



Army Secretary Dan Driscoll, right, and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George, center, examine equipment with Brig. Gen. Phillip Kinery, director of the Soldier Lethality Cross-Functional Team, during Project Convergence Capstone 5 at Fort Irwin, California. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. 1ST CLASS NICOLE MEJIA)

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Army refines, speeds transformation

With the proliferation of drones presenting an “inflection point” in how war is waged, the Army must completely rethink how it is transforming to meet enemy capabilities, senior Army leaders said.

“As we view it, war in the last couple of years in human history has hit an inflection point ... and will no longer look like what it has for the past two millennia,” Army Secretary Dan Driscoll said Wednesday at a hearing before the House Appropriations subcommittee on defense.

Testifying alongside Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George, Driscoll said the Army needs to empower soldiers with the tools they need to “fight and overcome any enemy in

war,” which will require “a complete rethink” of how soldiers are trained and equipped.

Using the recently canceled M10 Booker armored vehicle as an example of how the Army “got it wrong,” Driscoll said Army senior leaders must “own that” and move out quickly to establish better processes, improve the way it involves industry partners and keep costs down.

With soldiers now providing greater input and innovation in how new systems are developed, they are transforming and ready to “move out,” George said, adding that it’s change at the higher levels of the Army that is presenting the greater challenge. “The biggest risk here is not changing and not changing fast

enough,” George testified. “Everywhere [Driscoll] and I go, when we talk to our soldiers, it’s like, ‘OK, let’s move out.’”

The Army senior leaders testified just days after the service announced the Army Transformation Initiative, a sweeping effort to “reexamine all requirements and eliminate unnecessary ones, ruthlessly prioritize fighting formations to directly contribute to lethality, and empower leaders at echelon to make hard calls to ensure resources align with strategic objectives,” Driscoll and Randy George wrote in a May 1 message to the force.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth described it in an April 30 memoran-

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Mingus: Army transforming into leaner, more lethal force

The Army is preparing to combat global adversaries with speed and precision as it transforms, Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. James Mingus said.

“The Army is building a force that is leaner, more lethal, and equipped to operate in contested domains with speed and precision,” Mingus said Tuesday in testimony before the House Armed Services subcommittee on readiness. “Under transformation in contact ... we are enhancing our tactical networks, rapidly fueling [unmanned aircraft systems], counter-UAS, electronic warfare systems, increasing mobility across our formations.”

Today, over 110,000 soldiers are deployed or forward stationed across 140 countries to deter, defend and provide immediate response options, Mingus said. “The Army remains engaged worldwide, responding to immediate security challenges while modernizing to ensure long-term readiness,” Mingus said.

Army transformation efforts and investments in training, force posture and modernization “ensure readiness for both immediate and future demands,” he said.

Transforming in contact, an initiative that puts new and emerging technologies in soldiers’ hands for testing and experimentation, has already delivered new capabilities and is poised to expand over the next few years.

“In the last 10 months, [transforming in contact] delivered 11 new capabilities and technologies to warfighters” in the 101st Airborne Division, 25th Infantry Division, 10th Mountain Division and the Army National Guard’s 34th Infantry Division, Mingus said. In fiscal years 2025 and 2026, “we’ll expand this effort to entire divisions and beyond,” he said.

At the service level, the new Army Transformation Initiative, which was outlined in a May 1 message to the force from Army Secretary Dan



Soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division engage targets with a .50-caliber machine gun during Operation Lethal Eagle 25.1 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. (U.S. ARMY/MAJ. JONATHON BLESS)

Driscoll and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George, will enable a new era of transformation, Mingus said.

“The Army Transformation Initiative ... expands this transformation in contact,” he said. “It allows us to restructure formations to dominate future battlefields, while also advancing the development and delivery of critical capabilities and

end programs that no longer deliver value.”

Under the newly announced initiatives, the Army plans to merge commands, restructure units, eliminate staff positions, reform acquisition processes and cancel obsolete programs in favor of unmanned systems, long-range fires and more.

