

# **Gunner's Seat: Reconnaissance and Security Fundamentals**

In the profession of arms, learning from mistakes and avoiding the pitfall of repetitive errors can be the deciding factor on whether you bring everyone home at the end of a deployment or not. We as leaders must remain mindful of the training tools available. We must also learn from the past, use lessons-learned and observe training trends to help avoid making the same mistakes. We must identify areas that our Soldiers, leaders and units continually struggle with and where we need to focus on improvement. Once identified, we must accept our shortfalls; only then can we begin to move forward to become a more effective unit.

We struggle not only as a branch but as an Army in the proper execution of reconnaissance and security missions. The best way to combat this current weakness is to revisit and reinvigorate the fundamentals of reconnaissance, ensuring that the youngest Soldiers through the most senior leaders not only understand but have the skillset and knowledge base to effectively employ these fundamentals. Much like any task we strive to master, we must instill the fundamentals into all that our Soldiers do. Once the fundamentals are mastered, we must continue to improve and expand on these tasks and skills. As these young Soldiers master their craft and advance themselves professionally, we will once again lay a solid foundation for the future of the Armor Branch and improve our units as a whole in the process.

Another way to combat the trend is to reinforce knowledge in your junior and senior noncommissioned officers by sending them back to the schoolhouse to attend reconnaissance-specific courses. Having leaders who are qualified through the Army Reconnaissance Course, Reconnaissance and Security Leader's Course – or even the Cavalry Leader's Course – ensures that our leaders can properly train our junior Soldiers, arming them with the technical and tactical knowledge to naturally employ learned skills. Having qualified leaders on the appropriate platform also goes a long way to not only more effectively train Soldiers but also more efficiently execute the mission.

Having leaders qualified to fulfill their assigned positions allows them to confidently fulfill their duties and responsibilities and sets them up for success. It is a working goal at the Armor School to aid the force in completing the connection of follow-on school opportunities for NCOs who come to the schoolhouse for the Advanced Leader's Course and Senior Leader's Course. The overall intent is to have Soldiers trained on skillsets and platform-specific training before they return to their home station.

The key takeaway is to continue sending leaders to the proper schooling and not defer course dates due to the mission. In the long run, deferring course dates is counterintuitive to what the Army expects and what the Armor School intends to accomplish. Bottom line up front: we want to set up our leaders for success!

Visit the following link to download copies of the "fundamentals of reconnaissance and security" posters:  
<http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/fundamentals/>.

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