

Thunderbolt Blast

Armor School Newsletter

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Armor News

19K INDIVIDUAL CRITICAL TASK LIST. The Central Army Registry (CAR) posted the 19K ICTL on their website. Click the link below and sign in with your CAC. Once signed in type ICTL in the search box to find the 19K ICTL. <https://atiam.train.army.mil/catalog/catalog/search.html>

REQUEST FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS. In an attempt to capture thirteen years of Cavalry and Scout combat operations CPT Josh Suthoff is requesting submission of successful combat operations and training plans. His goal is develop a book of training plans, LPDs, and historical reference. Submissions types include combat operations and training ideas. All submissions should fall within traditional 19D Cavalry/Scout tasks and can be linked to the fundamentals of Reconnaissance and Security.

Topics include but are not limited to: Observation Post Establishment, Emplacement/Use of Sensors, Zone Reconnaissance, Area Reconnaissance, Route Reconnaissance, Sniper Employment, Small Kill Team Use, Screen Operations, Raids, Infiltration, Establishment of a Patrol Base. We ask that prior to you beginning to write your paper that you make contact with CPT Josh Suthoff, at Joshua.suthoff@us.army.mil, to ensure the topic is not already taken or over-used. The initial deadline for all first run submissions will be **30 SEP 14**.

TRADOC Capabilities Managers

TCM-ABCT: STANDARDIZE SCOUT PLATOONS. Last year the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) submitted a Force Design Update (FDU) to standardize scout platoons assigned to cavalry squadrons in ABCTs, IBCTs and SBCTs. The FDU was initiated following the identification of formation capability gaps involving uniform versatility, survivability, protection, mobility, and firepower to conduct effective reconnaissance and security operations during combined arms maneuver and wide area security. In the ABCT, the FDU accomplishes this by reorganizing the platoon from three Cavalry Fighting Vehicles (CFV) and five High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) to six CFVs, commonly referred to as 6x36. This configuration requires fewer vehicle crewmembers, creates six additional positions for dismounted operations, and utilizes remaining NCOs to train and lead them without adding Soldiers.

In June 2013, 1st Squadron 7th Cavalry Regiment (Garryowen) from 1st Cavalry Division was identified to participate in a gap solution analysis and reorganized all six of their scout platoons into the 6x36 formation. Shortly after, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between 1st Cavalry Division, the National Training Center (NTC), The Maneuver Center of Excellence, and Tank Automotive Command (TACOM) to outline justification, responsibilities, and process implementation culminating with NTC Rotation 14-04. The Armor Commandant then assembled a MCoE analysis team to form a data collection plan to gather information during the experiment that would examine predicted capabilities of the 6x36 scout platoon. The ABCT scout platoon must be fully capable of developing the situation through action, employ appropriate combinations of mounted and dismounted forces, and survive while fighting for information.

From the Chief of Armor's Turret

As our Army comes out of 13 years of persistent conflict characterized by rotational deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, we are increasingly becoming a Regionally Aligned Force (RAF). The Army has begun to provide Regionally Aligned Forces to geographic Combatant Commanders for shaping operations, building host-nation relationships, and operating across the range of military operations. GEN Odierno stated



"by aligning unit headquarters and rotational units to combatant commands, and tailoring our combatant training centers and exercises to plan for their greatest contingencies, units will gain invaluable expertise and cultural awareness, and be prepared to meet the regional requirements more rapidly and effectively than ever before" (Army News Service, C. Todd Lopez, Oct. 23, 2012).

Armor and Cavalry Soldiers and Leaders are helping lead the way for our Army. The "Dagger" 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and "Greywolf" 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division have prepared, trained, and deployed as Regionally Aligned Forces in support of AFRICOM and PACOM. Their efforts to build relationships, develop partner capabilities, provide humanitarian assistance, and advise-and-assist have proven invaluable to the Combatant Commanders' strategic missions. As the Army continues to adapt, it's important that we share hard-earned lessons as Regionally Aligned Forces. Accordingly, I strongly encourage you and your Soldiers to share your insights and experiences in the upcoming SEP-OCT ARMOR magazine. Please submit our articles NLT 31 JUL 14.