Though the Army is ready for war, the service recognizes the need to adapt continually to keep pace with adversaries, Mingus said. “The Army stands ready to defend our nation,” he said. “However, being forward doesn’t guarantee we’re ahead. Our adversaries are adapting faster than our processes, and our Army cannot afford to treat readiness, modernization and force structure as separate conversations.”

Mingus also warned that a “modern, capable force is not built in a single budget cycle.”

“It takes years of sustained investment, careful planning and a commitment to keeping pace with an evolving adversary,” he said. “Our adversaries are not waiting for us to catch up, and they are not making the same compromises we are.”



Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. James Mingus addresses an AUSA Coffee Series event April 22 at the association’s headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)

Growing drone threat necessitates adaptable, multidomain approach



A soldier with the 3rd Infantry Division operates a Skydio X10D unmanned aircraft system on Monday during training in Hohenfels, Germany. (U.S. ARMY/SPC. HUNTER CARPENTER)

As drone threats grow and develop globally, the Army is investing in small-unmanned aircraft systems and counter-small UAS capabilities, defense leaders said before the House Armed Services tactical air and land forces subcommittee.

"We fully acknowledge the threat and the proliferation of these systems, both abroad and at home, and we collectively ... are acting with urgency," said Lt. Gen. Robert Collins, principal military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology. "We are generating momentum, and we are aggressively pressing ahead."

The threat from small-UASs "is present and constantly evolving," said Maj. Gen. David Stewart, director of the Joint Counter-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Office.

"Conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine demonstrate how advances in hardware, software and tactics are making drones more autonomous, easily acquired and deadlier," he said during the May 1 hearing. "Compared to the IEDs that killed and injured thousands of American

service members, UASs are more dangerous because they actively surveil, target and deliver lethal effects from the air."

When it comes to detecting small UAS threats, "there is no silver bullet," Stewart said. "Each service and each installation will have different circumstances based mostly on the threat. ... There are multiple ways to navigate [threats], whether that's using radio frequency, uplink, downlink, using waypoints through satellites or loading optics and using the terrain to fly," he said. "There's no one single way to detect these different threats, so you need a system of systems approach."

Small UASs remain a threat to U.S. troops, Collins wrote in his written statement to the subcommittee. "The proliferation of [small] UAS presents an evolving and asymmetric threat to United States and allied forces, requiring a layered, adaptable, and multi-domain approach," he wrote. "We will have to continue to work as a department and with Congress to quickly adapt to the ever-changing landscape."

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MEMBERSHIP RATES. To celebrate the U.S. Army's 250th birthday, from April 1, 2025, to Dec. 31, 2025, membership rates are reduced to a five-year Premium rate of \$50 and a two-year Premium rate of \$30. Lifetime membership is \$250. A special Premium rate of \$10 for two years is open to E1-E4 and cadets only. Two-year Basic membership with select benefits is free. Learn more at www.ausa.org/join.

PERK OF THE WEEK

Cambridge Credit Counseling is a nonprofit organization that performs an in-depth analysis of your financial situation and identifies ways for you to get out of debt as quickly as possible. AUSA members can receive a free budget review at www.cambridge-credit.org/ausa/.



Army announces new space operations specialist MOS

Rising space and missile threats require modernized processes, and the Army is creating a new 40D MOS, space operations specialist, and broadening its homeland defense capabilities, the commander of Army Space and Missile Defense Command said during a media roundtable.

“We need space capability. These soldiers will become the experts we turn to during the next conflict,” Lt. Gen. Sean Gainey said. “Our Army space professionals support unique assets to interdict or disrupt adversaries’ use of space capabilities, ensuring Army forces gain and maintain the initiative to fight from positions of relative advantage in all domains.”

The new MOS, which is on track to become official by October 2026, will ensure that enlisted soldiers gain ex-



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Space Brigade construct an expeditionary space control system during air assault training at Fort Carson, Colorado. (U.S. ARMY/BROOKE NEVINS)

pertise in space operations, Gainey said. “To date, the preponderance of expertise and experience in space operations resides in the officer corps instead of the noncommissioned officer corps,” he said. “This new space operations MOS will ensure that specialists through command sergeants major arrive at Army space forma-

tions with experience and expertise in space operations.”

