



Future Combat Systems: The Future is Now

Future Combat Systems is a joint, networked, system of systems (SoS). It consists of 18 individual systems, the network and, most important, the Soldier. Future Combat Systems are connected via a common operating environment, battle command software, communications and computers, and intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance systems. This overarching building-block approach to the network architecture will enable levels of joint connectivity, situational awareness and understanding, and synchronized operations heretofore unachievable. FCS will network existing systems, those already under development and those to be developed to meet the requirements of the Army's Future Force Unit of Action (UA).

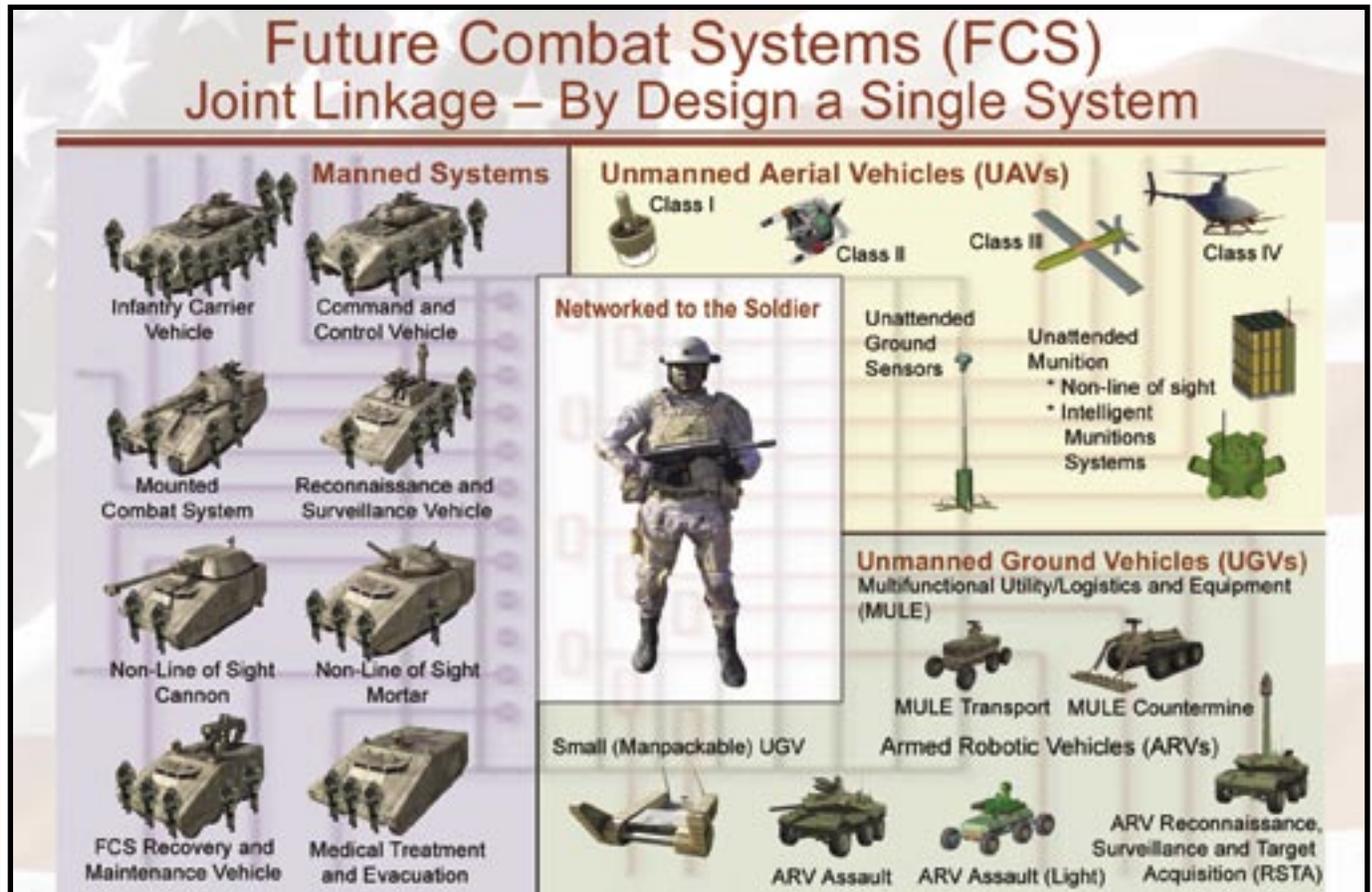
FCS includes 18+1+1 systems consisting of:

