Clear The Way

By Major General R.L. Van Antwerp
Commandant, U.S. Army Engineer School

Forging our Future - Shaping Engineers for Joint and Multinational Operations is not simply the theme for ENFORCE 2004 (26-30 April), it reflects the current operational environment and state of our Regimental transformation. In the last two years, we have gone from preparing for transformation to transforming. One of the featured articles in this issue of the bulletin, "The Future Engineer Force," outlines how we are shaping the Regiment at this moment—forging our future to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. This transformation must be a rapid but purposeful change. As engineers, we provide a unique set of core competencies that critically enable the combatant commander and the joint team with the mobility required to provide a position of advantage at the tactical through strategic levels. We'll retain the best of our current capabilities and attributes and develop others that will increase relevance and readiness in joint and multinational coalitions. To continue to provide this support in the future, we will reexamine and challenge our most fundamental institutional assumptions, paradigms, and procedures.

In this issue, we have published our thought process to stimulate a "no-holds-barred" discussion here at ENFORCE—between leaders at all levels—and obtain feedback so we can make adjustments where necessary. I encourage those of you who cannot attend in person to send us your comments.

The first installment of the transformation framework is currently occurring in the 3d Infantry Division and the 101st Airborne Division. In accordance with the Chief of Staff of the Army's guidance, these two divisions are being reorganized into more modular, deployable, lethal, integrated, and joint interoperable units. The first installment of the Engineer Model clearly depicts a joint and expeditionary flavor and defines what engineers must bring to the fight and how. It is the starting point for partnering on organizational solutions, equipment, doctrine, standards, and training strategies. It also becomes the reference point for the hard discussion we must have on joint interdependencies—we must become more interdependent if we are to optimize our support to the joint force commander. That means taking a hard look at divesting ourselves of certain "traditional" Army engineer capabilities. Equipment and organizations must be common for all engineer forces as much as possible. Imagine the increased flexibility the joint force commander has if a bridge unit in the Marine Corps has the same modular design as that in the Army, and both branches undergo the same training regardless of component.

We are not only looking at transformation from the joint perspective but from the multinational perspective as well. We will enlist the members of the joint and multinational engineer communities attending ENFORCE this year to share their experiences and assist us in ensuring that engineers remain a relevant and ready force. Their perspective is invaluable as we refine the design of the Future Engineer Force.

I am looking forward to this year's ENFORCE being a celebration of engineers and the many achievements that have directly contributed to our nation's success in Iraq and Afghanistan. I feel an immense pride in our Regiment and our soldiers when I hear or read about the great works engineers are doing around the world. As many of you have experienced, these successes have not come without a price. We have lost comrades in arms, friends, and family in this Global War on Terrorism. I would like to close by paying respects to our most recent losses in the Engineer Regiment. Essayons!

Captain Matthew August	1st Engineer Battalion, Fort Riley, Kansas
Sergeant Dennis Corral	1st Engineer Battalion, Fort Riley, Kansas
Sergeant First Class James Hoffman	1st Engineer Battalion, Fort Riley, Kansas
Staff Sergeant Sean Landrus	1st Engineer Battalion, Fort Riley, Kansas
Sergeant Travis Moothart	1st Engineer Battalion, Fort Riley, Kansas
Captain Eric Paliwoda	4th Engineer Battalion, Fort Carson, Colorado
Sergeant Benjamin Gilman	41st Engineer Battalion, Fort Drum, New York
Specialist David Goldberg	52d Engineer Battalion Fort Carson, Colorado
Specialist Joshua Neusche	203d Engineer Battalion, Joplin, Missouri
Private First Class Kristian Parker	205th Engineer Battalion, Slidell, Louisiana
Private First Class Duane Longstreth	307th Engineer Battalion, Fort Bragg, North Carolina
Sergeant First Class Robert Rooney	379th Engineer Company, Nashua, New Hampshire
Private First Class Jonathan Cheatham	489th Engineer Battalion, Camden, Arkansas
Specialist Gabriel Palacios	588th Engineer Battalion, Fort Hood, Texas
Sergeant First Class Dan Gabrielson	652d Engineer Battalion, Spooner, Wisconsin
Specialist Brandon Tobler	671st Engineer Brigade, Portland, Oregon
Staff Sergeant Kenneth Hendrickson	957th Engineer Company, Bismarck, North Dakota
Sergeant Keith Smette	957th Engineer Company, Bismarck, North Dakota