Command Performance
Telling the Army Story

The Army’s Home—
What Army Installation Management is Doing
to Restore the Army’s Balance

By Lieutenant General Robert Wilson

In order to sustain our all-volunteer force, we will do more to support our Army families during these challenging times. Family support systems—health care, housing, childcare and education designed for the pre-9/11 peacetime Army—must be adapted to sustain an Army at war.

The health of the Army family is and must remain a priority for the Army leadership as long as we choose to depend on volunteers to protect and defend our nation... as long as we depend on that national treasure... our All-Volunteer Force.

The Honorable Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army
Arrival Ceremony, Fort Myer, Virginia, 30 August 2007

The U.S. Army’s Installation Management Command (IMCOM) is all about installation, Soldier and family readiness. It is IMCOM that provides “The Army’s Home” to thousands of men and women in uniform and the families that support them. Our mission is to provide the Army with installation capabilities and services to support expeditionary operations in a time of persistent conflict, and to provide a quality of life for Soldiers and families commensurate with their service.

In his 2008 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush said,

America is a force for hope in the world because we are a compassionate people, and some of the most compassionate Americans are those who have stepped forward to protect us. We must keep faith with all who have risked life and limb so that we might live in freedom and peace... .

Our military families also sacrifice for America. They endure sleepless nights and the daily struggle of providing for children while a loved one is serving far from home. We have a responsibility to provide for them. So I ask you to join me in expanding their access to childcare, creating new hiring preferences for military spouses across the federal government and allowing our troops to transfer their unused education benefits to their spouses or children. Our military families serve our nation, they inspire our nation and tonight our nation honors them.

The President’s assessment rings true with the Army leaders, Soldiers, civilians and families who make up the Army Family.

Army Chief of Staff General George W. Casey, Jr. has stated that today’s Army is out of balance.

This series is published on an occasional basis by the Association of the United States Army to highlight the activities of Army commands. The content does not necessarily represent the position of AUSA or its members.

Association of the United States Army
2425 Wilson Boulevard • Arlington, Virginia 22201
www.ausa.org
Demand is greater than supply, the Army lacks sufficient strategic depth, and Soldiers and families need more “dwell” time between deployments. He has challenged Army leaders to configure a strategy to place the Army in balance by 2011, through four imperatives:

- **Transform** to meet the demands of the 21st century;
- **Prepare** Soldiers for success in current operations;
- **Reset** to restore readiness and depth for future operations; and
- **Sustain** our Soldiers, families and civilians.

IMCOM has stepped up to the challenge and will use the following strategy to achieve balance by 2011.

**Supporting the Four Imperatives**

**Transform.** For IMCOM, transformation is inclusive; it’s how we think, how we develop our leaders, empower our workforce, partner with industry to achieve technologically connected homes, and build energy efficient and smart facilities. IMCOM must keep in step with an Army that is transforming.

We are the Army’s leader in Lean Six Sigma efficiencies. We are proud to be the source of the largest portion of Lean Six Sigma financial benefits to the Army. IMCOM transformation is about leadership and people; it means looking for ways to be innovative and partner with industry and communities as we develop “The Army’s Home” of the future.

We are reshaping our installation footprint through Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) and Global Defense Posture Realignment. Simultaneously, we are converting to a modular force, Growing the Army and operationalizing the Army Reserve. We will transform our headquarters and regional headquarters structures and locations in the years ahead, moving IMCOM headquarters to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and consolidating regional headquarters both overseas and in the United States. These moves and consolidations are in response to BRAC law and to improve efficiency and effectiveness. We are also investing heavily in our facilities through military construction (MILCON), services and programs. Our goal is to have premier Army installations across the globe and connect geographically dispersed Soldiers and families across all components. We are focused on improving Soldier and family readiness and providing a quality of life second to none.

