

**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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**SUSTAINING COMBAT READINESS
DURING PEACE OPERATIONS**

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

Sustaining Combat Readiness During Peace Operations

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ABSTRACT

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The United States Army has become a key component of our national security strategy of engagement abroad to promote peace and prosperity at home. On any given day, American soldiers can be found in over 70 countries participating in training exercises and contingency operations, most of which focus on peacekeeping. However, there are significant costs and risks associated with this strategy. Not only has the OPTEMPO greatly increased for our down-sized Army, but our ability to transition from peacekeeping operations to fighting two nearly simultaneous major theater wars may be in question. This paper will first review how peace operations degrade the combat readiness of Army units. It will then offer a "warfighter management program" designed to sustain combat readiness during extended peace operations. This program is based on the lessons learned by U.S. Army Europe while supporting Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR in Bosnia.

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SUSTAINING COMBAT READINESS DURING PEACE OPERATIONS

THE ARMY'S GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

The United States Army today finds itself as an essential component of our national security strategy of engagement abroad to promote peace and prosperity at home. On any given day, American soldiers can be found in over 70 countries participating in training exercises and contingency operations, most of which focus on peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations.¹ Not only active duty soldiers, but as many as 45,000 reserve component soldiers are participating annually in these deployments.²

Without question, the benefits of our Army's global engagement are significant for the nation. However, there are associated costs, as well as risks, for our Army as it supports this strategy. Most importantly, engagement in peace operations has greatly increased the operational tempo (OPTEMPO) for our down-sized and fiscally constrained Army.³ Some analysts fear that our current focus may be distracting us from our true purpose to fight and win our nation's wars. And, that our

ability to disengage from peacekeeping operations to fight and win two nearly simultaneous major theater wars (MTW) may be in question.⁴ No doubt, even our most versatile units would find it difficult to shift from the low-end to the high-end of the conflict spectrum as stipulated in the Army's FM 100-5, Operations.⁵

The challenge facing senior Army leaders today is to successfully engage in the myriad of peacekeeping requirements while simultaneously sustaining combat readiness. One suggestion is to minimize our involvement in peacekeeping operations. Unfortunately, all indications suggest that the United States will continually be required to support future peacekeeping operations.⁶ The purpose of this paper is to offer a program that will allow soldiers to sustain required warfighting skills while engaged in peace operations, be they enforcing the peace in Bosnia, observing the peace in the Sinai, or conducting border patrols along the Mexican border. But first, the negative impact of peace operations on Army readiness needs to be considered.

HOW PEACE OPERATIONS DEGRADE COMBAT READINESS

The combat readiness of our Army, as always, is an issue of great debate. There are many factors which can affect unit readiness such as the amount of training funds available, the quality of new recruits, the increase in operational tempo and the retention of personnel with special skills. Indeed, readiness is a multi-dimensional, complex subject that can be analyzed in many ways, both subjectively and objectively. It should not be surprising then, due to the very nature and tremendous costs of peacekeeping missions, that many analysts believe such operations are having a significant negative impact on many of the readiness factors mentioned above.

Recognizing the broad overall impact peace operations could be having on Army readiness, this paper will specifically address the issue of how warfighting skills can be sustained throughout the life-cycle of an extended peacekeeping operation. That is, from pre-deployment training to post-recovery operations, how does a unit commander ensure his or her soldiers are ready to perform on short notice in a mid- or high-intensity combat situation. Granted, this may be just the tip of the iceberg;

however, it is a crucial aspect that directly affects our ability to win the first battle of our next war.

Recent U.S. Army War College (USAWC)⁷ and Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL)⁸ studies concluded that combat proficiency declines during extended peace operations. The degree of degradation was based not only on the duration and type of peace operation, but also on the correlation of skills required during combat with those skills actually exercised during peace operations.⁹ Studies have confirmed that the skills of combat arms soldiers in particular clearly atrophy during extended peace operations due to a lack of practice in maneuver and live-fire operations.¹⁰ Additionally, greater skill decline occurs while deployed on humanitarian assistance operations as compared to peace enforcement operations.¹¹

Does this suggest that skill development is not taking place while soldiers are deployed in support of peace operations? On the contrary, great skill development and maturation takes place for everyone involved in these types of complex operations. Surprisingly, these same USAWC and CALL studies conclude that some combat support and combat service support soldiers actually increase their proficiency on wartime tasks because they practice them repeatedly while supporting peacekeeping operations.¹² One

example is a truck driver who may log tremendously more miles supporting peace operations than he or she ever would if training under normal garrison conditions. Of greatest concern, however, is that specific warfighting skills are not being sustained while units are deployed on peacekeeping missions.

