

CONFERENCE CALL



Chief of Staff of the Army GEN George W. Casey Jr. tells the audience at the February AUSA Land Warfare Institute's Winter Symposium and Exposition that Soldiers deploying after Oct. 1 could expect to have 24 months' dwell time upon return. (U.S. Army photo by J.D. Leipold.)

Key Leaders Outline Priorities for Army in Transition

Margaret C. Roth

With encouraging signs of progress for the force and sobering signs of tighter budgets, top leaders in the Army, Army acquisition, and industry were cautiously optimistic about the years ahead, in remarks at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Institute of Land Warfare's Winter Symposium and Exposition from Feb. 23 to 25 in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The Army "is at a key transition point," said GEN George W. Casey Jr., Chief of Staff of the Army since April 2007. "We are coming out of a decade of war where we have fundamentally transformed the Army. And we are entering a period of continued war and, frankly, great uncertainty both at the strategic and the fiscal level."

Casey is retiring in April after nearly 41 years of service. GEN Martin E. Dempsey, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command since December 2008, is Casey's successor as Chief of Staff of the Army.

The Army is stronger for having been rebalanced over the past five to six years, Casey noted. It is "a well-equipped and combat-seasoned Total

Force," though still stretched by continued war. The question at this time of congressional debate over the Nation's priorities is, "how do we sustain that balance and continue to build a balanced Army in a period of constrained resources?"

Steps Toward Success

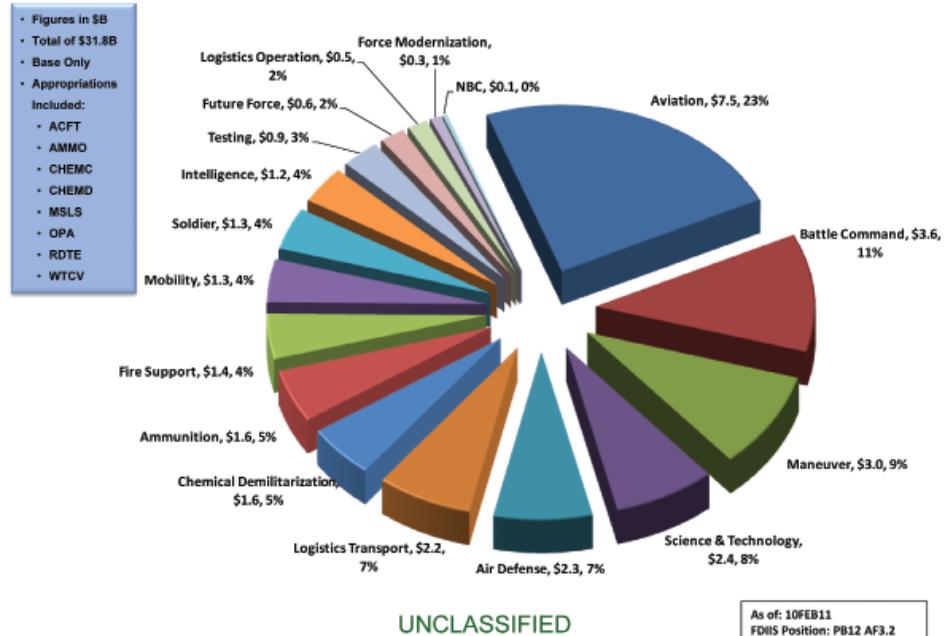
Casey cited a number of critical accomplishments that have enabled the Army both to sustain the all-volunteer force

and to restore strategic flexibility in the face of competing demands:

- Finishing the personnel growth that President George W. Bush directed and a temporary end strength increase of 22,000 Soldiers, which allowed the Army to field 120,000 Soldiers without having to use stop-loss.
- Increasing time at home station for Soldiers between deployments—Starting with deployments in FY12,

Soldiers can expect to have two years at home after a year deployed.

- Organizational change—“Between the modularization of the Army and the rebalancing of skills away from Cold War skills over the last seven years, we have fielded a fundamentally different Army ... much more suited to the challenges of the 21st century,” Casey said.
- The Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) concept—While it was impossible to adhere to while the Army was deploying 150,000 to 160,000 Soldiers one year out and one year back, as of FY12 the Army will be able to execute ARFORGEN at a sustainable pace and tempo.
- Strategic flexibility—As a result of all the other achievements, Soldiers are now able to train for conflicts other than Iraq and Afghanistan.



Challenges Ahead

The Army is poised to take on the current transition and sustain its new-found balance even without growth in its budget, Casey said. “We’re not in a bad place,” he said. However, he noted, “the war is not over.”

“We know the budget has to come down, we know we need to be more efficient in how we execute, but we have to be very, very careful that we don’t inadvertently hollow out the force as we’re trying to reduce the resources,” Casey said.

As Casey sees it, the challenges of the next decade, which he acknowledged may sometimes be conflicting priorities, include maintaining the combat edge of the current Army, reconstituting the force, and dealing with the impacts of a decade of war. “Think about it.