IMCOM is also transforming the way services are provided on installations through implementation of Common Levels of Support (CLS). CLS is a coordinated, corporate strategy for transforming installation services management by focusing on service delivery costs and performance. Through CLS, the Army expects to achieve three objectives:

- **Standardized installation services:** Installation customers receive the same elements of service, to the same level of service, regardless of the installation at which they are located (flexible for unique missions, geographic or demographic considerations)
- **Accountability for service delivery performance:** Garrisons report service delivery performance quarterly and are held responsible for meeting performance targets
- **Equitable distribution of available resources:** Available resources will be distributed effectively across garrisons so each has adequate resources to deliver installation services to an expected standard.

Common Levels of Support is IMCOM’s principal method to standardize and resource services across Army installations. To Soldier’s and families, it means better quality of life because of its flexibility in enabling installation leaders to make management decisions that are oriented on a standard delivery of services in an efficient and predictive manner.

**Prepare.** Soldiers deserve the best training available and are counting on their leadership
to prepare them to meet future challenges. We are providing broadening experiences for both Soldiers and families through modern training support systems, distance learning opportunities, continuing education, Army Family Team Building programs, and installations configured to meet long-term life skills and contribute to family readiness.

IMCOM supports the Operational and Generating Forces through modern facilities, ranges and maneuver areas where Soldiers and units prepare for the rigors of an increasingly uncertain, complex and dangerous global environment. These facilities and training areas are combat enablers. They provide for tough and realistic training across the full spectrum of conflict and help produce competent, cohesive units and formations. Army training support systems consist of home station training, institutional training and combat training centers. Installations form the backbone of training support through the land, ranges and facilities that support the Army’s training.

The Army’s new Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, states that

**effective training is the cornerstone of operational success. Through training, Soldiers, leaders, and units achieve the tactical and technical competence that builds confidence and allows them to conduct successful operations across the spectrum of conflict.**

Army installations will continue to provide the facilities, ranges and training areas necessary to meet the needs of the best Army in the world and to be responsive to the Operational and Generating Forces. As doctrine, training and equipment evolve into the 21st century, and as Future Combat Systems are fielded, Army Installations must evolve to support the training requirements of an expeditionary Army.

**Family readiness is key to Soldier readiness.** Family Readiness Groups (FRG’s) and Virtual Family Readiness Groups are integral to the readiness and support of Soldiers and Families. The FRG functions as a communications and support mechanism, bringing information and physical and emotional support to families. Working closely with families, installation services, commanders and rear detachments, they resolve important Soldier and family issues.

The commander’s family readiness support assistants (FRSAs) work closely with Family Readiness Groups and family members in managing the stress of deployment and assisting them in dealing with family readiness issues. By the end of last year, 770 of the planned 1,029 FRSAs had been hired to work with battalion-level commands.

The Virtual Family Readiness Group Internet system provides the functionality of a traditional FRG in an online setting to assist in meeting the needs of geographically dispersed Army Soldiers and families. It connects to other online sites, such as MyArmyLifetoo.com and MilitaryOneSource.com, to provide a wealth of information and assistance.

To further connect geographically dispersed Soldiers and families, we are establishing the Army Integrated Family Support Network. The network will provide information, referrals and training. Initial support for this program jump-started the funding for 80 community liaisons, the eArmyFamily messaging system, and training for Army Community Service and Reserve Family Program staffs. This year, we expect to reach Initial Operational Capability in March and Full Operational Capability by September.

**Reset.** General Creighton Abrams, former Chief of Staff, Army, said, “[P]eople are not just in the Army, they are the Army.” The priority to “reset” also applies to the human element. We must provide Soldiers and families the time and support needed to reset, refresh and prepare for future deployments and contingencies.

To ensure they are prepared for future deployments and a wide range of contingencies,
we must refresh and reset Soldiers and families with the same attention that we devote to resetting equipment and training readiness. The Army’s goal is to increase the dwell time between deployments and to make as much dwell time as possible at a premium quality of life. To that end we are focusing energy on high-quality, consistent services to maximize pre- and post-mobilization time and deployment preparation while making post-mobilization and redeployment efficient and effective. Our Directorates of Information Management (DOIMs) and Battle Command Training Centers are creating reachback so that units in sanctuary to deploy are seeing and planning the next mission on the streets of Baghdad. In concert with Army Materiel Command, our Directorates of Logistics (DOLs) are at the center of quickly rebuilding our equipment for reissue in the reset process. Additionally, through programs under the Army Medical Action Plan, Soldiers and families can better deal with the stresses, behavioral health problems and injuries associated with war.

