option to units who want more training for the buck.

"If a unit knows their mission when they are deploying, we can create that mission and the unit can practice the mission before deploying," Caudill said. For this session, it was the 173rd that chose the Bavarian database to prepare units for an upcoming major exercise in Hohenfels.

"We train Soldiers on how to use communications equipment both audio and digital, small-arms weapons familiarization. If a unit knows they are going to be conducting a convoy, live-fire range in the Grafenwoehr training area, we can build that exact range in the RVTT and the unit can practice that range several times in a day versus real dry runs of maybe two a day. This reduces the risk assessments of the range and improves the performance of the unit on the live fire range," said Caudill.

Combat multipliers—for example close-air support, explosions or medical evacuations—can be programmed to add realism and threats into the exercise.

"Any training a unit conducts at home station or at any of the training areas can be conducted in the RVTT, saving the units lots of time, resources and money," said Caudill. "In my mind and heart, I know we have saved Soldiers' lives because of this training."

Team Orlando Enjoys Annual Family Picnic

By Rick Gregory, PEO STRI Strategic Communications Support Staff

The annual Civilian Morale Welfare Recreation Association (CMWRA) Family Picnic was held in Warfighter Park on June 9 with plenty of food and fun activities for everyone.

The children enjoyed jumping in the inflatable house, sliding down the inflatable waterslide, watching a magic show, having their face artistically painted as well as participating in arts and crafts activities and various games.

The adults also got into the fun playing volleyball, horseshoes and cornhole games.



U.S. Army photo

Employees line up to buy lunch from one of the many food trucks at the picnic.



U.S. Army photo

Ms. Beverly Fisher, from PEO STRI legal department, proudly displays a gift card she won during the raffle.



U.S. Army photo

The water slide was a popular attraction for the children on the warm Florida afternoon.



U.S. Army photo

Sgt. 1st Class Patricia Ward, Army Contracting Command (ACC) - Orlando, and Aaliyah Royster, daughter of Sgt. 1st Class Laura Royster, also with ACC-Orlando, take time out of the activities to pose for a photo.



U.S. Army photo

A magician entertains the audience with a rope trick.



U.S. Army photo

A balloon twister entertains children during the picnic.

STRI IN FOCUS



U.S. Army Photo

Col. Bill Canaley, Project Lead Field Operations, presents a certificate of retirement to Roger D. Lennox during a ceremony on April 26.



U.S. Army Photo

Mr. Scott Pulford speaks to the audience after assuming the charter for Project Manager Training Devices in a ceremony on May 30.



U.S. Army Photo

Mr. Mike Willoughby, new Product Director Digitized Training, addresses the audience during the change of charter ceremony on June 2.



U.S. Army Photo

Deputy Program Executive Officer Cherie Smith cuts her cake during a surprise birthday celebration outside her office.



U.S. Army Photo

Ms. Sheri Peters (center), administrative assistant to the deputy program executive officer, enjoys a farewell party prior to her departure for temporary duty in Afghanistan.



U.S. Army Photo

Mr. Scott Pulford, acting Project Manager Training Devices, presents a certificate of retirement to Lt. Col. Yolanda Frazier in a ceremony on June 2.