

# Clear The Way

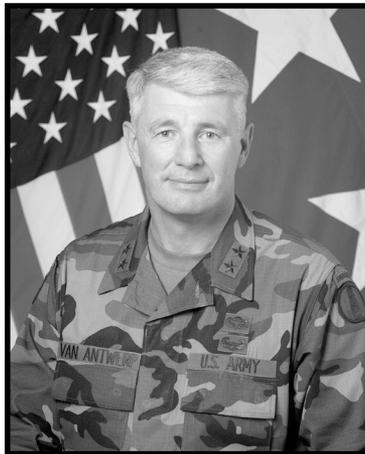
By Major General R.L. Van Antwerp  
Commandant, U.S. Army Engineer School



In the last issue of *Engineer*, we explored the (then named) Objective Engineer Force and its path to transforming our Regiment. As you know by now, we are no longer using the term Objective Force; instead our focus is the Future Force as we continue the Transformation mission.

This issue of the bulletin is focused on aspects of the major combat operations phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom. You will be provided some insights into what happened during the preparation for, and execution of, this complex, tremendously challenging and superbly executed engineer support to Operation Iraqi Freedom. I expect that discussions of the following articles in this bulletin will take place at your professional development (officer and NCO) and command information classes: "Victory Sappers: V Corps Engineers in Operation Iraqi Freedom" by Colonel Martin; "The Inland Petroleum Distribution System" by Captain DeSimone; "Engineer Operations in Turkey Support Operation Iraqi Freedom" by Lieutenant Colonel Nosal; "Army Diver Missions in Iraq" by First Lieutenants West and Inskeep; "Engineer Operations in Urban Environments" by Lieutenant Colonel Funkhouser; "Helping Iraqis Rebuild Iraq" by Colonel Vossler; and "Prime-Power Considerations" by Captain Van Epps. There is much more that we will publish in future issues of this bulletin as we write the next chapters of Army engineer history.

Even though Iraq and Afghanistan remain combat zones, we must begin the analysis and begin to answer "What happened?" From 3 to 5 November 2003, the senior leaders of the Regiment will gather in Savannah, Georgia, to continue the after-action review (AAR) process at the regimental level by coming to grips with the question "Why did it happen?" and begin the discussion on "What do we need to do about it?" We will seek to identify the truly critical aspects of how the lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom apply to engineers in the Current and Future Forces, as well as develop thoughts on how to implement those lessons learned into our Army Transformation efforts.



Seek out lessons learned articles and AARs from engineer units and senior engineer leaders as they are published. They are powerful and valuable learning tools. In some way, virtually all of our Regiment has been affected by the events of the past two years, and I solicit your comments and ideas to help us in the transformation of our Regiment.

It is with immense pride that I serve as the Commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School. These past months have seen the truth in the phrase: "One Corps—One Regiment—One Team." It has been especially gratifying to see the outstanding readiness displayed on mobilization and arrival at Fort

Leonard Wood of our U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard engineers. Those citizen soldiers have answered the call and have done what they were asked to do. With nearly 75 percent of our engineer soldiers in the Reserve Component, there is just no way all the engineer missions would have been accomplished by relying only on the active forces.

It is also important at this time to acknowledge the tremendous support our soldiers have received from their family members. Separation, and especially separation involving a family member in combat, is an extra stress component that requires love and special handling. Family Readiness Groups have remained key elements to keeping the home fires burning and an information and support group that lend stability to a traumatic situation. Thanks to all of you.

As the Army's builders, we construct our future from the groundwork of our past experiences. Our true heritage and the history we hold dear was merged from the cement of our values and the blood of our heroes into the enduring concrete that is our Regiment. Our Regiment is people, and when we suffer the losses that we did recently, we must take their inspired service and ensure that those who follow as Army engineers know of their exploits and deeds while facing enemy fire in direct combat operations. We dedicate all that we do to their memory. Essayons!

Sergeant First Class Paul Smith  
Private First Class Jason Meyer  
Staff Sergeant Hollinsaid Lincoln  
Private Gregory Huxley  
Staff Sergeant Kenneth Bradley  
Sergeant Keman Mitchell  
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Bravo Company, 317th Engineer Battalion, Fort Benning, Georgia  
Bravo Company, 588th Engineer Battalion, Fort Hood, Texas  
Charlie Company, 4th Engineer Battalion, Fort Carson, Colorado  
Bravo Company, 54th Engineer Battalion, Bamberg, Germany  
Alpha Company, 244th Engineer Battalion, Grand Junction, Colorado