

November/December 2017

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REDLEG Update

The United States Army Field Artillery Branch's Newsletter

2017 Year in Review

Looking Back at 2017 & Looking Forward to 2018

Future of the Noncommissioned Officer
Professional Development System

 **VETERANS DAY 2017**

Happy Holidays 

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Purpose: Founded in 2011, the *Redleg Update* provides past and present Field Artillery leaders with a monthly update of informational highlights to assist in their individual, collective and professional training efforts, as well as report on activities occurring throughout the Field Artillery community.

Official Distribution: The *Redleg Update* is distributed by the Commandant of the U.S. Army Field Artillery to key members of the Field Artillery chain of command across the U.S. Army. The current edition can be found @

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Stephen J. Maranian
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Stephen J. Maranian

RFIs, Notes, and Notices: To submit a Request for Information (RFI), please email the POC listed below.

Points of Contact:

We appreciate those who have provided announcements, notices, articles and lessons learned.

Additionally, if you have a story of interest or wish to initiate a discussion on any topic or issue facing the Field Artillery community, contact Ms. Sharon McBride, Field Artillery Public Affairs Officer, at (580) 558-0836 or sharon.g.mcbride4.civ@mail.mil

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An NCO with the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard takes a break during training.

From the Commandant's desk

2017 Year in Review

Looking Back at 2017 & Looking Forward to 2018

After 18 months serving our Redlegs as Field Artillery Commandant, I am more convinced than ever that our branch has never been more needed nor more relevant than it is today. We are now, but must continue to work hard to remain the world's premier Artillery force. As we look at our Nation's potential adversaries, we see competitors who have modernized their formations while we've been busy in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must be ready to deter, and if deterrence fails, decisively defeat an enemy's Army, starting with their fires formations.

Command Sergeant Major Parsons and I have traveled extensively in the United States and overseas, to both Army National Guard and Active component units, to engage the operational force. The dialogue we've had with you, the Soldiers and leaders of our formations, has enabled us to make some adjustments to the branch priorities and lines of effort, which you will see reflected in our 2018 vision for the branch.

Our 2017 Field Artillery Vision for the branch states we will "Be the world's premier Field Artillery force; modernized, organized, trained, and ready to integrate and employ Army, Joint, and Multinational fires, across multiple domains, enabling victory through Unified Land Operations."

This vision contains five lines of effort (LOE), encompassing the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leader Development, Personnel, Facilities and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) domains, and provides us with a common azimuth of fire which has enabled us to put together solid training strategies and programs in 2017.

As we look forward to 2018, we will further tighten our focus. As a result of the input we've received from Redlegs in the operational force, from our leaders in TRADOC, and from those inside our schoolhouse, we will slightly adjust our LOE and supporting efforts.

Enable readiness within the Operational Force

Our number one LOE has been and will remain – *Enable readiness within the Operational Force.*

In 2017, we supported this LOE by collecting and disseminating lessons learned, enhancing the Fires Knowledge Network, and by providing opportunities for branch-wide discussion and collaboration. The single most effective means of enhancing readiness has been through conducting frequent visits with our Army's FA units and with their division, corps, and Army service component command (ASCC) leaders.

In our travels, we've met with units on the ground, asked questions, listened to concerns, and conducted leader professional development forums in every place we've been. These face-to-face interactions built trust, understanding, and a real sense of a shared mission. I believe that this has had a significant impact on communication between the operational Army and the institution and is something we will sustain in the years to come.

A big part of our visits to FA formations involves engaging with Maneuver leaders to assist them in optimizing the effectiveness of our Fires formations. As we engage senior leaders across our Army, we will continue to hone our ability to effectively integrate and synchronize Fires with all other Warfighting functions.

Information collected from these engagements will continue to inform our cyclical and focused updates to programs of instruction (POI) for Initial Military Training (IMT) and Professional Military Education (PME), in an effort to optimize the education of our FA force. High quality, rigorous institutional training and instruction foster professional and personal growth throughout our force. When leaders and Soldiers are properly trained, we all benefit from a competent and confident FA force.

