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U.S. soldiers conduct a disaster management exchange with their Chinese counterparts. China's army is growing more modern and lethal, DoD says in a new report. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. KEVIN MARTIN)

## DoD warns of more lethal Chinese army

**A** new report to Congress reveals why the U.S. Army is thinking so much about China as a near-peer competitor.

The army part of the People's Liberation Army has 915,000 active-duty troops in combat units, making it the world's largest ground force and one that is fielding upgraded combat and communications systems and other technologies in a drive toward a "more modern, mobile and lethal ground force," says the Sept. 1 DoD report titled "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China."

The Chinese army's "modernization seeks to improve its ability to conduct joint operations in a high-intensity conflict and project power abroad," the report says.

It also notes that China's land force—called the People's Liberation Army Army or PLAA—continues "to create and mature formations at lower echelons that are more opera-

tionally flexible and better suited to conducting and managing complex combined-arms and joint operations."

There has been more training and more realistic training as the PLAA transforms from a regional defense force so it can handle "trans-theater operations," the report says.

It is now organized into five theater Army commands, plus commands in Tibet and Xinjiang, and has 13 corps-sized armies, a reduction of about five armies since 2017 as part of an effort to streamline force structure, the report says.

Restructuring was designed so combined arms battalions could "conduct operations with greater independence from higher echelons," the report says. There also is greater flexibility to tailor force packages.

Like the U.S. Army, modernization has been a PLAA priority, although it appears to be trailing U.S. efforts, partly because China's army is so large. Some infantry units have com-

bat systems from the 1960s.

"Despite the PLA's modernization ambitions and its demonstrated ability to develop highly modern equipment for ground forces, the PLAA has faced challenges acquiring and fielding new equipment in sufficient quantities to retire its legacy equipment, although it continues to make progress in this regard," the report says.

DoD and the Army are working on new Indo-Pacific strategies that take a transforming China into consideration.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said in July that U.S. allies and partners in the region are "looking for a strong friendship" with the U.S.

"No one wants to have any type of conflict out there because, as we all know, there's so much trade going on that is so important to the global economy," he said.

The full report is available here.

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## Army chief praises ‘amazing soldiers’ of National Guard

**F**rom supporting communities across the country to deploying overseas, the National Guard has really made a difference, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said.

“You have units deployed around the world, you have units responding to wildfires, COVID, hurricanes, civil unrest, it’s just amazing what you’re doing,” McConville said. “When you were needed, you were there, and you should be very proud of that because we are.”

Speaking Aug. 28 during the National Guard Association of the United States’ annual meeting, which was held virtually, McConville reinforced the importance of the National Guard.

He cited, as an example, the Minnesota National Guard’s 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, which recently completed a rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California.

The soldiers—representing 20



A Minnesota National Guard soldier prepares for the field during a recent rotation at the National Training Center. (MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD/SGT. 1ST CLASS BEN HOUTKOOPER)

states—were the first brigade to return to the National Training Center after the Army suspended training there because of the COVID-19 pandemic, said McConville, who visited the training center during the soldiers’ rotation.

“I ran into some amazing soldiers,” he said. “They’ve been through a lot this year. They’ve been through CO-

VID, they’ve been through some of the civil unrest.”

But they packed up and shifted their focus to training for combat, he said, fulfilling the National Guard’s dual role of protecting “your neighbors and communities” and defending the nation.

The National Guard also will be critical as the Army works to transform itself for the future, McConville said.

“It’s really not about fighting the last fight better, it’s about winning the next fight,” he said, adding, “we recognize we must transform the Army now,” and the Guard will be right alongside the Regular Army and Army Reserve as that happens.

“The Army could absolutely not do what it does without the National Guard,” McConville said. “I would say this year, it is even more true. You are critical to the transformation of the Army, and we are proud to serve, fight and win alongside of you.”

## Leaders stress ‘dignity and respect’ in race discussions

**T**reating everyone in the Army with “dignity and respect” is the way to build cohesive, ready teams, where people feel “part of a squad rather than in a squad,” a senior leader said Wednesday during a discussion on race in the Army hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army.

