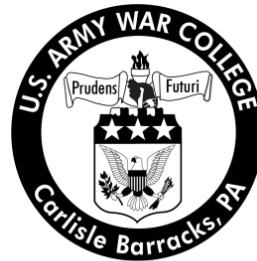


## Army National Guard Leader Development: Pot Luck or a Five- Course Meal?

by

Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. M. Harris  
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United States Army War College  
Class of 2012

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**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD LEADER DEVELOPMENT: POT LUCK OR A FIVE-COURSE MEAL?**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The National Guard Bureau faces an extraordinary complex environment. Recent changes include the appointment of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the new defense strategy, the continued evolution of the Profession of Arms, and the development of Joint Force 2020. Therefore, the ARNG directorate leadership must adopt a unique, focused leadership development program for the Title 10 (T10) Active Guard Reserve (AGR) officers that creates a bench of next-generation talent. This new talent must be prepared to meet the challenges facing the ARNG and Joint Force 2020. The recommendations from this analysis will help to create a leader development program that delivers a competitive edge for the T10 AGR officer corps and ARNG directorate.



## ARMY NATIONAL GUARD LEADER DEVELOPMENT: POT LUCK OR A FIVE-COURSE MEAL?

Experience is what you get when you didn't get what you wanted. And experience is often the most valuable thing you have to offer.

—Randy Pausch, *The Last Lecture*

The National Guard has experienced unprecedented changes over the past decade. The most recent and most significant is the appointment of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>1</sup> This appointment continues to demonstrate the on-going, significant evolution of contribution provided by the Army National Guard (ARNG) to the United States (U.S.) and the Department of Defense (DOD) as an Operational Reserve.

On January 5, 2012, the President introduced a new defense strategy. The Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and General Martin Dempsey, spoke in more detail about the new strategy “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense.”<sup>2</sup> This strategy shaped by changing threats and mounting fiscal constraints provides a framework for the future force, Joint Force 2020. In closing his remarks, General Dempsey emphasized that leadership and the cornerstone of the profession of arms would provide the means to see this strategy successful.

Since his time as the Training & Doctrine Command (TRADOC) commander, and rapid ascent to Chairman Joint Chief of Staff, General Martin Dempsey has gained notoriety for his outspoken thoughts and views on leadership and leadership development. His enthusiasm has reinvigorated the Army and others to think and write

on this subject as well. This renewed interest provokes thought about the unique challenges of leader development within the ARNG directorate.

What challenges face the ARNG directorate as it develops leaders for Joint Force 2020? According to the revised defense strategy, Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense, Joint Force 2020 is described as “a force sized and shaped differently than the military of the Cold War, the post-Cold War of the 1990s, or the force that was built over the past decade to engage in large scale ground war.”<sup>3</sup> This paper will analyze why the ARNG directorate should adapt a unique and focused leadership development program that creates a bench of strategic talent in order to lead the ARNG as a full partner of the Army, within Joint Force 2020. Currently, the directorate lacks a coherent leader development strategy that meets the organization’s unique needs and those anticipated in the future. Recent publications including the Chief of the National Guard Bureau’s “The National Guard: A Great Value Today and in the Future”<sup>4</sup> and the ARNG Directorate’s “2012 Strategic Planning Guidance: The Army National Guard – Present and Future”<sup>5</sup> make no mention of leadership or leader development. This is quite curious given that in 2008, “A Leader Development Strategy for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army (ALDS21)” declares that the Army’s most important core competency is leader development.<sup>6</sup>

This paper considers three areas in its analysis of leader development. The first area considers current and emerging Army leader development programs (through Army regulations, doctrine, and professional publications) to explore implementation of what it says and means. The second considers current ARNG directorate leader development programs and the associated complexity and challenges. The third area

for consideration presents concepts and methods for leader development that with adaptation may be relevant and create value for the unique needs of the ARNG directorate. The leader development focuses on the uniqueness and challenges for the ARNG officer serving in the Title 10 (T10) Active Guard Reserve (AGR) program. In addition, the development that occurs beyond company grade professional military education (PME) that typically consists of a branch specific of a captain's career course. This paper assumes an officer is qualified in their basic branch and has had a company command assignment and thus meets the development requirements for accession into the ARNG T10 AGR program.<sup>7</sup> The Human Capital Management Division is the proponent for the T10 AGR program within the ARNG directorate providing policy and program oversight, sometimes interchanging the terms ARNG directorate for T10 AGR.

