

Lead The Way

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It has been a very productive and busy quarter for our Regiment, our Army, and our Soldiers serving our nation at war around the world. Proof of this was seen during a recent visit to the 2d Infantry Division sappers in Korea (Engineer Brigade, 44th Engineer Battalion, 2d Engineer Battalion, 82d Combat Support Equipment Company, 50th Engineer Company, US Forces Korea Engineer Command, 33d and 85th Engineer Detachments [Terrain]). They're doing a fantastic job, especially those preparing to deploy to Iraq.

Additional proof of outstanding work was evident during the Commandant's VTC on 5 August when the Engineer School leadership heard issues from the command teams of most of our deployed units as well as those that are preparing to deploy. As a result of this VTC, there are many issues that we are working, and I'd like to address the most pressing ones: approval of the sapper leader tab, the Sapper Leader Course, and the Urban Mobility Breachers Course. Another important issue, the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) Structure Redesign (from a four-tier to a three-tier system), is discussed on page 8. It is my pledge to ensure that we continue to provide first-class training to a first-class NCO Corps.

The Chief of Staff of the Army approved the creation of the sapper leader tab on 28 June 2004. The policy should be incorporated into the next revision of Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-22, *Military Awards*, and AR 670-1, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, as appropriate, hopefully within the next 90 days. The tab may be awarded retroactively to any person who successfully completed the Sapper Leader Course after June 1985. Soldiers who obtain a minimum of 700 points are considered a graduate of the course and are authorized to wear the tab.

For officers and NCOs interested in earning their sapper leader tab, there are many options available to attend the course. Select Engineer Officer Basic Course students with follow-on assignments to light units will have the opportunity to attend the course immediately following graduation. A new initiative will soon allow NCOs in the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC)/Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC) to attend the course immediately upon graduation, with chain-of-command approval. Soldiers identified to attend must be input into the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS) in order to be authorized to remain here at Fort Leonard Wood an additional 25 days following graduation from BNCOC/ANCOC. This can be done at the unit level prior to the beginning of school, or it can be done here at Fort Leonard Wood with the assistance of the NCO Academy



leadership. Those who are deployed in support of the war can attend in a TDY status when redeployed, with chain-of-command approval. As you can see, all options present additional opportunities for professional development, as well as allow the Army greater opportunity to educate, train, and prepare leaders to succeed if called upon to execute specialized sapper skills. By the way, let me remind you that during ENFORCE, we announced the first "Best Sapper Competition," which will kick off in April 2005. I challenge you to send the best of the best for this super competition!

I also challenge you to take advantage of another initiative positively affecting the Engineer Regiment's NCOES. Select NCOs are now being afforded the opportunity to attend the

Urban Mobility Breachers Course, conducted by the US Marine Corps Engineer School at Camp LeJeune, North Carolina. We have selected two NCOs from the 588th Engineer Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, and one NCO from the 307th Engineer Battalion, 82d Airborne Division, to attend Class 01-04 on 4-26 October 2004. Upon graduation, they will be reassigned to Fort Leonard Wood, with duty at Camp LeJeune. These NCOs will serve as Interservice Training Review Organization (ITRO) instructors, augmenting the training of Army personnel attending the course. All class dates have been loaded in ATRRS, with the next class scheduled for 31 January-18 February 2005. We have 15 slots per class, as requested by units. The course will consist of 120 hours of in-depth explosive theories, urban reconnaissance, employment of urban breaching assets—including explosive, manual, and ballistic breaching techniques for urban operations—and use of Current Force equipment. To attend this course, you must meet the requirements in DA Pam 611-21, *Military Occupational Classification and Structure*, and AR 600-9, *The Army Weight Control Program*; be a combat engineer in grade E-5 (P) through E-7 and a graduate of combat engineer BNCOC; have no pending Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) actions and no limiting profile.

It's important that everyone accept and adapt to these changes. Today's Army is very different from yesterday's Army. Change is essential to survival. As the Chief of Staff of the Army insists, "We have to [change] some of the things that made us the best Army in the world...but everything else is on the table." Subsequently, we must reconsider and challenge our most deep-seated institutional practices to better serve our Army and our nation. This means retaining practices that make sense and implementing initiatives where necessary to increase our ability to successfully respond in today's Army. Essayons!