The measure of success for Army Acquisition is the success of the soldier. The goal of every weapon system program, contract, investment and experiment is to provide our soldiers with the decisive advantage on the battlefield. The battle landscape, however, is changing. Our enemies are becoming more technologically savvy; they now also wage war across the electronic spectrum. Tomorrow’s war may well be fought on altogether different and unanticipated landscapes. At the same time, equipping our soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan for the fight today remains a top priority.

Sequestration has added yet another challenging dimension to this dilemma. As Sir Winston Churchill once said, “Gentlemen, we’re out of money; now we have to think.”
Acquisition must become more adaptive, versatile and efficient to provide our soldiers increased capabilities with fewer resources. Over the past year, we’ve had great success in three crucial areas: developing a 30-year modernization plan to strategize our investments, holistically reviewing and planning our contracting operations, and investing in our most important asset—the Acquisition workforce. We’ll continue to build on our success in these three areas to use limited fiscal resources to meet the present and future needs of our warfighters.

Strategic Modernization Planning

As it has throughout the nation’s history, the Army continues to play a significant role in safeguarding our security. As we look to the future, we recognize that security threats, the technologies they employ, and the scenarios our soldiers must face continue to evolve. We cannot afford to let the curve of technological change level the conditions of any potential future conflict. Army Acquisition will continue to pursue investments to provide our soldiers with the best capabilities in the world.

A notable challenge, however, is the simple reality that fiscal pressures have ended our ability to meet these challenges with ample resources. We therefore have no choice but to make affordable, prudent and well-informed investments in modernized Army capabilities. As Army history repeatedly shows, this is an institution that thrives on adaptation and change. To equip the Army of the future, we must undertake a comprehensive and strategic approach to Army equipment modernization in which we adhere to long-term planning and affordable equipping priorities.

One major accomplishment from the past year is the development of a 30-year modernization plan, which combines a detailed analysis of investments in science and technology (S&T) and materiel development linked to emerging threats and capability gaps across a 30-year time frame. In addition, the average utilization rate of the platform is mapped against its half-life to better enable planning of the next generation of capabilities. The output of this process will be a detailed road map for our future capabilities across the acquisition life cycle, linking S&T investments with our programs of record, which, in turn, are mapped to long-term sustainment planning.

At the outset, our analysis is driven by strategic guidance developed through the national military strategy and joint warfighting concepts. As materiel developers, our program executive officers are working to lay out our current and planned capabilities across a 30-year horizon. This covers those capabilities we are currently fielding, those in development today and those we anticipate commencing in the near future. Laying out a new road map for the future is essential to our strategic modernization planning effort.

The Army is also reassessing its investments in S&T across all portfolios to ensure that such developments are appropriately linked to our acquisition road maps and that they facilitate enabling technologies as potential insertion opportunities into our programs of record. A significant part of this effort is assessing technologies that can fundamentally change the way that we fight in the future.

This undertaking is not the Army’s alone. Research supporting future capabilities must complement—not duplicate—what we undertake. Our planning across each portfolio of Army capability must reflect our partnerships with the private sector, other services, federally funded research and development centers, national labs, academia and our allies. Our strategic modernization planning must also take deliberate account of long-term sustainment needs and priorities. The development of our 30-year modernization plan was a critical step in planning our investment strategies to meet today’s needs while preparing for the future fight.

Contracting

In addition to planning for the long-term modernization of our systems, we must also focus on our contracting enterprise, which affects every Army mission worldwide. In fiscal year (FY) 2012, the Army obligated $108 billion—30 percent of DoD spending and 21 percent of overall federal

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Our focus in contracting is to provide the goods and services needed by our warfighters in a timely manner and serve as good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

To that end, over the past year we instituted quarterly contracting enterprise reviews (CERs) across all Army contracting organizations. The CERs measure all buying commands against metrics developed to reveal the health and quality of Army contracting, particularly those metrics that provide insight into areas that historically receive the most scrutiny at the highest levels of government. These sessions provide senior Army leaders with recurring opportunities to cross-share best practices and communicate vertically and horizontally across the contracting enterprise.

Army commands now have access to real-time information that measures progress in such areas as fiscal obligation rates, competition and small-business participation. Implementing these multilitered reviews has enabled the contracting community to work together at the highest levels and reinforces the fact that contracting leaders must plan, execute and oversee contracting to achieve command-specific, Armywide goals. As a result of the establishment of the CERs, Army leadership has a heightened awareness of the desired end state, resulting in dramatic improvements in every metric covered by the CER.

While the CERs are an important first step to integrating the contracting function across the Army, we must continue to build on their success. The Army contracting enterprise is a large and complex organization. Management of its significant and diverse spending can be challenging. One primary goal this year is to build upon the CERs and strengthen oversight of spending through incremental policy changes. Efforts will focus on several areas: coordinating enterprise-wide planning, establishing customer-focused metrics and forums to incentivize customer service, maximizing commodity alignment to develop expertise and drive efficiencies, establishing strategic sourcing priorities, and synchronizing human capital planning to holistically develop the contracting workforce. In this fiscal environment, we must contract smarter and more efficiently. Synchronizing the efforts of our contracting enterprise is a critical first step toward accomplishing this goal.

**Acquisition Workforce**

No policy, plan or process will be effective without the expertise and work ethic to implement it. The Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) is a 42,000-strong workforce made up of both civilian and military members located within every major command of the Army and governed by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), which focuses mainly on the professionalization of the defense Acquisition workforce and requires that all members of the workforce be certified in the Acquisition career field and level required of their position.

In December 2010, the Army Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) instituted a general officer- and civilian Senior Executive Service-level quarterly forum to address DAWIA requirements with a specific focus on certification rates. At the end of FY 2010, the certification and within-grace-period rate for the AAC was 87.4 percent. As of May, the certification and within-grace-period rate was 93 percent.

With the Army’s success, the overall defense Acquisition workforce certification level has increased. This top-level focus ensures our Acquisition workforce is certified in accordance with DAWIA and supports the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics) Better Buying Power 2.0 initiative to increase the professionalism and prestige of the Acquisition workforce.

The increase in certification of our workforce has been a tremendous success over the past year and represents the Army’s continuing commitment to our most important asset—our people. Certification and education, however, are only two aspects of professional development. We must continue to improve the experience, professionalism and leadership of our Acquisition workforce members. Opportunities to broaden professionalism are offered in numerous Acquisition career development and broadening programs, including developmental assignments, acquisition boot camps and acquisition leadership challenge programs. These programs and opportunities enable our Acquisition professionals to grow their expertise and expand to ensure that we continue to succeed in our acquisition mission. Continuous learning is a vital precept to ensure our acquisition professionals maintain current and relevant skills and expertise as well as achieve our purpose to secure an agile and adaptive professional Acquisition workforce.

In this challenging fiscal environment, we must remain committed to providing our soldiers with the systems, goods and services to accomplish today’s mission, while investing in critical technologies and modernizing our systems to prepare for tomorrow.

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*In January, Heidi Shyu visited the 401st Army Field Support Brigade to see how some technology is fielded. She met with soldiers at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, who use the equipment on a daily basis.*