The impact of peacekeeping operations not only varies by military occupational specialty (MOS), but also by years of service. Reports from combat training centers (CTCs)¹³ indicate that there may be little impact on senior leaders since their base knowledge of warfighting has been deeply rooted during years of cumulative training and study. On the other hand, the development of warfighting skills for new lieutenants, sergeants and junior enlisted soldiers are definitely hampered by extended peace operations, especially if possessing a combat arms skill identifier. An example, as reported by observer/controllers (O/Cs) at the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC), is the tendency for soldiers returning from peace operations to respond very methodically to given situations; every plan worked out to the smallest detail, all actions cleared by senior commanders. Situations facing soldiers in high-intensity conflict (HIC) operations, however, do not allow such timely luxuries, but

instead require quick response through execution of well-trained battle drills in support of the commander's intent.

The most degrading impact of peace operations is on collective training. When one unit deploys for such an operation, there are other units that support the deployment with equipment and personnel, thus degrading their own ability to train. For extended, multi-year missions such as OJE, there is not just the unit deployed to Bosnia and the unit supporting back home, but also the unit that has just returned from the mission, as well as the replacement unit that is preparing to deploy.¹⁴ There are actually four units whose training programs are negatively affected by this one mission.

There are many other hidden effects of peacekeeping deployments. One is the inability to "train as you fight" as specified in FM 25-100, Training the Force.¹⁵ Specifically, when a subordinate armor or infantry battalion deploys from its parent brigade headquarters, the brigade cannot effectively train for combat.¹⁶ The result is that combined arms training is not done by the deployed unit nor is it done by those units left at home station. Additionally, special equipment needed to train for combat may also be diverted to support peace operations, an example being tank plows and rollers. Deploying all of these

assets to support OJE in Bosnia meant that all USAREUR units remaining in Germany were unable to train breaching operations - a complex task which must be mastered before any combat operation.¹⁷

Recognizing that extended peace operations degrade warfighting proficiency, leaders must determine how much time is required to return to full combat readiness once back at home station. CALL studies generally conclude that the required times for units to return to a fully mission-capable status is as follows: combat arms - 30 days (with risk), 75 to 90 days optimum; combat support - 30-45 days, 60-90 days optimum; and combat service support - 15-60 days (based on vehicle maintenance requirements).¹⁸ These times are based on a worst-case scenario requiring units to transition immediately to a MTW.

Normally when units redeploy to garrison operations there are a myriad of tasks to be accomplished as part of recovery operations. These tasks include vehicle maintenance, block leave, reorganization of personnel, individual training and collective training. A light infantry unit which requires little if any vehicle maintenance normally can recover more quickly than a mechanized unit.¹⁹ Heavy units, on the other hand, more closely adhere to the old Army adage that it takes three days to

recover for every one day in the field. This time is rarely available due to the resumption of normal mission and exercise requirements. Accordingly, some researchers advocate that all units returning from peace operations should report a C-5 readiness rating for at least four to six months to allow appropriate reconstitution.²⁰ This low rating sends a clear signal to the Department of the Army that the returning unit will require significant resources above its own capabilities to achieve the optimal C-1 rating.

A final aspect of readiness to consider is the long-term, cumulative effect of several years of continued involvement in peace operations. Specifically, as we invest our limited training resources to prepare for real-world and potentially high-risk peace operations, these resources are now not available to train for combat missions. Many Army leaders profess that it was extremely difficult to stay combat-ready during the Cold War when our total focus was on warfighting. One has to wonder how a unit can be as combat-ready today, now that our limited training resources are being diverted for peacekeeping training. The unfortunate reality is that Army units today simply cannot be as ready as they were before being required to support peace operations.²¹

Since our national security strategy will require continued engagement in peacekeeping for the foreseeable future, as well as the ability to quickly transition to support a MTW,²² Army leaders are faced with a great dichotomy. Given the skill differentiation between combat and peacekeeping, how can the Army accomplish both simultaneously? Army training doctrine does not address this problem because FM 25-100, Training the Force, was published prior to the advent of peacekeeping missions. It does, however, stipulate the requirement to train for war continually. Specifically, it states:

