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Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Weimer, right, speaks with retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey, AUSA's vice president for NCO and Soldier Programs, during a Coffee Series event on Thursday at the association's headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)

Weimer: Bold goals drive transformation

Faced with potential resourcing gaps in the race to include more units in its transformation efforts, the Army will need “bold and lofty goals” to maintain a sense of urgency, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Weimer said.

As the Army expands its transformation in contact initiative, “we’re going to make bold and lofty goals, ... and then we’re going to force the system to figure out how much we can actually do,” Weimer said Thursday during a Coffee Series event hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army.

Transformation in contact is an Army initiative driven by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George that puts new technology and equipment in the hands of soldiers for test-

ing under combat conditions, then obtaining their feedback about what worked, what didn’t and what might be better.

Three infantry brigade combat teams, one each from the 101st Airborne Division, 25th Infantry Division and 10th Mountain Division, were the first to test the concept, and the Army now is gearing up to move to transformation in contact 2.0, which will expand the effort to two divisions, armored and Stryker brigade combat teams and formations in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

Weimer noted that the Army is working at the highest levels and with industry to resource the effort, explaining that “it’s not inexpensive.”

“Now that we’ve expanded it to multiple divisions and multiple type formations, there’s just unbelievable opportunities to increase the experimentation we’re doing,” Weimer said, adding that “I think that’s one of the reasons why it’s becoming a little more popular for some of our industry partners who have some pretty capable off-the-shelf technology that we’re experimenting with.”

The transformation in contact initiative also is having an unintended effect on retention, according to Weimer, who said retention levels have been higher in the brigades tapped for the initiative.

“To me, that’s a data point that I can truly sink my teeth into and

See **Weimer**, Page 7



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Army invests in H2F program to boost soldier lethality

The Army's program to enhance troops' readiness and lethality through holistic fitness is "the largest investment in soldier readiness" the service has ever undertaken, a senior officer said.

In remarks on Wednesday at a Hot Topic hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army, Lt. Gen. David Francis, commanding general of the Center for Initial Military Training and deputy commanding general of Army Training and Doctrine Command, said the Holistic Health and Fitness program is the Army's "primary investment in soldier readiness and lethality."

In fact, he said, "Holistic Health and Fitness is the largest human optimization performance program ever fielded at scale."

Known as H2F, the program is designed to encourage soldiers to maintain their health, fitness and well-being for peak performance by optimizing physical and non-physical domains while minimizing injury. The system promotes readiness with five pillars that include mental,



Lt. Gen. David Francis, commanding general of the Center for Initial Military Training, addresses an AUSA Hot Topic focused on holistic health and fitness. (AUSA PHOTO)

sleep, nutritional, physical and spiritual wellness and is supported at the brigade level with technical specialists and equipment.

While the Army is working to expand the program to dispersed units such as recruiting brigades, multi-domain task forces and units in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, the effort to field the program to 111 active-duty brigades by fiscal 2027 is well underway, Francis said.

Pilot programs slated for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 will explore the best way to deliver the H2F program to Guard and Reserve units, he said.

To field the program more quickly to units that haven't yet received the technical specialists and advisers, the Army has created doctrine and a program of instruction for the H2F Integrator Course, which gives "young NCOs or officers the education on all of the domains and what resources are available on their installations to begin these programs," Francis said.

Francis outlined several other initiatives that will expand resources such as training H2F advisers through a course that is now in development, modernizing the program's data management system, in part, by

providing wearables that can track soldier activity in multiple domains and offering pregnancy and post-partum performance training.

"The key to success, especially with our dispersed units, is going to be the ability for us to collect data so that they can have a meaningful discussion with an H2F team, and if they're not colocated with an H2F team, this will make that much better," he said, explaining that at first it will be "independent of wearables, but the requirement will enable us to plug in wearables if the Army decides to go that way."

A wearables study taking place with basic trainees at Fort Benning, Georgia, aims to help the Army decide whether the devices will improve performance data among the youngest soldiers and give commanders the data they need to optimize readiness.

"Our senior leaders put their money where their mouth is, and they are delivering this capability to our Army," Francis said. "It's going to make us more fit, it's going to make us more ready and it's going to help the whole person ... a byproduct of that is increasing performance lethality and what we expect our soldiers to do."

ARMY magazine March issue



AUSA Basic Members can now view a selection of articles from the March issue of *ARMY* magazine. To read the articles, [click here](#).

In honor of WWI hero, Fort Moore in Georgia is renamed Fort Benning

Fort Moore, Georgia, has been renamed Fort Benning in honor of Cpl. Fred Benning, who received the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroic actions during World War I.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth directed the immediate change in a memo on Monday to honor Benning and “in recognition of the installation’s storied history of service to the United States of America.”

