

Thunderbolt Blast

Monthly Armor School Newsletter
Vol. 1, Issue 3 OCTOBER 2012



Armor School

316TH CAVALRY BRIGADE: ABOLC FOLLOW-ON TRAINING STRATEGY. The Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) has expanded opportunities for Armor lieutenants to attend functional and assignment-oriented training (AOT) prior to reporting to their first duty station. Lieutenants reporting early to ABOLC can attend AOT, including Airborne, Air Assault, Pathfinder and Combatives prior to starting ABOLC. Assignments to this training are based on physical fitness, aptitude and projected assignment.

Lieutenants can also attend functional and AOT training after ABOLC. The AOT training strategy's goal is to enable each lieutenant to attend at least one AOT course before reporting to his first unit. Lieutenants receive priority to attend schools, such as Ranger School and Army Reconnaissance Course (ARC), based on their next assignment. The squadron also maximizes opportunities to enroll lieutenants into the Stryker Leader Course, Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader Course and other available training.

The squadron has over a 90 percent success rate in ensuring all Active Component (AC) lieutenants attend a follow-on AOT course at Fort Benning. As such, it is imperative that lieutenants reporting to 2-16 Cav are mentally and physically prepared for the rigors of ABOLC and to maximize opportunities to attend follow-on training.

194TH ARMORED BRIGADE: ARMY PHYSICAL READINESS TRAINING (APFT). Soldiers must pass the full APFT to graduate our courses, and the Army's Physical Readiness Training (PRT) has proven both safe and sufficient to meet this initial/basic requirement. During the first weeks of One-Station Unit Training (OSUT), Soldiers in training (SIT) take a 1-1-1 assessment (one minute of pushups, sit-ups and a one-mile run). We use the assessment to place SIT into ability groups to prevent injuries and to challenge every fitness level. Early in Initial Military Training (IMT), the Soldier undergoes a toughening phase, which prepares them for the physical demands of OSUT by developing their foundational fitness and fundamental movement skills. Next, the warrior starts the sustaining phase, which develops a higher level of physical readiness to meet the demands of today's Forces Command (FORSCOM) units. PRT provides a scientific approach to physical readiness and training, and a rational training progression that elicits the desired training effect for Soldiers without overreach, overtraining and overuse.

Our cadre's main focus is ensuring all Soldiers are using proper form for every exercise by strictly monitoring their performance. If a Soldier sustains an injury or shows indicators of an emerging injury, the Musculoskeletal Action Team (MAT), which is comprised of physical therapists and athletic trainers specializing in sports medicine, provides the initial assessment. The team directs PRT authorized modifications to exercises for those Soldiers to assist in their recovery while minimizing degradation to the Soldiers' physical training.

From the Chief of Armor's Turret

Upon nearing 90 days here, the following is a summary of my initial assessment of where we are at the Armor School.

Overall, the Armor School is in great shape. The BRAC process has resulted in our units and personnel being set to "about right" for training our Soldiers and leaders. We will make some organizational adjustments but with minimal anticipated effects to the mission.



Harmony Church has new infrastructure and is a great place to train our tankers and cavalrymen. We are completing the verification that all BRAC requirements are complete. In addition, we are adjusting Harmony Church's facilities based on experience, but we'll have to balance fiscal constraints as we go through this process. Through the efforts of many people, we are getting closer each day to achieving the vision that Harmony Church becomes a crown jewel within Fort Benning.

As we upgrade our physical facilities, we are working on several other fronts to ensure we send the best-trained Soldiers and leaders to the operating force. We are working with the Infantry School to integrate training, with the ultimate goal of conducting true combined-arms training at Fort Benning. Many of our range facilities are still under construction, but we anticipate their completion in the second quarter of FY 2013. Most importantly, we are maneuvering in Good Hope Mounted Training Area and are still actively pursuing more land options to better support mounted training. We will tirelessly continue to "improve the position" every day until we

Armor Branch and OCOA Personnel Notes

OFFICE CHIEF OF ARMOR ACTIONS. Updating DA PAM 611-21, *Military Occupational Classification and Structure*. This provides guidance to commanders, personnel managers, proponents, and combat and materiel developers and contains information on the classification of individuals by identifiers and classification of positions (duty position title, identifier(s) and grade-in requirements and authorization documents). It also contains authorized branches, areas of concentration (AOC), skill identifiers (SI) and guidance on using these codes in the classification of officer positions and personnel, and it details authorized career management fields (CMF), MOSs, SQIs, ASIs and guidance on using these codes in the classification of enlisted positions and personnel.