Army Space and Missile Defense Command is also finalizing a new approach to secure the homeland through a broader missile defense system, Gainey said. “As the architecture is finalized with the capabilities that will potentially, eventually support a Golden Dome-type of defense, our formation is expected to have a larger role,” he said.

The Army’s air and missile defense capabilities remain critical to the future fight, Gainey said.

“Missile defense, air and missile defense, [counter-unmanned aircraft systems] capabilities are critical capabilities on the battlefield,” he said. “We’re finding more and more through lessons learned that being able to operate in a denied or degraded environment is essential.”



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Transformation

From Page 1

dum as a “comprehensive transformation strategy” to “build a leaner and more lethal force.”

Under the transformation plan, Army Futures Command and Army Training and Doctrine Command will merge into one command, and Army Forces Command will merge with U.S. Army South and U.S. Army North into a single headquarters “focused on homeland defense and partnership with Western Hemisphere allies,” according to the memo.

The sustainment enterprise also will be restructured, with the consolidation and realignment of headquarters and units within Army Materiel Command. “Our focus is on filling combat formations with Soldiers,” Driscoll and George wrote in their message. “Every role must sharpen the spear or be cut away.”

This includes eliminating 1,000 staff positions at Army headquarters, the message says.

The Army also will restructure Army Aviation by reducing one aerial cavalry squadron per combat aviation brigade in the Regular Army, and “we will consolidate aviation sustainment requirements and increase operational readiness,” Driscoll and George’s message says. The Army also will convert all infantry brigade combat teams to mobile brigade combat teams to “improve mobility and lethality in a leaner formation. We are trading weight for speed, and mass for decisive force,” the message says.

By 2027, the Army is directed to achieve long-range missiles capable of striking moving land and maritime targets, electromagnetic and air-littoral dominance and artificial intelligence-driven command and control at theater, corps and division headquarters.

It also must improve counter-unmanned aircraft systems mobility and affordability and integrate those capabilities into maneuver platoons by 2026 and companies by 2027.

During Wednesday’s hearing,



Army Secretary Dan Driscoll, left, conducts a spur ride with soldiers of the 11th Airborne Division April 24 at Black Rapids Training Site, Alaska. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. 1ST CLASS NICOLE MEJIA)

while addressing the ubiquity of drone warfare in the Ukraine conflict with Russia, Driscoll told lawmakers that drone training is now part of basic training, where the Army’s youngest soldiers are learning to consider overhead threats.

Driscoll and George also testified that other changes such as smaller command and control posts and concealment on the battlefield are top priorities, as are unmanned aircraft systems and counter-unmanned aircraft systems.

“The Army has for a very long time said, ‘We own the night,’ and a

lot of our offensive capabilities were built around the fact that we own the night,” Driscoll said, “That is no longer sufficient with drones and all of the other sensors. The moment a human being starts to move, the enemy knows.”

The Army is going to have to change the way it’s organized, George said. “Drones are going to be in every formation, we’re going to have autonomous systems everywhere, in every formation, whether it’s to protect, detect or attack,” George said.

Read the DoD memo here.

The Army leaders’ message is here.



Army Secretary Dan Driscoll, right, speaks with soldiers assigned to the 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade during a visit to Fort Bliss, Texas. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. MAURICIO QUEZADA)

Deadline extended for 2025 AUSA scholarship applications

The Association of the U.S. Army has extended the deadline to apply for more than \$304,000 in national scholarships in 2025, with 40 scholarships awarded by AUSA and seven administered by the association in conjunction with the Army.

Scholarship applications will now be accepted online until May 31. Those selected to receive an AUSA national scholarship will be notified in late June.

AUSA national scholarship applicants must be active AUSA Premium members, Association Partner members or their children or grandchildren. Membership is not a prerequisite for the Army scholarships administered by AUSA.