### Background

In order to better understand the uniqueness and challenges with the T10 AGR program it is relevant to provide a brief history of the National Guard and describe the organization of the ARNG Directorate under the National Guard Bureau. Today, the National Guard recognizes itself as having served the United States for 375 years. The General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony ordered the militia's First Muster, December 13, 1637 in Salem, MA.<sup>8</sup> Since then through the formal founding of the Federal Government in 1792, the Constitution and Bill of Rights provides the legal provision for the establishment of state's militia. In 1903, under the Dick Military Act, the Federal Government assumed responsibility for Soldier pay, training, and equipment. The National Defense Act of 1916 provided federal recognition of the state's militia establishing uniformity of unit force structure, the commissioning of officers, and recognized the collective militia as the National Guard. The same act gave the

President the authority to mobilize the National Guard in times of war or national emergency. In 1958, The Department of the Army Reorganization Act formally established The National Guard Bureau as a Joint Bureau of the Department of the Army and the Air Force.<sup>9</sup> This establishment was later reaffirmed under the Reserve Officers Personnel Management Act on October 5, 1994 to direct the service Secretaries of both the Department of the Army and Air Force to develop and prescribe the National Guard Bureau Charter.

As a joint activity within DOD, the National Guard Bureau, under section 10501, Title 10, United States Code, is the legal peacetime channel of communication between the Department of the Army, Air Force, the United States, Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. These 54 States and Territories (commonly called 54 States) form today's collective National Guard. Representing both the Army National Guard and Air National Guard within each state and collectively as the National Guard component to each service. The National Guard Bureau is comprised of three major elements and three minor elements. The major elements are; Office of the Chief, National Guard Bureau (CNGB), (commonly referred to as the NGB Joint Staff), Officer of the Director Army National Guard, (referred to as the ARNG Directorate) and the Officer of the Director Air National Guard, (also known as the ANG Directorate). The CNGB is a General, who as of December 31, 2011 is a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff – providing advice to the President on matters regarding non-federalized activities of National Guard (Title 32 – state emergencies as needed by the governor). The directors of the Army and Air National Guard are both Lieutenant Generals, under the supervision of the CNGB. NGB and the Directorates

have no command and control authority over the National Guard within each state. Unique to this structure and that of the National Guard, none of the state's Adjutant Generals are in the chain of command extending from the 54 states to the President. Except for the District of Columbia, the Governor is the commander in chief of the state's National Guard; the President is the Commander in Chief of the District of Columbia. The three minor elements include the Office of the Chief Counsel, the Comptroller, and Inspector General. These minor elements represent components of the CNGB's special staff and are comprised of special branch officers and those hand selected for nominative positions. Both the Army and Air Guard Directorates provide personnel for these elements, overall these elements represent a small portion of the T10 AGR officer corps.

The ARNG Directorate in accordance with the directives established in the Charter provides essential Army service component, Title 10 functions to the Army National Guard, and participates collectively as an element within the Department of Army Staff. The ARNG Directorate consists of officers, warrant officers, enlisted Soldiers serving in the T10 AGR program, Department of the Army Civilians, and contractors. These groups formulate long-range plans, provide policy and program management, administer resources for force structure, personnel management, facilities, and training to each of the 54 States.<sup>10</sup>

Collectively, the ARNG Directorate under supervision of the CNGB, provides resources, administration, training and logistics to the 54 states and territories in support of 358,200 ARNG Soldiers operating worldwide within their respective states. Operating

with nearly 10% of the Army's total budget, the ARNG made some notable accomplishments in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010.