I want every soldier in the world to say, ‘Hell, no, I don’t want to fight the Americans. It’s a losing battle.’

We’ve lost over 4,000 Soldiers,” Casey said. “They’ve left over 20,000 family members. We’ve had over 25,000 Soldiers wounded, over 8,000 of them badly enough to require long-term care. We’ve had over 100,000 Soldiers since the beginning of the war diagnosed with traumatic brain injury; fortunately, over 90 percent of those are mild to moderate. We’ve had over 40,000 Soldiers since the beginning of the war diagnosed with post-traumatic stress. We’ve processed over 30,000 Soldiers through our Warrior Transition Units. We cannot take our eye off of the ball in terms of commitment to continue to support those who have been affected by this war.”

Fiscal Realities

The Army has found the efficiencies and reductions that Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates called for in

2010 without having to reduce force structure until 2015, Casey said. Gates set a goal of 2-3 percent net annual growth in warfighting capabilities without a commensurate budget increase.

Acquisition plays a major role in those efficiencies, Casey said. “We have to be hugely efficient to get the most value out of our acquisition dollars.” The recently completed Acquisition Study, for which an implementation plan is expected to be delivered late this summer, will help provide a road map for “how to make our requirements and processes more collaborative and more resource-informed ... how to better manage risk, and ... how to better grow our acquisition resources,” Casey said.

It is a paradox, Casey said, that while the Army’s acquisition core competencies suffered atrophy over the past 20 years, “we’ve got the best-equipped Army we’ve had in decades ... What we have to be careful of is that a series of incremental cuts doesn’t put us in the position, eight to 10 years from now, where we turn around and say, ‘What the heck happened?’”

Acquisition Priorities

Dempsey emphasized the importance of adaptability. “We will build the Army that will be employed in 2020, and here’s what’s even more interesting to me: We’re building it with full knowledge that this Army will not be what we need in 2030. And that’s why adaptation must be an institutional imperative,” he said.

“It means that we have to revise our concepts every two years. It means we should expect significant organizational redesign every five years. It means incremental modernization with five- to seven-year procurement objectives synchronized to ARFORGEN. It means revision of doctrine, training methodologies, and leader development strategies every one to two years.”

GEN Peter W. Chiarelli, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, noted that the ground combat vehicle, the first production model of which is expected to be delivered within seven years, embodies the Army’s desire for flexibility and versatility. It could benefit from lessons learned with the Army’s incremental modernization of the M1 Abrams tank, Chiarelli said. The present-day M1 is different than the original, because of improvements made with each incremental build, yet is “a platform that still shows great growth potential for the future.”

“If things go the way we hope they will go, [FY12] is not necessarily dire times,” said LTG Robert P. Lennox, the Army’s Deputy Chief of Staff (G-8). Lennox said the Army’s funding request to Congress places a high priority on initiatives that enhance Soldiers’ survivability, lethality, and situational awareness, and lighten their loads (See chart on Page 49). These FY12 investments include:

- \$1.37 billion to improve M4 Carbines
- \$1.2 billion to procure unmanned aircraft systems at the division, brigade, and battalion levels

- \$3.9 billion to develop a single, coherent network for Soldiers, platforms, and command posts
- \$884 million for Technology Development of the ground combat vehicle, with up to three contractor teams performing design and integration activities

Small-Unit Focus

“The small unit, the squad and platoon, has become the decisive element in our formation,” Chiarelli said. “The Army’s success in the future requires us to empower the small unit leader.”

Dr. Malcolm Ross O’Neill, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASAALT), also used the M1 as an example of strength, as he spoke of the need to make the dismounted Soldier a decisive weapon. Citing the M1’s overwhelming lethality, he said, “That’s what we call a decisive advantage: The enemy’s not going to fight you. They give up. I think the M1 tank has that kind of reputation worldwide, and I think the ground combat vehicle that we’re going to be fielding in seven years ... will have that kind of decisive advantage.”

