

Inspector General

United States
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Training for U.S. Ground Forces at Army
Maneuver Combat Training Centers

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Acronyms

ARFORGEN	Army Force Generation
CONUS	Continental United States
CTC	Combat Training Center
ETC	Exportable Training Capability
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Center
MCTC	Maneuver Combat Training Center
NTC	National Training Center
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-4704

DEC 28 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

SUBJECT: Report on Training for U.S. Ground Forces at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers (Report No. D-2008-033)

We are providing this report for review and comment. We considered management comments on a draft of this report in preparing the final report.

DoD Directive 7650.3 requires that all recommendations be resolved promptly. We request that management provide additional comments on the recommendation—specifically, a statement of concurrence or nonconcurrence, planned actions, and the dates for planned actions—by January 25, 2008.

If possible, please send management comments in electronic format (Adobe Acrobat file only) to AUDROS@dodig.mil. Copies of the management comments must contain the actual signature of the authorizing official. We cannot accept the / Signed / symbol in place of the actual signature. If you arrange to send classified comments electronically, they must be sent over the SECRET Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET).

We appreciate the courtesies extended to the staff. Questions should be directed to Mr. Timothy M. Wimette at (703) 604-8876 (DSN 664-8876) or Ms. Melissa M. Quealy at (703) 604-9283 (DSN 664-9283). See Appendix B for the report distribution. The team members are listed inside the back cover.

By direction of the Deputy Inspector General for Auditing:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wanda A. Scott".

Wanda A. Scott
Assistant Inspector General
for Readiness and Operations Support

Department of Defense Office of Inspector General

Report No. D-2008-033

December 28, 2007

(Project No. D2007-D000LH-0108.000)

Training for U.S. Ground Forces at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers

Executive Summary

Who Should Read This Report and Why? Officials involved in staffing Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers should read this report to understand the importance of filling Observer/Controller authorizations at a higher priority.

Background. In the last 3 years, the Army has been transforming its traditionally division-centric force to a more flexible, agile force. Part of this transition has included a restructuring of the Operations Groups, specifically Observer/Controllers, at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers.

This is one in a series of reports concerning training for U.S. ground forces supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. This report addresses the priority of staffing Observer/Controllers at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers.

Mission rehearsal exercises conducted at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers serve as the final collective training event for units deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Observer/Controllers are the foundation of this training because they control engagements and operations, observe unit performance, teach doctrine, monitor safety, and provide feedback to units through after-action reviews.

Results. The Army's Maneuver Combat Training Centers are providing military positions as part of an overall restructuring process and to meet the training requirements of a more modular force. However, training for ground forces could be negatively impacted by this restructuring if Observer/Controller positions are not staffed near full-strength in FY 2009. Specifically, the full benefit of combat training may be degraded and the amount of critical feedback provided by the Observer/Controllers during training may be reduced. To prevent this from happening, priority for staffing Observer/Controllers should be increased from current levels dictated in Army manning guidance. (See the Finding section of the report for the detailed recommendation.)

Management Comments and Audit Response. The Director of Military Personnel Management, Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1, neither concurred nor nonconcurred with the recommendation. The Director stated that the Army is currently reviewing the Active Component Manning Guidance, including an in-depth analysis of all Army organizations, and will use our report in the review. We consider the comments partially responsive and request that the Army provide comments on the final report by January 25, 2008. See the Finding section of the report for a discussion of management comments and the Management Comments section of the report for the complete text of the comments.

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Background

Combat Training Center Program. The mission of the Combat Training Center (CTC) Program is to provide realistic combined arms training that is in accordance with Army and joint doctrine and replicates actual combat. There are four primary combat training centers: the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC); the National Training Center (NTC); the Joint Multinational Readiness Center; and the Battle Command Training Program.

JRTC, NTC, and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center. JRTC, located at Fort Polk, Louisiana; NTC located at Fort Irwin, California; and Joint Multinational Readiness Center, located at Hohenfels, Germany are collectively referred to as Maneuver CTCs (MCTCs). The MCTCs provide realistic combined arms training focused on developing soldiers, leaders, and units. The MCTCs train brigades, selected division maneuver assets, and special operations forces in combined arms operations across all levels of conflict.

Battle Command Training Program. The Battle Command Training Program at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is the Army's capstone CTC. The Battle Command Training Program supports realistic, stressful training and leader development, and provides computer-assisted command and staff level training in a simulated environment.

This review was limited to MCTCs in the continental United States (CONUS), specifically JRTC and NTC.