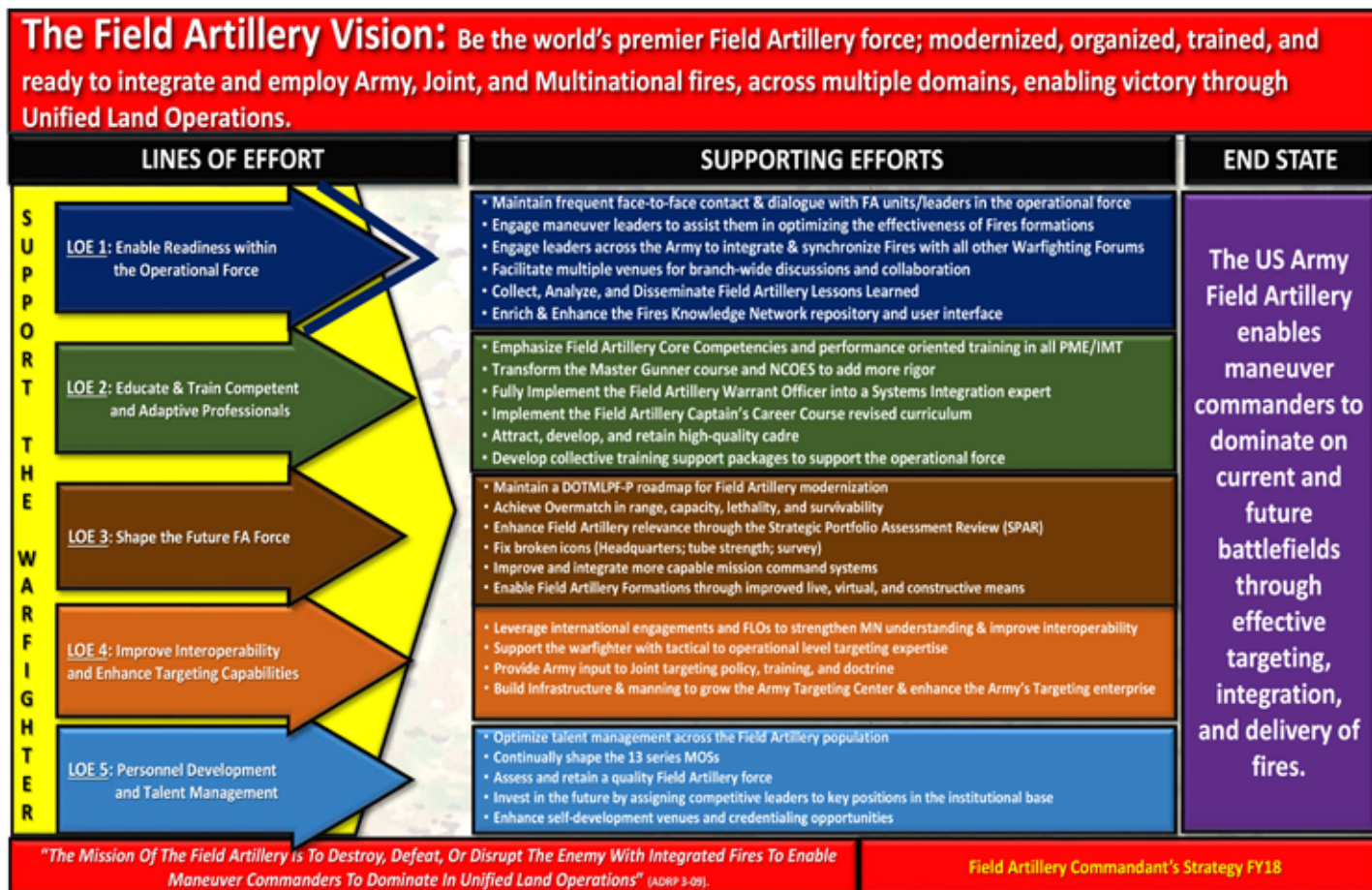
Re-emphasizing battle field design

From our observations over the past year, I believe that we must continue to focus leader energy on aiding our Maneuver commanders to optimize planning and synchronization of Warfighting functions to make fires more permissive. As I talk with Maneuver

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Field Artillery Commandant's Strategy FY18



and Fires leaders, it is evident that we must get better at the early and iterative process of Fire Support Coordinators and Fire Support Officers dialoguing with their Maneuver commanders and their staffs about battlefield design. This is an absolute must to effectively integrate and synchronize Fires and Maneuver.

We must be more sophisticated in our fire support approach. We must help design a battlefield architecture that enables Maneuver commanders to bring all elements of combat power to bear simultaneously at the time and place of their choosing on the battlefield. Techniques that may have been effective in counter-insurgency (COIN) operations, such as establishing blanket low-level coordinating altitudes, result in unnecessary clearance of fires drills and ineffective indirect fires when applied in a decisive action training environment (DATE). We must operate more efficiently when training in a DATE, to optimize our valuable time at our Combat Training Centers (CTC).

Our Fires force must enable all users of airspace

to synchronize, plan, and execute a cohesive air de-confliction resolution. To do so, we must design our battlefield geometry to coordinate airspace integration to ensuring that conflicts between ground fires and air operations are minimized. We do this by effectively using fire support coordination measures (FSCM) and airspace coordination measures (ACM) that are integrated with one another in a cohesive plan. It is only through the integrated use of FSCM and ACM which balance and are agile enough to adjust the levels of permissiveness and restrictiveness, that responsive Fires may be obtained.

