



Armored vehicles will continue to play a major role in future combat operations. Here, SSG Andrew Frengel, his fellow Soldiers, and Stryker vehicles of A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 104th Cavalry Regiment, 56th Stryker BCT, move through Sab al Bour, Iraq, July 20, 2009. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Doug Roles.)

# Providing Armor Capabilities to the Future Force

Jaclyn Pitts and Kellyn D. Ritter

**O**ur Soldiers require extensive armor capabilities to combat the ever-changing challenges they face in atypical warfare. At the Armor Warfighting Conference May 12–14, 2009, Fort Knox, KY, Army personnel gathered to discuss, strategize, and report on how the Army will support Soldiers and the Future Force in the armor world. This article details remarks from Army senior leaders at the conference, to include the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA) and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commanding General (CG), who outlined the necessities for our Army's future success.

## Changes in the Battlefield

VCSA GEN Pete Chiarelli offered his perspective on how the Army can continue providing unmatched armor capabilities to our Soldiers and achieve mission success. Chiarelli described the type of warfare our Soldiers face: “The Army and the environment in which we operate is constantly evolving, and the basic change has accelerated to an all-time high in recent years. Warfare, as we know it, has changed forever. ... The probable adversaries we face are increasingly savvy. Every Soldier, therefore, has to be versatile and agile enough to operate across the spectrum.”

As our Army continues to adjust to meet the challenges of future conflict, armored vehicles will remain a key element of the force. “The survivability, lethality, mobility, and the simple, pure intimidation that they provide is critical,” Chiarelli said. “It’s been demonstrated repeatedly in recent conflict. ... However, how we employ tanks and other armored vehicles will likely continue to vary significantly depending on the situation on the battlefield.”

“In this new strategic environment, the only thing we know for certain is



VCSA GEN Pete Chiarelli discussed how the Army must focus on its flexibility and willingness to embrace new ideas and technologies as it faces current and future contingency operations. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of Fort Knox PAO.)

that the enemy will purposely go where we are not, and we must ensure we are prepared and are capable to respond to any contingency across the full spectrum of operations,” Chiarelli said. In recent years, the Army has been focused at the brigade level, which has greatly enhanced the force’s ability to respond to any situation quickly and effectively. “We intentionally built these BCTs [brigade combat teams] to be self-sufficient,” Chiarelli said. “However, in reality, there is still a relatively robust support system that augments the BCT in the environments in which we fight today.”

Chiarelli advised that the force has become increasingly specialized as more capabilities have been added; however, further specialization could hinder the force. “Every attempt we make to specialize the force takes away from the flexibility we have,” Chiarelli explained. “If you try to train in everything, you end up captured by the training matrix. ... I believe the right answer is to focus on the critical and most difficult task, working day in and day out until every Soldier is proficient in it.”

As an organization, the Army must remain flexible and open to new possibilities as they arise. “In recent years, we’ve made numerous changes and improvements in the size, mix, and design of the force to better prepare for current and future operations,” Chiarelli said. “Ultimately, our goal is to achieve a balanced force that is able to operate for potentially long, drawn out periods across the spectrum of operation.” Currently, the Army is focused on building a network enterprise to enable users across the Army to share knowledge and leverage capabilities across the force.

Chiarelli also discussed other futuristic capabilities that may revolutionize the battlefield in years ahead, such as the electromagnetic gun. If achieved, it has the potential to contribute game-changing capabilities to combined arms



GEN Martin E. Dempsey, TRADOC CG, stressed the importance of training, leader development, and maintaining the all-volunteer force. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of Fort Knox Public Affairs Office (PAO).)

battle, both at the tactical and operational level. Significant progress has been made on this technology in recent years, but many challenges remain, such as the vast amount of heat generated from propelling the electromagnetic projectile that is strong enough to rapidly erode the system. The Army will continue to explore these types of technologies and how they can potentially provide innovative and unmatched capabilities.

## TRADOC—Preparing for the Future

TRADOC plays an irreplaceable role in the future development of our Army’s armor capabilities. The command’s official mission is to “develop the Army’s Soldier and civilian leaders and design, develop, and integrate capabilities, concepts, and doctrine to build a campaign-capable expeditionary Army in support of joint warfighting commanders through Army Force Generation [ARFORGEN].” GEN Martin E. Dempsey, TRADOC CG, discussed his thoughts on what the Army must do to ensure future success. He advised of the Army’s three imperatives:

- We must win this war.
- We must preserve the all-volunteer force—“The Army can do anything because of the quality of the young

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men and women we have in uniform, and that's because it's a volunteer Army, and that's what we have to work to preserve," he said.

- We must continue to develop our leaders—"This rises to the same level as the other two [imperatives] because we are not going to predict the future; we always get it somewhat wrong," said Dempsey. "Policy comes late, organizations are not perfect, but it works because of our leaders."

To accomplish these imperatives, Dempsey advised the Army must focus on maintaining balance in the force for the Nation. "If we're looking to provide a balanced force for the Nation, it really resides in the force mix that we choose in the available pool," he said. "We've got to have this versatility reflected through the balance in the force mix and the modular brigade structure."

Dempsey also stressed that the ARFORGEN model, the Army's effort to bring predictability back to the deployment cycle, must be successfully adapted. Currently, the average deployment to dwell time ratio is about 1 to 1.45. "That's not sustainable over time," Dempsey said. "One to 2 begins to become sustainable, and to get to 1 to 2 at 12-month deployments, we've got to get below 13 brigades deployed." The ultimate ratio is to have a ratio of 9 months deployed to 27 months dwell time—a goal crucial in maintaining the all-volunteer force.