To be successful in combat, the Army must train continually to develop and maintain combat-ready soldiers, leaders, and units that can perform assigned tasks to specific standards. The requirement for training continues during wartime (especially within the combat zone). Training builds self-confidence, promotes teamwork and esprit de corps, and increases professionalism in soldiers, leaders and units.²³

Today, we don't have a combat zone. Instead, we have troops deployed in support of peacekeeping operations. Trainers need to develop strategies now which will allow units to be pulled out of their daily peacekeeping regimen so that they can sustain their warfighting proficiency. The next section of this paper discusses one approach to this dilemma. It is based on the experiences gained by U.S. Army Europe during its year-long

support of 1st Armored Division's (1AD) deployment to Bosnia in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR (OJE).

USAREUR's STRATEGY TO SUSTAIN READINESS WHILE DEPLOYED

During FY 96, USAREUR was consumed by various peacekeeping missions. In fact, USAREUR conducted one of the largest peacetime operations since World War II with the deployment of over 20,000 U.S. soldiers to Bosnia in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR (OJE).²⁴ Other peacekeeping commitments included a battalion-sized unit supporting the United Nations UNPREDEP mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FRYOM), as well as units participating in several Partnership for Peace exercises with countries from both NATO and the former Soviet Union.²⁵ With only four maneuver brigades remaining in Germany, the OPTEMPO of USAREUR units was becoming far greater than it had ever been during the Cold War.²⁶

Recognizing the tremendous pace, yet balancing it with the myriad of potential contingency operations facing USAREUR, General William Crouch, CINCUSAREUR, reiterated in his annual training guidance that combat readiness would remain the number one priority for all units assigned to USAREUR.²⁷ He also

specified that every soldier and unit would be certified by the unit commander as being trained and ready to execute their assigned mission essential task list (METL) prior to deployment. Based on this guidance, a resource-intensive training program was developed by 1AD that would ensure mastery of both combat skills and specific peacekeeping tasks that were anticipated for OJE. In addition to a rigorous home station training program, units deployed to Grafenwohr Training Area (GTA) to conduct gunnery qualification and to participate in several peacekeeping Situational Training Exercise (STX) lanes. These lanes were designed to certify soldiers were trained on checkpoint operations, mine awareness, media awareness, conducting negotiations and convoy operations.²⁸ These lanes were set up under the supervision of BG George Harmeyer, the Commander, 7th Army Training Command (7ATC), and were executed by supporting units tasked from 3rd Infantry Division.

The last training phase in preparing 1st Armored Division for deployment was a "certification" Field Training Exercise (FTX) designed to replicate the same tasks that would be required in Bosnia. Known as MOUNTAIN EAGLE, this FTX began with units initially roadmarching from GTA to CMTC, just as they would be required to roadmarch from the Intermediate Staging Base (ISB) in

Hungary to the base camps they would build in Bosnia. This exercise was very manpower intensive requiring support of over 2400 soldiers, including 11 general officers, 17 brigade commanders, 31 battalion commanders and 597 O/Cs.²⁹

Once at CMTC, units were required to establish base camps, build checkpoints, and separate the Former Warring Factions (FWFs) along a Zone of Separation (ZOS), all of which were observed by CMTC O/Cs. The intent during this FTX was to insure that soldiers would not experience anything in Bosnia which they had not first been trained on at CMTC. A worst-case scenario was executed culminating in mid-intensity hostilities.³⁰

As noted by BG Stanley F. Cherrie, the ADC(M) for 1st Armored Division (1AD), the division's preparation for Bosnia was as intense as any training he had participated in during his 31 years of service.³¹ One rationale for the intensity of preparation for this deployment was that it was a "peace enforcement" operation, one where the combat readiness of 1AD could be challenged at any time by the FWFs. Comparatively, this type of mission is at the high end of the peace operations spectrum, with force authorized to ensure compliance of established peace agreements, in this case the Dayton Peace Accord.³² As a result, 1AD's mission inherently required combat

proficiency before deployment as well as sustainment once in Bosnia.

