



## Strategic Responsiveness: New Paradigm for a Transformed Army

DR 00-3 / October 2000

*The world situation demands an Army that is strategically responsive. The Army's core competency remains fighting and winning our Nation's wars; however, the Army must also be capable of operating throughout the range of conflict—to include low intensity operations and countering asymmetric threats. It must, therefore, be more versatile, agile, lethal, and survivable. It must be able to provide early entry forces that can operate jointly, without access to fixed forward bases, and still have the power to slug it out and win campaigns decisively. At this point in our march through history, our heavy forces are too heavy and our light forces lack staying power. Heavy forces must be more strategically deployable and more agile with a smaller logistical footprint, and light forces must be more lethal, survivable, and tactically mobile. **Achieving this paradigm will require innovative thinking about structure, modernization efforts, and spending.***

General Eric K. Shinseki  
*Intent of the Chief of Staff, Army, 23 June 1999*

Two interdependent characteristics distinguish strategically responsive military forces:

- a combination of mission capabilities able to counter any significant threat to U.S. vital interests and
- the ability to deploy the right mission capabilities to the right places at the right times to achieve decisive results.

While much remains uncertain about the security environment of the 21st century, this much is already clear: In the future, a number of states will be able to threaten our nation's interests in new ways by using asymmetric capabilities. The National Command Authorities (NCA) and the warfighting commanders in chief (CINCs) will need greater flexibility than is offered by today's forces.

In this future environment, the Army must be ready to respond to missions ranging from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, to peacekeeping and peacemaking, to

major theater wars—including conflicts involving use of weapons of mass destruction. A strategically responsive Army must be deployable and able to operate as part of a joint, combined or multinational force. When called on to fight, the Army must be able to initiate combat on its own terms, retain the initiative, build momentum quickly, and win decisively.

The Army has been working to develop and field forces with these capabilities. However, the last decade has been marked by dramatic force reductions, an unprecedented number of force deployments, and Department of Defense-wide "holidays" in research, development and procurement. So progress has been painfully slow. To finish the job, the Army must continue enhancing selected existing capabilities, add new ones, and increase the speed with which its capabilities can be brought to bear.

In other words, the Army must *transform* itself.

Meaningful Army transformation cannot happen overnight—but it can happen over time, as a result of continuing innovation, if it receives long-term support from fully committed leaders at all levels. The need for support extends beyond the Army to the other services, the Defense Agencies, the CINCs of the unified commands, the administration and Congress.

### **Strategic Responsiveness and the Army Vision**

In October 1999, Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera and Army Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki established a template for transformation in a new Army Vision. The Vision calls for transforming the Army into an Objective Force that is strategically responsive and dominant at every point on the spectrum of military operations.

The Army will provide strategic responsiveness through forward-deployed forces, forward-positioned capabilities, engagement, and—when called for—force projection from any location where the needed capabilities reside, including the continental United States (CONUS).

The Army will field forces that are more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable and sustainable. In cooperation with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the other services, the Army is developing the capability to put combat force anywhere in the world in 96 hours after liftoff—in brigade combat teams for both stability and support operations and for warfighting. The Army will build that capability into a momentum that generates a warfighting division on the ground in 120 hours and five divisions in 30 days.

### **Strategic Responsiveness and Transformation**

To attain the Army Vision's strategic responsiveness goals, the Army has developed a comprehensive transformation campaign plan. The transformation builds on progress

made during the 1990s while proceeding along three major paths—the current *Legacy Force*, the transitional *Interim Force* and the long-term *Objective Force*.

The plan moves all divisions toward a common design that includes:

- internetted command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C<sup>4</sup>ISR) capabilities;
- aggressively reduced logistics footprint and replenishment demand; and
- a common suite of vehicles that are 50 to 70 percent lighter than today's, but just as mobile, lethal and survivable as those of today's armored forces.

These goals could engender a mistaken perception that new vehicles are at the center of transformation. As Major General James M. Dubik, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's deputy commanding general for transformation, points out:

*At the center of transformation is a new concept of fighting. We want to move from a general rule of making contact with the enemy, developing the situation and then maneuvering the force, to one of understanding the situation, maneuvering the force and then making contact at the time and place of our choosing. Because we want to make that conceptual shift, we are looking for new doctrine, new methods of fighting and new equipment to help us fight that way.*

While evolving into the Objective Force, the Army must remain trained and ready to meet National Military Strategy (NMS) requirements. Thus, implementing such profound changes will require careful planning, sustained support, and periodic adjustments. Accordingly, the Army has established intermediate objectives and conditions that must be met before implementing subsequent changes.

