



# Army Transportation School Works On Cross-Training Active, Reserve Soldiers

*By T. Anthony Bell*

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**F**ORT LEE, Va. — The U.S. Army Transportation School is continuing to implement elements of the One Army School System, launching recent efforts to cross-train active duty and reserve component instructors.

OASS, originated in 2007, was developed to create an efficient system of schools — active duty and reserve component — that could train any Soldier anywhere relative to the needs of the Army.

Residually, it is a readiness tool that will ensure Soldiers from all components of the Army are trained to the same standards.

Sgt. Maj. Otis C. Pate, the Transportation School sergeant major, said OASS shows promise in helping the Army maintain the level of readiness gained from years of working with the reserve components on the battlefields of Southwest Asia.

“I think OASS is a great opportunity to improve upon what we’ve built in the last 12 years as a result of war,” said the 29-year Soldier who has served with various reserve component units and Soldiers in Southwest Asia. “The reserve components have made great strides in improving their readiness while the active Army has gotten

better at integrating their capabilities into the operational arena.”

The school’s current OASS initiatives will better support resource allocation while maintaining Soldier readiness. For example, prior to OASS, Reserve component instructors in the transportation MOSs were limited to teaching MOS-transfer students, or those Soldiers who were reclassifying from other specialties.

Active duty instructors primarily teach advanced individual training students. The new initiative aims to ensure both are qualified to perform duties of the other.

“The end goal of this process is to ensure that every Soldier who comes to the U.S. Army Transportation School to gain the MOS of 88N or to re-class to the MOS of 88N will receive the same instruction and course material,” said Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Loy, the senior active duty instructor.

Currently, the 88N course — transportation management coordinator — is the only transportation MOS taught at Fort Lee (the school has satellite locations at Fort Eustis and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.). A class that began in June was the first time an active duty instructor taught blocks of instruction to MOS-T students. Loy

said there is not much difference in teaching the Reserve versus the active duty course — only that the students are more seasoned.

“It was like (teaching) the other courses,” he said, “but with an MOS-T course, you have individuals who have possibly been deployed already, so they are able to relate to some of your combat/real-world experience.”

Because MOS-T training takes place only once per month, it may take up to a year to train all nine active duty instructors, Loy said.

On the Reserve side, two instructors have undergone training that qualifies them to instruct initial entry students. Staff Sgt. Paul Prevot, a Houston Reservist assigned to Fort Lee’s 94th Division (Force Sustainment) and on active status, said he noted the new warriors’ enthusiasm and relished the opportunity to work with the active duty instructors.

“The IET students have a great outlook,” he said, “and working with the active duty instructors is cool because everybody brings different experiences to the table. When you put that all together, it worked really well.”

Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Smith, the U.S. Army Reserves’ senior 88N instructor, said the near-term objective is to cross-train 40-50 Reserve instructors per year. The long-term mark is to train every instructor.

“The goal is be 100-percent interchangeable,” he said.

When certain OASS milestones are reached, ideally, any Soldier will be afforded the opportunity to receive standardized training at various locations around the country. Pate said this will be especially important for those who are required to attend the noncommissioned advanced and senior leader courses. As it stands currently, most of the Soldiers required to attend leadership courses must travel to Fort Lee to receive the training. That’s a costly endeavor, Pate said.

“Why can’t we benefit the Army by having the same training on the West Coast, Middle America as well as the East Coast?” he said. “That would make the training regional. That’s one of our hopes for OASS — having an ALC, 88-series at several locations other than Fort Lee, Fort Leonard Wood or Fort Eustis.

“That way, someone in Washington (state) would only have to travel to California or Nevada to attend school



Reservist Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Smith talks to Reserve military occupational specialty – transfer students about securing vehicles for air travel in July at the Mockup Training Site. Smith is one of several Reserve instructors slated for training that will certify them to instruct advanced individual training students. (Photos by T. Anthony Bell, Fort Lee Traveller)

versus flying all the way to Virginia.”

That will be a critical factor for the Transportation Corps, one of the smallest in the Army, and especially considering the impending troop and resource reductions. Pate said OASS can serve as a guard against the cutbacks.

“The last time the Army went through a drawdown, there were a lot of gaps,” he said. “With these backfills (from the Reserve components), it’s going to help us maintain readiness. It’s one team, one fight.”

How will the OASS initiative play out over the long term? Pate said he knows it will have a significant impact on the Transportation Corps but said it could have the same effect Army-wide.

“Within the next five years,” he said, “I would like to see it fully implemented across the board. Have it to where there is truly one standard. I would like to see the day when an active duty Soldier can go to a Reserve training course and there is truly no difference in training — one team; the day when a Soldier — AIT, NCO or officer — from Fort Lewis, Wash., can train on the West Coast, and the quality of training received is no different than the training he or she would receive anywhere else.”

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