How successful was this pre-deployment training in preparing 1AD for its Implementing Force (IFOR) mission? The answer to this question can be found by assessing the overall success of the operation. Clearly, all accounts conclude that 1AD was tremendously successful, not only in executing its complex mission, but also in implementing rigorous force protection measures that helped to save soldiers' lives. As noted by one brigade commander, "The mission rehearsal training conducted at CMTC was the best possible preparation for peace enforcement operations."³³ This focused mission rehearsal greatly increased the confidence and competence of 1AD soldiers, allowing them to hone their warfighting skills. These skills are a key ingredient to successfully transitioning into peace operations. As noted by MG Thomas Montgomery, U.S. forces commander in Somalia, "A well-trained and disciplined military unit is the best foundation upon which to build a peacekeeping force".³⁴

Once established in Bosnia, Task Force Eagle's commander, MG William Nash, issued training guidance which directed warfighting training to continue as part of normal daily functions.³⁵ There were many risks associated with executing such a program due to

the uncertainty and complexity of the environment. First, the high operational tempo of normal operations made sustainment training on warfighting skills just one more task in a long list of tasks that could wear down soldiers. Soldier fatigue needed to be considered due to the high energy level required just in meeting daily mission and force protection requirements.

Secondly, combat training might not only distract soldier focus, but it could have been misinterpreted by the FWFs and the local populous.³⁶ Finally, collective training opportunities were limited, simulators and other training aids were not on-hand, and training areas for weapons firing and maneuver training were not readily available.

In light of these concerns, it would have been easy to allow sustainment training on warfighting tasks to not occur. Instead, commanders aggressively strategized how this training could be accomplished. Their first obstacle in establishing a "warfighter management program" (WMP) was in locating training aids, devices, simulators, and simulations (TADSS). Since they were not readily available in country, CINCUSAREUR directed 7ATC to acquire them from theater sources or from CONUS. With help from Simulations, Training and Instruction Command (STRICOM), 7ATC was able to provide 1AD with a total of 155 various TADSS.³⁷ Next, training

ammunition and other materials were provided to build local training areas and small arms ranges near base camps in Bosnia. A total of 24 firing ranges supporting up to caliber .50 were eventually built near various base camps, as well as several Bradley and tank crew proficiency courses (BCTP/TCPC). 1AD also built a live-fire range at Glamoc, Bosnia-Herzegovina, that was capable of supporting aviation, artillery, mortar and tank firing.³⁸ In fact, some artillery units may even have had better training in Bosnia than they would have had back home in Germany.

One resource still not available was a training area to conduct collective maneuver and live-fire gunnery training. No such facility existed in Bosnia. One solution would have been to return the soldiers to GTA for training in conjunction with some sort of mid-rotation rest and relaxation program. Instead, a second alternative was selected which was to revamp a Soviet built live-fire/maneuver training complex 60 kilometers southeast of Budapest, Hungary. Known as the Taborvalva Training Area (TTA), this facility provided crew and platoon gunnery simulators as well as live-fire ranges capable of supporting up to Bradley and tank tables VIII and XII.³⁹

Recognizing the difficulty in conducting collective training while deployed, USAREUR provided all support requirements for

operations at TTA, to include providing live-fire O/Cs from CMTC to assess training. The end result was that 1AD units were now conducting home station training near their base camps in Bosnia, then railring to TTA for seven days of intense collective live-fire/maneuver training. This is the same training model that USAREUR soldiers have been executing for years in the resource-constrained environment of Germany.

MG Nash directed that training on combat tasks be conducted in accordance with Army doctrine as found in FM 25-100 and FM 25-101. The focus of the training was on four objectives: battle command/staff training, warfighting skills, leader training, and training management.⁴⁰ Subordinate commanders subsequently developed their training programs and briefed their plans at quarterly training briefings. As always, training was conducted in accordance with the standard USAREUR training model.⁴¹ The end result was that 1AD executed a well-planned, robust warfighter management program that greatly enhanced the warfighting capability of its soldiers.

But, what was the impact of this training compared to the initial fears? First, and most importantly, MG Nash stated that Task Force Eagle's success during OJE was "directly proportional to our credibility and proficiency at warfighting".⁴² Without a

doubt, the WMP, not only sustained soldier proficiency, but it also had a secondary benefit of deterrence among leaders of the FWFs.⁴³ Another benefit of this training was that the monotony of day-to-day routines associated with long deployments was broken up. Since the mission was going so well, commanders eventually feared that soldiers might become complacent. Instead, soldiers focused attention not only on daily mission requirements, but also on preparing for local training exercises as well as for their collective training opportunities at TTA. This training kept noncommissioned officers and junior officers focused on training combat tasks, a key skill for their continued professional development and branch qualification.⁴⁴