Responsibilities for the CTC Program. The Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans, and Policy, G-3/5/7 (referred to as Army G-3/5/7) serves as the CTC Program Director. The Army G-3/5/7 manages the CTC program and establishes program priorities and resource requirements for the CTCs. The Army G-3/5/7 approves all tables of distribution and allowance authorizations for the CTCs. The Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1, Director of Military Personnel Management, is responsible for formulating, coordinating, publishing and overseeing the Active Component Manning Guidance. The guidance outlines manning priorities during times of significant personnel shortages and changing requirements. The Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1, Human Resources Command fills the authorizations using Headquarters, Department of the Army Manning Guidance.

The Commander, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is responsible for the administration, validation, and integration of the CTC program and CTC resources. The Commander, TRADOC, is responsible for providing an operations group at JRTC and NTC that is staffed, equipped, and organized to develop and execute training scenarios, and observe and analyze the performance of training units using Army doctrinal standards.

Focus and Design of CTC Training. CTC training focuses on a wartime mission-essential task list and combat operations in a realistic environment. The CTC training is executed through live-fire exercises that are tailored to the

operational environment. The CTCs design training to increase collective unit proficiency on the most realistic and challenging training battlefield. In order to provide a realistic training environment, training at the CTCs:

- is designed to stress all battlefield operating systems in ground combat operations;
- includes tactical scenarios where the outcome is not assured; and
- ensures that consequences of tactical decisions are fully played out.

Mission Rehearsal Exercises. CTCs conduct mission rehearsal exercises for units prior to their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Mission rehearsal exercises serve as the final collective training event for deploying units and are used to validate unit readiness. Mission rehearsal exercises provide units with an understanding of counterinsurgency doctrine and operational tactics, techniques, and procedures in scenarios that reflect complexities of combat, including population interaction and cultural awareness. Mission rehearsal exercises stress critical thinking and decision making capabilities and include training events for cordon and search, combat patrol, combat convoy, and defeat of improvised explosive devices.

Observer/Controllers. Observer/Controllers are the foundation of CTC training and are part of the CTC Operations Groups. During mission rehearsal exercises, Observer/Controllers observe unit performance, control engagements and operations, teach doctrine, coach to improve unit performance, and monitor safety. Observer/Controllers also provide formal feedback to units through after-action reviews. After-action reviews reinforce Army doctrinal standards by analyzing unit and leader performance, highlighting strengths and weaknesses demonstrated during the training exercise, and providing feedback necessary to improve unit performance.

Observer/Controllers are structured to match the organization of the training unit. They are assigned to cover units based on their own branch qualifications and military occupational specialty and most have recent combat experience. In addition, all Observer/Controllers fill military authorizations; no civilians or contractors are authorized to be Observer/Controllers.

Army Force Generation Training. Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) is a cyclical training and readiness process that synchronizes strategic planning, prioritization, and resourcing to generate trained and ready modular expeditionary forces. ARFORGEN is a structured progression of increased unit readiness over time, in which units transition through three readiness pools to meet operational requirements with increased predictability.

Reset/Train Force Pool. In the Reset/Train Force Pool, soldiers receive both individual and collective training that focuses on the unit's core mission essential task lists. Units in the Reset/Train Force Pool are generally not ready to conduct major combat operations.

Ready Force Pool. A unit enters the Ready Force Pool following a collective training event when the commander assesses that the unit has achieved designated capability levels. In the Ready Force Pool, units continue their structured progression of collective training to meet operational requirements.

Available Force Pool. Units move to the Available Force Pool when commanders assess that the unit has met designated capability levels. Units in the Available Force Pool are at the highest state of training and readiness capability and the first to be considered for sourcing operational requirements.

Objectives

Our overall audit objective was to determine whether U.S. ground forces supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom were receiving training necessary to meet operational requirements. Specifically, we determined whether requirements reflect the training necessary in the area of operation and verified whether the ground forces are receiving the required training. In addition, we evaluated whether the training met the needs of the ground forces supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This is one in a series of reports addressing training requirements for ground forces supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Specifically, this report addresses the realignment of Observer/Controller authorizations at CONUS Army MCTCs and the impact on training for units preparing to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. See Appendix A for a discussion of the scope and methodology and prior coverage related to the objectives.