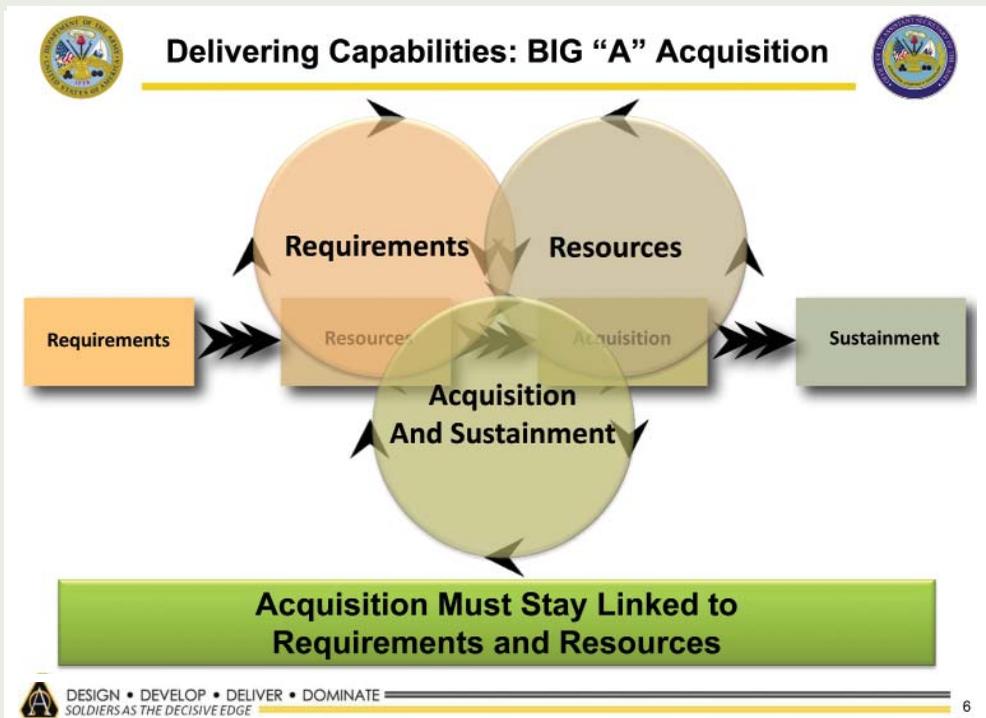
Dismounted Soldiers should have the same advantage, he said. “I want every soldier in the world to say, ‘Hell, no, I don’t want to fight the Americans. It’s a losing battle.’ The Soldier’s going to be my most important customer, whether he’s dismounted or mounted.”

A Healthier Workforce

LTG William N. Phillips, Principal Military Deputy to the ASAALT and Director of Acquisition Career Management, emphasized the importance of collaboration throughout the design, development, delivery, and sustainment of systems.

“Requirements, resources, acquisition, and sustainment are inherently linked,” Phillips remarked. “They cannot be sequential. We have to be teamed together as we work through this.” With operational demands outpacing traditional business processes, he said, “We have got to reduce the bureaucracy that relates to Big-A acquisition” to prevail against an adaptive, responsive, and evolving enemy.

With regard to the professionals executing these acquisitions, Phillips



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Joe Coltman
Vice President, Protection Systems



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 - System integration
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Take-Away: Industry is willing to invest where there is a defined objective

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reiterated that “we have got to rebuild and rebalance the workforce.”

“Nowhere is that greater than in the contracting workforce,” he said. “We have a lot of work left to do. ... We’re probably about halfway there.” Overall, “We’re much better than we were three or four years ago.”

O’Neill noted that “We don’t have the ability to compete [with the private sector] on a salary basis,” but that DOD “is a great place to get the grounding.” In government, he said, you can “turn the iceberg.”

Involving Industry

Asked how industry could contribute to giving Soldiers the decisive edge, O’Neill replied: “Think more about the Soldier.” He noted the huge investments industry made in America’s nuclear deterrence. “What we need is to have conventional deterrence. We should get some real big players, revenue-wise, into the area of the Soldier.”

Representatives from industry agreed with the need for greater investment in capabilities for the dismounted Soldier, but cited obstacles to innovation in the current acquisition processes.

“We’ve got to be significantly better in size [of Soldier equipment]. We’ve got to be significantly better in power. We’ve got to be significantly better in weight. We’ve got to be significantly cheaper,” said Robert P. Birmingham, Senior Vice President, Army Programs for L-3 Sensors and Simulation Group.

However, industry is reluctant to risk investing in new capabilities with no guarantee that the investment will lead to a Program of Record.

“There’s no incentive for us to provide any technological change beyond what was called for in the solicitation,” said Joseph W. Coltman, Vice President, Protection Systems at BAE Systems, a supplier of body armor, combat helmets, and other Soldier gear to the Army. For example,

Coltman said, there is no Program of Record for Soldier protective equipment.

Coltman showed the audience a hypothetical case study of internally funded research and development: the Ultra-Lightweight Warrior. One obstacle, he noted, is that no current product description fits this equipment, which would make it difficult to develop through existing acquisition programs. Furthermore, the project spans multiple Project Management Offices, raising questions about who would be responsible for developing, testing, and procuring.

Soldier protective equipment “has become a commodity market, and a commodity market supports at best incremental improvement. We need a vision of where that needs to go,” Coltman said.

“What we have to do is ... get things developed today and out in the field tomorrow,” O’Neill said. “I want to do this on time and within budget. Everything has to be affordable. ... The Army budget is not going to grow.”

Casey’s remarks are online at <http://www.army.mill-speeches/2011/02/28/52575-feb-25-2011---remarks-at-the-ausa-winter-symposium/>; Dempsey’s remarks are at <http://www.army.mill-news/2011/02/25/52438-managing-transitions-profession-highlighted-in-csa-select-speech/>. Presentation slides are available at <http://crprogroupp.com/eventnotebook/>.

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