Our Soldier and Family Assistance Centers are the single entry point for families and caregivers and serve as a safe haven where Warriors in Transition and families can gather for mutual support and comradeship to aid physical, spiritual and mental healing.

Single Soldiers also go through a process of reset between deployments. The Army Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) program provides morale, welfare and recreation support to single Soldiers not provided through other programs. A standardized Army BOSS program is being developed to enhance single Soldiers’ quality of life and increase readiness and retention. Installation programs and services apply extensively to the human element.

**Sustain.** In the October 2007 edition of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Green Book, General Casey wrote,

_The Army has long been the strength of the nation. . . . Our Soldiers and their Families epitomize what is best about America. They carry heavy burdens in today’s world and face a hard road ahead. Yet their willingness to sacrifice, to build a better future for others and to preserve our way of life is the reason our Army is the Strength of the Nation._

We realize that it is the families who support the Soldiers who support the Army that defends our nation. The quality of life Soldiers and families experience during a tour of duty weighs heavily on a Soldier’s decision regarding an Army career. These experiences directly affect the Army's ability to retain experienced Soldiers and leaders in the all-volunteer force. Equally important is how potential recruits perceive the Army’s quality of life, for it directly impacts the Army’s continuing ability to attract, recruit and maintain the all-volunteer force.

**The Army Family Covenant**

The Honorable Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army, introduced the Army Family Covenant in his opening remarks to last fall’s AUSA Annual Meeting. He recognized the commitment and increasing sacrifices Army families make every day and noted that the strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their families.

Secretary Geren and General Casey committed the Army to providing Soldiers and families a quality of life commensurate with their service, providing Army families a strong and supportive environment where they can thrive, and building a partnership with Army families that enhances family strength and resilience. That commitment is the framework of the Army Family Covenant. The Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (ACSIM) will lead the effort to make the Army Family Covenant a reality through the Soldier-Family Action Plan.

At Army installations worldwide, Army leaders stood in front of Soldiers and families to sign the Army Family Covenant and demonstrate their commitment to Soldier and family readiness.
and quality of life. The Army is committed to standardizing and funding existing family programs and services; increasing accessibility and quality of health care; improving Soldier and family housing; ensuring excellence in schools, youth services and child care; and expanding education and employment opportunities for family members.

**Standardize and Fund Existing Family Programs**

By the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 IMCOM had invested $100 million to help standardize and fund existing family programs and services to Army installations most affected by deployments to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. In FY 2008, the Army doubled its investment in family programs across all components and installations by investing $1.4 billion a year for the next four years. This funding supports four major programs: Army Community Services, Child Care Services, Youth Services, and Soldier and Morale Welfare Recreation Services.

**Health Care**

Last year, the Army implemented the Army Medical Action Plan (AMAP) so that Soldiers are supported, treated and vocationally rehabilitated in preparation for a successful return to duty or transition to active citizenship. AMAP ensures the needs of the Army, the Soldiers and their families are jointly met. Its mission is defined by the Warrior Ethos of “I will never leave a fallen comrade.” It identifies and implements improvements in the Army’s system of caring for, supporting and providing benefits for Warriors in Transition, and establishes long-term solutions for a lifetime of support.

In his State of the Union Address, the President urged Congress to act promptly on the proposals put forward by a bipartisan Commission on Care for America’s Returning Wounded Warriors, headed by former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala. This distinguished panel urged modernization of the military disability system, more aggressive treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and brain injuries, and a strengthening of support to families. The panel also recommended that those whose injuries render them incapable of remaining in the military receive an immediate lifetime annuity, coupled with lifetime medical care. The Army deeply respects the service and sacrifices of our veterans, and strongly supports this initiative.