For more information, including available scholarships, eligibility requirements or to apply, click [here](#).



AUSA's national scholarships include awards for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, and general studies. (U.S. ARMY/JOHN HAMILTON)

AUSA's national scholarships include awards for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, and general studies.

For young professionals with debt from recently completed college courses or professional certifications, eight

\$2,500 scholarships are available.

AUSA also administers the following Army scholarships: the SGM Larry Strickland Memorial Fund and Scholarship, the SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship, and ROTC scholarships.



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AUSA hosts Operation Deploy Your Dress event in Hawaii

For the first time since partnering in 2017, the Association of the U.S. Army and Operation Deploy Your Dress are teaming up to bring a pop-up event to military and family members in Hawaii.

The two-day event at Schofield Barracks will take place May 13–14 in conjunction with AUSA's LANPAC Symposium and Exposition in Honolulu.

Volunteers from AUSA and Operation Deploy Your Dress will welcome military or dependent ID card holders of all ranks and services, regardless of where they're stationed.

Participants will receive one dress, and they will be able to try on the dresses in a fitting room.

The popular event and the dresses are free, and registration is not required.

"AUSA Family Readiness and AU-

SA's Hawaii chapter are thrilled to bring the popular Operation Deploy Your Dress event to Schofield Barracks," said Holly Dailey, AUSA's Family Readiness director.

"We look forward to seeing military and family members there, and we will have hundreds of dresses ready to deploy," she said.

The walk-in event is open from 4:30–8 p.m. Hawaii time on May 13, and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 14 in the 604 Banquet & Conference Center on Schofield Barracks.

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

AUSA, led by the Hawaii chapter, and Operation Deploy Your Dress also are collecting dresses for the upcoming event. Donated items can be dropped off at three locations. They are First Command's Aiea office near Pearl Ridge Mall; Guaranteed Rate at 820 West Hind Drive, Suite 1293

in Honolulu; and Hui O' Na Wahine Thrift Shop at 2107 Ulrich Way in Wahiawa.

Operation Deploy Your Dress was founded in late 2015 at Fort Bliss, Texas, by a group of military spouses who organized a dress swap to lessen the cost of formal wear for holiday balls. The idea quickly grew into an organization run by dozens of volunteers, offering gently used dresses and accessories to military members and dependents.

The group now has 14 shops across the U.S. and one in Germany, run solely by military spouse volunteers. In the past six years, the organization has given away more than 35,000 gowns, saving military families \$3 million, according to the organization's website.

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

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Focus Areas highlight funding needs, Army transformation

It has been a busy month for the Association of the U.S. Army's Government Affairs directorate.

Our 2025 Focus Areas—key and essential actions required to properly fund, maintain, sustain and modernize a combat-ready, all-volunteer Army—were recently approved. These legislative recommendations highlight AUSA's membership exceeding 1.8 million members, how AUSA helps to forge strong partnerships, and the association's efforts to support warfighting and strengthening the profession.

Government Affairs

The Focus Areas include 10 recommendations for Congress, beginning with supporting the Army's 250th birthday, ensuring timely and flexible funding and authorizations for the service, and supporting Army programs to increase lethality and accelerate transformation.

You can view the Focus Areas [here](#).

Last week, I attended the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony honoring the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion. At this event, lawmakers and other leaders highlighted the patriotism, courage and commitment to mission of the first and largest all-female, all-African American unit to deploy overseas during World War II.

The unit cleared more than 17 million pieces of mail and package backlog in three months—half the time expected.

The Government Affairs team attended AUSA's 2nd, 3rd and 4th Region meetings this month to highlight our Advocacy Campaign Plan with Congress and to encourage chapter leaders to meet locally with senators, representatives and their staff to advocate for the Army.

In Washington, Government Affairs continues to meet with congressional staff and advocate for the Total Army. In our meetings, we emphasize the Army's critical role in the Indo-Pacific and recommend Con-



Maj. Gen. Curtis Taylor, left, commanding general of the 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss, Texas, provides a briefing on armored vehicle capabilities to members of a congressional delegation April 16 in Powidz, Poland. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. CHARLIE DUKE)

gress support Army priorities including warfighting, transformation and quality-of-life initiatives for soldiers and their families.

