

Training Management: Old is New

by COL Stuart S. Smith

Echoing the Greek lyrical poet and soldier Archilochus (c. 650 BCE): “We don’t rise to the level of our expectations; we fall to the level of our training.” With that in mind, commanders owe their Soldiers the focus and tools required to succeed, and training is the most critical means the Army provides to achieve readiness.

Within the Army Vision 2018 statement, U.S. Army Chief of Staff GEN Mark A. Milley and Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper said their vision for the Army requires a transition from training that previously focused on emergent and counterinsurgency fights to training for high-intensity conflict against conventional and hybrid peer threats.

To achieve the proficiency in training and operations needed to win the fight described in the Army vision and doctrine, Armor Branch leaders must be well-versed and proficient in training management (TM). Training must be deliberately planned and focused on both the individual and collective tasks that support the unit’s mission-essential tasks (MET) while being evaluated and assessed against established standards. To achieve and maintain the unique crew qualifications, collective maneuver and integration skills required on the modern, extremely complex battlefield, leaders must properly plan, resource and protect training opportunities to achieve the desired levels of readiness.

In response to Army leadership’s readiness requirements, the Training Management Division (TMD), under the direction of Department of the Army’s Operations and Training (G-3/5/7), responded to changes in guidance by continuing to improve TM doctrine, reporting requirements and associated tools that enable leaders to train their Soldiers for future conflicts.

New vision

The Army Vision 2018 directs leaders to focus training on high-intensity conflict and combined-arms maneuver with joint forces, allies and partners, and to be prepared to conduct large-scale combat operations against conventional and hybrid peer threats. To achieve this goal, leaders must design and structure training events that force their units to “train as we would fight against an equally capable peer with a full array of threat capabilities” while training to and reporting against established objective standards found in the proponent-developed training and evaluation outlines (T&EO) associated with each collective task. This is important because “[a]s leaders, our responsibility is to properly plan, prepare, execute, evaluate and assess training to ensure our Soldiers and units are prepared for combat,” said LTG Joseph Anderson, deputy chief of staff, Army G-3/5/7. “Training readiness informs senior leaders and supports their decisions regarding the distribution of resources – including time, money and personnel.”

As early as 2011, Army leaders began the process of filling the void in TM knowledge created by years of mandated Army Force Generation pre-deployment training. To educate new generations on how to conduct unit-developed TM at each echelon, the Army provided TM doctrine. The doctrine – found in Field Manual (FM) 7-0, **Training Units and Developing Leaders for Full-Spectrum Operations** – outlined and described principles, roles and functions, along with the “how to” for developing unit training products. Over the years, training doctrine was refined to reflect changes in guidance and policy. For example, the revised FM 7-0, **Train to Win in a Complex World**, published in 2016, and Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 7-0, **Training**, published in August 2018, are the capstone documents that describe how the Army trains to win by achieving training readiness and the capabilities that support Army and joint force commanders.

When not operating, training is the most important thing a unit can do. Therefore, the systems and processes that govern reporting have evolved to provide senior leaders the training-readiness information required to make informed resourcing decisions. The major changes to reporting are detailed in the standards for assessments in the training-and-evaluation matrix found in the T&EO for each task reported for readiness. These assessment tools provide leaders a means to provide Army leaders more objective readiness data.

The Leader’s Guide to Objective Assessment of Training Proficiency (OBJ-T) (published in September 2017)¹ goes into great detail on the process, tools and systems required to perform objective reporting. Objective reporting does not change the process for planning, preparing and assessing training; it uses updated standards to better

assess the readiness achieved. Moreover, assessments that accurately measure unit training and readiness will ensure Soldiers are the most capable and lethal on the battlefield. This impacts readiness, which is the foundation of the Army's ability to fight and win America's wars.

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The Digital Training Management System (DTMS) and the Combined-Arms Training Strategies (CATS) have been significantly improved during the last several years. They provide leaders with tools needed to plan, prepare and manage training, while providing accurate, objective assessments. They are the Army's current systems of record to assist in developing, managing and recording training for units and individuals.