After its year-long deployment to Bosnia, 1AD leaders believed it would take three to six months to reach required training proficiency in collective maneuver warfare tasks.⁴⁵ Recognizing the habitual readiness issues associated with returning from a long deployment, CINCUSAREUR directed 1AD units to complete platoon level live-fire and maneuver training at TTA enroute to home station.⁴⁶ This was a tremendous undertaking, requiring significant planning and training resources. It may be one of the first times in our Army's history when pre-return combat training was conducted on the way to home station. The

result of this training was an increase in warfighting proficiency and soldier confidence, as well as an accurate assessment by each commander of the training proficiency of his or her unit.⁴⁷

With an eye toward division and brigade staff training, 1AD also scheduled brigade and division Warfighter exercises to be conducted shortly after return to Germany.⁴⁸ These command post exercises (CPXs) were resourced by V Corps and included support from CMTC O/Cs. The CPXs provided commanders an excellent vehicle to assess their staff's and subordinate commander's warfighting proficiency and to subsequently develop their long-range training programs. Unfortunately, many key leaders rotated back to CONUS shortly after these exercises as part of the normal Summer rotation cycle. However, these CPXs allowed all personnel to refocus on warfighting operations and provided a branch qualifying experience which had previously been missed due to their deployment to Bosnia.

But, with all the command emphasis to stay combat-ready, as well as spending millions of dollars to conduct training during the deployment, why would it still take 1AD units three to six months to achieve combat proficiency? To begin, since USAREUR was not faced with a crisis situation, unit commanders planned a

methodical recovery program which compensated for the high OPTEMPO associated with their one-year deployment. Secondly, a myriad of time-consuming administrative activities were required to include family time for soldiers, changeover of key personnel and maintenance of equipment.⁴⁹ Finally, redeploying units were all competing for limited resources to conduct their individual and collective training programs. Taking all these factors into consideration, the goal was for each battalion to rotate through CMTC within six months of their return from Bosnia.

Every effort was made to protect 1AD soldiers during their recovery. However, now that 1ID (reflagged from 3ID) was in Bosnia, 1AD would not only be the recovering unit, but would also be the supporting unit. These supporting activities served to make a focused retraining program very hard to execute.⁵⁰ Additionally, real world missions in USAREUR would now fall on these recently returned units. Examples are taskings to support numerous Partnership for Peace exercises, as well as to support the continuing UNPREDEP mission in FRYOM. So, the "return to warfighting" training program for some units was unfortunately diverted to once again prepare for peace operations.

From the above discussion, I have demonstrated that U.S. Army Europe made tremendous efforts to sustain the combat readiness of

its deployed units during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. The long term benefit of their warfighter management program was that units returned to the Central Region well on their way to being ready for future mid-intensity combat missions.⁵¹ Since peacekeeping operations will continue for the immediate future,⁵² USAREUR's only option, until CONUS-based units are tasked to help, is to continue to aggressively train warfighting tasks throughout the life-cycle of peacekeeping deployments. The next section of this paper addresses how this can be accomplished, not only for USAREUR, but for any unit tasked to participate in extended peace operations.

A RECOMMENDED WARFIGHTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The actions taken by USAREUR to sustain combat readiness during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR serve as a model for our Army. Similar warfighter management programs will be required during all extended peace operations in the future, be they peace enforcement operations or simply conducting observer duties. The key to success for such a program, as noted in FM 25-100, Training the Force, is to insure training proficiency of combat tasks remains within the band of excellence.⁵³ This means that

sustainment training must be conducted to keep combat skill proficiency within established Mission Training Plan (MTP) standards throughout the entire deployment. Admittedly, this is a pretty tall order, but the guidance could not be any more clear.

As noted in Joint Pub 3-07, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, peace operations are best conducted by disciplined soldiers proficient in their assigned combat tasks, who then apply their skills to their peacekeeping environment as appropriate.⁵⁴ An effective WMP also starts with well-disciplined, highly trained soldiers. This high degree of proficiency is absolutely required prior to deployment, not only to insure real-world mission success, but to provide each soldier with an adequate training base of combat skills which can then be sustained once deployed. So the first step in any successful WMP is that the unit must go out the door at the very highest end of the training band of excellence.

