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Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George discusses the service's transformation efforts Wednesday during a Coffee Series event hosted by the AUSA. (AUSA PHOTO)

Innovation drives Army transformation

Bottom-up innovation continues to drive the Army's transformation as the service seeks to move "at the speed of change," Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George said.

"Our soldiers are very innovative. They are very welcoming of this change. They can move at this kind of speed," George said Wednesday during a Coffee Series event hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army. "I'm a believer in bottom-up innovation. ... Our challenge is the processes back here to support all of that."

A big driver of this innovation is the Army's transformation in contact initiative, which puts new and emerging technology into soldiers' hands for testing and experimentation.

The initiative, which has featured three infantry brigade combat teams,

will expand this year to include two divisions—the 25th Infantry Division and the 101st Airborne Division—as well as armored and Stryker brigade combat teams and formations in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, George said.

Feedback from transformation in contact units and other lessons learned will be used to inform a force design update scheduled to begin this spring, George said. The Army also is working with industry and other partners about innovating counter-unmanned aviation systems, he said. "That's one area where we think we have to move much, much faster," George said.

Another area the Army is focused on is changing how it buys things, George said. "We need to buy capabilities," he said, especially in areas

where commercial technology is outpacing military technology.

The Army is working closely with lawmakers on Capitol Hill. "I think there's appetite for change," George said. "I think we're going to get better value for our money. ... It's what's best for our formation, and it's where we need to go."

Along those lines, the Army will have to make "tough choices" when it comes to the budget. "Nothing is off the table, we're looking at everything," he said.

As the Army moves out, it wants to transform "with speed, but we don't want to be frantic," George said. "We're going to have to be leaner in our formations, more mobile," he said. "We're going to be ruthless in how we get to that point and get there as fast as possible."

NEW FROM AUSA!

2024 PROFILE OF THE U.S. ARMY



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AUSA workshop aims to sharpen professional writing

Efforts to revitalize professional writing across the force are a “very important part of the fiber of our Army profession,” the commanding general of Army Training and Doctrine Command said.

“Professional writing may not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of military readiness, but it’s a cornerstone,” Gen. Gary Brito said Tuesday during a writing workshop hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army.

Clear, concise and precise communications allow leaders to convey their intent, facilitate learning, synchronize operations and contribute to innovation and overall readiness, Brito said.

It could be something as simple as after-action reviews, briefings or emails, he said. “Writing is much more than words on a page,” Brito said. “The way you communicate precisely can impact lives, shape missions and help define our profession.”

Ambiguity in communications can lead to confusion, misinterpretation and, sometimes, mission failure, he said, as he challenged the audience to be clear, use plain language and avoid jargon and acronyms.

Brito’s remarks and AUSA’s “Writing Workshop: Powerful Prose,” a



Retired Lt. Gen. Jim Dubik, an AUSA senior fellow and namesake of a new writing fellowship program from Army University Press, emphasizes the importance of contributing to the profession of arms during a writing workshop hosted by AUSA. (AUSA PHOTO)

new event hosted by the association, follow a renewed emphasis on professional writing by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George.

George initiated the Harding Project, which aims to revitalize scholarship and writing across the force. In response, AUSA launched the Harding Papers, which exclusively highlights the work and scholarship of LTG (Ret.) James M. Dubik Writing Fellows.

Hosted by Army University Press, the Dubik program is a voluntary, non-resident writing fellowship to encourage discourse that contributes

to a community of military and national security professionals.

Speaking during AUSA’s writing workshop, retired Lt. Gen. Jim Dubik encouraged soldiers to write. “Our profession is a multigenerational profession, and those generations need to talk to each other,” he said.

Writing for professional journals and publications is “one way that each generation can contribute to the richness of our profession and contribute to your ideas,” he said.

Dubik also emphasized that everyone could contribute. “None of us are writers. We’re Army people,” he said. “You are a caring professional. You care about this profession. You care about the people in this profession. You care about what’s going on in this profession. You talk to your peers and supervisors about this. This is a way you contribute to your profession.”

Each generation of soldiers has a different perspective, Dubik said, as he encouraged soldiers of all ranks to write. “You have to contribute your observations, your innovativeness and creativity, your critical observations of the profession,” he said. “You have to do this, otherwise, the profession as a multigenerational chain starts to break because the generations don’t talk to each other.”



Soldiers discuss effective communications strategies in a small group breakout session during a writing workshop hosted by AUSA on Tuesday. (AUSA PHOTO)

Annual survey shows that Americans' military support is increasing



Soldiers from the 7th Infantry Division react to a wired obstacle while conducting a battle drill Jan. 23 at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. MICHAEL MAJORS)

Confidence in the military is increasing, and Americans support increased defense spending, according to a survey from the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute.