FRANKS AWARD. The Armor School is seeking nominees for the 17th Annual Frederick M. Franks Award. The Franks Award is presented to a mounted active-duty or reserve officer, noncommissioned officer or DA civilian who has demonstrated a long-time contribution to the Army's ground-fighting and warfighting capabilities. The winner will receive the award during the 2013 Army Reconnaissance Summit. Nominations are due NLT 31 January 2013. For complete award criteria and more information, please visit <https://forums.army.mil/SECURE/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=1849408&lang=en-US> or contact OCOA at usarmy.benning.mcoe.mbx.armor-ocoa@mail.mil.

OPMD: BROADENING OPPORTUNITIES. As the Army becomes more competitive and selective, the CSA and other senior leaders have begun to re-emphasize broadening opportunities as discriminators. Many fellowships and scholarships fall squarely into this increasingly important category.

Human Resources Command (HRC) has released most of the "Broadening Opportunities Program" MILPERs to begin accepting applications. Following is a list of these opportunities along with the relevant grade, associated MILPER and application due date. All officers are encouraged to review the MILPERs and submit applications if they are interested, and all leaders are encouraged to counsel their officers on these programs. Officers may apply for multiple programs, but will have to submit individual packets for each and provide an OML in case they are selected for more than one.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>MILPER</u>	<u>Application Due</u>
Congressional Fellowship (OCLL)	O3/O4	12-325	31 Jan 13
JCS/OSD/AR Staff Intern Program	O3/O4	12-320	31 Jan 13
General Wayne A. Downing Scholarship	O3/O4	12-323	31 Jan 13
Cyber Command Scholarship Program	O3/O4	12-131	31 Jan 13
Information Assurance Scholarship (IASP)	O3/O4	12-276	14 Dec 12
Olmsted Scholars Program	O3/O4	12-322	31 Jan 13
White House Fellowship	O3/O4	12-279	07 Dec 12
CSA Strategic Studies Group (SSG)	O3/O4	12-278	15 Nov 12
HQDA Harvard Strategist Program	O3/O4	12-280	11 Jan 13
Arroyo Center Fellowship	O4/O5	12-277	11 Jan 13
Regional Fellowship Program	O4/O5	12-275	11 Jan 13

All of these programs are highly selective and require careful timing to ensure eligibility, so we encourage leaders at all levels to talk to their subordinates about them early. Officers should contact their assignment officers to ensure they can be competitive.

SOLDIER ASSIGNMENTS. The Armor Enlisted Branch priorities remain Army requirements, Soldier professional development and Soldier preferences. We will continue efforts to rotate Soldiers from operational to institutional assignments as well as look to Soldiers with recent and multiple deployments as the experience base for institutional Army assignments. We normally limit institutional-to-institutional assignments and rotate Soldiers from the institutional Army to operational assignments.

Here are a few important points to discuss with your Soldiers to help them manage their careers and influence their next duty assignment: (1) Ensure their Assignment Satisfaction Key (ASK) (<https://www.ask.army.mil/ask/>), deployment history and other personal information such as Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) or Married Army Couples Program (MACP), are up-to-date. (2) Tell them to communicate with their Armor Branch career managers / assignment managers. (3) Improve GT Scores. Soldiers with low GT scores are not considered for broadening or nominative positions.

get things exactly right.

One of the ways we are improving is by undergoing a rigorous TRADOC accreditation of all courses taught at the Armor School. This is going on right now and will ensure we are conducting the best training possible. More importantly, YOU can provide feedback to the Armor School about the quality of the Soldiers and leaders we're sending to the force. Comments from the field carry the most weight as we adjust programs of instruction. Please take a moment to answer the two surveys on the 19D and 19K Soldiers that we are sending from Fort Benning. The links are posted on Page 4.

