

Experts say training transformation prepares Army to work in joint environment

By Jennifer J. Albert

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 2, 2005) - Soldiers will continue to train with members of other services as the Army works to transform its training and to improve its ability to work in a joint environment, Pentagon training experts said this week.

"Training transformation is about making sure that we are focused on training the way we actually fight," said Dr. Paul W. Mayberry, deputy under secretary of defense for readiness. "That is, as a joint team with the other services, as part of a joint multinational force, with interagencies such as the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and intergovernmental agencies such county and local police."

He said one of the Department of Defense's transformation goals is ultimately to create a more joint force to meet the needs of the combatant commander and that transforming DoD training is a key element to achieving that goal.

As Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom continue, the demands are that we have an armed force that is flexible and adaptable, said Mayberry.

The Army's 2004 Posture Statement said one of the Army's goals for transformation is to provide relevant and ready land power for combat commanders in a joint force.

Mayberry said training transformation is a means by which the Army can accomplish that objective.

"Maintaining a ready current force today and achieving a transformed future force tomorrow requires a shift in the way units train for joint operations," according to the posture statement. "Our Army's Training Transformation Initiative, which supports the June 2004 Defense Department Training Transformation Implementation Plan, provides dynamic, capabilities-based training and mission rehearsal in a joint context."

Three capabilities form the foundation for training transformation: Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability, Joint National Training Capability and Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability, Mayberry said. Combatant commanders, through these capabilities, will receive better prepared forces that will be more aligned with their joint needs.

Mayberry said the JKDDC is designed to be a library of training courses available through various online outlets that can be taken "just-in-time" or when a Soldier is assigned to a unit in which the training is required.

JKDDC is developing courses that originated through the JKDDC working group, Mayberry said. More than 35 organizations, including Army, are represented on the working group. The courses will better prepare individuals for assignment to the combatant command staffs.

Future joint force leaders must strive to reach new joint education and training standards by continually improving individual knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve desired effects in decisive operations, according to the Department Of Defense Training Transformation Implementation Plan.

For example, cultural and language training is being implemented into current Army deployment workups, said Mayberry. The incorporation of foreign speakers is being done to be able to present answers to tactical level problems to the individuals.

The Army, through its force rebalancing efforts, has begun taking individuals with field artillery backgrounds and sending them Fort Dix, N.J., for military police training, said Mayberry. There is not a great deal of demand for field artillery currently so those individuals are being cross-trained to fill the need for military police.

"This will meet the drive of individuals managing their own careers and focusing on self development," said Mayberry. "It will also get individuals cross-trained in other areas to broaden the base for which they deploy."

The Joint National Training Capability will provide the ability for all the services to participate in real-time, simulated training, said Mayberry.

"The idea is to make service specific events more joint in character", said Mayberry. "We can't have everyone in one place at one time. This will give them the means to plug into the event from their home station."

Mayberry said the JNTC will give command staffs and units a live, virtual (person in a simulator) and constructive (computer-generated) environment that will eventually be available globally. Active and Reserve component members from all services will be able to train in this realistic venue.

Eventually it will incorporate a larger training audience that includes coalition partners and Federal, state, local and nongovernmental agencies, also noted Mayberry.

The last facet, Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability, focuses on the process of the anticipating and evaluating the development of the training transformation.

This process includes the use of performance assessment tools, techniques, policies, and metrics, in support of national security requirements, according to the DoD transformation plan. It will give leaders the guidance necessary to achieve transparency between training and operations and ultimately making the force more adaptable.

The Army's posture statement indicates the objective is to increase the ability to think and act jointly, and to provide Soldiers with the latest and most relevant techniques, procedures and equipment that will make them successful on the battlefield.

Training transformation improves joint force readiness by enabling personnel to think in terms of the joint concepts and build upon service education and training, said Mayberry.

"As the Army goes through its modularity, its modernization and fielding its future combat systems, training transformation must really be ahead of that to be sure these training enablers are in place," said Mayberry. "We must support future concepts from a joint perspective and not just from a single service perspective."

For more information on Army transformation, visit www.army.mil and for information about the Department of Defense training transformation, visit www.t2net.org.