In addition to returning the name Fort Benning to the Georgia post, Hegseth directed the secretary of the Army to “honor the legacy of Lieutenant General Harold (Hal) Moore’s storied military service and Ms. Julia (Julie) Moore’s family and casualty notification advocacy in a manner that celebrates their significant contributions to the local community and the Army.”

Fort Benning was renamed Fort Moore in 2023 following the recommendations of an eight-member commission that was tasked by Congress to remove Confederate names, symbols, displays and monuments from DoD properties.

When Fort Benning was established in 1918, it was named for Gen. Henry Benning, a Confederate officer from Georgia. Hegseth’s directive follows the Feb. 10 renaming of Fort Liberty, North Carolina, to Fort Bragg in honor of Pfc. Roland Bragg, a Silver Star recipient who served during World War II.

Cpl. Benning, a native of Norfolk, Nebraska, was born in 1900 and, after enlisting in April 1917, was assigned to Machine-Gun Company, 16th Infantry Regiment in the American Expeditionary Forces’ 1st Division during World War I, according to an Army news release.

On Oct. 9, 1918, the enemy killed Benning’s platoon commander and disabled two senior NCOs in action south of Exermont, France, according



The redesignation of Fort Moore, Georgia, to Fort Benning honors Cpl. Fred Benning, who received the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroic actions during World War I. (U.S. ARMY/JOHN HELMS)

to the Army. The Army awarded him the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation’s second-highest valor award, for taking command of the remaining 20 men and leading them through heavy fire to their assigned objective in support of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, according to the Army.

After his Army service, Benning returned home and became mayor of Neligh, Nebraska. He died on May 17, 1974, according to the memo.

Benning “never failed his country’s trust and fought to the objective to triumph for his unit and his country,” Hegseth said in his memo.

Fort Benning is home to the Army’s Maneuver Center of Excellence, where thousands of soldiers are trained in infantry and armor. The installation also is home to the 75th Ranger Regiment.

The memo directs the secretary of the Army to “take all necessary and appropriate actions to implement this decision in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.” The Army shall inform the undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment of its plans, including timelines and resource requirements, for implementation of this decision.

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Driscoll: Soldiers ‘will always be my mission’ as secretary

In his first message to the force, Army Secretary Dan Driscoll promised to renew public trust in the Army, pump up the industrial base and eliminate “distractions” in favor of training hard for combat.

Driscoll, who was confirmed by the Senate on Feb. 25 and sworn in that afternoon as the 26th secretary of the Army, wrote in his Feb. 27 letter that, “The American Soldier will always be my mission, and I will be the Soldier’s Secretary of the Army,” reiterating a statement he made during his confirmation hearing.

His first order of business, he wrote, will be to raise the Army’s national profile and renew its bond with the public. “First, we must revitalize the nation’s pride in her Army,” Driscoll wrote, pointing to the Army’s 250th birthday celebration in June. “This year we will renew the connection

between the Army and the people we serve.”

Driscoll pledged to tackle the industrial base and to “revolutionize” procurement processes, writing that the Army is “not ready for large-scale conflict with a peer adversary.” To make the Army more ready, he wrote, stronger partnerships with the defense industry will ensure soldiers have the firepower they need to “dominate our enemies.”

“When our nation calls, we will not send you into a fair fight—we will ensure you have overwhelming superiority,” Driscoll wrote.



Army Secretary Dan Driscoll. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

The new secretary also pledged to “refocus” soldiers’ quality of training. “We will train as we fight,” Driscoll wrote. “We will refocus, eliminating distractions and training you to fight and win in the most contested environments. Your country demands no less.”

Global threats, he wrote, demand that the Army take a “more aggressive footing and re-establish deterrence” and “move further, faster and fight harder” than any of its adversaries.

“As your Secretary, I will honor the Army’s 250-year legacy of service and strength while preparing us for the future. I will stay focused on my mission and shoulder my share of the task, and I know that you will do the same,” Driscoll wrote. “It is good to be back home.”

Read the full letter here.

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Graham: Corps of Engineers delivers quality to the Army

The Army Corps of Engineers remains dedicated to the needs of the Army and delivering quality projects to the force, said Lt. Gen. William Graham Jr., the corps' commanding general and the Army's 56th chief of engineers.

Priorities for the Corps of Engineers are "as simple as safely delivering quality projects on schedule within budget," Graham said Tuesday during a Noon Report webinar hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army.

With about 37,000 uniformed and civilian employees, the Army Corps of Engineers reinforces national security by building and maintaining infrastructure and military facilities, according to the corps' website.

The corps also responds to emergencies, including the recent Maui and Los Angeles wildfires and Hurricanes Milton and Helene.



