

# Commandant's Note

BG PHILLIP J. KINIERY

The U.S. Army is rapidly adapting to meet the demands of the modern battlefield. Research and development efforts are underway to develop cutting-edge tools for American warfighters. We've already seen some of this advanced technology make its way to frontline units to begin implementing into the fight. These tools are exceedingly helpful in finding, fixing, and destroying the enemy. During times like these, there is an emphasis placed on the implementation of this new technology into our formations, but we must not discard the basics. Our strength has always been American Soldier, NCO, and officer competency, both tactical and technical.

There is an art to balancing priorities. Given the current operations tempo, it may seem difficult to balance and prioritize training goals and outcomes. I believe that two tasks should be prioritized in every training plan: focusing on fundamental Soldier skills and implementing new technology. Physical fitness, basic Soldier tasks, and military occupational specialty (MOS) competency are required to fight and win. New technology is great to have, but it's also useless without a capable fighting force to implement it. Tough physical training, team building, NCO training time, and MOS-specific leader professional development (LPD) events are required to build and maintain a competent Army. These Soldiers and NCOs will be responsible for fielding and implementing some of the most important systems the U.S. Army has ever had. These systems will revolutionize how we fight and win on the battlefield. This fact brings importance to the second training priority — implementing the new technology. Flattening the learning curve for our newly acquired systems should be important to all leaders. The quicker we build proficiency with a system, the better we can implement it into the fight.

In September, the Maneuver Center of Excellence hosted its annual Maneuver Warfighter Conference, where key leaders from across the force addressed the Army's ongoing continuous transformation efforts. During one presentation, COL James C. Stultz, commander of the 2nd Mobile Brigade Combat Team (MBCT), 101st Airborne Division, shared some of the lessons his unit has learned as part of the transformation in contact initiative. 2/101 MBCT Soldiers have been hard at work breaking down the barrier between implementation and expertise. Their focus on Soldiering and integrating new technology is unmatched.

This issue of *Infantry* includes several articles about 2/101's transformative efforts. In particular,

two articles stand out to me: "Large-Scale, Long-Range Air Assault (L2A2) Lessons Learned," authored by CPT Jared Weece, and "Utilizing the Integrated Tactical Network (ITN) in Mobile Command Posts (MCPs)" by LTC Jonathan Nielsen and MAJ Eric Cannon. The L2A2 article examines lessons learned from the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment at Fort Campbell. This battalion participated in a highly impressive air movement, spanning three states and 500 nautical miles. An operation of this size and complexity introduces various friction points. CPT Weece describes the importance of planning and communication between ground and aviation forces, pickup-zone operations, sustainability, and equipment utilization. The MCP article shares insights into the modernization efforts of battlefield command and control. The decision to integrate ITN into MCPs greatly enhanced mobility, adaptability, survivability, and efficient control of ground forces. These enhanced MCPs offer superb survivability and emit a much smaller electromagnetic signature. The enhanced survivability offered by an MCP with ITN stands out to me as a unique advantage for our next fight.

In closing, I would like to reiterate the importance of creating a tough fighting force and embracing the commitment to learn and integrate new systems. Our Army needs to be physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually ready for the next conflict. During modernization and transformation efforts, the Army is leading the way on implementing cutting-edge battlefield technology. Our warriors bear an important responsibility of figuring out how we can target and destroy the enemy with this never-before-seen tech. These lessons learned are valuable to the individual units who discover them, but they are useless to the force if they aren't shared. Professional discourse is critical, and our publications aim to create these worthwhile discussions. If you have lessons learned or any knowledge transfer that you think the Army can benefit from, I urge you to reach out to your Harding Fellow and branch professional bulletin. Harding Fellows are now integrated into all branch journals, and they are responsible for creating Army-wide professional conversations on critical topics. Contact *Infantry* staff at [usarmy.moore.tradoc.mbx.infantry-magazine@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.moore.tradoc.mbx.infantry-magazine@army.mil).

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