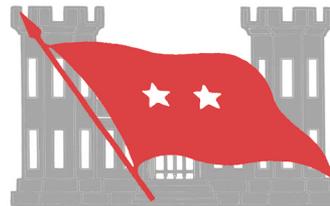


Clear The Way

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In October, we here at the Engineer School began active support for Operation Iraqi Freedom. It wasn't called that then, but our involvement was an important factor in the decision to cancel ENFORCE 03. It wasn't an easy decision, and we held off on until the last possible moment. We think it was the right thing to do in many ways, but the work that was to be accomplished was to have important impacts on the future of our Regiment. That work must continue, so this issue of the bulletin remains devoted to opening the discussion on critical transformational ideas. In it we lay out some of the key conceptual, informational, and material ideas that form the basis of our overall theme: *Regimental Transformation – Forging Our Future*.



In the last two issues, I began to describe to you some of the underlying ideas behind the transformation of our Regiment. Those were some of the ideas behind assured mobility and some of the impacts of information superiority. In the following pages, more ideas—such as operationalizing assured mobility, a description of many aspects of how we will fight in the Objective Engineer Force, and ideas in the areas of the Officer Education System transformation—are explored. Each of these in turn was to form the basis for breakout sessions where you, the regimental leadership, would come together to discuss, debate, hopefully engage, and explore. That is part of what I am talking about when I say that people are our strength. People and leadership—woven together—are what will carry the Regiment into the future.

We were looking forward to the discussions at ENFORCE 03, the feedback you would provide, and the ideas you would carry away, which are vital in that effort to reach the future. These things are important, because I believe we are at the crux on transformation. We have been talking it, briefing it, writing about it, and—perhaps most painful—resourcing and funding it for more than three years.

There has been progress in a variety of areas within the overall goals of transformation, but much of that progress is not apparent, not even to those who work it every day. I assess that we, the Army, are very close to what the Chief of Staff calls sustainable momentum. I take that to mean that we are close to having a coherent concept—tied to achievable resourcing and solid science and technology—that will allow us to achieve the goal of fielding the Objective Force.

That's a remarkable thing to say, and it has some specific impacts that you, the leadership, need to understand. For

example, in some ways this affects the Legacy Force. Although I think everyone will agree that every engineer leader remains deeply committed to taking care of the legacy portion of our Regiment, everyone must understand that the new force is coming, and the process of reaching that force has deep impacts on the Legacy Force. Further, it has come to the point where we must commit to the Objective Engineer Force. It is our path to ensuring that we can support the Objective Force in the future operational environment. Without the Objective Engineer Force, we will simply watch our portion of the Legacy Force fade and will see the risk inherent in future operations rise to truly unacceptable levels.

Now you notice that I have used the term leadership in several contexts within this article. In that usage comes my challenge to you. If this discussion seems difficult to understand—new ideas, new terminology, complex approaches, difficult decisions—then you are right, but your effort to understand them is an example of one of the aspects of transformed leadership that we must incorporate: lifelong dedication to learning. It simply isn't enough to say "I have mastered that skill." That's no more appropriate than an ophthalmologist saying "I am competent on the concept of contact lenses" and then never going on to grasp the idea of laser surgery. Such an inability to keep on learning simply dooms that type of leader to obsolescence in the march of new ideas. We aren't, can't be, and won't be that kind of leader. That's my first challenge to you—lifelong learning.

My second challenge to you is the other half of the leadership team—the led. I think that while many great ideas about leader development come and go, there is one enduring aspect for transformation. We must develop agile and adaptive leaders. Agile (fast on their feet, fast in their thoughts, fast in their analytical and assessment skills and make it happen, get it done, do it right) and adaptive (come out on top, work together to overcome, ensure teamwork, learn and grow) leaders can and will overcome the challenges that we and the future environment are building for them. I know that many of you have given quite a bit of attention to these types of thoughts, and I look forward to your feedback.

I know, just from the type of leaders you are, that we will get it. And even more importantly, you can count on us to use that feedback as we continue to work toward the Objective Engineer Force and toward ENFORCE 04.

Essayons!