**Soldier and Family Housing**

The privatization of family housing via the Residential Communities Initiative has dramatically improved the lives of more than 80,000 Families. At the end of 2008, we will have privatized 38 locations with 83,080 homes. By the end of 2009, we will have privatized 44 locations with 88,026 homes. Additionally, the Army is upgrading 1,200 unaccompanied personnel housing units and introducing 30,600 new and renovated barracks spaces. The Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) is building 19 new post exchanges with an investment of $170 million, and the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) is building 15 new commissaries with an investment of $220 million over the next three years. In partnership with AAFES, we are using the most innovative concept in city planning and building “life style centers” at our larger installations.

**Excellence in Schools**

The Army is committed to ensuring our children receive a quality education. Army Child and Youth School Liaison Officers provide installation commanders, garrison commanders and parents information about on- and off-post schools and assist military families in achieving a quality education for their children. The Army is working with the Department of Defense and the Department of Education to better define our education requirements and enable community access to impact aid earlier in the year.
Child and Youth Services and School Liaison and Transition Services provide strategies and resources for garrisons, school districts and parents or guardians. School Liaison Officers help military connected students, their parents and guidance counselors face the challenges of transitioning between school systems and dealing with the impact of multiple parental deployments.

**Child and Youth Services**

Child and Youth Services are mission-essential for active and reserve component Soldiers and families. Army Child and Youth Programs are force multipliers, critical to the sustainment and retention of the all-volunteer force. They provide for a healthy environment for children and youth and reduce conflicts between parental responsibilities and Soldier mission requirements.

In fulfillment of the Army Family Covenant, to ensure excellence in schools, youth services, and child care, a large number of changes are in effect. For all families, garrison child care registration fees are eliminated, off-post child care registration fees in Army-sponsored programs are eliminated, and fees for extended-duty-day child care hours are eliminated.

For families with deployed Soldiers, fees for garrison-operated full-day child care programs for working parents and students are reduced, as are fees for hourly child care. Fees for Army off-post programs for geographically dispersed working parents and students are also reduced. Child care hours are extended from 55 hours per week to 70–80 hours per week at garrisons impacted by deployments.

Respite child care for families of deployed Soldiers has been increased from 5 to 16 hours per child per month. Our goal in 2008 is to expand respite child care in the reserve component.

For Wounded Warriors, full- or part-day fees in Army-operated or -sponsored child care programs are reduced, and hourly child care in Army-operated programs during medical treatments is free.

The Army has programmed funds to expand child development centers, programs for school-age children, family child care homes and child development homes across all Army installations.

These improvements in child care are immediate in fulfillment of the Army’s commitment to families.

The Chief of Staff, Army has put child development centers at the front of construction programming. The Army built 137 child development centers prior to 2006 and 42 more in the past two years. We will have built 91 more by the end of 2013. By the end of the current program, the Army will have very nearly doubled the number of newly constructed child development centers.

Army youth programs, particularly those impacting after-school needs, play a critical role in meeting family requirements during deployments. Youth leadership forums, camps and recreational and educational field trips also help teens deal with the stresses of parental deployments. The Army will have built 124 more youth centers by the end of 2012.

School Liaison Officers are key to ensuring a smooth transition for our mobile Army students. They ensure that schools are aware of and can deal with the challenges facing our students during deployments. The Army is adding 50 additional School Liaison Officers. We are also providing additional training for school personnel who work with military students at highly impacted schools.

The construction of more child development centers and youth centers and improvements in child care programs, youth services and school transition and support programs demonstrate the importance placed on making the Army a great environment to raise children.

**Employment**

The Army Spouse Employment Partnership mutually benefits the Army and corporate America.
Army spouses, who “restart” their careers with each transfer, will find greater opportunities for employment, and corporate America can tap into a readily available, diverse and talented pool of employees. The partnership provides Army spouses the opportunity to attain financial security and achieve employment goals through career mobility and enhanced employment options. There are currently 31 federal and corporate partners, through which more than 23,000 spouses have obtained employment.

In his State of the Union Address, President Bush asked the Congress to create new hiring preferences for military spouses across the federal government. There are three proposal areas which would answer the need to expand support to military spouse careers:

- to significantly expand an existing pilot program allowing military spouses to continue education at local universities or technical schools through career advancement accounts;
- to create merit-based military spouse internships within the federal government to open the door to a possible federal service career; and
- to grant military spouses direct hire status for placement in jobs, where they qualify, anywhere in the federal government.