"The American people ... want a U.S. military capable of deterring autocratic powers like China and Russia and believe U.S. forces should maintain a global presence across multiple theaters to address the diverse array of threats we face," the survey found.

The 2024 survey, the seventh annual Reagan National Defense Survey, was conducted Nov. 8–14 by a bipartisan survey team and included interviews of 2,510 American respondents. Its findings were released Dec. 5.

Compared to last year, Americans' confidence in the military is rebounding. This year, 51% of Americans reported "a great deal of confidence in the U.S. military," which is up 6 percentage points from the previous survey.

The military is still the most trusted public institution in the U.S., ahead of the police and law enforcement, the president, the Supreme Court, news organizations and Congress, the report found.

Just under eight-tenths of respondents indicated they "want the government to spend more on the military, and a bipartisan supermajority of respondents are "concerned that the cost of the national debt will force cuts to defense spending," the report found.

The majority of Americans view maintaining military bases around the world "as a critical component of deterrence and rapid response," and over four-tenths of respondents indicated the military "should be large enough to win simultaneous wars against both China and Russia," according to the report.

Americans support a strong, global U.S. military presence. "Year after year, this survey shows continued, unwavering support for peace through strength," Roger Zakheim, Washington director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute, said in a news release. "Trust and confidence in the military is rebounding after hitting a low in recent years, and Americans support increased defense spending to build a military able to deter and defeat adversaries in multiple theaters."

The complete survey is available here.

AUSAExtra

*Voice for the Army –
Support For the Soldier*

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PERK OF THE WEEK

Valentine's Day is approaching, and AUSA members receive 25% off a curated collection of gifts or 20% off sitewide with code FORAUSA at popular brands including 1-800 Flowers, Cheryll's Cookies, Fruit Bouquets, Shari's Berries, Things Remembered and many more. Visit www.ausa.org/gifts for more.



Panel: Advanced manufacturing enables Army readiness

Advanced manufacturing fills supply chain gaps and enables Army readiness, the commanding general of Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command said.

“When we attack the advanced manufacturing mission, it’s about making sure that we can get effects to units in the field,” Maj. Gen. Michael Lalor said during a panel on advanced manufacturing initiatives at a recent Association of the U.S. Army Hot Topic on the industrial base. “Primarily, it’s about filling gaps in that supply chain ... and then it’s also about serving as a catalyst for Army capability at echelon.”

Advanced manufacturing capabilities include 3D printing and utilizing artificial intelligence, robotics and machine learning, among others, according to an Army news release from December.

As part of its embrace of advanced manufacturing capabilities, Tank-automotive and Armaments Command launched the Battle Damage Repair and Fabrication effort.

Under the program, the Rock Island Arsenal-Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center in Illinois uses agreement status reports “worldwide by fleet” to identify “candidates for advanced manufacturing” and prints temporary replacement parts that units need, Lalor said. “We have to be able to produce at scale and on time,” he said.

Ultimately, the Department of Defense is working to create a global network of advanced manufacturing capabilities that can be accessed by any of the services, said Christopher Lowman, former assistant secretary of defense for sustainment. “The department has to ... proliferate the understanding of the capabilities of advanced manufacturing throughout the services at echelon,” Lowman said.

As the Army deepens its advanced manufacturing capabilities, it is ea-



Christopher Lowman, left, former assistant secretary of defense for sustainment, and Maj. Gen. Michael Lalor, commanding general of Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, speak at an AUSA Hot Topic focused on the industrial base. (AUSA PHOTO)

ger to partner with industry, Lalor said. “As far as us at a more strategic, operational, tactical level, ... what we need is a partner,” he said. “I need a partner, not a transactional relation-

ship. I need someone who’s willing to assume some risk, some cost sharing and partnership and help me develop the capabilities and fill in the gaps where we have them as a team.”

AUSA hosts War College roundtable



National security professionals with the Army War College Advanced Strategic Art Program hear from a panel of strategy experts during a roundtable event hosted at AUSA headquarters on Monday. (AUSA PHOTO)

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AUSA titles showcase multiple aspects of Vietnam War

Launched in the early hours of Jan. 30, 1968, the Tet Offensive was a series of surprise attacks by the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army against the South Vietnamese Army, the U.S. and their allies.

It was intended to trigger a popular uprising throughout South Vietnam, but it failed to do so, and the communist forces faced serious tactical defeats throughout the following weeks. However, the ferocity of the campaign changed the political calculus for U.S. leaders.

The anniversary of these mixed results represents a good opportunity to review some of the Vietnam War titles published in the Association of the U.S. Army's Book Program.

Tet was not the first time the Viet Cong tried to deliver a knockout blow. *Grab Their Belts to Fight Them: The Viet Cong's Big-Unit War Against the U.S., 1965-1966*, by Warren Wilkins, chronicles their attempts to fight as traditional troops rather than guerrilla forces. Kenneth White details an operation that coincided with an earlier Tet holiday in *The Battle of Bong Son: Operation Masher/White Wing, 1966*, when the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) fought the North Vietnamese Army Sao Vang Division.