The ARNG provided disaster relief assistance in Haiti as well as assistance to several gulf region states in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil refinery explosion. The ARNG provided troops to Customs and Border Patrol in order to bolster the efforts along the Southwest Border during these events. Cumulatively in 2010, the ARNG provided over 13,000 Soldiers for defense support to civil authorities while mobilizing 36,000 Soldiers in addition to the already 30,000 Soldiers deployed to combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>11</sup> Routinely orchestrating this magnitude of global and domestic operations and Title 10 functions is a daunting task for a geographically disperse cohort of 1,200 T10 AGR officers. The multitude of ongoing and future federal and state missions distinguishes the unique role, functions, and responsibilities of the ARNG; always ready to deploy and vigilantly ready as America's militia, protecting the homeland.

#### Army Leader Development: Today and Tomorrow

Leader development is an imperative for a viable, sustained Title 10 program. This section will provide a foundation for understanding the sources for Army leader development. Regulations and doctrine will describe Army leader development definitions, theories, and models. Then, with this information, explore recent emerging thought about Army leader development needs for the future. Understanding the Army's framework for leader development – the rules of the game and an informed perspective of the current and future demands for leader development facilitates exploring the following sections. The ARNG needs for a coherent leader development strategy for the ARNG T10 AGR officers in order to thrive in the future.

There are three primary sources for Army leader development; Army Regulation (AR) 600-3, The Army Personnel Development System, AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, and Field Manual (FM) 6-22, Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile. From a more broad perspective, AR 600-3 describes development as a holistic process “. . . of developing people mentally, morally, and physically. This includes both character and leadership development, education and training. Development includes the supporting processes of evaluations, as well as selection for promotion, command opportunity, and advanced education (civilian and military).”<sup>12</sup> From this regulation’s definition, we can better appreciate the breadth and width of Army leader development – requiring both development and assessment in order to be effective.

AR 350-1 defines leader development as “The deliberate, continuous, sequential, and progressive process grounded in Army values that grows Soldiers and Army civilians into competent and confident leaders capable of decisive action.”<sup>13</sup> Leader development is achieved through the lifelong synthesis of the knowledge, skills, and experiences gained through the three domains of institutional training and education, operational assignments, and self-development. This regulation further describes the purpose of leader development is “to develop leaders of character and competence who are able to exploit their full potential as a leader.”<sup>14</sup> The regulation goes on to describe, “Army leaders gain needed skills, knowledge, and experience through a combination of institutional training and education, operational assignments and self-development.”<sup>15</sup> “Through experience gained during operational assignments, leaders acquire the confidence, leadership, and the competence needed for more complex and higher level

assignments.”<sup>16</sup> Then transitioning from experience to assessment, the regulation states “The assessment process provides the basis for evaluation (periodic and formal rating of performance) and development (a continuous and informal process aimed at improving leadership potential). For both the evaluation and development assessment processes, the individual’s performance is rated against established criteria, which are understood by both the individual and the commander or supervisor conducting the assessment.”<sup>17</sup> In addition to the development that occurs across the three domains, four key enablers promote Soldier growth and progression. Cumulatively this forms the Army’s formal leader development process – “promotes the growth of individuals through training and education, experience, assessment, counseling and feedback, remedial and reinforcement actions, evaluation, and selection. This integrated, progressive and sequential process occurs in Army schools, units, and civilian education institutions and organizations.”<sup>18</sup>

FM 6-22, provides the Army’s doctrine for leadership. In doing so, some doctrinal concepts closely match the regulatory descriptions provided in AR 350-1. The FM describes leader competence - developed from a balanced combination of institutional schooling, self-development, realistic training, and professional experience and follows a systematic and gradual approach. Additionally, competencies are demonstrated through behavior and as such make them – a good basis for leader development. The FM asserts that leader competencies improve over extended periods, basic competencies are acquired at the direct leadership level and mature through organizational to strategic level positions.<sup>19</sup> Previously mentioned in the development process is the term character, defined in the FM as a person’s moral and ethical

qualities and asserts that character development as an individual's responsibility. The leader's responsibility for development of character is to encourage, support, and assess. It is important to distinguish that character is foundationally essential. Development of character according to the Army occurs distinctly apart from development of knowledge, skills and competency. The most revealing leader development concept in FM 6-22 states, "The effort requires improved individual assessment, feedback, and increased development efforts at the organizational level in the form of mentoring, coaching, and counseling, as well as picking the right talent for specific job assignments."<sup>20</sup> Done well, this effort creates drive and desire to accomplish and succeed.