Retired Gen. Bob Brown, left, AUSA president and CEO, and retired Lt. Gen. Leslie Smith, right, AUSA's vice president for Leadership and Education, greet Lt. Gen. William Graham Jr., commander of the Army Corps of Engineers, before a Noon Report webinar on Tuesday at the association's headquarters. (AUSA PHOTO)

During the AUSA Noon Report, Graham said that proactive partnerships with communities and partners are essential to effective disaster response. "The first [lesson] in emergency management is to make

a friend before you need a friend," he said. "We want to make sure that our engineering districts are working with the local [Federal Emergency Management Agency] regions, the state emergency operation centers and ... that these teams all train on blue-sky days so that they know each other" and can quickly come together when disaster strikes.

After Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge was struck by a container ship and partially collapsed on March 26, 2024, for example, the corps swiftly responded to the disaster.

The Corps of Engineers supports the Army by leveraging its innovation skills daily, Graham said. "The innovation ... that this country is so good at ... is the beauty that we're going to bring to the fight, and I think that's how we compete against our adversaries," he said.

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Deadline looming for critical appropriations legislation

Capitol Hill remains busy, with both chambers of Congress in session this week. The Senate continues to process executive branch nominations and hold confirmation hearings for various appointees.

Secretary of the Army Dan Driscoll was confirmed by the Senate on Feb. 25. Here is his message to the force.

On Feb. 26, the House Armed Services Committee heard testimony from Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga, commander of Army Special Operations Command, and his counterparts from the other services on the role of special operations in great-power competition. You can view that hearing [here](#).

Government Affairs

Lawmakers have a lot of unfinished work with respect to appropriations. The current continuing resolution passed in December runs through March 14, and congressional leaders seem to be leaning toward a full-year continuing resolution as of this writing.

These stopgap measures to fund the government and prevent shut-downs have been used repeatedly over the past several years, but they are inefficient, hurt readiness and negatively impact soldiers and families.

The Association of the U.S. Army's Government Affairs team will continue to advocate for passage of the



Col. John Samples, right, garrison commander at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, hosts members of a congressional staff delegation, as well as Puerto Rico Resident Commissioner Pablo Hernández, at the installation's headquarters Feb. 21. (U.S. ARMY/CARLOS CUEBAS)

2026 National Defense Authorization Act before Sept. 30. This critical legislation provides authorizations and policy guidance to the Department of Defense and the Army.

You can help build momentum for quick passage of all 12 appropriations bills and additional funding for the Total Army by contacting your representatives and senators or meeting with them. We encourage you to meet with lawmakers or their staff as a constituent and AUSA member in support of the Total Army. Advocate for AUSA's Focus Areas and passage

of the legislation mentioned above.

As a reminder, AUSA is nonpartisan and apolitical, and the association only lobbies at the federal level on federal issues. It is prohibited from supporting or participating in any political campaign for or against a candidate for local, state or federal office.

We will continue to monitor these and other developments closely as we advocate for the Total Army with Congress.

Mark Haaland is AUSA's Government Affairs director.

Weimer

From Page 1

know that troops want purpose," Weimer said. "They want to be busy, not busy hanging around in the company area. They want to be training, and when you tell them that you're empowering them to make decisions for the future of the Army, this generation feels like an extra purpose. That's what we're seeing in all three of those brigades, and I'm excited because now we're going to see that in

twofold divisions plus."

Weimer added that even in brigades that haven't had the opportunity to experiment with new equipment, he has witnessed a "transformation mindset" promoted by leaders, such as in the 10th Mountain Division, who have observed what their sister brigades are doing.

"That really stuck with me," Weimer said. "It's really kind of a culture piece, ... and so we're starting to see it spread."



Expanding the Army's transformation in contact initiative provides 'unbelievable opportunities' for experimentation, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Weimer said during an AUSA Coffee Series event. (AUSA PHOTO)

New and updated discounts, savings for AUSA members

The Association of the U.S. Army is always looking for ways to provide more value to its members. Here are some examples of new and updated benefits available with your AUSA membership.

1-800 Flowers brands

We have a new member discount program that includes all the 1-800 Flowers brands, including 1-800 Baskets, 1-800 Flowers, Alice's Table, Bloom.net, Cheryl's Cookies, Design Pac, Fruit Bouquets, Harry & David and Moose Munch.

NAPCO, Personalization Mall, Scharffen Berger, Shari's Berries, Simply Chocolate, The Popcorn Factory, Things Remembered, Vital Choice and Wolferman's Bakery are

Member Benefits

also available on the site.

Members receive 25% off a curated collection of gifts or 20% off sitewide with code FORAUSA. Please note that wine is excluded.

The brands run special offers from time to time, but AUSA's discount is always available—and a small portion is returned to the association's nonprofit programs.