All of these proposals, if enacted, fulfill the President’s call to provide improved support to military families.

**Education**

The Army supports legislative changes that could make Montgomery GI Bill benefits transferable. The Montgomery GI Bill generally covers 36 months of education worth about $40,000. Today, 97 percent of eligible Soldiers enroll, but only 70 percent use the benefit. Few Soldiers use all of it. Legislative changes would allow unused benefits to be transferred to family members.

**Looking to the Future**

We must accelerate our momentum in the concept of sustainability, using our nation’s resources to meet the Army’s present needs without compromising those resources for future generations. We must make sure our Soldiers and families are supported by installations that have sustainable operations now and in the future.

The Army’s comprehensive programs and successful innovations are improving the environment and saving energy across its installations, while at the same time sustaining training readiness and quality of life. New ways of doing business that support clean-water generation, natural-resource management, waste reduction and recycling, energy efficiency and alternative energy sources can reduce the cost of doing business both at the installation and in the theater of operations. Sustainability, therefore, directly links natural and energy resources to Army business transformation.

Two Army strategies are leading us further toward our sustainability goals:

**The Army Strategy for the Environment** stretches our ideas of environmental stewardship so that we understand the interdependence of our mission, the environment and community neighbors. It focuses on shifting paradigms and rethinking both present and future mission needs. It moves us from a traditional, compliance-based approach to a mission-oriented, systems-based approach to environmental stewardship. From this strategy, the environment becomes a mission enhancer rather than a mission detractor. It will lead us to better training lands, improved recreational opportunities, healthier communities and new collaborative partnerships.

For example, we are improving the way in which we design, manage and use training and testing ranges. Working together, trainers and environmental specialists are creating new range-management practices and implementing new technologies to control erosion, prevent pollution,
manage forests and protect wildlife so that Soldier readiness will not be impaired. Additionally, the Army is working with conservation partners across the country to create natural resource buffers near our installations that will keep suburban sprawl from interfering with installation operations as we grow the Army. By leveraging $115 million in partnership contributions from nonmilitary organizations, we already have conserved more than 80,000 acres near 22 Army installations to protect ranges from incompatible land uses.

The Army Energy Strategy for Installations was implemented two years ago to counter our growing demand for energy and water; reduce expenses and enhance the use of new technologies and renewable energy. This strategy established the framework to meet the present and future challenges of rising energy prices, energy shortages, aging infrastructure, and a changing global environment, while achieving the Army’s mission and objectives.

The Army Energy Strategy sets broad goals for the management of energy and water resources through 2030. It is founded on five initiatives:

- eliminating energy waste in existing facilities;
- increasing energy efficiency in renovation and new construction;
- reducing dependency on fossil fuels;
- conserving water resources; and
- improving energy security.

Taken together, the Army Strategy for the Environment and the Army Energy Strategy put installations across the Army on the path to innovation, wise stewardship of resources and transformation into more efficient and enjoyable Army communities in the future.

The need for future thinking extends to facilities as well. According to Tad Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health:

We will be able to design buildings that will be relevant to the changing mission, in the right place, and built on time. We’ll design buildings to be reconfigurable for mission change, to be healthy and enjoyable to live and work in, and to be built with sustainable materials. We need these buildings to be more energy efficient, and do a better job conserving energy and water. These buildings will reduce our energy use by over 30 percent from today’s standards.

Communities of the Future

Our installations will be the future Army Communities. They will continue to adapt to the needs of an expeditionary Army and to the fielding of Future Combat Systems. We will improve our capabilities to support geographically dispersed Soldiers and families. We will continue to provide healthy, safe and attractive communities of which Soldiers and family members can be proud.

Families deserve a community support network and a quality of life that complements their commitment and sacrifices. We are committed to providing Soldiers and families a strong supportive environment where they can thrive, a quality of life that is commensurate with their service. Our future installations will be family- and environmentally-friendly, tailored to readiness, flexible, adaptable and efficient.

We are The Army’s Home, now and in the future.

**LTG Robert Wilson**
Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management/
Commanding General, Installation Management Command.