Dempsey outlined training recommendations for the Future Force. "You've got to master your weapon system," he said. "You need to learn small unit tactics and how to respond to orders, because they're going to come at you

fast, and they're going to come at you furious." He also explained the importance of integrating combined arms and how to leverage joint fire. "You've got to stay immersed in that training to become masters of it," he said. "We're not asking you to remain apprentices of it." Training in the future needs to focus on the ability to replicate everything at home station that will be faced in the battlefield. "We've got to get back to being an Army where battalion and brigade commanders feel personally responsible and accountable for training their unit, and then go to the [Combat Training Centers] to validate [training], not to get it, and we can do that," Dempsey said.

Dempsey also discussed the importance of the force's personal courage as a foundation upon which to build a strong Future Force. "The willingness to go and go again because your country needs you, because you believe the mission, and because you believe in the team," Dempsey said. "That's what we know about the force."

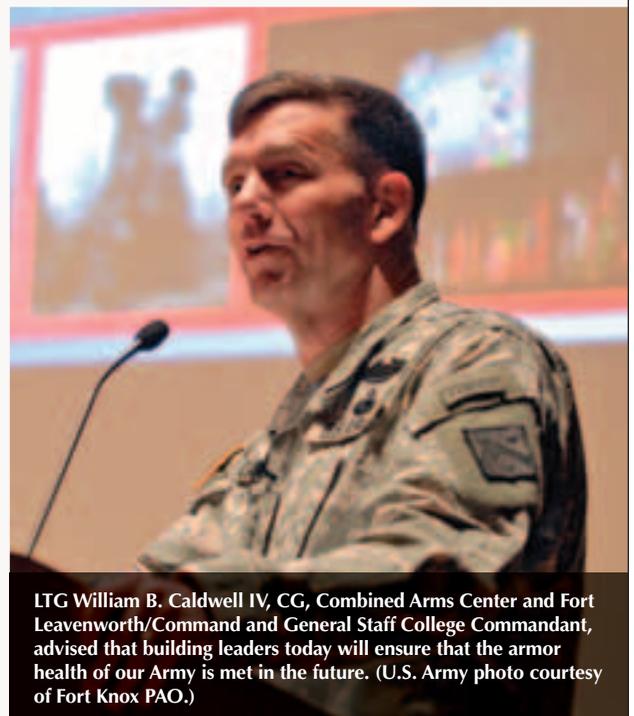
### Building Leaders to Continue the Armor Mission

The imperatives for success set forth by Army senior leaders are not possible without future leaders to carry out those missions. LTG William B. Caldwell IV, CG, Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, KS/Command and General Staff College Commandant, advised that building leaders today will ensure that

the armor health of our Army is met in the future. To ensure our force is competent for the future, he stressed that we have to foster leaders today.

Caldwell advised that the Army needs agile and adaptive leaders for success in meeting the challenges of full-spectrum operations. The 21st century war zone is characterized by extremist violence that strives to create instability. "The lines separating war and peace are becoming very blurred," said Caldwell. "Successfully operating in this ever-changing environment that we call the 21st century is critical to the development of our leaders. This environment will require us to literally leverage every element of our national power. It will teach us and require us to understand how to cooperate, collaborate, and coordinate amongst many different entities."

Caldwell explained that in the spectrum of conflict we face, our adversaries move between operational themes. "We have to develop our leaders so we are capable of meeting those challenges," said Caldwell. "What is important for leaders today is the ability to anticipate and to manage these transition areas." Leaders must enable offense, defense,



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Attendees at the Armor Warfighting Conference, Fort Knox, KY, listen to senior leaders explain how the Army can prepare for the success of the Future Force. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of Fort Knox PAO.)

and stability operations simultaneously. Our Soldiers must possess an array of skill sets, have the ability to rapidly adapt and adjust, and modify and assess what is required.

A comprehensive strategy, not sole force, will ensure the Army's mission success in current and future operations. To be able to devise and carry out this strategy, the Army must have critical and creative thinkers to deal with complexities and challenges. Part of that is living the Army values, as they are a significant part of leadership and help to ensure our Soldiers are prepared for every mission. "Everything we do is grounded in those seven Army values," said Caldwell.

Caldwell explained the methods he believes are necessary for developing Army leaders:

- Focus on agility and the ability to adapt.
- Remember the constants in leader development (moral and character development; mentoring; comprehensive fitness to include mental,

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- physical, and spiritual).
- Manage talent by providing high-performers with additional opportunities.
- Foster a joint, interagency, inter-governmental, and multinational mentality that includes culture, language, and information.
- Teach how to master transitions.
- Emphasize self-development.
- Stress the systemic processes (i.e., ARFORGEN).

Caldwell further addressed the Armor Conference attendees: "We need leaders who can forge a unity of effort ... to help change for a better future, a better tomorrow. Those leaders are here today. You are the leaders who will make a difference for our Army in the 21st century."

As the Army continues to engage in a period of conflict and transformation

unlike any other in history, it is essential that our forces receive unparalleled support and armor capabilities. As outlined by Army senior leaders at the Armor Warfighting Conference, that objective is achievable through adaptation, preparedness, and the development of future leaders.

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