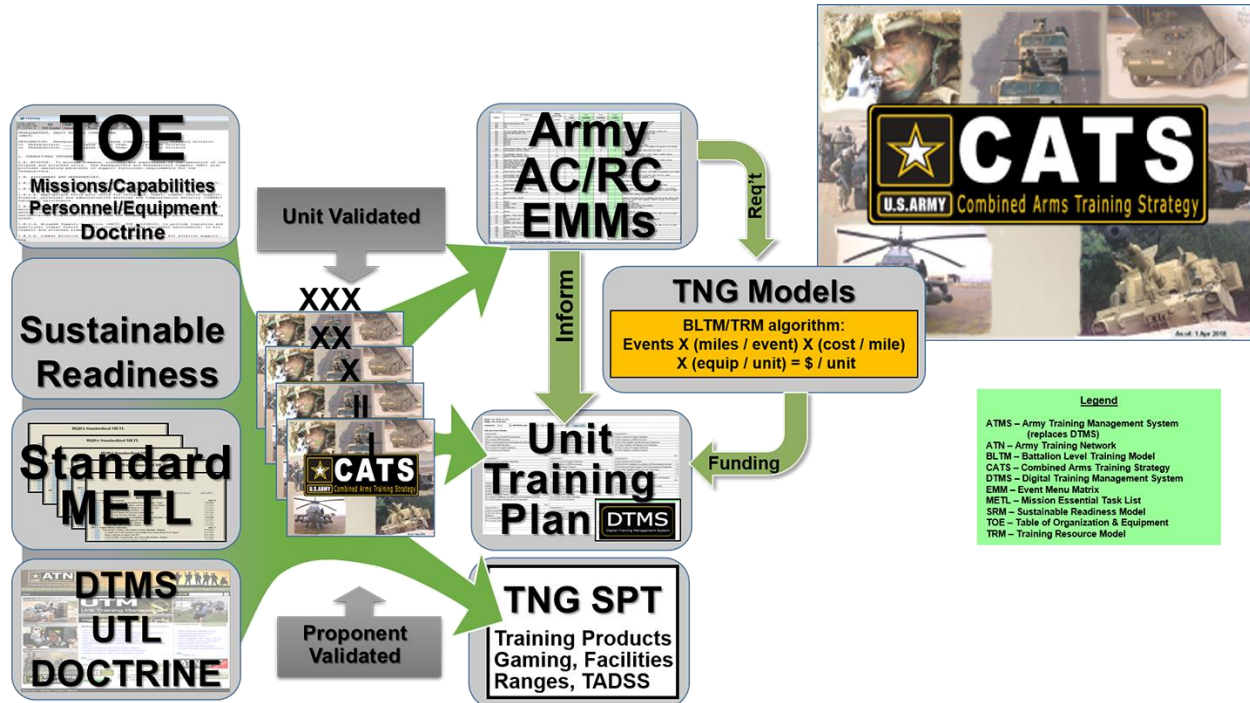


Figure 1. CATS model.

DTMS is a powerful system, providing tools to give units the ability to plan and record all supporting training for units while providing leaders visibility of their units. Following are a few of the most recent updates. Following are a few of the most recent updates.

Dashboards

The most recent improvement to DTMS has been the Training and Readiness Dashboard, which provides brigade-and-below users the ability to directly access, review and manage most of their organization's required reportable training data in a single location.

The dashboard was created in concert with the Secretary of the Army's and Chief of Staff's focus on prioritizing efforts for readiness through reducing requirements in brigade-and-below units, which was reflected in the Army's significant reduction in the numbers of reportable items required within DTMS. The dashboard now reflects the following eight reportable items: MET assessments; collective live-fire proficiency; individual, crew-served and platform-weapons status (three items); Army Physical Fitness Test and height/weight data (two items); and mandatory training.

This new DTMS training dashboard is now the default login screen, where leaders can quickly view unit and subordinate readiness as well as individual and unit training data. The dashboard also allows leaders and their designated operators to immediately drill down and update training data for individuals or groups of Soldiers in their units. These provide users with easy access to reporting requirements outlined in Objective-T.

Finally, the training dashboard is directly linked to Army Unit Status Reporting and will eventually feed not only MET assessments but all reportable unit and individual training in the coming months. It serves as the one-stop-shop for all mandatory training-readiness data.

CATS

Another critical tool provided by TMD is CATS. Developed by the proponents for specific unit types, CATS supports leaders and units as they plan unit-training events by providing events linked to MET list and collective tasks. CATS provides commanders and operations (S-3) personnel an easy tool to plan training, and track and record unit proficiency, in one easy on-line tool. Recent improvements in CATS now offer a more user-friendly long-range planning tool and calendar.

“Many unit-training managers have reported that CATS is a great tool to facilitate planning training,” said Dan Huell, the Maneuver Center of Excellence’s collective-training manager.

Improvements continue

TMD, in partnership with proponents and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command centers of excellence, responded to changes in training and reporting policy. TMD will continue to improve the doctrine, reporting processes and tools to ensure the Army has an effective, efficient means to achieve and record training readiness.

If you have questions or want to learn more, see the **Leader’s Guide to Assessment of Training Proficiency**. It may be found on the **Leader’s Guide to Objective Assessment of Training Proficiency** via the Army Training Network (ATN) Webpage at https://atn.army.mil/dsp_template.aspx?dplD=376. The ATN Website (<https://atn.army.mil/>) contains many resources for Soldiers, from FM 7-0 to the CATS and DTMS tools.

TMD also has other necessary tools to ensure units are trained and ready. To reach a TMD expert, contact the help desk via telephone at toll-free (877) 241-0347, (913) 684-2700 or DSN 552-2700. Users may also email the TMD help desk for assistance at usarmy.leavenworth.cac.mbx.dtmshd@mail.mil.

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Notes

¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army Exercise Order 002-16, Fragmentary Order 4, “Enable, Resource, Build, Assess and Sustain Training Readiness,” Appendix 1 to Annex D, **The Leader’s Guide to Objective Assessment of Training Proficiency (OBJ-T)**, September 2017.

Acronym Quick-Scan

ATN – Army Training Network

CAT-T – Combined Arms Center-Training

CATS – Combined-Arms Training Strategies

DTMS – Digital Training Management System

FM – field manual

LRT – Leader Readiness Tool

MET – mission-essential task

T&EO – training and evaluation outline
TM – training management
TMD – Training Management Directorate