We also are encouraging lawmakers to pass the Military Spouse Employment Act and the Major Richard Star Act, legislation aimed at ensuring that combat-disabled veterans with less than 20 years of service can receive both their military retirement pay and disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Earlier today, Government Affairs participated in a chapter chat with AUSA members from across the nation. We discussed how to advocate and provided suggestions to enhance effectiveness.

Last week, the administration released a top-level or "skinny" budget, which provided insight into its priorities for fiscal year 2026. We anticipate a more detailed budget in the coming weeks.

The Senate continues to process executive branch nominations and hold confirmation hearings. Many hearings remain to be scheduled, but this week the Senate Armed Services Committee held a confirmation hear-

ing for retired Col. Michael Obadal, who has been nominated to be under-secretary of the Army.

Both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees continue to hold posture hearings in support of the annual authorizations process. You can view those hearings [here](#) and [here](#), respectively.

The House Appropriations defense subcommittee held a hearing with the Army Secretary Dan Driscoll and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George on Wednesday. You can view that hearing [here](#).

You can help build momentum for passage of the fiscal 2026 National Defense Authorization Act and the 12 appropriations bills—especially defense, military construction and veterans affairs—by contacting your representatives and senators or by meeting with them.

We encourage you to meet with lawmakers or their staff as constituents and AUSA members in support of the Total Army. Advocate for AUSA's Focus Areas and passage of the legislation mentioned above.

Mark Haaland is AUSA's Government Affairs director.

AUSA member named installation Volunteer of the Year

Sgt. Mitchel “Dru” Hull, an Army Reserve soldier and civilian social worker who also serves as membership chair for the Association of the U.S. Army’s Central Texas chapter, recently was honored as Volunteer of the Year for Fort Cavazos, Texas.

Hull, of the 11th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade, was recognized for months of volunteering to work nights at a suicide prevention hotline, according to an Army news release. In addition to his service with AUSA, Hull also volunteers at the local USO, helping to support his fellow service members and their families.

He logged more than 1,600 hours of volunteer time in the past year. “I was just trying to help everybody I could,” Hull said, according to the Army. “I care about people, and I want people to care more about other people.”



Sgt. Mitchel ‘Dru’ Hull, left, an Army Reserve soldier who serves as membership chair for AUSA’s Central Texas chapter, is awarded an Army Commendation Medal by Lt. Gen. Kevin Admiral, commanding general of Fort Cavazos and III Armored Corps, during the installation’s Volunteer of the Year awards ceremony. (U.S. ARMY/SCOTT DARLING)

The annual award ceremony is organized by Army Community Service, and nominees are winners of their respective Brigade Volunteer of

the Year awards.

This year, with more than 200 people in attendance, the event acknowledged 39 volunteers—a mix of soldiers, Army civilians and spouses. The soldiers received Army Commendation Medals, while the Army civilians received Civilian Service Commendation Medals. The spouses who were recognized were awarded Public Service Commendation Medals.

Lt. Gen. Kevin Admiral, commanding general of Fort Cavazos and III Armored Corps, lauded each awardee and emphasized their shared traits. “What they all have in common is the dedication to helping other people in bettering our community,” he said, according to the release.

The event was “a powerful celebration of dedication and community spirit,” the AUSA chapter said in a Facebook post, adding that Hull was honored “for his outstanding commitment to making a difference.”

“Thank you, Dru, for your tireless service and for being an exceptional member of the Central Texas chapter,” the chapter said. “We are proud to stand beside you in support of our soldiers, families and Army civilians.”

Chapter supports Guard resource fair



Las Vegas-MG John C. Fremont

Patrick Morrissey, right, president of AUSA’s Las Vegas-MG John C. Fremont chapter, interacts with drilling personnel and community partners during the Nevada National Guard Drill Weekend Resource Fair in early May. (AUSA PHOTO)



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