- unattended ground sensors (UGS);
- two unattended munitions—the Non-Line of Sight–Launch System (NLOS-LS) and Intelligent Munitions System (IMS);

- four classes of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) organic to platoon, company, battalion and UA echelons;
- three classes of unmanned ground vehicles—the Armed Robotic Vehicle (ARV), the Small Unmanned Ground Vehicle (SUGV) and the Multifunctional Utility/Logistics and Equipment (MULE) vehicle; and
- eight manned ground vehicles;
- plus the network (18+1);
- plus the Soldier (18+1+1).

FCS is the core building block of the Army's Future Force. The FCS-equipped UA will consist of three FCS-equipped combined-arms battalions (CABs), a non-line-of-sight (NLOS) cannon battalion, a reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition (RSTA) squadron, a forward support battalion (FSB), a brigade intelligence and communications

Future Combat Systems



more . . .

This is the first in a series of discussion papers on
key issues relevant to the U.S. Army's Transformation.



Future Combat Systems (continued)

company (BICC) and a headquarters company. The FCS-equipped UAs will be the Army's future tactical warfighting echelon, a dominant ground combat force that complements the dominant joint team. Although optimized for offensive operations, the FCS-equipped UA will have the ability to execute a full spectrum of operations. FCS will improve the strategic deployability and operational maneuver capability of ground combat formations without sacrificing lethality or survivability.

Evolutionary acquisition will be used to develop, field and upgrade FCS throughout its lifecycle. On 22 July 2004, Army officials announced plans to accelerate the delivery of selected Future Combat Systems to the Current Force. The plan expands the scope of the program's System Development and Demonstration (SDD) phase by adding four discrete "spirals" of capabilities at two-year increments for the Current Forces. Spiral 1 will begin fielding in Fiscal Year 2008 and consist of prototypes fielded to the Evaluation Brigade Combat Team (BCT) for their use and evaluation.

Following successful evaluation, production and fielding of Spiral 1 to Current Force units will commence in 2010. This process will be repeated for each successive spiral. By 2014, the Army force structure will include one UA equipped with all 18+1 FCS core systems and additional modular UAs with embedded FCS capability. This is the centerpiece of this adjustment—providing the Current Force with FCS capability sooner rather than later.

FCS is now in the SDD phase. The FCS acquisition program was approved by the Defense Acquisition Board (DAB) in May 2003. FCS requirements and key performance parameters (KPPs) were revalidated by the Army Requirements Oversight Council (AROC) on 30 June 2004. Presentation for Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) review and approval is scheduled for 14 October 2004. A DAB review is scheduled for 18 November 2004. FCS has been designated a Joint Services program, and an Army and Marine Joint Program Office (JPO) is being established.



Future Combat Systems

Future Combat Systems-Equipped Unit of Action (UA) Commonality with Current Force

(Fewer than 4,000 Soldiers in each brigade)

Stryker UA



Standard maneuver brigades with organic combined-arms capabilities

Heavy UA



Infantry UA



FCS UA





FCS-equipped UA design influenced Heavy and Infantry modular brigades.

Common design characteristics:

- Modular
- Campaign-quality with joint and expeditionary capabilities
- Combined-arms battalions
- Increased reconnaissance and surveillance at lower echelons
- Organic fires battalion
- Organic logistics support battalion

FCS enables a campaign-quality Army with joint and expeditionary capabilities.