“We win through people, the Army’s greatest strength, specifically through cohesive teams. We win because of our diversity,” said Lt. Gen. Darryl Williams, the 60th superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

“Racism has no place at the United States Military Academy,” he added, stressing that culture and character growth are key parts of the academy’s education.

Williams, Maj. Gen. John Evans, commander of Army Cadet Com-

mand, and Sgt. Maj. Julie Guerra of the Army G-2 were part of a discussion about how the Army is working to improve diversity among its cadets and other issues.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston shared similar sentiments Monday during a separate AUSA event, saying there’s “no place” for microaggressions among soldiers.

“We’re better than that, and we can do better,” Grinston said. “When you see something, you’ve got to say something. Just say, ‘Hey, that’s not appropriate.’”

The two events that took place this week were part of AUSA’s ongoing discussion on race in the Army.

The virtual events, part of The AUSA Noon Report series, come as Army leaders encourage open and tough conversations between soldiers

and their leaders about diversity, inclusion and issues such as unconscious bias.

Conversations on these topics can be considered “taboo”—but they shouldn’t be, Grinston said.

“That’s why ... these sessions are so important,” he said, describing the conversations as powerful. “It’s OK to have these conversations.”

During the Monday event, Grinston led a group of squad leaders in a wide-ranging discussion where the NCOs talked about their families and upbringing, shared stories about their time in the Army, and opened up about instances of racism or bias they’ve seen or experienced while in uniform.

The next event on race hosted by AUSA will take place Sep. 16.

For more information, click [here](#).

## Medal of Honor recipient and Korean War hero Ronald Rosser dies



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Rosser at a 2013 event honoring Korean War veterans at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

**R**etired Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Rosser, who received the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions in Korea as a member of the 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, has died at the age of 90.

His funeral was Aug. 29.

A member of the Association of the U.S. Army, Rosser's story is unique. The eldest son of 17 children, he joined the Army in 1946, served three years and got out, but rejoined the Army in 1951 after one of his brothers, Richard, was killed in combat in Korea.

Serving as a forward observer on Jan. 12, 1952, during an assault on a Korean-held hill, Rosser's unit came under heavy fire.

Disregarding the enemy fire coming at him from two sides, the then-corporal charged up the hill to the enemy positions armed only with a carbine and a grenade. Rosser would return down the hill twice, through enemy fire, for more ammunition and grenades. He is credited with killing at least 13 enemy fighters.

That wasn't all he did. His Medal of Honor citation says, "After exhausting his ammunition, he accompanied the withdrawing platoon, and though

himself wounded, made several trips across open terrain still under enemy fire to help remove other men injured more seriously than himself."

Rosser was presented the Medal of Honor in June 1952, one month after his return to the United States.

He remained in the Army for 22 years, serving multiple assignments stateside and in Germany, including as a body bearer for the remains of unknown service members from World War II and the Korean War at Arlington National Cemetery, according to his obituary.

He finally retired after another of his brothers, Gary, was killed in the Vietnam War. Rosser had requested a combat assignment to Vietnam but was turned down.

After leaving the Army, he worked for the U.S. Postal Service and as a police chief and history teacher, among many other occupations.

His Anglin Funeral Home obituary says Rosser died in Bumpus Mills, Tennessee, at the home of his daughter, Pamela Rosser Lovell.

"One of his favorite tasks was speaking with children about the choices they make in life, honor, and selfless service," the obituary says.

# AUSAExtra

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## PERK OF THE WEEK



**GE APPLIANCES STORE**

AUSA members save up to 32% on select appliances during the GE Appliances Store Labor Day sales event and get free delivery on orders over \$299. Visit [www.ausa.org/ge](http://www.ausa.org/ge) and take advantage of special promotional financing. The AUSA member discount at GE Appliances Store is "evergreen," but this Labor Day offer is valid through Sept 16.



# Continuing resolution likely as new fiscal year approaches

By Mark Haaland

**A**s we approach the new fiscal year, DoD and the rest of the federal government likely will be forced to rely on a continuing resolution as lawmakers continue to work on the 2021 budget.

So far, the House and Senate have passed their versions of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act.

The House has also passed its versions of defense, military construction and veterans appropriations. However, the Senate has not passed any appropriations, and three legislative weeks are all that remain before the new fiscal year begins Oct. 1.