The MCoE data collection team has conducted surveys and interviews with the unit, observed home station training at Fort Hood, and attended their culminating training event at NTC Rotation 14-04 this past February. The goal of this effort will validate all improvements or deficiencies in versatility, survivability, protection, mobility, and firepower. It will also identify shortcomings in doctrine, organization, training, professional development, materiel, and personnel as they pertain to the 6x36 force design. When formally approved, the MCoE will initiate the necessary changes to ensure future scout platoons are properly organized, manned, equipped, and trained to be mobile, lethal, and protected in all operating environments.

Armor School and OCOA

194th ARMORED BRIGADE: SULLIVAN CUP. In keeping with the Armor School's Pursuit of Excellence, the 48th Chief of Armor will host the 2014 Sullivan Cup to identify the top tank crew from the United States Army, United States Marines Corps and our National Atlantic Treaty Organization Allies. Crews will be evaluated on their Physical fitness, Problem Solving, Technical, Tactical and Precision Gunnery skills to identify the top tank crew. The conduct of the competition will maintain a tactical context. All events and bivouacs will be in the field or on the range with tanks. The 2014 Sullivan Cup will be unique in that we have opened the competition to the international armor community, with interest currently from Canada and Australia. The competition will go as follows, Day 1 will consist of a physical competition that will challenge the competitors and test their Problem Solving and Technical Skills. Day 2 will test the crews in the Close Combat Tactical Trainer testing their Technical and Tactical skills. Day 3 the crews will be on the range testing their Precision Gunnery skills. Day 4 will see the top 4 crews go head to head for the honor of the top tank crew. The competition will build esprit de corps within our Armor Force. The competition will take place at Fort Benning, Georgia from 11 - 15 May 2014. See <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/sullivan/>

316TH CAVALRY BRIGADE: DEPARTMENT OF RECONNAISSANCE AND SECURITY. The Department of Reconnaissance and Security (R&S) is comprised of the Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader's Course (RSLC), the Army Reconnaissance Course (ARC), and the Cavalry Leaders' Course (CLC). All three courses use the experiential learning method outlined in Army Learning Model 2015 (ALM). RSLC teaches individual, team and squad scout skills, focusing on gathering and reporting information; individual land navigation; and stalking, selection, and occupation of surveillance sites. These skills are essential to our scouts at the squad and below level in order for them to support the overall scout platoon's mission. ARC teaches Scout Platoon leadership skills, focusing on adaptability to the mission and operating environment, anticipation to higher headquarters' needs, risk management during planning and execution, deliberate thinking instead of following a checklist, and taking the initiative in the context of the mission command philosophy. CLC trains Troop 1SGs/Commanders and Squadron Staff NCO/Officers on the necessary critical thinking skills needed in order to produce an R&S plan at both the squadron and troop level. These skills are measured on the student's ability to apply R&S tactics in a way to anticipate higher headquarters' needs; ability to recognize the importance of a new situation and communicate new orders clearly; ability to prioritize requirements and synchronize troop R&S activities; and apply the fundamental knowledge required as a cavalry leader.

OCO: RANGER SCHOOL. The purpose of Ranger School is to develop the leadership, confidence, competence, and combat skills of selected junior officer, non-commissioned officer, and enlisted volunteers whose primary mission is to close with and destroy the enemy in direct fire battle. Ranger Course Graduates return to their units' physically and mentally tough, proficient in Squad and Platoon dismounted operations in austere terrain and understand how to plan, coordinate, and execute small unit missions with minimal guidance.

Currently there are 479 active component Cavalry Scout skill level 2 and 3 Ranger coded authorizations, SQIs G and V. Pending approval by HQDA authorizations will increase to one squad leader and one team leader per Scout Platoon across the 32 remaining Armored, Stryker, and Infantry Brigade Combat Teams, for a total of 1,215 authorizations. This will include SQI V squad leader and team leader authorizations in the IBCT scout platoons. Armor branch currently has on hand 47 Ranger qualified sergeants and staff sergeants. Ranger school is an important leadership school for NCOs who lead dismounted scout squads. Cavalry Squadron and Cavalry Troop leadership across the brigades are highly encouraged to fill these unused Ranger slots. The Armor School is prepared to assist any units that is in need of additional slots, or needs assistance developing an aggressive training program that prepare our Soldiers to meet the demands of Ranger School. For more information, please go to <http://www.benning.army.mil/infantry/RTB/>

