

Communication— The Key to Our Success



By Lieutenant Colonel Paul L. Grosskruger

The Engineer Regiment is a “Team of Teams,” a diverse organization comprised of Reserve, National Guard, and Active Army units; the US Army Corps of Engineers® (USACE); engineer leaders in our major commands, joint commands, combat training centers, and industry; and engineers in our allied forces and our sister services. If harnessed, the possibilities for information sharing and collective problem solving across our organization are endless. While simultaneously engaged in operations and transformation, communication within our Regiment is more essential than ever! Our major efforts in strategic communication in 2004 centered on visits to engineer commands around the world, the ENFORCE Conference, the Councils of Colonels, the Commandant’s video teleconferences (VTCs), the Engineer Professional Bulletin, and hosts of conferences both here at Fort Leonard Wood and in the field. We must, however, do much better with communication and harnessing our finite resources of funds and time in 2005.

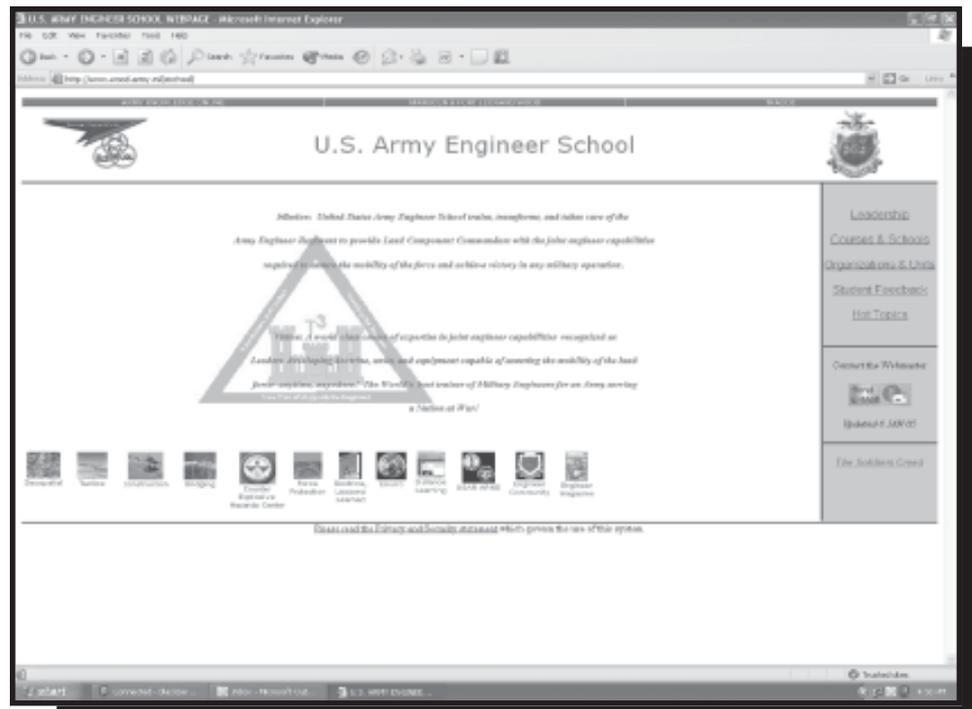
Some work was done within the US Army Engineer School on collaborative techniques to more effectively communicate with the field, but much more needs to be done. The Army Knowledge Online (AKO) collaborative Web site, located under the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)/Engineer School, will take more shape in the months ahead. The goal is for all leaders of the Regiment to use this tool often for getting the most current information, providing comments for various initiatives, and providing up-to-date responses to requests for information. A goal in 2005 and beyond is to work more on using collaborative feedback with the Total Engineer Regiment—utilizing the phenomenal levels of expertise and insights of our Soldiers and leaders.

US Army Corps of Engineers

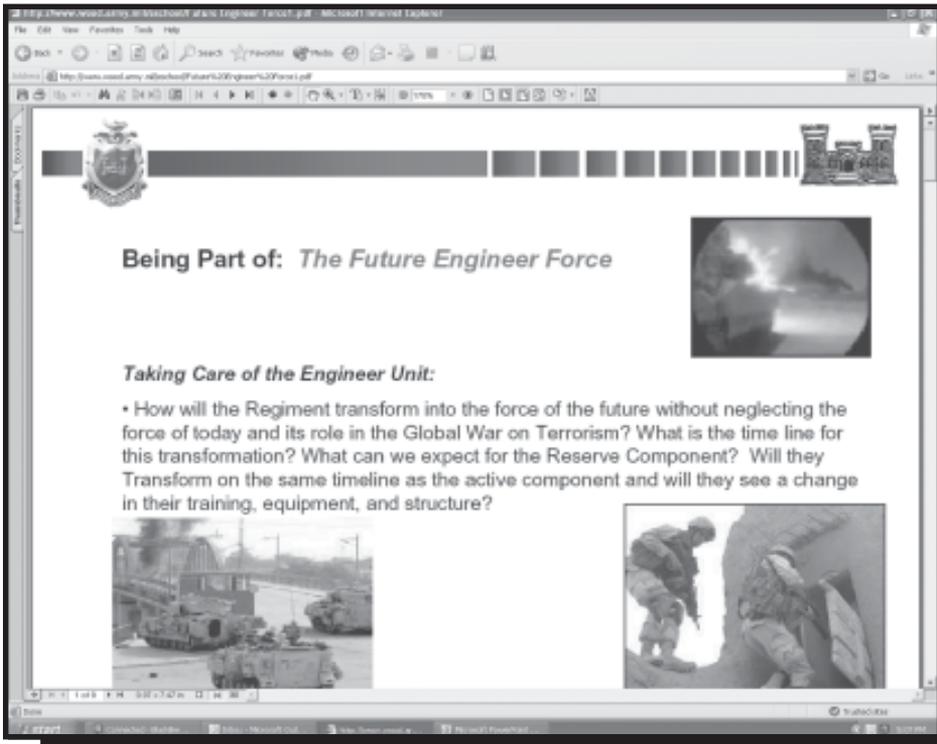
The Engineer School and the USACE Public Affairs Office are teaming in 2005 to send out periodic newsletters and updates via e-mail. This systematic “push” of information gives the members of our Regiment the most recent situational reports (SITREPs), messages, briefings, and actions with the purpose of keeping current on “big-picture” developments. Additionally, beginning this year, the Engineer School will publish a Regimental Letter from the Commandant that is intended to inform every Soldier in the Regiment.