The White House recently suggested passing a continuing resolution early, perhaps as part of the next COVID-19 stimulus package, instead of waiting until the end of the current fiscal year and risking a government shutdown.

Fortunately, no one in Congress or the administration is suggesting a government shutdown this year.

Since the NDAA has passed both the House and Senate, the next step will be for conferees to be designated, meet and work out the differences between the two bills.

Unfortunately, there does not seem to be any big hurry to accomplish this before the new fiscal year.

Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has said he is confident an agreement with the House on the NDAA will be reached, but perhaps not before the election.

This means lawmakers may not pass the bill until December.

President Donald Trump has already said he would veto the legislation if it contains certain items, so the end state for the NDAA remains uncertain.

Adding our voice to the NDAA con-



ference process, the Association of the U.S. Army has provided these recommendations to both armed services committees.

- Support House provisions to slow and more thoroughly review plans to reduce the military medical force and restructure military treatment facilities in light of COVID-19.

*See next page*

## Government Affairs

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**Government Affairs***From previous page*

- Provide transitional health care benefits to members of both the National Guard and Reserve who have been activated in response to the pandemic.

- Keep commanders as the Uniform Code of Military Justice convening authority for serious crimes and support for protecting victims' rights.

- Support family readiness and quality of life improvements for service members and families to include quality housing, standardizing the Exceptional Family Member Program, improvements in child care access and assistance with spouse employment.

- Support House instructions for DoD to update the business case analysis for the Defense Resale System changes—the consolidation of the exchanges and commissaries.

In other news, the Army has re-



There will be an opportunity for public comment on planned changes to eligibility rules for in-ground burial at Arlington National Cemetery. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

leased planned changes to eligibility rules for in-ground burial at Arlington National Cemetery, and they are posted on the cemetery's website.

There will be an opportunity for public comment.

AUSA is tracking this issue, and we

will let you know when the comment window opens.

Lastly, beginning Jan. 1, working-age military retirees will begin paying a monthly enrollment fee for Tricare Select health care coverage.

This first-ever fee was mandated in the 2017 NDAA. Enrollment fees will be \$150 annually for individuals and \$300 annually for families.

AUSA has worked with The Military Coalition and other military and veterans service organizations on this and other issues for several years.

This collective effort resulted in Congress delaying implementation of the new fees for three years, lower fees than originally proposed, a lower catastrophic cap increase, no enrollment fees for Tricare for Life beneficiaries, and lower future increases to expenses and fees.

**Mark Haaland** is AUSA's Government Affairs Director.

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# STORAGE HEADACHES?

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# Find thousands of discounts through affinity programs

By Susan Rubel

In developing our Association of the U.S. Army Member Savings Program, we wanted to provide you with quick, easy access, so we created [www.ausa.org/savings](http://www.ausa.org/savings).

The site displays many logos you probably recognize.

Just click on them for your member discounts from well-known brands like Apple, Dell, HP, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, National, Choice Hotels, Red Roof Inns, GE Appliances, GEICO, Office Depot, UPS, PODS and many more.

Additionally, AUSA offers thousands more discounts that aren't obvious on the site because the brands are part of a larger affinity program.

I want to share some of those with you.

## Hotel discounts

On the savings page, you can click on the Red Roof Inn logo to access your 20% discount.

Click on the Choice Hotel logo for discounts at all its brands, including Clarion, Econolodge, Rodeway Inn, Quality Inn, Sleep Inn, MainStay Suites, Suburban Extended Stay, Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Ascend and Cambria.

But where are Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, IHG, Kimpton, Holiday Inn and smaller boutique hotels?

They're at [www.ausa.org/hotelclub](http://www.ausa.org/hotelclub), an exclusive wholesale hotel discount site with more than 600,000 worldwide locations.

The site includes almost all hotel brands and shows the AUSA price as well as the current Expedia price for a helpful comparison.

## MemberDeals

Visit [www.ausa.org/entertain](http://www.ausa.org/entertain) to access the MemberDeals site for discounts on tickets to Disney World and other theme parks and attractions around the country.



With your AUSA membership, discounts are available for hotels around the world and many theme parks and attractions such as Disney World. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

When we're able to return to live shows, this is a great site for concert, movie, Broadway and sporting event tickets.