Doctrine

DOCTRINE: FM 3-98, RECONNAISSANCE AND SECURITY OPERATIONS. Directorate of Training and Doctrine hosted a writing conference for FM 3-98, from 24-28 February 2014 at Fort Benning. Participants represented the operational and institutional Army as a collaboration of subject matter experts and practitioners including former and current squadron commanders, brigade and squadron/battalion staff officers from armor, infantry, engineer, aviation, field artillery, air defense artillery, military intelligence, special forces, and logistics branches. This field manual addresses the planning, preparation, execution and assessment of reconnaissance and

Concurrent with the concept of Regionally Aligned Forces is the designation of Reconnaissance and Security Brigade Combat Teams (R&S BCTs). R&S BCTs address the need for Divisions and Corps to have a formation capable of: integrating intelligence and operations to answer PIR; developing the situation in close contact with enemy & civilians; creating and maintaining options for the commander; and facilitating Combined Arms Maneuver to gain a position of advantage while maintaining freedom of maneuver. The MCoE, other CoEs, and FORSCOM are making final recommendations to our Army's senior leaders on the way ahead. The Armor School is leaning forward to help prepare our formations through the establishment of the Department of Reconnaissance & Security (DORS). The DORS houses the Cavalry Leaders Course (CLC), the Army Reconnaissance Course (ARC), and the Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader Course (RSLC). The DORS develops Soldiers and Leaders to command, lead, and train Reconnaissance and Security formations to accomplish their missions in current and future conflict. As each R&S BCT is identified we will work to tailor training opportunities and course availability within the DORS to ensure leaders and units are properly prepared.

As always, any concerns or questions please do not hesitate to contact me directly at leopoldo.a.quintas.mil@mail.mil
FORGE THE TUNDERBOLT!

BG Lee Quintas
"48"

From the CSM's OP

This issue we focus our attention on the Army's move to become a regionally aligned force and develop reconnaissance formations at echelons above the brigade. These are great opportunities to highlight the expertise of the Armor and Cavalry force and to continue to develop the proficiency needed to ensure we remain the combat arm of decision.



As the Army begins regionally aligning its forces with each geographic combatant command there will be greater opportunity for the Soldiers in the Armor and Cavalry force to focus and train on a specific region and participate in exercises with partner countries militaries. Recently the Training And Doctrine Command commander GEN Cone commented "I think, as we really see the power of a Soldier who is really an expert in a region, or has a strong background, I think there's going to be a strong tendency to want to leave them there." As emerging doctrine calls for a land force inundated with regional expertise, who better than cavalymen to conduct partnered operations that focus on both the operational and human domain? Our tankers are the

security operations at the BCT and below. Once a draft is complete, the MCoE will staff the manual from April to May throughout the operational and institutional Army as well as the Joint Force for feedback prior to its publication. The draft can be found under the "Hot Topic" section of the USAARMS website, <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/index.html>, or by contacting MCoE POC MAJ Ryan T. Kranc, ryan.t.kranc.mil@mail.mil

Armor Branch Personnel Notes

OFFICER PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (OPMD): UPCOMING OFFICER MANNING CYCLE. HRC is conducting the 15-01 manning cycle from 14-18 APR 2014. Armor officers available to PCS from 1 OCT 2014 to 31 MAR 2015 should contact their assignment officer to ensure that they are tracked as an officer identified to move. Armor Branch encourages officers to contact their assignment officers to open a dialogue about assignments early in the manning cycle. This allows the officer to provide input into the assignment process and gives the assignment officer the most flexibility in balancing the needs of the Army with the preferences and professional requirements of the officer.

Check the Armor Branch website for the latest updates and contact information for your assignment officer. <https://www.hrc.army.mil/Officer/AR%20Officer%20Home>

ARMOR ENLISTED PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (EPMD): ASSIGNMENTS

With the ongoing Brigade Combat Team (BCT) reorganization, Armor Soldiers are reminded that priorities of assignments are dictated by unit requirements. We have received numerous requests for assignment reconsideration, deletion, or deferment. The active management of assignments and organizational timelines require us to disapprove most requests and we ask that chains of command take an active role in helping us manage the expectations for the future assignments of Armor Soldiers. House buying, spouse's employment, and schooling should not be the main reason for deletion. Decisions to support impact other Soldiers and their families. We ask that everyone take a hard look at the justification before submitting.