**Progress During the 1990s.** Since the end of the Gulf War, the Army has been steadily enhancing its strategic responsiveness, primarily through the Army Strategic Mobility Program. Over the last decade, major accomplishments have included:

- improving CONUS transportation infrastructure to speed outloading of forces and sustainment from 15 installations, 11 depots and 31 airfields and seaports;
- expanding afloat prepositioning from four ships (uploaded with a port-opening package and sustainment) to 15 ships (uploaded with a combat brigade [will expand to two combat brigades in the early 2000s], a port-opening package, sustainment and corps support elements);
- restructuring land-based prepositioning to six combat brigades (three in Europe, two in Southwest Asia and one in Korea); and
- improving theater capability for reception, staging and onward movement of arriving forces and for distribution of sustainment.

An essential element of each of these initiatives has been the development of the information technology capabilities necessary for more effective command and control.

**The Legacy Force.** Today's Army is equipped with major weapon systems that were technologically conceived in the 1970s, built in the 1980s and employed with magnificent results in the 1990s. Today's forces are still unmatched in major theater war operations, but they have limitations. The heavy forces are challenged to deploy rapidly and the light infantry lacks the lethality, survivability and mobility needed for some scenarios.

Despite their shortcomings, these forces have potent capabilities that must be kept viable well into the future. To guarantee warfighting readiness as it transforms over the coming decades, the Army will recapitalize selected formations of armored and aviation systems and enhance lethality and survivability of light forces.

**The Interim Force.** The Army will field the Interim Force in two phases:

- establishing an Initial Force of two brigade combat teams to validate an organizational and operational model for Interim Brigade Combat Teams (IBCTs) and
- fielding five to eight IBCTs that will
- be available for apportionment to the warfighting CINCs and
- provide legitimate full spectrum capabilities for independent, combined arms, joint, combined or multinational operations.

The Initial Force phase has already begun at Fort Lewis, Washington. These two brigade combat teams will eventually be equipped with the soon-to-be-selected, off-the-shelf, C-130 transportable Interim Armored Vehicle (IAV). The initial phase will conclude with fielding of the first battalion set of IAVs.

During the next phase, the two initial brigade combat teams will convert into IBCTs. The first will be available for deployment beginning in December 2001, and the second is projected to be available in December 2002. The Army has programmed for an additional IBCT each fiscal year through the Future Years Defense Plan. By 2005, IBCTs will have the capability to deploy anywhere in the world in 96 hours, given adequate strategic lift.

The Interim Force will operate more effectively in urban environments and provide better protection for units on peacekeeping missions. New concepts for combat support and combat service support will be key to the deployability and sustainability of the Interim Force. It will possess key Objective Force characteristics achievable within the constraints of current technology.

The Interim Force will allow the Army to train soldiers and grow leaders in new doctrinal and organizational concepts, and it will be the vanguard of the Objective Force.

**The Objective Force.** In the long term, the Army will transform itself into the Objective Force, which will provide the NCA an increased range of options for regional engagement, crisis response and sustained land force operations.

The Future Combat Systems (FCS) program will develop concepts for a multimission system of systems to equip the Objective Force. FCS platforms will be able to deploy between theaters by C-17 or C-5 and within theaters by C-130-type aircraft. The goal of the program is to strike an optimum balance between critical performance factors, including strategic, operational and tactical mobility; lethality; survivability; and sustainability. The program will consider promising combat vehicle technologies such as lethality, propulsion, mobility, survivability, robotics, ergonomics and C<sup>4</sup>ISR for inclusion into potential platforms.

### **Strategic Responsiveness Challenges**

**Managing Technology Risks.** Although technology provides the opportunities to meet the Army Vision's strategic responsiveness goals, it also entails risks.

The key to successful transformation lies in the answers to some tough questions:

- How can the Army reduce armored volume in combat vehicles while increasing survivability?
- How can the Army increase deployability without sacrificing survivability and lethality?
- How can the Army reduce in-theater support needs, and thereby reduce strategic lift requirements?

To answer these questions, the Army has challenged the science and technology community to reply with a comprehensive set of technology recommendations plus research and development plans by 2003. Based on the reply, the Army will make technology readiness decisions. When the technologies are mature and the production lines are ready, the Army will begin fielding the Objective Force in unit sets. Organizations will field complete suites of new equipment, with thoroughly integrated systems designed to provide all of the capabilities outlined in the Army Vision.

The Army is asking the right technological questions, and its senior leadership has pledged to go where the answers lead. With the right answers, the Army can design a future Objective Force.

**Optimizing Use of Strategic Lift.** Strategic lift—as well as its supporting en route and destination infrastructure—is now and will remain a limited asset. For FY 2001, Congress helped keep strategic lift improvements on track by appropriating \$2.8 billion

for C-17 aircraft and moving the money to a special airlift account to prevent it from being used for other needs.