Highlights from these three sources of regulation and doctrine establish a consistent framework for understanding and appreciating the fundamentals of today's Army leader development. However, recent writings may indicate changes lie ahead.

As the Army continues to evolve and mature there is a constant challenge to prepare for what comes next. In doing so, much is written about what leadership and leader development is required for the future Army. General Dempsey mentions the Army is part of Joint Force 2020. However, before we can move forward, we must also assess and reflect on today's Army leader development.

In 2008, the Rand corporation published a discerning report "Leader Development in Army Units," concluding that the Army needs significant help with leader development.<sup>21</sup> The most revealing finding from the report indicates work experience is found to have the most developmental value when individuals have feedback systems.<sup>22</sup> Another revealing point from the report indicates a diminished

value for some developmental events; many officers did not perceive a link between isolated events that could provide a cumulative benefit. This report clearly indicates opportunities for improvements to the Army's leader development process. Bolstering the Rand report, a recent article in Military Review January/February 2012 indicates the Army continues to lag in fulfilling leader development expectations.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps moving forward things will improve.

Since 2009, at least five noteworthy publications describe the leader development needs for the near future, including; The War on Terror and the War for Officer Talent: Linked Challenges for the U.S. Army; A Leader Development Strategy for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army; the Army Capstone Concept; Win, Learn, Focus, Adapt, Win Again; and America's Military, A Profession of Arms White Paper. A review of these publications is necessary in order to better understand and appreciate the demands on the future force and the associated leadership challenges and developmental needs. This understanding enables senior leaders in the ARNG directorate better ability to adapt and shape a relevant leader development program today.

The War on Terror and the War for Officer Talent concludes that superior talent is the single source of competitive advantage for tomorrow. This article declares that current military thinking and human resource systems are out of date focusing primarily on filling vacant slots over developing talent. The article introduces a concept for talent management that provides organizations the competitive edge. He defines talent management as "the strategic management of the flow of talent through an organization . . . to align the right people with the right jobs at the right time based on strategic business objectives."<sup>24</sup> This would indicate that the driver for assignments is based on

the needs of the organization vice the needs of the individual.<sup>25</sup> He goes on to emphasize that talent management is not about lock step career paths, that in order to develop and retain individuals, options must be available to support alternative assignments in order to promote and accommodate development. Another relevant point stressed is the importance of talent management as a corporate priority. Talent oriented organizations clearly communicate value and inform high-performers that they are being groomed. As such, organizations develop the ability to attract and retain the best talent; a relevant challenge as the Army moves towards Joint Force 2020 and the realities of significant future fiscal constraints.

A Leader Development Strategy for an ALDS21 has re-spurred leader development thought and dialog. As stated previously, this document asserts leader development as the Army's most important core competency. Components of this strategy reveal how and what to develop,

[it] is clear that we cannot wait to develop leaders capable of operating at the strategic level until they are assigned there . . . We are not building an adequate 'bench' of senior leaders for the future . . . more careful management of key and developmental tours" and ". . . we must increase our efforts to develop each of our leaders, and we must ensure that we are managing our most talented leaders to lead our Army into the future."<sup>26</sup>

The ALDS21 describes 8 leader development imperatives 3 of which resonate regarding development of T10 AGR officers; (1) encouraging equal commitment by the institution, by leaders, and by individual members – Leaders will match the commitment by establishing a climate that values life-long learning and holds subordinates responsible for achieving their leader development objectives (2) balance commitment to the training, education, and experience – Leaders will ensure their subordinates get the right mix of development opportunities at the right time (3) prepare select leaders for

responsibility at the national level – develop processes for identifying high performers and provide them with additional opportunities for broadening and advanced assignments that prepare them for positions of senior leadership at the national level.<sup>27</sup>