Review of Internal Control Program

We did not identify one overall management control program for our review of Observer/Controllers at Army MCTCs. Each organization has its own program and specific internal control mechanisms pertaining to staffing Observer/Controllers. However, during our review, we tested key controls applicable to assigning Observer/Controllers to Army MCTCs. Generally, management controls were in place and working effectively; however, we identified a control issue requiring management attention. The control issue is described in our finding and recommendation sections of this report, and the recommendation addresses the action necessary to improve the control issue.

Training for U.S. Ground Forces at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers

While Army MCTCs have successfully trained U.S. ground forces to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, future training of U.S. ground forces could be negatively impacted due to planned restructuring of Army MCTC Operations Groups. This is because current Army manning guidance will not support future changes to staffing of Observer/Controllers at Army MCTCs. As a result, U.S. ground forces training to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom may not receive the most realistic training and may not receive feedback that could be critical to the success of their mission.

The CTC Way Ahead

In October 2004, the Army G-3/5/7 tasked TRADOC to coordinate a holistic review of the CTC Program regarding changes to the CTC training strategy, structure, and resources needed to meet modular force¹ and ARFORGEN training requirements. This review, titled the “CTC Way Ahead,” included input from the Army Major Commands and the CTCs and covered every facet of the CTC Program. As a result, the Deputy Commanding General for Combined Arms, TRADOC, issued a memorandum in March 2005 to the Army G-3/5/7, with recommendations on how the CTCs could support the modular force and training requirements. TRADOC made several recommendations, including ones dealing with restructuring of the Operations Groups and establishment of an exportable training capability (ETC). The Army G-3/5/7 approved the recommended changes in April 2007.

Revised Troop Lists and Operations Groups. TRADOC recommended that the Army implement a new structure for the CTC Operations Groups based on a revised troop list. A working group reviewed the brigade combat team troop list, which included units, number of deployed personnel allowed, and total equipment authorizations. The working group revised the troop list to include core brigade combat team personnel and support assets essential for full spectrum operations.

With the revised troop list, the working group reviewed coverage of Observer/Controllers at the MCTCs. The working group reduced the number of military authorizations in the MCTC Operations Group staff, exercise control, and higher headquarters functions as much as possible. The analysis generated a new structure for the MCTCs.

¹ Modular force is the name for the Army’s large-scale reorganization. The Army is converting from a division-centric force to more flexible and agile brigade combat teams.

ETC. TRADOC also recommended that the Army establish a CONUS ETC to resolve the CONUS MCTC capacity shortfall. The MCTCs must conduct 34 to 36 training events each year to support the modular force and ARFORGEN training requirements. However, in FY 2007, the existing MCTC training capacity was 28 training events per year, which left an annual shortfall of 6 to 8 training events. To fill this annual training shortfall, TRADOC recommended that the Army establish a CONUS ETC that would have the capacity to conduct six to eight training events annually. Although the ETC at JRTC will not replace the normal MCTC training events, it will focus on brigade combat team readiness and will support training exercises at home stations, power generation platforms, or other remote training areas.

The “CTC Way Ahead” working group also identified staffing efficiencies. Using the revised troop list, new MCTC structure, and authorizations from the FY 2006 table of distribution and allowances, the working group identified that the Army could resource a portion of the CONUS ETC. Therefore, TRADOC recommended that the Army approve the new fixed site MCTC structure and reprogram remaining authorizations to resource the ETC.

In March 2006, the Army G-3/5/7 completed a final review of the “CTC Way Ahead” recommendations and decided to establish a CONUS ETC in FY 2009 that could be operationally capable in FY 2010. In April 2007, the Army G-3/5/7 approved the CONUS ETC Concept Plan. To staff this initiative, TRADOC will realign 278 active component military authorizations from the MCTCs to the ETC table of distribution and allowances as of October 1, 2008. Specifically, JRTC will provide 240 military authorizations, and NTC will provide 38 military authorizations.

Observer/Controllers at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers

Army MCTCs have successfully trained ground forces for Operation Iraqi Freedom with the number of assigned Observer/Controllers. However, the planned restructuring of Observer/Controller authorizations at JRTC and NTC could negatively impact future training of ground forces.

Observer/Controller Vacancy Levels. Since FY 2005, JRTC and NTC have experienced fluctuations in Observer/Controllers assigned. Vacancy levels at JRTC have more than doubled in the last 3 years, from 9 percent of their authorized strength in FY 2005 to 22 percent in FY 2007. In addition, NTC has experienced Observer/Controller vacancy levels fluctuating between 12 and 31 percent. Officials at JRTC and NTC stated that, even with current Observer/Controller vacancies, they are able to adequately train ground force units. The Army’s planned restructuring, however, could impact this ability under current manning priorities.