Since the Army doesn't have its own strategic lift, it must depend on assets from the United States Transportation Command (and its service components), the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and commercial sources. Today, the Army typically deploys using a combination of

- Air Mobility Command's organic aircraft and chartered commercial aircraft (including commercial aircraft activated as part of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet);
- Military Sealift Command's organic fleet (such as the Large, Medium-Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off ships and Fast Sealift Ships) and chartered commercial vessels; and
- MARAD's Ready Reserve Force ships.

The emerging commercial concepts for high-speed sealift and ultra-large airships (ULAs) have potential for future use in Army deployments. For example, ULAs may make it possible to deploy Army helicopters in mission-ready configurations by air. The Army will help itself by reducing its demand for lift. It will:

- discipline itself so that warfighting units deploy with only their essential combat support and combat service support needs;
- reduce the size of the logistical footprint deployed in the battlespace by
- developing a "reachback" capability in logistics, communications and intelligence and
- exploring emerging concepts such as intermediate staging/support bases;
- evaluate new alternatives and strategies for pre-positioning equipment and supplies; and
- make its equipment, support and sustainment more compatible with commercial lift, thereby leveraging both existing and emerging commercial capabilities.

However, the Army can do only so much on its own. It needs help from those who have the mission and/or the assets to provide strategic lift. To assure that its lift requirements are understood and addressed, the Army will

- continue to work closely with the Air Force and Navy on such programs as the C-17; the Civil Reserve Air Fleet; Large, Medium-Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off ships and prepositioning, both ashore and afloat; and
- maintain close liaison with the commercial transportation industry to identify opportunities for influencing manufacturers to make design choices that enhance the military utility of new-design commercial vehicles.

A high-priority strategic responsiveness goal is to reduce dependence on major air- and seaports because

- they can be bottlenecks in many deployments,
- they are particularly attractive targets for potential adversaries and
- access cannot always be assured.

**Obtaining and Sustaining Funding.** Today's Army is overcommitted, underpaid and underresourced.

Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, agrees that the Army needs increased endstrength to meet its commitments. However, the DoD budget is inadequate to sustain the force at the current level. In September 2000, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published *Budgeting for Defense: Maintaining Today's Forces*, an analysis that highlights the mismatch between NMS requirements and DoD resources. In estimating the annual funding required to sustain today's forces into the future and to modernize them, the CBO determined

- the Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 DoD total appropriation fell \$51 billion short of the level required to sustain the force (\$276 billion versus \$327 billion) and
- the FY 2000 DoD procurement appropriation fell \$37 billion short of the level required to sustain the force (\$53 billion versus \$90 billion).

Inadequate funding frequently tempts—and sometimes compels—senior leaders to divert resources from modern-ization to current operations. To get Army transformation off on the right foot, Congress appropriated roughly double the administration's FY 2001 proposed funding for the initiative. The Army also restructured its FY 2001 budget to fund transformation and is working closely with OSD to resource transformation requirements. In so doing, the Army showed that it doesn't expect Congress to pick up the entire tab, that it will make hard decisions to cut programs that don't fit in with transformation objectives and that it will redirect resources to transformation projects.

Because of the long-term nature of transformation, the Army will need sustained support from the administration and Congress to succeed in transforming itself.

### **The Journey Ahead**

The Army has embarked on a journey from a Vision to plans, programs, and fielded capabilities that provide the strategic responsiveness essential for the 21st century. The question is when the journey will be completed—

- while our nation is at peace, our economy is prosperous and we have strategic perspective and technological potential, or
- on the eve of the next war, when our perspective has narrowed, and our potential is limited by the press of time and the constraints of resources.

The main obstacle is inadequate funding. Freedom isn't free—and some of our bills are past due. Now is the time to reverse years of declining military budgets and to begin reinvesting part of the peace dividend in the institutions that made it possible. Toward that end, the Association of the United States Army strongly advocates

- increasing the overall DoD budget and service endstrengths to levels commensurate with peacetime force commitments, the demands of the NMS and the needs of the people in the armed forces;
- increasing DoD science and technology and procurement budgets to levels that enable the services to acquire strategically responsive capabilities; and
- increasing DoD funding for strategic mobility improvements, including infrastructure, airlift, air refueling, sealift, equipment prepositioning and logistics footprint reduction.

The journey to strategic responsiveness must be completed before our nation's enemies can acquire the asymmetric means to deter or defeat us. A strategically responsive Army—a *transformed* Army—is an essential investment in our nation's security.

Look for future *Defense Reports* to address Army strategic responsiveness issues in greater detail.

DR 00-3 / October 2000