The missions and assignments of our leaders during the decade following 9/11 have resulted in many of our Redleg leaders having grown up with an unconventional fire support background. Years of performing non-Artillery duties have yielded over the past five years to a focus on Large Scale Combat Op-

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erations (LSCO), but it remains imperative for senior Field Artillery leaders to take on the role of mentoring subordinates in the art and science of integration and synchronization of Fires and Maneuver at the high end of the spectrum. We must continue to see positive trends in improving rehearsals, tactical fire direction and battlefield design.

Of note, in 2017 we conducted three iterations of the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) Commander Pre-Command Fires Orientation Course, to familiarize these leaders with the roles, functions, and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) of Fires integration. This course has proven invaluable in improving the integration of fires and maneuver at the BCT level, over the past year. One of the many highlights is practical instruction in the integration of the Fire Support Element (FSE) with the Air Defense Airspace Management/Brigade Aviation Element (ADAM/BAE) cell. The ADAM/BAE cell provides situational awareness that encompasses a broad spectrum of military and non-military air activities. We've renewed focus on digital sustainment training and enhanced Institutional training on the Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (AFATDS) which will increase the Fires cell's ability to leverage a real-time, three dimensional airspace clearance tool. When synchronized, these two sections provide a powerful capability to the BCT commander and staff. Optimizing that capability will require leader energy to ensure that we are adequately trained to provide BCT commanders the necessary situational awareness and capability to deconflict, and when necessary clear airspace in real time.

Additionally, in 2017 we secured funding to resume teaching the popular and highly demanded Joint Operational Fires and Effects Course (JOFEC). JOFEC educates leaders from all services on Joint capabilities and targeting methodology to create both lethal and non-lethal effects. JOFEC has proven to be an excellent opportunity for Army and sister service personnel to receive training on the joint and service targeting processes. The operational impact of JOFEC has been significant and tangible. JOFEC has helped fill a gap in leader education on Fires at the Operational level, in support of Joint Force Commander mission and priorities. This course was resumed based on requests from the field to provide a solution to close a leader gap in operational fires education. JOFEC

accomplishes this by providing students instruction on and application of Joint doctrine, the Joint Operational Environment, the Joint targeting process, Joint functions and staff responsibilities, Joint and service capabilities and platforms, and how Joint Fires and effects are synchronized. The course has prepared students to plan and coordinate Fires at the operational level of a Joint headquarters in military operations, including integrating across all domains. JOFEC is scheduled to be continued into 2018.

To build upon our success with JOFEC, and to address operational needs identified by the Combatant Commands, we intend to grow the Army Multi-domain Targeting Center (AMTC) in 2018 to facilitate instruction of Target Material Production (TMP), inclusive of Intermediate and Advanced Target Development. This growth, combined with a planned reach-back capability for operational level units in the field, will be a significant supporting effort in the months and years to come.

POI Updates

We are well down the path of merging the fire direction and control Military Occupational Skill (MOS) of cannon (13D) and rocket (13P) systems into one integrated MOS – 13J. In order to process missions for both cannons and rockets, the MOS courseware has been updated in conjunction with the fielding of our latest version of AFATDS, version 6.8.1.1. This update dramatically improves the integration of organic and joint targeting sensors and effective data sharing of Army and Joint Mission Command systems. This will enable the targeting process and fire support planning to deliver accurate and timely fires in support of the Commander's scheme of Maneuver.

Fire Support Specialist (13F) courseware has been updated to include the Mission Essential Packages (MEP) for the Knight, Fire Support Vehicle and Bradley Fire Support Vehicle. The Firefinder Radar Operator 13R courseware was updated to remove the old Q36 and Q37 Radars and add the Q50 and Q53 Radar systems.

The Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC) has undergone an entire POI rewrite, moving from COIN to LSCO focus, removing Radar maintenance, and

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implementing enhanced Fires integration capabilities through use of Fires mission command systems. WOBC also received Classroom XXI digital upgrades, to allow for better instructor to student interaction in support of the Army Learning Concept for Training and Education 2020-2040.

The Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC) is also being updated, with increased instruction on Advanced Target Development, to provide students a better understanding of intelligence collection processes, the Joint Targeting Cycle and weaponeering. The FA Branch worked diligently this past year to gain approval to begin pilot courses for A+ Certification under the Army University Credentialing Program, in an effort to align FA WOAC with other branch schools. This will begin January 2018.

The FA Basic Officers Leaders Course (BOLC-B) received a significant upgrade to its POI. To facilitate the teaching of Joint Fire Observer (JFO) skills to our lieutenants, we added JFO Interactive Multimedia Instruction (IMI). The JFO IMI is a software program that students can access on Blackboard and provides students with virtual equipment 'hands on training.' The program allows students the ability to get familiar with equipment they will utilize in the force. The JFO IMI instructs students on how to operate a Defense Advanced GPS Receiver (DAGR); it also incorporates the Lightweight Laser Designator Rangefinder (LLDR), the Advanced System Improvement Program (ASIP) radio, and the Multiband Inter/Intra Team Radio (MBITR). Currently, we are working on adding the Joint Effective Targeting System (JETS) and the Harris 117G radio to the mix.