Realignment of Observer/Controller Authorizations. To comply with modularity and ARFORGEN requirements, and provide units with MCTC events as they prepare to deploy, the Army plans to realign 278 Observer/Controller

authorizations from CONUS Army MCTCs and establish a new ETC in FY 2009. JRTC must provide 240 military authorizations, which is approximately 28 percent of its FY 2007 military authorizations, and NTC must provide an additional 38 military authorizations, which is approximately 6 percent of its FY 2007 military authorizations. Realignment of these positions will be reflected in the FY 2009 table of distribution and allowances of the MCTCs. However, the total number of annual training events needed to support ARFORGEN, between 34 and 36, will not decrease after the establishment of the ETC.

Impact on Ground Forces Training. The planned restructuring of CONUS Army MCTC operations groups could negatively impact future training of ground forces. In the past 3 years, vacancy levels for Observer/Controllers have risen as high as 31 percent. In FY 2009, NTC and JRTC will have to provide 6 and 28 percent of their current military authorizations, respectively, while the number of annual training events at the MCTCs will remain constant. Essentially, the MCTCs will have to continue to conduct full-scale mission rehearsal exercises, capturing and providing critical training information in the after-action reviews, with fewer Observer/Controllers if current manning priorities are not changed. Operating at this level could negatively impact the effectiveness of mission rehearsal exercises conducted at the MCTCs.

Effectiveness of Mission Rehearsal Exercises

If Observer/Controller positions are not staffed near full-strength in FY 2009, effectiveness of the mission rehearsal exercises that prepare units to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom could be negatively impacted. Decreased Observer/Controller staffing levels may degrade the realism of training or decrease the amount of feedback that units receive from training events.

Realism of Training. Decreased Observer/Controller staffing levels may impact the realism of mission rehearsal exercises by requiring MCTCs to limit a unit's freedom of maneuver during training exercises. Freedom of maneuver is crucial to achieving superior combat power at operational and tactical levels of war. Freedom of maneuver ultimately leads to success on the battlefield, and testing this ability is key for units going through a mission rehearsal exercise.

At MCTCs, units are not permitted to move within the exercise area without Observer/Controller coverage. This ensures that units adhere to rules of engagement and allows Observer/Controllers to fully capture units' actions to provide adequate feedback in the after-action review. If the MCTC has to limit a unit's freedom of maneuver because there are not enough Observer/Controllers available to accompany them through the exercise, the unit would not be able to realistically react to exercise situations or fully test systems, decisions, or abilities to act under realistic wartime conditions.

Feedback from Training. Decreased Observer/Controller staffing levels can prevent visibility on warfighting functions at all levels of command and maneuver, which may decrease the amount of feedback a unit receives from training. Fewer Observer/Controllers means that Observer/Controllers will not

always be available to provide coverage on multiple elements of training when platoons break down into squad, section, or team levels. Losing fidelity on a unit's actions and decisions during training directly affects the ability of Observer/Controllers to capture problems, shortfalls, and successes, and report them through the after-action review process so the unit can identify corrections and solutions that are crucial to units preparing to deploy. Ultimately, this could result in a degradation of critical mission-essential training.

Because mission rehearsal exercises at the MCTCs serve as the final collective training event for deploying units, it is critical that the unit train to the fullest extent and be able to discover and address any issues with its systems, actions, and decision-making abilities during this time. The coverage provided by Observer/Controllers is critical for ensuring that units get the most effective mission rehearsal exercises by not limiting freedom of maneuver or the amount of information provided in the after-action reviews. If Observer/Controller positions are not staffed near full strength, units training in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom may not receive feedback that could be critical to the success of their mission.

Priority for Manning Observer/Controller Authorizations

Current Army manning guidance will not support future changes to staffing of Observer/Controllers at Army MCTCs. Specifically, the "Headquarters Department of the Army Active Component Manning Guidance for Fiscal Year 2007," dated March 1, 2007, does not give adequate priority to Observer/Controller authorizations in the staffing process. The guidance provides three priority categories:

- "deployers," such as deploying units and special mission units, which must be filled at 100 percent of authorizations;
- "priority missions," such as drill sergeants and recruiters, which must be filled at 100 percent of authorizations, except where otherwise noted; and
- "remainder of units," which are to be filled to the extent possible based on remaining available Army inventory.

The guidance categorizes CTCs in the "remainder of units" category, which does not give them adequate priority to be filled at the strength necessary to maintain training capabilities.