Engineer School Web Page

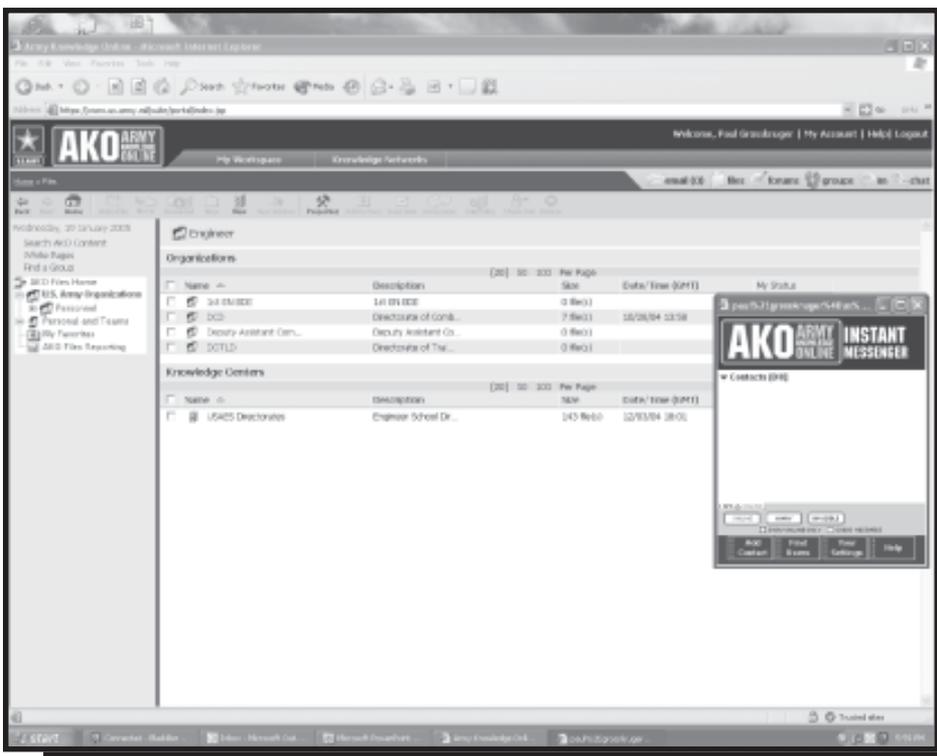
The nonsecure Internet protocol router (NIPR) Web page at <http://www.wood.army.mil/eschool/> will continue to provide up-to-date, open-source information on the Engineer School’s mission and vision, the directorates, and course information. This will continue to be



Engineer School Home Page



Engineer School Web Page



Army Knowledge Online Home Page

used to disseminate information on general topics such as upcoming events and points of contact and for collecting requests for more information. Check this site for periodic messages and themes to the Regiment from the Engineer School.

Army Knowledge Online

An area packed with potential is the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) Collaborative Knowledge Center at <<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portal/index.jsp>>. Under TRADOC, the Engineer School has a site that has general “For Official Use Only (FOUO)” information and has files for staffing and collaboration between the Engineer School directorates and leaders of the Regiment. More collaboration at the FOUO level within our Regiment—using this site—may be our “way ahead” in harnessing our limited time and resources while simultaneously ensuring that all stakeholders share in the development of holistic solutions.

Secure Web Sites

There is a tremendous amount of information on the secure Internet protocol router (SIPR) knowledge sites within our major commands and functional task forces, such as that on improvised explosive device (IED) defeat. Expanded use of SIPR by our institutional base “operationalizes” the workstations of our decision makers across the Regiment. This means of secure collaboration tackles the challenges of coordinating operations across the globe, while also addressing the critical need for constant operational security. It is definitely only the beginning, since collaborative capabilities on SIPR knowledge sites are improving dramatically.

Lieutenant Colonel Grosskruger is the US Army Engineer School Chief of Staff. Previous assignments include command of the 94th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Heavy), V Corps Assistant Corps Engineer, S3 of the 36th Engineer Group, and executive officer of the 317th Engineer Battalion (Mechanized). He also commanded the 535th Engineer Company (Combat Support Equipment) and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 82d Engineer Battalion (Mechanized).