Additionally, the Fire Support Department increased the amount of digital training provided to our Lieutenants. Students receive hands on training with the Pocket Forward Entry Device (PFED) and then incorporate the PFED into their live fire training. During the Fire Support Coordination lanes and Redleg War, students utilize the PFED to call for fire; thus providing the fighting force competent leaders in the digital Fires realm.

The department also completed a standardization review of JFO academic products across FA BOLC-B, 13F AIT and the JFO resident course. This included a revision of JFO simulation scenarios that incorporate

more Decisive Action situations to better prepare the students for training at our Combat Training Centers (CTCs).

This year in gunnery, we have updated the base reference to TC 3-09.81, *FA Manual Cannon Gunnery*. We transitioned all instructional material to reflect changes in AFATDS version 6.8.1.1. This is now reflected in all classes, homework, simulations, live fires and tests. Finally, the team has incorporated the MACS Rapid Firing Table values and enhanced mode Muzzle Velocity Variations into all aspects of instruction.

Finally, we completed a complete POI review of the Captains Career Course, to capture and codify the changes that have been made over the past several years. We will not stop here, however, as I've directed that we immediately go back into a POI rewrite to improve the quality of instruction and focus on those blocking and tackling skills required to be successful when training in DATE or fighting in LSCO.

As we look towards 2018, we will roll out new performance oriented POI for all CMF13 ALC and SLC courses. These POI are the result of a comprehensive scrub of the current instruction. In ALC, we will focus our efforts on developing muscle memory in those skills required to be effective as a Section Chief. Likewise, in SLC, we will work on the skills required for NCOs to be effective Platoon/Gunnery Sergeants, Task Force Fire Support NCOs, and Battalion Fire Direction NCOs. These updates, and our planned growth to our Master Gunner POI, will result in a much needed recalibration of our NCO PME.

Doctrine Updates

Battlefield experiences combined with new concepts require new doctrine that effectively describes how the Field Artillery will accomplish its assigned missions. During FY17, our Doctrine Division published two field artillery doctrinal publications, ATP 3-09.30 and ATP 3-09.90.

ATP 3-09.30, *Observed Fire*, updated the previous version of the publication to include all of the skills required for a JFO. It also adjusted the distribution restriction of the publication, so that it is now

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approved for public release, allowing us to share this critical doctrine with our allies, partners and international students in our schools.

ATP 3-09.90, *Division Artillery Operations and Fire Support for the Division*, is a new publication that establishes doctrinal techniques for the employment of the Division Artillery (DIVARTY) to deliver fires, integrate all forms of fires, and conduct targeting in support of the division.

Over the next fiscal year, the field artillery portion of Doctrine Division will focus on updating ADP, ADRP, and FM 3-09, *Field Artillery Operations and Fire Support* to ensure that they are in line with evolving Joint doctrine, as well as the recently published ADP, ADRP, and FM 3-0, *Operations*. We will also update ATP 3-09.24, *Techniques for the Field Artillery Brigade*, to reflect the evolving techniques for that organization. Finally, we will work with the AMTC and the Operational Training Division to assist with updates to ATP 3-60, *Targeting*, and TC 3-09.8, *Field Artillery Gunnery*.

Army Multi-domain Targeting Center

The AMTC's primary focus in 2017 was to ensure that the Army develops a Targeting Enterprise capable of empowering the Operational force to successfully leverage cross-domain capabilities and employ cross-domain fires in multi-domain battle through the joint targeting process, while maintaining the Army targeting standards necessary for land-based operations. However, the Army is currently neither manned nor trained to adequately meet Joint standards for target development; a critical capability gap that prevents the Operational force's ability to submit targets to be serviced by cross-domain fires. The AMTC was tasked to develop an organization that enables the Force Modernization Proponent (FMP) to achieve institutional unity of effort for related and continually converging DOTMLPF-P targeting developments. With this guidance, the AMTC staff has been working diligently on preparing a Concept Plan for submission to the Project Objective Memorandum (POM) 21-25 that will resource the Army's ability to fully train and support the Operational forces efforts in meeting joint target development standards.

Additionally for 2017, the AMTC was respon-

sible for the successful restart of JOFEC. We are working closely with the staff of Army University and the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in order to develop and implement a JOFEC-like elective for CGSC students. Also in 2017, the AMTC began a Target Mensuration Only (TMO) growth effort that will provide the Operational force the ability to certify its own operators.

In 2017, the AMTC also provided the lead for three Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) in Ukraine, consisting of the AN/TPQ-36 Operator Course, AN/TPQ-36 Maintainer Course, and the Army Basic Instructor Course. These MTTs trained over 40 Ukrainian officers, NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers in the technical and tactical employment of the Weapons Locating RADAR systems to assist in ongoing combat operations in eastern Ukraine. Finally, the AMTC supported Unified Challenge 17.2, by providing support to the Fires battle lab.