As noted in the previous section of this paper, 1AD's pre-deployment training and final mission rehearsal were very resource intensive, requiring tremendous external assistance. The commander determines what tasks must be certified, as outlined in FM 25-100, by considering the unit's MTP, possible

contingency missions, and specific peacekeeping tasks required for the upcoming deployment.⁵⁵ Based on this mission essential task list (METL), specific training programs are developed to train individual, leader and collective tasks. Once these programs are incorporated into a multi-echelon training program, the commander can then identify the time, training resources and external assistance that will be required to train and certify the unit.

Since this training may be the last training prior to a subsequent transition to combat, it is essential that the focus of this training be on warfighting skills. Soldiers should be required to demonstrate proficiency in all battle drills, as well as the specific peacekeeping tasks required for the mission. These tasks are best trained utilizing the STX lanes methodology and it is best if these lanes are set up and conducted by a supporting unit. Resources for leader training are also quite extensive as all leaders should be required to call for artillery fire and coordinate close air support. These skills are best trained in a Fire Coordination Exercise (FCX). Additionally, a series of command post exercises (CPXs), map exercises (MAPEXs), Tactical Exercises Without Troops (TEWTs) are all essential components of leader training that will have to be resourced.

Collective training is the most resource intensive aspect of pre-deployment training. It should include combined arms maneuver and live-fire exercises at least through platoon level, but preferably include company and battalion live-fire exercises. Finally, training should culminate in a mission rehearsal which will allow the commander to assess training proficiency, conduct retraining as required and certify that the unit and soldiers are prepared to deploy. A more detailed discussion on pre-deployment training programs can be found in a special study conducted by CALL in February 1996, The Effects of Peace Operations on Unit Readiness.⁵⁶

Required manning is always an issue when planning for any peacekeeping operation. It is generally based on the threat, the size of the area to be covered, force protection requirements and the command and control elements needed for successful conduct of the mission. Another factor to consider is the tempo of operations for the individual soldier. This is also a critical factor in establishing an effective warfighter management program. There simply must be enough soldiers on hand to conduct the mission while selected soldiers and units are pulled out to conduct combat training. Just as FM 25-100 specifies troops must be trained in the combat zone during war, soldiers must be pulled

from their peacekeeping duties to also train for war. Failure to adequately man the mission will naturally guarantee failure of the WMP.

Given a fully-trained, combat-ready unit, commanders at every level must now develop a strategy to sustain readiness for their unit while deployed. The intent for a warfighter management program needs to be clearly articulated for subordinates in the commander's training guidance and in the mission orders for the deployment so that leaders can plan appropriately. It must also be briefed to the next higher headquarters, not only for approval, but also for a commitment of required resources. Once these resources are approved, commanders can then incorporate them into their WMP as well as plan for their deployment.

Once deployed, training management must continue in accordance with FM 25-100 and FM 25-101. Contracts between supporting and supported commanders must be agreed upon during initial training briefings. Execution of sustainment training must always be balanced with actual mission requirements. However, leaders must be taught to aggressively seek new and creative training opportunities that will not compromise the

mission. The end result is a unit whose leaders have a passion and commitment to train at every available opportunity.

Another key to success of a Warfighter Management Program is the noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps. Our Army enjoys the benefit of the most professional cadre of NCOs of any army in the world. Generally, they are outstanding trainers who can execute very effective individual and small unit training. Command sergeant majors and company first sergeants should be given responsibility for conducting this training and for documenting it appropriately. Sergeant's Time training should also continue, as always with a focus on combat skills. If executed effectively, this soldier skills component of the WMP will not only sustain the combat proficiency of soldiers, but also continue to reinforce a warfighting spirit within every soldier, a trait that our Army cannot afford to lose.

Commanders and staff officers should resource, supervise and assess this individual training, making adjustments to the program as required. They also plan and conduct collective training based on available resources. CPXs, MAPEXs, officer professional development (OPD) classes, as well as fire coordination exercises should be conducted when possible. The culminating collective training event should be at least platoon

level maneuver and live-fire exercises, assessed by external O/Cs. Clearly, the deployed unit's ability to conduct collective training is greatly dependent upon external support. Overall funding for this training program will probably be equal to or greater than the allocated training funds the unit would normally have at home station. Failure to adequately fund this program will also guarantee its failure.

Early in the deployment, assessments should be conducted to determine the overall effects of the WMP. To begin, the availability of training aids, maneuver areas and firing ranges needs to be considered as to how well they support the sustainment of targeted warfighting skills. Additionally, an assessment needs to be made of how the WMP is impacting on soldier OPTEMPO, as well as the impact on the mission. Finally, commanders need to determine the affect this training might be having on the local populous to insure a negative reaction is not developing.