Speaking of surveys, we are working hard to establish and strengthen communications between the Armor School and the rest of the Army. This newsletter is one such initiative. Another idea that started with the first issue of the Thunderbolt Blast was a monthly on-line forum. Each month we post a relevant question to inform us of the issues from the field. For the past two months, the forum was on milSuite, which unnecessarily limited the discussion to active-duty members. Starting this month, we've moved the forum question onto Army Knowledge On-line (AKO). This move will allow anyone with AKO access to participate in the discourse.

I want to close by saying that the focused leadership and quality training in the Armor School and in our units are truly impressive. Our Soldiers, leaders, civilians and family members across the Mounted Force impress me every day with their dedication, innovation and professionalism. Never forget that they are the core of our branch.

Forge the Thunderbolt!

Giddyup! 47

From the CSM's OP

Good things happen to those who wait. The Army recently released the message approving the officer and enlisted Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) R7, Army Reconnaissance. Beginning 1 Nov 2012, all graduates of ARC will automatically receive the R7 ASI. ARC is a fantastic course, and getting an ASI only makes it more of a benefit to the graduates and the units. Please refer to ALARACT 268/2012 for all the details.



We are now in full planning mode for the first Gaaney Cup, to be executed on Fort Benning in March 2013. The first decision we had to make was setting a limit on the number of teams that can compete. We all deal with constraints on a daily basis, and

Also, please ensure your Soldiers understand that Armor Branch does not work enrollment in NCOES. Enrollment in NCOES is conducted through the unit schools NCO. If your schools NCO is unfamiliar with how to enroll a Soldier in NCOES, please have your Soldiers contact Military Schools Branch at (502) 613-5916 or email them at usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.epmd-ncoes-operations@mail.mil. –LTC Shawn Vail, Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate, shawn.michael.vail@us.army.mil, (502) 613-5667, DSN 983-5667.

ARNG (Branch Chief - Armor). LTC Scott Fowler is an ARNG AGR Soldier on the Armor School staff that reports directly to the Armor School commandant on all Armor issues within the ARNG force. He liaises with the commanders of all ARNG armor and cavalry units as well as the Regional Training Institutes (RTIs), and works directly with the TCM-ABCT, TCM-BfSB and TCM-Stryker at the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, GA. Direct all ARNG armor and cavalry issues and questions to LTC Fowler at (706) 626-2306 or scott.fowler1@us.army.mil.

TRADOC Capabilities Managers

TCM-ARMORED BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM: TRAINING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT. TCM-ABCT is participating in a Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) program of instruction (POI) analysis aimed at restoring hands-on, field-oriented training to 11B, 19D and 19K ALC and M-SLC. Further, we continue to assess the atrophy of core competencies and technical skills on Abrams and IFV-BFV platforms through post-deployment unit visits, command team interviews, surveys and dirt-CTC rotation data-collection efforts. Our goal is to reinstall technical platform and mounted maneuver training back into institutional training strategies that support maneuver proficiencies (CAM/WAS) in the operational force. POC is Carl Johnson, carl.r.johnson32.civ@mail.mil, (706) 545-4652.

TCM-ABCT: ABRAMS AND BRADLEY PLATFORM UPDATE. Team Bradley continues to work with the program manager and the user community to provide the best available equipment to conduct operations and to provide input to future combat vehicles that capitalize off current and future technologies. To accomplish these tasks, we conduct analysis and review of doctrinal publications, technical manuals and training publications; review modified tables of organization and equipment (MTOEs) to ensure they accurately reflect organizational requirements; and monitor new material development and fielded equipment for deficiencies to provide the information link to industry partners to resolve issues. Your POC at Team Bradley is MAJ Ernesto Perez, ernesto.perez2.mil@mail.mil, (706) 545-7697.

