

NCOs Discuss Army Warfighting Challenges at Professional Development Session

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Professional Development

With an eye on 2017 and beyond, Command Sgt. Maj. Matthew D. McCoy, U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, wrapped up 2016 by hosting a professional development presentation for the Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, or C4ISR, community.

Open to military and civilian members of the DOD workforce, the professional development session titled, “The Future of Combat; the Army Operating Concept and the Army War Fighting Challenges,” was held at the Mallette Training Facility and addressed a myriad of issues significant to the Army’s number one priority: readiness.

“While this session is designed to be CECOM specific, we wanted to open it up to the greater APG and C4ISR community,” McCoy said. “The purpose of this session was to inform our own workforce on the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command’s process of developing future Army capabilities. What this is not, is a discussion about the acquisition process and reform. It is not a deep discussion about multi-domain battle, and it’s not a discussion about the transition. It’s an introductory opening to the Army Operating Concept, the Army Warfighting challenges and the future design of combat.”

Those challenges, from Southwest Asia to Europe, make clear the need for a strong and effective force that is capable of employing the complete range of potential operations. Toward that end, Army officials say TRADOC Pam 525-31-1, “U.S. Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World,” is a key document in the Army concept framework, and outlines how the Army will employ forces and capabilities in complex environments against increasingly capable opponents. The Army operating concept also describes the Army’s contribution to globally integrated operations, and speaks to the need for Army forces to provide foundational capabilities for the joint force and to project power across land and from land into the air, maritime, space and cyberspace domains.

Joining in the discussion via video teleconference, keynote speaker Army Capabilities Integration Center Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen J. Travers, thanked the CECOM command sergeant major for organizing the session, and went on to provide a brief overview of the TRADOC mission.

“TRADOC is a design-build form. and we’re the design portion of that. Travers said. “It starts with a concept. Every single Army command has

TRADOC is a design team, and we're the design person on staff, rather than a concept. Every single Army command has its purpose, and we interact as TRADOC's future force, but we're also an extension of the Army's staff. TRADOC is a team of professionals from all different walks of life, all different backgrounds, to help design our future force."

Also chiming in on the exchange, Soldiers from across C4ISR, Integrated Logistics Support Center, and the Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, generated conversations that touched on such topics as gaps between new equipment and training, achieving physical and mental capabilities over adversaries, one-Army integration (multi-component fight), collaboration between centers of excellence; future force development, what winning really means, and the ability to define the winning conditions more clearly.

That future force, as Army leaders continue to point out, will have to confront a number of new strategic realities. Laying the groundwork for further discussion, McCoy said, "The Army operating concept has changed in how it defines our future challenges. What it says is that the future is unknown and even more so, it is unknowable. The Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Mark A. Milley, has made it clear that the number one priority of the total Army is readiness, and there are no other number ones. That readiness is individual. It's collective. It's at the unit level that feeds our nation's strategic readiness. Readiness is all linked to our daily operations and that helps us prepare for the future of combat in our complex world."

The professional development session drawing to an end, McCoy said, "As we leave here today, let's keep in mind these things: the Army is fundamentally designed for a specific purpose — to deter aggression and to fight and win when called upon. Our Army warfighting challenges are operational-needs based. They are concepts that have to be addressed to win. If they were all easy, they wouldn't be challenges. Readiness is our number one priority. That's how we accomplish the mission that our nation has given us ... and that mission is to win. We have to win in a complex world."