Conclusion

As we forge ahead into 2018, our focus will remain on the Chief of Staff of the Army's three priorities of "Readiness," the "Future Army," and "Taking Care of the Troops." These priorities guide everything we do at the Field Artillery school, and everything we endeavor to do for the operational force as the Field Artillery proponent. From equipment modernization to training to leader development, we have our eye on providing a force capable of deterring potential adversaries and if deterrence fails, aiding our Maneuver formations to quickly and decisively win on the modern battlefield. I want to thank you for all that you do and for the sacrifices that you and your families have and will continue to make in service to our great Nation. I am proud of all we have accomplished in 2017 and I look forward to all that 2018 will bring us.

We have the greatest Soldiers in the world, and with your leadership and dedication, we will continue to be the World's Premier Artillery force; ready to deliver decisive fires, 24/7/365, regardless of weather, in any terrain, quickly, accurately, and Danger Close.

BG Stephen J. Maranian



VETERANS DAY 2017

Leaders and Soldiers,

Veterans Day, November 11, 2017, is a day to honor the valor and sacrifices of those who have served and those who continue to serve as members of the United States Armed Forces.

It's a day to honor Americans who have committed themselves to the service of our Nation and the protection of the values and ideas we hold so dear. Veterans have been on point for our Nation, serving with skill, determination, grit and fortitude in the most arduous conditions, often far from home and away from loved ones.

Veterans have a proud lineage of standing tall and firm against our enemies and those who have opposed the ideas for which our Nation stands.

Our republic continues to depend on the willingness of men and women to step forward and serve and to dedicate themselves to a greater cause – the cause of protecting our freedom.

Veterans Day 2017 is equally important to all Americans citizens as it is an opportunity for Americans to learn more about the sacrifices that have been made on their behalf – most recently during the past 17 years of war.

Service members join for an assortment of reasons, but one thing shared in common is a love of country. So, as civilians step forward and thank you for your service this Veterans Day...take time to tell your Army story.

Take the time to thank Veterans of all generations. They are our neighbors, our friends, our families, and our loved ones. Let's also not forget to thank the family members of our Veterans for all they have sacrificed as well.

BERK A. PARSONS
CSM, U.S. Army
Command Sergeant Major,
United States Field Artillery School

STEPHEN J. MARANIAN
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Field Artillery Commandant



Happy Holidays

Leaders and Soldiers,

This time of year goes by so fast. Starting with Halloween all the way through the first of the year, the time will pass extremely quickly as we take part in holiday festivities. Please remember to slow down and enjoy the time you get to spend with your families. Don't concentrate on making the holidays "picture perfect;" some of the best memories can be created by just spending time with your loved ones.

Also take a moment to remember those who are separated from families and friends during this time of year, and the many more who are preparing for deployment. Our Field Artillery units will continue to be deployed across the globe – now and well into the future. Everyone wants to be partnered with the "King of Battle" and we are more than willing to fulfill our duties.

It is because of your great leadership and skill that our Maneuver colleagues know they can count on us in a fight. Your service is essential, and we appreciate the sacrifices that you and your families make; especially during the holidays.

We also want to remind you as you celebrate, please do so safely. As you travel, please make sure you are rested and have a well-thought out travel plan. Be responsible if you partake in libations and always have a designated driver AND a backup plan. Keep safety and responsibility to your families, friends, and teammates as your first priority.

Finally, we want wish you and yours every happiness during this holiday season. We are looking forward to a great start in 2018. We need everyone to be fit to fight, because we are the world's premier Artillery force – modernized, organized, trained and ready to integrate and employ Army, Joint, and Multinational Fires because of the tremendous efforts of you and your Soldiers – 24/7/365, regardless of weather, in any terrain, in any environment, quickly, and accurately.

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Field Artillery Commandant



From the Desk of the Field Artillery CSM

Future of the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development System

What to Expect with NCOPDS *How we got to this point*

Army Executive Order (EXORD) 236-15 directed the Army-wide implementation of the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development System (NCOPDS) from the NCO Education System during the last quarter of FY17. The NCOPDS initiatives involved renaming the Warrior Leader Course to the Basic Leader Course and adding a Master Leader Course for noncommissioned officers selected for promotion to Master Sergeant. Subsequent fragmentary orders added the implementation of Deferment policy updates, the Select, Train, Educate, and Promote (STEP) policy, the delivery of the Digital Ruck Sack, and enhancing the Army Career Tracker. These directives guided change to the entire NCO professional military education (PME) learning continuum. These changes consist of the creation of the Distributed Leader Courses (DLC), which is the complete overhaul of the legacy Structured Self-Development-(SSD) program, linking the DLC to the resident NCO PME, and ensuring the entire learning continuum is sequentially and progressively linked.