TCM-BATTLEFIELD SURVEILLANCE BRIGADE (BFSB) UPDATE. As the Army continues the process of developing our force for 2020, possible changes in the structure and role of the Army's battlefield surveillance brigades (BfSB) are being analyzed. Working with the TRADOC Analysis Center (TRAC) at Fort Leavenworth, KS, the Mission Command, Intelligence and Maneuver Centers of Excellence are working to determine the necessary changes to this organization to ensure a robust capability in painting an accurate picture of future battlefields for ground-force commanders at brigade through corps level. Possible changes include augmenting the current BfSB with greater capability, including the ability to fight for information; organizing current brigade combat teams (BCTs) to perform the reconnaissance and security (R&S) mission during combat operations; designating a specific BCT with a R&S Mission-Essential Task List (METL), task organized throughout an Army Forces Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle to train and execute the R&S mission; and finally, identifying a dedicated BCT assigned with an R&S METL, task organized with the required capabilities to execute the R&S mission through multiple ARFORGEN cycles. Throughout the analysis process, current corps and division commanders, as well as the current BfSB leadership, have been providing guidance and input to augment the team's efforts. These efforts will help provide the best possible picture of the modern battlefield to combat commanders for the Army of 2020. The POC is LTC Eric Lowry, anthony.e.lowry.mil@mail.mil, (706) 626-2444.

Organization, Materiel and Facilities Updates

MINE RESISTANT AMBUSH PROTECTED (MRAP) VEHICLE DISTRIBUTION. Maneuver Center of Excellence Capabilities Development and Integration Directorate (CDID) Mounted Requirements, in concert with the Armor and Infantry schools, is working with TRADOC and HQDA to determine the most appropriate enduring requirement for the nearly 20,000 MRAPs assigned to the Army. MRAPs may be provided to combat units based on mission and threat. Most Armor and Cavalry Soldiers will not see MRAPs at home station except for predeployment training. A final decision is expected late in 1st Quarter FY13. POCs are Tom Stafford (thomas.j.stafford.civ@mail.mil, 706-545-4701), Scott McCranie (scott.t.mccranie.ctr@mail.mil, 706-545-4671), Harry Jackson (harry.h.jackson2.ctr@mail.mil, 706-545-1512) and David Dillinger (david.c.dillinger.ctr@mail.mil, 706-545-1816).

resources and logistics are real premiums here at the Maneuver Center of Excellence. We will put on a great competition, not necessarily perfect in everyone's opinion, as reconnaissance has a wide range of meaning and platforms in today's Army. But, the first Gainey Cup will be a demanding, challenging event that will test even the best scout!

On a more somber note, we at the Armor School would like to pass along our sincere condolences and thoughts to the Davis and Plumley families. CSM(R) Ronnie W. Davis, former Thunderbolt 7 from February 1994 to June 1997, passed away 31 Aug. CSM(R) Basil L. Plumley, 92, passed away 10 Oct. A veteran of World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam, CSM Plumley is best known for his service and leadership of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment in the Ia Drang Valley. Unfortunately, I only met CSM Plumley once in life, and that was in a hospice six days before his death. Even then, I could see the fire in his eyes and he still could say, "A Soldier is only as good as his leader." Those words meant the same to him as they did more than 235 years ago on a cold Valley Forge night, to the mountains of Afghanistan today, and will hold true in the Army of 2020. You can find many pictures of CSM Plumley on-line. Sure, he is wearing the blue infantry cord, blue discs and three awards of the Combat Infantryman's Badge (CIB), but always on "top" of all that is a Stetson! Rest in peace, CSMs, and may peace be with your families.

In closing, I want to thank all of you for the awesome job you day every single day. From the maintenance bays to the mountains and valleys of Afghanistan, the Armor force continues to go above and beyond what is expected of it by this great nation!

Forge the Thunderbolt!

One Force, One Fight! Armor Strong!

Thunderbolt 7

HQ U.S. Army Armor School 

	Armor CMDT	(706) 545-2029	COL Paul Laughlin
	Armor CSM	(706) 545-8169	CSM Miles Wilson
	DCMDT	(706) 545-3815	COL Scott King
	NG Liaison	(706) 626-2306	LTC Scott Fowler
	MGMT Staff	(706) 626-1406	LTC Matt Boal
	Armor Historian	(706) 626-1491	Dr. Robert Cameron
	Operations NCOIC	(706) 545-0529	SFC Dustin Tomecko
	OCOA	(706) 626-TANK (8265)	email OCOA
	Excellence in Armor	(706) 626-TANK (8265)	email Excellence in Armor
ARMOR magazine	(706) 545-2698	email ARMOR	

192nd IN BDE 

	COL Ron Clark		CSM Clyde Glenn	
		1-46 IN BCT	LTC Brown, Cale	CSM Dydasco, Eugene
		2-47 IN BCT	LTC Feger, Kyle	CSM Dennison, Daniel
		3-47 IN BCT	LTC Thompson, Travis	CSM Svenson, Todd
		30th AG (Rec)	LTC Kidder, Stuart	CSM Reddock, Earla