The Army Capstone Concept describes the broad capabilities required for the Army in 2016-2028, taking into account the past decade of conflict, the persistent complexity of the environment, the rapid pace of changing technology and hybrid threats.<sup>28</sup> This capstone concept describes officers who plan collaboratively and conduct decentralized execution; who tolerate ambiguity and possess the ability and willingness to make rapid adjustments according to the situation.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, describes leaders who can understand and adapt to complexity and uncertainty.<sup>30</sup> In order to develop officers with expertise, the Army must consider broadening experiences and high quality higher education programs.<sup>31</sup>

AUSA's Win, Learn, Focus, Adapt, Win Again, a collection of publications and presentations by General Dempsey during the winter 2011 AUSA symposium that seeks to renew efforts towards improving leader development. In the article, "The Profession of Arms: Walking this Road Together," General Dempsey discusses the relevant significance of adaptability, ". . . in the next four years, through the next four [Program Objective Memorandum] submissions – [2013-17 and through 2016-20] – we will create the Army we employ in 2020. Therefore, right now we are building the Army of 2020."<sup>32</sup> This revelation emphasizes that adaptability is essential in order to remain relevant tomorrow. This is truly a call to action - given our understanding of Army leader development, current trends and insights regarding the future environment and future

force, what changes must be made today to better prepare leaders for the Army of 2020?

Lastly, after a series of publications regarding the profession of arms, Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey, on 23 February 2012 published America's Military – A Profession of Arms - White Paper. The central theme asserts leadership as the profession's foundation and that development of leaders is essential and vital to the continued successful longevity of the military services. "Investing in their development is essential to strengthening and cultivating our profession."<sup>33</sup> Unlike previous opportunities, this instance cautioned preparations for a different future for Force 2020 in an environment of increasing fiscal pressure.<sup>34</sup>

In summary, understanding Army leader development doctrine and increased awareness from professional writings sets the foundation for better synthesis when faced with unique organizations and adapting to future challenges such as those facing the ARNG directorate. This section reinforces the concept of leader development through the experiences that occur in the three domains and that when supplemented with assessment, feedback, and organization level development, the development process is optimized. Recent writings in professional publications urge the need for deliberate efforts toward leader development. Leader development is the core competency strengthening the vitality of the Army as a profession. In order to meet the demands and challenges of the future, development must begin now.

#### Life Cycle Management within the ARNG Directorate

Exclusively unique organization among the Army because of the Constitution and federal laws previously described. This section describes in summary the internal process that blends the T10 AGR leader development into execution via the senior

leadership's tools for personnel management. The ARNG directorate's T10 AGR life cycle management program is consistent with applicable laws and regulations regarding personnel policy and promotions. However, frequent questions and concerns from T10 AGR Soldiers regarding the interpretation of laws and regulations prompted NGB Inspector General reviews in 2010, 11, and 12.<sup>35</sup> T10 AGR officers participate in professional military education (PME), attending intermediate education (ILE), functional area courses, and compete for attendance to senior service college (SSC). Unique to the T10 AGR program is that the directorate does not exclusively promote the officers assigned to the program. Currently, the Human Capital Management (HCM) Division administers four essential life cycle management programs for the T10 AGR program that includes: (1) accessions, (2) promotion recommendation through the conduct of the promotion recommendation board (PRB), (3) the AGR assignments process, referred to as slating, and (4) the release from active duty (REFRAD) process.

The number of vacancies available significantly influences accession into the T10 AGR program at any given time. Basic requirements for officer accession include full-time membership in a state National Guard, federally recognized in the Army with the rank of captain or major, and having had previous company command experience.

Some requirements may be waived from the directorate senior leadership.

The PRB is an assessment conducted each year exclusively for those T10 AGR officers who meet the time in grade requirements, in accordance with Reserve Officer Personnel management Act, for promotion to the next higher grade.<sup>36</sup> The PRB results inform the directorate leadership decisions for assignments and potential for performance in positions of increased responsibility. Any recommendations for