Active&Fit

When you enroll in Active&Fit, you get free access to more than 14,000 on-demand workout videos.

For \$28 a month, you can join any of the more than 12,000 participating fitness centers such as Gold's Gym, LA Fitness, Snap Fitness, 24/7 Anytime Fitness and many more. A benefit of joining through this program is that cancellation is easy, and you can move from one participating gym to another without a lot of hassle.

The program also includes discounts at more than 9,400 premium gyms, including specialty brands like boxing studios, Pilates, yoga and more.

Learn more about Active&Fit and search for participating gyms in your



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area on the public site. To join, you must go through a participating company like AUSA. Instructions are at www.ausa.org/gym. Use promo code FITNESS GOALS to waive the \$28 enrollment fee.

SAT and ACT tests

Do you have a family member taking the SAT or ACT? As an AUSA member, you get the highly acclaimed eKnowledge test prep materials for free, and you can provide them to any family member. eKnowledge is the program recommended by the National Federation of High Schools. LSAT prep materials also are available at a large discount. Visit www.ausa.org/eknowledge for more.

Bigger UPS discount

Individuals and businesses who are AUSA members save at UPS, with discounts that recently increased from 50% to 65%.

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Access your savings

It's important to know that you can't just walk into a retail outlet and show them your AUSA membership card for your discount. They will not be familiar with the program—our agreements are with the corporate headquarters.

To make it easy for you to access your savings, we've set up a special landing page just for members: www.ausa.org/savings. You'll see the logos of our affinity partners on this page, in alphabetical order. Click on the logos to go right to your savings.

You also can search for brands by category, including electronics, education, entertainment, health and wellness and more.

In some cases, your member discount will automatically apply. If a promo code is needed, it is shown in the description under the company's logo on the savings page.

Susan Rubel is AUSA's Association and Affinity Partnerships director.

NCO honored for exceptional service, community support

A soldier with the Army Reserve's 5th Brigade, 102nd Training Division, recently was honored by the Association of the U.S. Army's Tobyhanna Army Depot chapter for outstanding service and community support.

Staff Sgt. John Hogan received the chapter's Distinguished Service Award and a complimentary two-year AUSA membership from retired Sgt. Maj. Kelvin Spencer, the chapter president, on Feb. 15 following the first period of the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins hockey team's

Tobyhanna Army Depot

Military Appreciation Night game.

"I am honored to receive this award," Hogan said, according to an Army news release. "It motivates me in my decision to continue to serve, and I hope others are encouraged to get involved as well."

Hogan also was recognized by Tobyhanna Army Depot commander Col. James Crocker with the installation's Outstanding Active-Duty Servicemember Award, established in 2024 to celebrate unit leaders who embody the Army Values and support the growth and prosperity of their communities.

In summer 2009, Hogan enlisted in the Army as a satellite communication systems operator-maintainer. "I have a lot of family and people in my community that have served," Hogan said about his decision to enlist, adding that he saw a military career as an opportunity to improve himself.

Hogan deployed multiple times to Iraq and Afghanistan before transitioning to the Army Reserve, where his expertise in communications-related MOSs led to his selection for the Active Guard Reserve program.

The appointment allowed Hogan the opportunity to join the faculty of the High Tech Regional Training Site-Maintenance at Tobyhanna Army Depot. In this role, he trains



Retired Sgt. Maj. Kelvin Spencer, left, president of AUSA's Tobyhanna Army Depot chapter, and Tobyhanna Army Depot commander Col. James Crocker, second from left, recognize Staff Sgt. John Hogan, second from right, during the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins hockey team's Military Appreciation Night game. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

soldiers who are transitioning to the satellite communication systems operator-maintainer and signal operations support specialist MOSs, and performs quality assurance to

ensure the curriculum meets Army standards.

"Staff Sgt. Hogan's contributions to the HTRTS-M Tobyhanna include facilitating hundreds of hours of training, with a 100% graduation rate for his pupils," said Ken Aten, executive officer of the schoolhouse, according to the Army. "He is exemplary in his dedication to the mission and to the growth of his soldiers, thus contributing to maintaining the readiness of the operational force."

Through his methods, Hogan has given vital insight to schoolhouse instructors by demonstrating the issues soldiers are most likely to encounter on the battlefield when operating communication systems, Aten said.

Outside of his military service, Hogan volunteers at the food pantry of his local church in Tobyhanna. "Community support is important to me because it fosters a sense of purpose and belonging," he said, according to the Army.



Col. James Crocker, left, commander of Tobyhanna Army Depot, presents the installation's Outstanding Active-Duty Servicemember Award to Staff Sgt. John Hogan during the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins hockey team's Military Appreciation Night game. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

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