194th AR BDE 

	COL Kevin MacWatters		CSM Robert Tompkins	
		1-81 AR	LTC Plummer, Dawson	CSM Lockhart, Dean
		3-81 AR	LTC McCoy, Jeff	CSM Wagner, Anthony
		5-15 CAV	LTC Koloski, Andrew	CSM Roark, Samuel

316th CAV BDE 

	COL David Davidson		CSM Michael Clemens	
		1-16 CAV	LTC Brown, Mark	CSM Martin, Valmond
		2-16 CAV	LTC Diano, Oscar	CSM Feltman, Bradley
		3-16 CAV	LTC Mackey, Andre	CSM Williamson, Michael

TCM			
COL Nicoson, Gary	TCM-ABCT and TCM-BfSB	(706) 545-2517	gary-nicoson@us.army.mil
COL House, Ed	TCM-IBCT	(706) 545-2078	claud.house@us.army.mil
COL Speights, Elmer	TCM-Stryker	(706) 545-5364	elmer.speights3.mil@mail.mil

Army National Guard Regional Training Institutes (RTIs)

	School code	958	1017	998	1012	1017	1012
	Location	Gowen Field Armor SME Site IDARNG Boise, ID	ARNG Res. Tng Ctr Smyrna, TN	Camp Shelby Hattiesburg, MS	Fort Indiantown Gap Annlville, PA	Camp Mabry Austin, TX	Camp Ripley Little Falls, MN
	ARNG RTI	1-204 th	2-117 th	1-154 th	1-166 th	1-136 th	175 th Regt
M1A1 Tank Commander Certification 171-SI3M/19K2/3/4		X					
Scout Commander Certification 171-SI3X/ASID3		X	X	X			
Cavalry Scout (MOS-T) 171-19D10 (HMMWV/M3) (R)		X	X	X	X	X	X
Cavalry Scout Adv Ldr 171-19D30-C45		X	X	X	X	X	
Armor Crewman (M1A1) 171-19K10 (M1A1) (R)		X		X			
Armor Crewman (M1A2) 171-19K10 (M1A2) (R)		X					
Armor Crewman Adv Ldr 171-19K30-C45		X		X	X		

Courses highlighted in yellow are not yet supported with required equipment.

Question of the Month

As we look at the BCT 2020 organization, what is the most critical aspect of reconnaissance at the BCT and squadron level that we must address?

Link to the new USAARMS organizational page (<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/677852>) and look on the top right-hand corner for the discussion. Or go into AKO, then type in the search box on the homepage "HQ USAARMS" -- when it returns the search results, it's the first selection in the search-results list. If not, refine the search by selecting on the left "AKO pages."



Upcoming Events

- 3-5 March 13 - Gainey Cup
- 5-7 March 13 - Recon Summit
- 13 April 13 - Armor Ball
- Late Aug/early Sep 13- Sullivan Cup

Armor School Links

- MCoE:** <https://www.benning.army.mil>
- Armor School:** <https://www.benning.army.mil/armor/>
- ARMOR magazine:** <https://www.benning.army.mil/armor/ArmorMagazine/index.htm>

Please take a moment to participate in these surveys on the quality of the 19K and 19D Soldiers you are receiving from Fort Benning. Your feedback will assist us in adjusting our training to ensure you receive Soldiers with the skills you most need.

19D-OSUT: GEN_19DSUPSURVEYV1_OCT12
The CAC URL is:
https://secureweb.hqda.pentagon.mil/ariweb/GEN_19DSUPSURVEYV1_OCT12

The AKO URL is:
https://securewebako.hqda.pentagon.mil/AKO/ariwebAKO/GEN_19DSUPSURVEYV1_OCT12

19K-OSUT GEN_19KSUPSURVEYV1_OCT12
The CAC URL is:
https://secureweb.hqda.pentagon.mil/ariweb/GEN_19KSUPSURVEYV1_OCT12

The AKO URL is:
https://securewebako.hqda.pentagon.mil/AKO/ariwebAKO/GEN_19KSUPSURVEYV1_OCT12