promotion are forwarded to the Officer's Adjutant General (within his state) as part of federal recognition process. The PRB assessment follows the total Soldier concept, evaluating the whole officer without regard to branch or functional area expertise – majors and lieutenant colonels are evaluated separately.<sup>37</sup> The PRB considers eight areas: job performance, potential, dedication/attitude, military/civilian education/professional training, judgment, experience, assignment history, and military bearing. Results of the FY 2012 PRB recommended 24 lieutenant colonels to colonel from a population of 270 eligible officers, yielding a promotion rate of 8.8%. The PBR also recommended 40 lieutenant colonels from a population of 282 majors, a 14% promotion rate.<sup>38</sup> These promotion rates are relatively consistent given the size of the officer cohort, the availability of control grades, and the fact that many officers seek to serve up until their mandatory removal date, 28 years for lieutenant colonel and below, 30 years for colonel. According to the PRB business rules, officer vacancies are filled by the first eligible, qualified officer, creating the perception that all qualified officers are developed similarly and all equally possess the same degree of talent by virtue of rank.

The slating process appears reactive at best and strained to provide strategic depth in the T10 AGR pool of talent. Facilitated by HCM and approved by the senior leadership, the slating process directs assignments for T10 AGR officers in the rank of major through colonel. The process begins by determining the number of authorizations from colonel losses due to promotion to brigadier general, retirements, or release from active duty (REFRAD). This process, applicable to lieutenant colonels and majors as well, creates the vacancies and thus authorizations to promote officers to the next higher grade within the T10 AGR program. Slating officers, also considers those officers

who move laterally within their grade and those newly promoted into that grade. Essential drivers to this process are the need to fill vacancies and the duration that an officer has held a given position, typically moving officers at 24 months and no longer than 36 months. Adding to the complexity of this already challenging process is taking into account officer moves to attend year long PME at ILE or SSC, state recalls (officers who depart the T10 AGR program and return to their respective state for the purpose of a unit deployment to fulfill a critical assignment with the fulltime T32 AGR force) and a number of other nominative officer assignments that unexpectedly arise (executive assistant to the CNGB, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Legislative Liaison, Inspector General, etc).

From a professional standards perspective – how to best leverage the organizations competitive edge, the current HCM process has great potential for refinement. According to “Developing Leadership Talent (DLT),” the HCM slating process resembles replacement planning more closely than succession planning or succession management – the process of identifying successors, developing successors, integrated across all levels of the organization.<sup>39</sup> The succession process, as explained in DLT, ranges from simple to complex using three approaches; replacement planning the most basic, then succession planning, and most mature or developed is succession management. Organizations that place a high valued replacement planning implement a more comprehensive approach. Using a comprehensive approach, replacements and successors are not only identified but specifically developed. Fully matured, this approach is stratified across the organization for all replacements and successors. Simplified replacement planning merely considers

replacing individuals who may possess ad-hoc experiential development, with little focus on forecasting or tailored development along the way up. Remarkably, succession management is the nexus for leveraging and creating organizational value from leader development. Thoughtful implementation of a succession management program is the way to provide the best talent for the right job and the right time. While this is the second leader imperative found in ALDS 21 published nearly three years ago, it needs further emphasis in the Title 10 AGR program.<sup>40</sup>

Globally, T10 AGR officers are routinely assigned to positions within the ARNG directorate among the functional G-staff, the NGB Joint Staff, the Department of Army and Secretary of the Army, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff office, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, functional and geographic combatant commands, Army service component commands, U.S. Army Forces Command, Combined Arms Support Command, Medical Command, Transportation Command, Army Material Command, Combat Training Centers, TRADOC, and TRADOC Centers of Excellence and schools. Providing quality trained, competent, confident, agile and adaptive officers to each of these commands and organizations with the expectation from the Army and ARNG that each officer is proficient in their assigned duties as well as a capable and knowledgeable as an advocate and advisor on Guard matters is truly a unique and complex challenge not found among the rest of the Army. The ARNG directorate faces a significant leader development challenge as, in the years between major and colonel. Rapidly transforming junior, tactically minded officers into functional area trained, enterprise savvy, culturally astute, strategic leaders and strategic leader advisers in both federalized and non-federalized roles of the ARNG. While a rudimentary process,

the life cycle management program presents vast opportunity for improvement and maturation through senior leader involvement. In the following section, two examples demonstrate how senior leader (executive) participation directly contributes to the evolution of leader development programs that produce leaders who add organizational value while posturing the organization for future success. These examples are valuable to the Title 10 AGR program because each demonstrates how committed leaders and organizations develop successive talent that continues to produce excellence in evolving, competitive environments.