Soldiers should also expect branch broadening assignments to become more competitive because of the dwindling opportunities for assignment nomination. For example, ROTC Instructor authorizations were either reduced or converted to require a female Instructor in support of the Army's increased emphasis on female Soldier opportunities. For Armor Soldiers, two of the greatest limiting factors for nomination consideration were outdated photos and low GT scores. NCOs with outdated photos were rejected for nomination because they were seen as either apathetic in the management of their career or unable to manage their personal time while Soldiers and NCOs who did not possess the minimal required GT score were not even considered.

Extra Information see Armor Enlisted Branch Website:

<https://www.hrc.army.mil/Enlisted/From%20the%20Office%20of%20the%20Armor%20Enlisted%20Branch%20Leadership>

natural choice to conduct real world, on the ground training that combines company level maneuver and live fire events with host nation forces. Cavalry and Armor forces bring an unequaled knowledge and capability that makes them invaluable to any commander and certainly a premier choice to any combatant command with the task of prevent, shape and win within their area of operations.

The Army is also currently reappraising the Reconnaissance and Security capabilities required to support a campaign in a potentially hostile, contested, austere or politically sensitive environment. Leaders have identified that we currently lack the ability to see beyond the "tactical horizon" and that an R&S capability is needed above the brigade. So how do we develop a force that would operationally allow a Corps level commander to see the battlefield and determine the enemies intent but also bridge the gap with the strategic mission, potentially being the first to interact with special operations forces and transition from a low intensity foreign internal defense mission to a decisive action operation? One of the requirements, at the Armor School, in support of this is to determine how to best prepare Soldiers and their units for their role inside this potential organization. A great example of this is the Reconnaissance Soldier Development timeline that starts at a redesigned 19D OSUT and goes thru NCOES, RSLC, ARC and CLC and on the officer side includes an elective at Fort Leavenworth for field grade officers on assignment to Cavalry Squadrons. This is only one of the initiatives at Fort Benning that are in support of this important dialogue.

As always, the Armor School wants to hear your thoughts on these important topics and others that are directly affecting the way the future Armor Force and the Army as a whole is shaped and will fight. Please feel free to contact us with your thoughts and ideas on these or any topic presented here or in Armor magazine.
SCOUTS OUT!

CSM Michael Clemens

Upcoming Events

27 March - Armor/Cavalry Gallery Grand Opening

28 March - Armor and Cavalry Heritage Ball

04 April - Commandant's Challenge

23 April - Saint George Luncheon

11-16 May - Sullivan Cup

28 May - USAARMS Stable Call









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194th AR BDE


	COL Scott King		CSM Robert Tompkins	
		1-46 IN BCT	LTC Matthew Scalia	CSM Eugene Dydasco
		2-47 IN BCT	LTC Christopher Bresko	CSM Daniel Dennison
		30th AG (Rec)	LTC David Welch	CSM Nyeedra T. Edwards
		1-81 AR	LTC Dawson Plummer	CSM Dean Lockhart
		5-15 CAV	LTC Michael Birmingham	CSM Samuel Roark

316th CAV BDE


	COL David Davidson		CSM Jeremiah Inman	
		1-29 IN	LTC Richard Surowiec	CSM Ricky Fields
		2-29 IN	LTC Darren Jennings	CSM Curtis Arnold
		1-16 CAV	LTC Mark Brown	CSM Eric Littlejohn
		3-16 CAV	LTC James Hayes	CSM Michael Williamson

199th IN BDE - ABOLC

		2-16 CAV	LTC Oscar Diano	CSM Bradley Feltman
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USAARMS DIVIDS: <http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USAARMS#.Us1-TfuF2TM>

<http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/563/thunderbolt-blast#.Us1-ePuF2TM>

<http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/562/armor-magazine#.Us1-EvuF2TM>

Fundamentals of Reconnaissance and Security: <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/fundamentals/>

Maneuver Self-Study Program: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>