
Defense Report

AUSA



Landpower in Transition—Fielding the Army of the Future

As our Army seeks better ways to prepare for the complexities of modern war, it is still faced with the old bugaboos of high costs and long lead-time required to develop the weapons needed to bring it up to a state-of-the-art level of readiness. Our prime ground combat force is moving ahead with its most extensive modernization in history and, to its great credit, recognized early on that the development cycle for a combat division would have to be drastically curtailed.

To accelerate the marriage of its new tanks, weapons, helicopters and communications equipment with the AirLand Battle doctrine, the Army established what it called a High Technology Test Bed organization and gave the mission to the Ninth Infantry Division at Ft. Lewis, Wash. There the emphasis was put on testing and evaluating technological and operational concepts to improve battlefield communications and control; firepower, mobility, survivability and sustainability of the Army divisions. Additional emphasis was placed on improving the deployability so that the United States could rapidly move lean, mobile, hard-hitting land forces to trouble spots around the world.

The test bed process has been a success and the Ninth Division is on schedule to convert to a fully motorized division in one third the time it had taken in the past.

These positive results convinced the Army leadership to institutionalize the test bed organization as the Army Development and Employment Agency (ADEA). Many of the innovations in tactics and weaponry which were evaluated by ADEA will be used in the design and development of the Army's new 10,000-man light infantry divisions.

These initiatives are helping to ensure that the latest high technology equipment and weapons will actually work as planned and that the Army will be prepared to deploy lean and lethal combat forces to the site of any future battle despite the limited supply of planes and ships to move and sustain them.

Best of all, the Army is proving by these actions that it can fulfill its worldwide commitments despite serious constraints on its monetary and manpower resources.