Operation Masher, like the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley two months earlier, was successful proof of the airmobile concept of using helicopters to transport troops to the battlefield. In *To the Limit: An Air Cav Huey Pilot in Vietnam*, Tom Johnson recounts his time flying for the 1st Cavalry Division from June 1967 through June 1968. Retired Maj. John Falcon similarly collects tales of attacking enemy positions and medically evacuating the wounded in *The Freedom Shield: The 191st Assault Helicopter Company in Vietnam*.

Moving from airmobile to armored cavalry, Donald Snedeker provides two Vietnam War books for the AUSA



Soldiers assigned to the 25th Infantry Division search a cemetery in Saigon for Viet Cong snipers on Feb. 1, 1968, one day after the Tet Offensive began. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Book Program: An overarching history called *The Blackhorse in Vietnam: The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam and Cambodia, 1966-1972*, and a collection of war stories, *Blackhorse Tales: Stories of 11th Armored Cavalry Troopers at War*.

Other branches get their due in *The 9th Infantry Division: Unparalleled and Unequaled* by retired Maj. Gen. Ira Hunt, detailing the unit's fight against the Viet Cong in the Mekong River delta. And Robert Gillespie turns to the secret joint-service aspects of the war with *Black Ops Vietnam: The Operational History of MACVSOG*.

AUSA's Book Program also features titles on later battles. A few months after the Tet Offensive, two NVA regiments attacked an isolated Special Forces camp near the demilitarized zone; James McLeroy and Gregory Sanders tell the story in *Bait: The Battle of Kham Duc*.

Several years later, the North Vietnamese launched the Easter Offensive of 1972, after most U.S. troops had been withdrawn. In *Kontum: The*

Battle to Save South Vietnam, Thomas McKenna offers the only in-depth account of this engagement.

Please visit www.ausa.org/books to order these and other titles in the AUSA Book Program. Use the promo code W25AUSA for select member discounts when purchasing directly through the publisher links.

Finally, AUSA's coverage of the Vietnam War extends to graphic novels.

Three titles in the Medal of Honor series focus on American heroes recognized for their actions in that conflict. *Medal of Honor: Roger Donlon* tells the story of the first recipient from the Vietnam War, as well as the first Special Forces recipient. *Medal of Honor: Roy Benavidez* recounts the remarkable story of another Green Beret legend, and *Medal of Honor: Bruce Crandall* highlights the helicopter pilot who flew again and again into enemy fire during the Battle of Ia Drang.

Joseph Craig is AUSA's Book Program director.

Eagle Chapters

The following chapters attained Eagle status for December by showing positive membership growth. The number of consecutive months of growth since July 1 is shown in parentheses.

Arkansas (6)	Central Ohio (5)	Suncoast (5)
Captain Meriwether Lewis (6)	Coastal South Carolina (5)	Sunshine (5)
Central Texas (6)	Columbia River (5)	Texas Capital Area (5)
Central Virginia (6)	Connecticut (5)	Tri-State (5)
Chattahoochee Valley-Fort Moore (6)	Des Moines Freedom (5)	Virginia Colonial (5)
Denver Centennial (6)	First Militia (5)	Minutemen (4)
Fires (6)	Fort Jackson-Palmetto State (5)	Northern New York-Fort Drum (4)
First In Battle (6)	Fort Leonard Wood-Mid Missouri (5)	Southern Virginia (4)
Fort Campbell (6)	Fort Pitt (5)	Space Coast (4)
Fort Riley-Central Kansas (6)	Fort Sheridan-Chicago (5)	Utah (4)
Greater Atlanta (6)	GEN Creighton W. Abrams (5)	GA Omar N. Bradley (3)
Houston Metroplex (6)	GEN John W. Vessey, Jr. (5)	GEN William C. Westmoreland (3)
Joshua Chamberlain (6)	Greater New York-Statue of Liberty (5)	Last Frontier (3)
Magnolia (6)	(5)	Polar Bear (3)
Marne (6)	Hawaii (5)	Isthmian (2)
Massachusetts Bay (6)	Japan (5)	
National Training Center-High Desert (6)	Las Vegas-John C. Fremont (5)	
Northern New Jersey (6)	Major Samuel Woodfill (5)	
Pikes Peak (6)	Monmouth (5)	
Puerto Rico (6)	New Orleans (5)	
San Diego (6)	Newton D. Baker (5)	
Thunderbird (6)	PFC William Kenzo Nakamura (5)	
Alamo (5)	Picatinny Arsenal-Middle Forge (5)	
Benelux (5)	Redstone Huntsville (5)	
Capital District of New York (5)	Rock Island Arsenal (5)	
	San Francisco (5)	

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