Structured Self Development (SSD) to Distributed Leader Course(DLC)

In November 2016, the TRADOC CSM directed the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA) to redesign and rebrand the legacy SSD and create the Distributed Leader Course (DLC). The redesigned DLC links self-development education with the resident professional military education (PME) courseware and is a prerequisite for the next level of resident NCO PME. The USASMA is currently in the initial phase of redesigning the legacy five levels of structured self- development, which average

80 academic hours of curriculum. The new Distributed Leader Course program will consist of six levels averaging 43 academic hours. The projected delivery of DLC I to the force is June 2018 and DLC II to follow during the month of August 2018. Levels III, IV, V, and VI will activate sequentially in 3 to 4 month increments following August 2018. Soldiers currently enrolled in their requisite level of SSD will remain in those courses until they are completed. Upon full implementation of DLC, HRC will automatically enroll Soldiers into the new course after their selection for promotion.

Basic Leader Course (BLC) Redesign

The training in BLC focuses on basic leadership training; instilling leader skills, knowledge, and experience needed to lead a team/squad size unit; providing the foundation for further training and development; and building functional leadership attributes and competence. The current BLC program of instruction includes 30 lessons, 9 assessments, and 3 multiple-choice examinations. The USASMA is conducting the content validation of the redesigned BLC with a target completion date of March 2018. The goal of delivering the redesigned BLC is 14 June 2018. BLC will remain a 22-day, non-live-in course consisting of 169 hours. The BLC redesign will have 22 lessons, 5 assessments, and no multiple-choice examinations. The new BLC curriculum increases the educational rigor, requires more student collaboration in the classroom, and replaces the multiple-choice examinations with written assessments.

Leader Core Competencies (LCC)

TRADOC determined that there are six Leader Core Competencies (LCC), which all NCOs should

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develop while in PME. The six LCCs are Readiness, Leadership, Training Management, Army and Joint Operations, Program Management, and Communications. These Leader Core Competencies fill the educational gaps from the subjects formally known as common core in the NCOES. All levels of PME in the learning continuum will have the Leader Core Competencies in the curriculum.

Advanced and Senior Leader Course Leader Core Competencies

The redesigned LCCs in the NCOPDS will even provide the proponent Advanced Leader Courses (ALC) and Senior Leader Courses (SLC) with educational curriculum that builds upon the leadership competencies required of all Army NCOs. Using the Leadership Requirements Model (LRM), leaders collaborate and exchange ideas on innovative approaches to leadership and training. Leaders will examine management techniques, analyze Mission Command systems, construct a persuasive essay, create platoon training and leader development plans, and learn basic negotiation principles. As a result, leaders will gain an understanding of the significance of becoming a senior noncommissioned officer and the responsibilities inherent in that role. The USASMA will deliver the 55-hour framework for the ALC and SLC Leader Core Competencies to the proponent schools and centers. The proponent schools and centers will infuse the LCCs into their programs of instruction. The ALC and SLC Leader Core Competencies prepare NCOs for the duties associated with being Staff Sergeants and Sergeants First Class.

CMF 13 Advanced and Senior Leader Course Revision

The changes to NCOPDS provided us an opportunity to relook the effectiveness of our Field Artillery technical and tactical training and how we are delivering the instruction. Our analysis was conducted within the framework of relevancy (is it what a Field Artillery NCO needs at skill level and MOS), currency (is it aligned with current force needs), is it doctrinally correct (does it align with current Field Artillery doc-

trine, is it focused on Unified Land Operations) and is it performance oriented v. classroom/lecture (are we effectively using the time we have available while students are attending the course).

The results, coupled with the implementation of LCCs, determined we could get a whole lot better. The first step is we will go to a six day training week in the Active Component (AC) ALC and SLC courses. This not only gives us more time to get after the critical tasks and implement the LCCs, but it also aligns the AC NCOPDS course length with the Army National Guard Regional Training Institutes (RTIs) NCOPDS courses to better facilitate One Army School System (OASS) attendance. The amount of time students spend at Fort Sill will remain the same for their respective courses, but we will use that time more effectively.

We have undertaken a complete re-write of every ALC and SLC Program of Instruction (POI) in CMF 13, which has not occurred in years. The intent is to eliminate common core not accredited through LCC, remove "good to know tasks" and eliminate outdated, unnecessary instruction. The time gained will be used to conduct more performance oriented training and evaluation (hands-on) for critical tasks and where applicable, more repetition. The new POIs will place emphasis on those tasks that are primary to the training of the Field Artillery NCO at skill level and by MOS and focus efforts on creating effective Field Artillery NCOs through repetition, reinforcing expertise of the appropriate tasks to ensure students have mastered the application and theory of each. Our end state is not to produce mere graduates of ALC and SLC, but to create validated, competent Section Chiefs and Platoon Sergeants capable of training, certifying and qualifying their section or platoon on METL tasks and are able to execute their craft in the Decisive Action environment.

We will begin to implement these new POIs in the near future, with a target of complete implementation across all ALC and SLC courses no later than 3rd Quarter, FY18. I expect there may be a higher attrition rate for academic failure in the initial stages, due

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to the amount of rigor we will inject. Our NCOs must understand that we will expect more from them, so they should be prepared.