#### What the Others Say about Leader Development

Leader development is equally relevant and essential in business as it is in the military. As such, much is written about this vast subject. Research supporting this analysis reveals that most significant among the leader development writings is that there are several consistent, reoccurring themes for improving leader development: (1) strategy must drive leader development, (2) managing leader development is a top priority, (3) experience with direction creates leader development that adds value creating a competitive edge, and (4) a deep, diverse bench provides organizational talent for success in varied futures. The following sections consider each development theme with relevance to the Army's leader development and the needs of the T10 AGR program. Understanding and appreciating other leader development theories broadens our perspective while enabling better evaluation of Army and T10 AGR leader development programs.

Strategy must drive leader development, McCall describes succinctly as “. . . the development of future leaders requires that current leaders have a tangible vision for their organization against which to assess the kind of leaders already being created and

to determine what the future will demand.”<sup>41</sup> In the ARNG Directorate, operational experience and Army PME provide much of this development. The shortfall exists in assessing the organization’s development needs and overlaying those requirements onto the process. If, as stated, in the ARNG Strategic Planning Guidance the core functions of the directorate are resourcing policy, operational integration, and strategic communication, what development activities are directed towards those efforts? Developing Leadership Talent proposes a relevant thought towards an integrated strategic approach, “The design of a leadership development initiative should be grounded in succession management, anchored in the organization’s strategy and feasible given the organization’s size and resources.”<sup>42</sup> Perhaps re-evaluating the ARNG directorate core functions and life cycle management process could produce better strategic alignment. A few examples of this include; refining and communicating a leader development strategy tailored to meet the unique needs of the ARNG directorate. Articulate the ends, ways, and means for achieving this strategy. Embed leader development into efforts that promote the All Volunteer Force beyond those of the human resource functions. Adopt succession management practices that leverage development and placement of talent across the organization.

Managing leader development is a top priority, Noel M. Tichy and Warren G. Bennis’ book “Judgment” provides an excellent example of not only leading from the front, but also investing time, energy, and countless hours of executive talent towards developing the next generation of senior executives in a fortune 500 company.

In mid-2006, PepsiCo announced that Indra Krishnamurthy Nooyi was the new CEO. She took over after Steve Reinemund. This was an internal candidate, a product of Pepsi leadership pipeline. Pepsi has leadership talent because of judgment made years earlier that succession planning –

leader development – was a CEO priority and commitment. Roger Enrico, former CEO prior to Reinemund, turbocharged the Pepsi process by conducting his own leadership development program for the top 240 leaders at Pepsi. He personally conducted a program with nine vice presidents at a time, which included a five-offsite, sixty-day project and three-day follow-up. He had no outside faculty, no staff teaching, just himself, eight in the morning till eleven at night. This program was how Indra was both developed and discovered. To this day Pepsi executives can remember more than 10 years ago the session . . .<sup>43</sup>

Previously discussed and critical to the future leader development, commanders and leaders are charged to invest in leader development no different than Roger Enrico. This theme continually resonates regarding the future of Army leader development but even more relevant to the T10 AGR – especially with a small cohort of officers. Each year the ARNG directorate senior leadership invests a few days discussing and approving the slating, typically approached as a necessary evil and distraction to complete as soon and painlessly as possible then allow everyone to move on to the real business of running the ARNG. However, the activities over 2-3 days might not demonstrate the same commitment as displayed by Enrico and might suggest that the ARNG directorate has not embraced leader development as the most important core competency.