Based on the complexities of executing a WMP in conjunction with a peacekeeping mission, deploying units should request assistance from the CALL office at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. They can provide liaison personnel to deploy with the unit and focus on capturing lessons learned throughout the conduct of the

mission. During OJE, there were over 100 lessons that were formally quantified from December 1995 to February 1997.⁵⁷ Most significantly, these lessons can be transmitted immediately to follow-on units preparing for the next iteration of the mission, as well as to Fort Leavenworth for distribution within a CALL newsletter.

Prior to redeployment, comprehensive training plans must be developed that will allow the unit to attain full combat proficiency. Early development of these plans will ensure appropriate resources are scheduled and every training opportunity executed. For example, conducting warfighting training enroute to home station leverages the unit cohesiveness attained during the mission and provides the commander with an excellent assessment of skill proficiency. Additionally, it increases soldier confidence in themselves and in their unit's overall combat readiness prior to being released for block leave once at home station.

If there is any time during the deployment cycle that a unit's readiness level might drop out of the band of excellence, it is during the first months upon returning to home station. There are many reasons for this, but it is generally due to equipment maintenance requirements and the overall reorganization

process that occurs throughout the organization after an extended deployment. Consequently, units should be directed to report a readiness rating of C-5 for the first six months at home station. This will insure appropriate resources are allocated, as well as "fence" the unit from any new taskings and training distracters, allowing the unit to completely focus on its recovery to full combat readiness. Finally, community headquarters should be required to develop focused support plans for this training in the same manner as currently done for supporting pre-deployment training.

Soon after returning to home station, division, brigade and battalion staffs should conduct a "warfighter" CPX supported by external observer/controllers. This event will allow the cohesive staff procedures developed during peace operations to be refocused on combat operations. Based on the commander's assessment from this event, a training strategy can be developed that will return the unit to required standards. Brigade and battalion training plans should culminate in an externally supported training assessment, preferably at a CTC within six months of return to home station. This training event will provide focus for home-station training, provide commanders with feedback to develop the unit's annual training program and

provide soldiers with a branch qualifying experience that may have been missed due to the peacekeeping deployment.

Having discussed the life-cycle of a warfighter management program, you can see there are many costs associated with its execution. From pre-deployment training, sustainment training once deployed, and retraining to achieve full combat readiness upon return, the increase in OPTEMPO and required training funds are significant. But these are the associated costs of maintaining combat readiness while supporting peacekeeping operations. Failure to provide these resources will not only result in an unsuccessful warfighter management program, but also guarantee our inability to quickly transition to support a MTW.

CONCLUSIONS

The volatile post-Cold War environment will require the U.S. Army to remain engaged in peacekeeping operations for the foreseeable future. Every effort to sustain combat readiness must be made to insure that deployed peacekeeping units are capable of disengaging from these commitments and immediately transitioning to mid- to high-intensity combat operations. This can only be done by training while deployed. Such training requires a commitment of significant resources, but it is

absolutely required if we are to be able to respond on short-notice to combat requirements.

Implications are that the U.S. Army should avoid any peacekeeping operation where this sustainment training cannot be accomplished. For instance, any long term U.N. peace operation whose mandate denies our ability to train while deployed should be avoided. Once deployed, Army leaders must find ways to train soldiers on warfighting tasks as a matter of normal practice for any peacekeeping mission. Just as the U.S. Army has trained during past wars, we must now seek to find ways to train while engaged in peace operations abroad or at home.

The reality for the future is that soldiers will be continually asked to conduct peace operations. Given the limited force structure of our Army today, it cannot afford the luxury of forming two separate types of units - combat and peacekeeping. Instead, Army units must remain versatile, capable of conducting operations through the spectrum of conflict, with soldiers able to respond to the requirements at both extremes. So, as we take on the many peacekeeping requirements of the near future, Army leaders must vigilantly execute a focused warfighter management program that will enable our soldiers to win on future

battlefields. Failure in this regard will be measured by the bloodshed of our soldiers - an unacceptable failure.

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ENDNOTES

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³⁷ CALL, Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Sustainment Training While Employing, II-5.

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³⁹ Ibid, II-6.

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⁴¹ Task Force Eagle After Action Report, 135, 136.

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