Master Leader Course (MLC)

As of October 1 2017, USASMA delivered and implemented the resident Master Leader Course (MLC). The purpose of the MLC is to prepare selected senior noncommissioned officers for positions of greater responsibility throughout the Army and Department of Defense, utilizing a synchronous instructional strategy. The course develops the professional skills and competencies required of Master Sergeants in the 21st century, accomplished in a rigorous learning environment. The course serves to challenge and educate selected Sergeants First Class in the areas of professional writing, communication skills, public speaking, critical thinking, organizational and command leadership, management skills, joint and operational level of war fighting, discipline, readiness, health, and administrative requirements. Additionally, MLC students cover topics like national security, Joint Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIM) and strategic thinking. Ten NCO Academies currently deliver

the resident MLC. Starting in November 2017, the USASMA will start the instructional delivery validation of a non-resident version of the Master Leader Course (MLCNR). HRC will enroll eligible Soldiers into the MLC and MLCNR courses, based on the Soldier's selection for promotion to Master Sergeant. Current projections have the non-resident course coming online on or about May 2018.

With the exception of four levels of DLC, the USASMA expects to deliver all NCO PME redesigns to the Army by 1 October 2018. By putting the "Leadership" back into the NCO PME courses, the intent of the learning continuum redesign is to revolutionize NCO professional leader development that will better educate and train noncommissioned officers to become agile, adaptive, creative, innovative, critical thinking and problem solving leaders who will meet the challenges of an ever changing and complex operating environment.

CSM Berk Parsons

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Book Review

The Unforgiving Minute

“The Unforgiving Minute” is former United States Army Capt. Craig M. Mullaney’s brisk, candid memoir about his education as a soldier. He learned different lessons in different places. As a cadet at West Point he learned to be dutiful, punctilious and unerringly accurate, even about the military method of folding underwear. At Ranger School he learned how to navigate difficult physical terrain and endure grueling tests of mettle. At Oxford, as a Rhodes scholar, he had a teacher who advised: “Read and think. Simultaneously if possible.” At home he thought he had learned how to make his father proud — until that father walked out and never came back.

As a reader he learned from writers as diverse as T. E. Lawrence, Rudyard Kipling (from whose poem “If” this book takes its title), Jane Austen and Thucydides. As a traveler he vacationed with buddies, partied heartily and learned that the world is very large. And as an American he was in New Zealand on Sept. 11, 2001, when someone asked if he had seen the news and said, “I’m so sorry.” At that point every lesson absorbed by this soldier in training suddenly took on different meaning.

“The Unforgiving Minute” is Captain Mullaney’s attempt to reconcile the precombat lessons that seemed so clear to him with the exigencies of battlefield experience. He makes it clear that this is no easy process. At one point Captain Mullaney, who led a platoon in Afghanistan and later became a teacher at

the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., explains how he told his students about the most difficult battlefield experience of his career. To do that, he writes, he had to give two different accounts of the fighting at Losano Ridge, which occurred in Afghanistan in 2003, very close to the Pakistan border.

First he gave his students the straightforward version. He described the basics, like “movement to contact, suppressive fire and medical evacuation.” But that version did not do justice to the “chaos, noise, fear, exhilaration.” So he retold the story from a different perspective. “This time I tried to put them under my helmet,” he writes about trying to convey the full experience of battle. He is honest enough to acknowledge that he cannot be sure that the decisions he made under fire — in that minute to which the book’s title refers — were right.

“The Unforgiving Minute” effectively contrasts the before and after aspects of one officer’s combat career. It conveys his fervent sense of responsibility for the men he led. At West Point, he says, even a loose belt buckle or an undone shoelace could bring on the worst words imaginable: “You just killed your platoon.”

Inhabiting the student’s hypothetical realm he never learned that the blood-slicked body of a wounded man might slip off a stretcher. He never wondered

Continued on Page 14, See Minute

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about “the number of minutes you could expect to shoot a machine gun before its barrel melted.”

The jacket of “The Unforgiving Minute” identifies Captain Mullaney as “a member of the Obama-Biden Transition Project.” He expresses some criticism of the Bush administration’s strategy in Afghanistan, but this book’s emphasis is on neither policy nor politics.

It is one man’s story, warmly and credibly told, and its focus is on the idealism that he brought to military service. In Captain Mullaney’s mind there is no contradiction between loyally following orders and intelligently wondering what purpose those orders serve.

“The Unforgiving Minute” is divided into sections, each with a distinct tone. The “Student” part of the book is the most familiar, what with its fond memories of punishing college episodes. (The first time he accepted an upperclassman’s offer to “hang out,” Captain Mullaney says, he found himself “suspended on two elbows from the doors of an open wardrobe.”)