There are also other discounts at MemberDeals, such as 40% off a Sam's Club membership; \$90 off and free shipping on your first box from Hello Fresh; 15% off Ray-Ban products; and a 20% discount on a Vudu streaming service subscription.

## Abenity

Abenity is a member-only site offering thousands of discounts, including from local restaurants and small businesses near you.

Visit [www.ausa.org/abenity](http://www.ausa.org/abenity) to search for discounts from brands you know and trust in categories such as concerts and events, electronics, travel, restaurants and many more.

Abenity is also where you'll find the Costco program (with free gifts when you sign up), discounts on gym memberships and at local restaurants and chains like Dairy Queen.

The site also offers options for those of us who are working remotely and have children attending school virtually. Program with discounts include

Rosetta Stone, ABC Mouse, Code Ninjas, Kids Discover and Thinkster Math.

There are more than 300,000 discounts—too many to list here—so visit [www.ausa.org/abenity](http://www.ausa.org/abenity), sign up and search by brand, category, location and more.

## Provengo

AUSA members can join Provengo for free to access discounts of up to 60%.

Because of a special affinity relationship with AUSA, members can access discounts with no sales tax and free shipping on orders over \$250.

Visit [www.ausa.org/provengo](http://www.ausa.org/provengo), sign up, shop with your discount and then add promo code AUSA15 for an additional \$15 off your first order.

Some of the brands available include Callaway, Camelbak, Footjoy, Gerber, Oakley, Otterbox, Under Armour and Yeti.

Of course, you can always access all your member savings by visiting [www.ausa.org/savings](http://www.ausa.org/savings).

**Susan Rubel** is AUSA's Affinity Programs Director.

## Chapter honors soldiers for outstanding performance

The Association of the U.S. Army's Henry Leavenworth chapter honored five soldiers from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, during a ceremony Aug. 6.

Michael Augustine, the chapter president, presented awards to Spc. Thomas Snell, Fort Leavenworth Soldier of the Year, and Sgt. Bryan Jacobo, the installation's NCO of the Year.

He also awarded certificates for outstanding performance to three

**Henry  
Leavenworth**

new inductees of the Sgt. Audie Murphy Club: Sgt. 1st Class Michael

Wilson, Staff Sgt. Alejandro Amaya and Staff Sgt. Paul Michaud.

Chapter executive committee members and soldiers from the 15th Military Police Brigade were on hand to witness the presentations.

"It was a great day to recognize soldiers," the chapter said in a Facebook post.

Two of the chapter's Community Partners, Armed Forces Insurance



Michael Augustine, rear center, Henry Leavenworth chapter president, presented awards to five outstanding soldiers from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (AUSA PHOTO)

and the Frontier Community Credit Union, joined the chapter to fund the awards.

Augustine was named chapter president in June, succeeding former president Cal Johnson, who served for five years.

"It is an honor to be a part of such a great organization that benefits our soldiers and their families, the community both on and off post, and provides a voice for the Army," Augustine said after becoming chapter president.

## Donations help support Fort Campbell soldiers, students

Recent donations from the Association of the U.S. Army's Fort Campbell chapter are making life a little easier for soldiers and students around Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

On Aug. 13, Charlie Koon, the chapter's first vice president, met with

**Fort  
Campbell**

Thomas Whittle, Fort Campbell High School principal, and assistant principal Joi Gause as donations

were delivered to the school.

"We are working hard to support our soldiers and their families," Koon said.

The donated snacks, candy, bottled water and hygiene items were part of a larger donation AUSA made to Fort Campbell.



Left to right, Charlie Koon, AUSA Henry Leavenworth chapter first vice president; Thomas Whittle, Fort Campbell High School principal; and assistant principal Joi Gause. (AUSA PHOTO)

The effort was coordinated with Mike Meyer of KAMO Adventures, a local charity organization, and the Rotary Club of Overland, Kansas.

It was made possible through the generosity of KAMO Adventures and

Feed the Children, said Samantha Henke, the chapter executive director.

"We were simply the platform in which to donate the items to our soldiers and military families in our chapter footprint," Henke said.



**AUSA'S**

# **ARMY MATTERS PODCAST**



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