This last concept, a deep, diverse bench provides organizational talent for success in varied futures, resonates now more strongly having conducted this research into leader development. The example provided here by A. G. Lafley, then CEO of Proctor and Gamble (P&G), provides an excellent model for leader development that would work well within the ARNG directorate because of its uniquely exclusive nature – a small cohort of officers and the ability to deliberately focus on leader development for specific senior positions within the organization. For the purpose of leader development A. G. Lafley best summarizes his intent by saying, “My objective was to groom more

horses for the race. I wanted horses that could run in all conditions and on all kinds of tracks. And I wanted the race to be a long one.”<sup>44</sup> In order to accomplish this strategy Lafley implemented three changes. First, he elevated the importance of leader development equal to business strategy. Second, talent assessments became the first item on the agenda during each major business meeting ahead of financial results, strategies, and operating plans. Third, each month Lafley met with 15-20 high potential leaders to discuss and assess their development. These talks educated Lafley by teaching him what they thought and how they thought. He evaluated how they dealt with ambiguity, change, and stress. He could also assess if they were team players, could they make a judgment call, be decisive, or take a stand.<sup>45</sup> As a result of his efforts, P&G developed a robust multigenerational list of contenders divided into three groups; ready to go, ready in the next few years, and likely contenders with some additional development , to monitor. Along the way Lafley came to another realization, assessing potential is more than defaulting to the highest IQ. More importantly, EQ (self-awareness, intrinsic motivation, empathy, and social relationships) along with good judgment (common sense, tempered by experience, maturity, and training) must accompany some IQ.<sup>46</sup> This approach at leader development resonates vividly when considering the T10 AGR officer corps, the size of the corps and relatively limited geographic dispersion makes adopting a similar approach feasible – more importantly, potential to be incredibly effective.

### Recommendation

It is no surprise that the current environment changes quickly. Therefore, it is reasonable to anticipate that the pace of change will continue to accelerate.<sup>47</sup> The ARNG directorate and the T10 AGR officers must adapt, lead, and develop those who

follow in order to ensure the vitality of the ARNG as a whole. Recent changes in the role of the CNGB, the new defense strategy, the continued evolution of the Profession of Arms, and the development of Joint Force 2020 are all indicators of a changing environment.

Five recommendations are needed to implement a more coherent, tailored, and future focused leader development strategy for the T10 AGR officer corps and ARNG directorate. Essential to the organization's vitality is the need for rapid adaptation, as General Dempsey plainly stated 2020 is merely a few program objective memorandum (POM) cycles away.

- (1) Strategic Assessment: Re-evaluate the ARNG Strategic Planning Guidance – assess the ARNG directorate's leader development requirements for the future environment. Communicate the strategy, leader requirements, and leader development programs for the future environment.
- (2) Assimilation: Highlighted earlier in the War for Talent and the ALDS – leader development is the core Army competency. Therefore, elevate and assimilate leader development into the organization's strategic plan. Ensure that attracting, developing, and retaining superior talent provides a competitive edge. Inspire a pervasive culture of leader development across the directorate.
- (3) Leader Development: As demonstrated by Enrico and Lafley, deliberately develop programs that promote senior leader involvement and participation that produces a deep bench of diversely capable, high-performers, who are adaptive, enterprise savvy, and who can lead the ARNG directorate in 2020.

- (4) Refinement: As discussed in succession management - synthesize leader development and human resource management practices. Leverage existing regulations, doctrine, and policy to invigorate and emphasize leader assessment and feedback. Senior officers must lead by example in this area. Focus on developing the directorate's future needs- shape, guide, and inspire enthusiastic development. Reevaluate accessions, PRB, slating assignments, and REFRAD policy to facilitate adaptation of succession management thus positioning the ARNG directorate for the future and Joint Force 2020.
- (5) Sustainment: Another significant, often overlooked but vital aspect of leader development mentioned by Lafley - Ensure, monitor, and track the balance of leader development across each domain, reinforced with the enablers – ensure EQ is cultivated along with IQ.

### Conclusion

With a focus towards the future, the ARNG directorate leadership must adopt a unique, focused leader development program for the T10 AGR officers that creates a bench of next-generation talent, prepared to meet the challenges facing the ARNG and Joint Force 2020. Evaluating the current and future environment with an appreciation of the rapid recent changes in the role of the CNGB, the new defense strategy, the continued evolution of the Profession of Arms, and the development of Joint Force 2020 are all indicators of future change. Implementing the five recommendations will help to create a leader development program that delivers a competitive edge for the T10 AGR officer corps and ARNG directorate.

## Endnotes

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