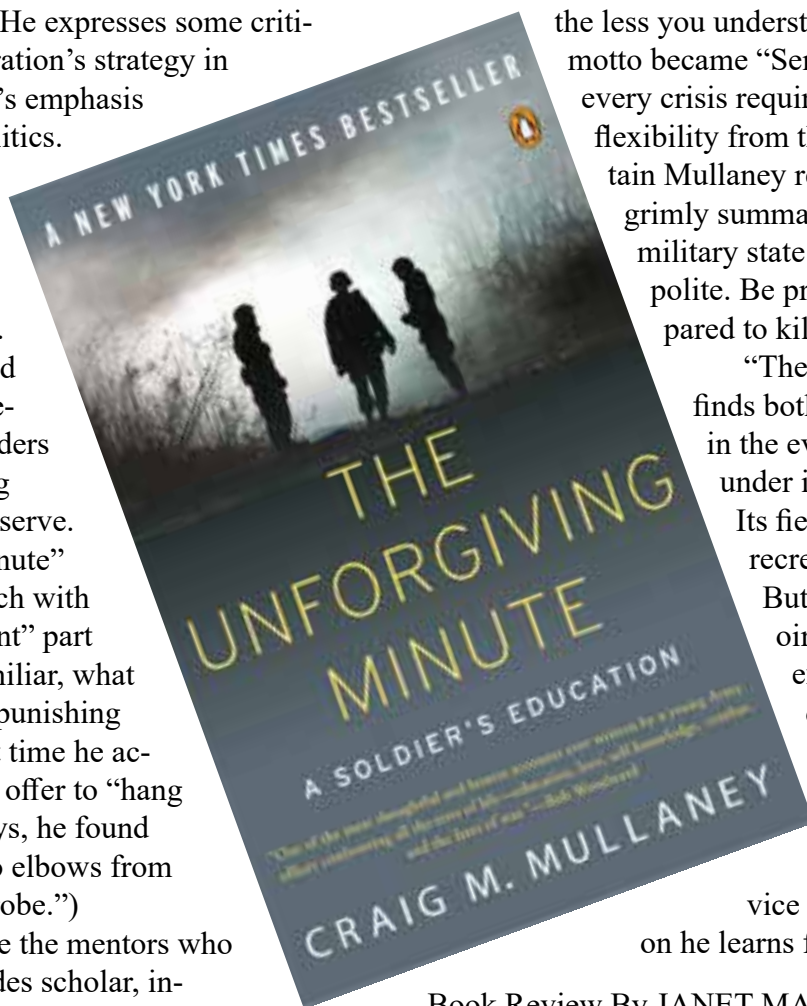
He goes on to describe the mentors who helped him become a Rhodes scholar, including the one who taught him the difference between houndstooth and herringbone jackets. Throughout this account he never forgets what it took for a working-class kid to have such golden opportunities and good fortune.

At Oxford he met his wife to be, a woman raised in New Jersey by a family of Indian descent. Her father’s fondness for Tom Clancy novels went a long way toward convincing her parents that a military man might make a good son-in-law. But he also describes family members’ post-9/11 worries about his future.

“It didn’t occur to me that it was unusual for a 24-year-old to have a notarized will and a life insurance policy,” he writes about preparing for his tour of duty. “I checked the box for maximum coverage.”

The book’s “Soldier” section is as abruptly different on the page as Captain Mullaney’s wartime experience must have been in life. The first rule of Afghanistan, he says, was this: “The closer you look, the less you understand.” One sergeant’s motto became “Semper Gumby” because every crisis required a new kind of flexibility from the troops. And Captain Mullaney repeats a warning that grimly summarized the American military state of mind there: “Be polite. Be professional. Be prepared to kill everyone you meet.”

“The Unforgiving Minute” finds both suspense and pathos in the events that took place under its author’s command. Its fierce climactic battle is recreated in searing detail. But what gives this memoir its impact isn’t the external events that it describes. It’s the inner journey of a man who is at first eager to learn as much as he can from service and scholarship. Later on he learns from his mistakes.



Book Review By JANET MASLIN

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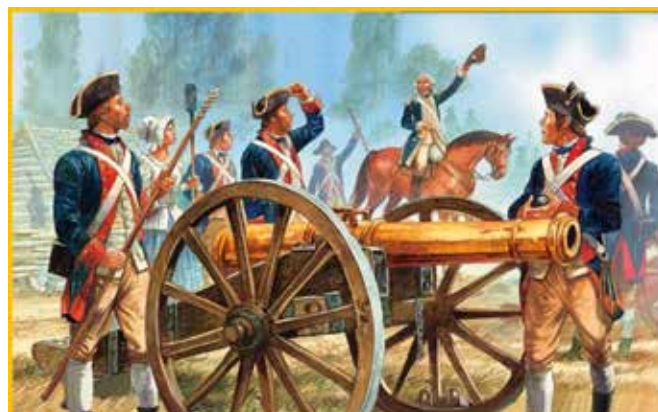
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