According to Army Regulation 350-50, "Combat Training Center Program," January 24, 2003, TRADOC has responsibility to fill 100 percent of operations group personnel authorizations through permanent party assignment. TRADOC published additional guidance to assist in managing TRADOC's military personnel fill in a reduced manning environment. According to the "TRADOC

Active Component Military Manning Guidance,” dated April 25, 2007, the minimum goal for officers at CTCs is a 70-percent fill rate, which is down from the previous target of 95 percent.

Although Observer/Controller authorizations have been filled above 70 percent on average since FY 2005, a lower number of authorizations requires a higher level of manning to ensure the MCTCs can continue to meet their mission. For example, in FY 2006, JRTC received an average of 593 Observer/Controllers every quarter. In FY 2009, the proposed strength for JRTC Observer/Controllers is 611. Therefore, in order to maintain the same level of staffing, JRTC would have to be filled at approximately 97 percent of their 611 authorizations in FY 2009.

To maintain the current level of training at JRTC and NTC, the Army must ensure that staffing levels at the CONUS MCTCs are sufficient to sustain the number of annual training events required for units training to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Therefore, the Army must update annual manning guidance to increase priority for Observer/Controllers at the MCTCs. Increasing priority for Observer/Controllers will ensure an adequate level of coverage for units training to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and will also ensure that units experience the most realistic and effective training possible.

Management Comments on the Realignment of Observer/Controller Authorizations, and Audit Response

Management Comments. The Director of Military Personnel Management, Army G-1 stated that there are no personnel assigned against the 278 active component military authorizations that TRADOC will realign from NTC and JRTC to the ETC. The Director also stated that under the restructuring plan, CONUS CTCs will realize a net gain of 86 total authorizations, and JRTC will obtain an additional 72 Observer/Controller positions in FY 2009.

Audit Response. We agree that the CONUS CTCs will realize a net gain of 86 authorizations under the CTC restructuring plan, and that 72 of these authorizations are Observer/Controllers for JRTC. However, these Observer/Controller authorizations for JRTC in FY 2009 will be assigned to the ETC, not the fixed-site training center. Furthermore, although the ETC will provide additional training capacity to meet ARFORGEN requirements through training events at home stations, the ETC is not intended to replace the training conducted at the MCTCs. The number and scale of the mission rehearsal exercises conducted at the MCTCs will remain the same even after the ETC is fully operational.

Recommendation, Management Comments, and Audit Response

We recommend that the Director of Military Personnel Management, Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1, update the Active Component Manning Guidance to increase the manning priority of Observer/Controllers at Maneuver Combat Training Centers to ensure that the fidelity of training continues.

Management Comments. The Director of Military Personnel Management, Army G-1 neither concurred nor nonconcurred with the recommendation. The Director stated that because of pressure to meet established manning goals, the Army, including TRADOC, is being decremented to facilitate the manning of currently deployed and next-to-deploy forces. The Army is currently reviewing the Active Component Manning Guidance, including an in-depth analysis of all Army organizations, and will consider our report during this review.

Audit Response. The Army comments are partially responsive. We believe the Army's review of the Active Component Manning Guidance partially satisfies the recommendation. We understand the challenges the Army faces in prioritizing and filling manning requirements. However, we believe that the Army, as part of its ongoing review of the Active Component Manning Guidance, must increase the priority for filling Observer/Controller positions at the MCTCs to ensure deploying units receive realistic and effective training. We request that management provide comments on the final report, including a statement of concurrence or nonconcurrence, planned actions, and the dates for planned actions.

Appendix A. Scope and Methodology

We conducted this performance audit from January 2007 through September 2007 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

We interviewed personnel at the Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7; the Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1, Human Resource Command; and the Army Training and Doctrine Command, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1/4. We also visited the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California; the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana; the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany; the Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany; and the United States Army in Europe, G-3, in Heidelberg, Germany. Due to time constraints, we limited our review to CONUS MCTCs, specifically JRTC and NTC.

We reviewed Army Regulations and training handbooks to obtain background information regarding the CTC program and the responsibilities of Observer/Controllers. We reviewed correspondence between the Army G-3/5/7 and TRADOC, from October 2004 to May 2007 regarding the “CTC Way Ahead” and ETC Concept Plan. We reviewed Version 4.0 of the “ETC Operational and Organizational Plan,” dated February 28, 2007. We reviewed Department of the Army FY 2007 Manning Guidance and TRADOC Active Component Manning Guidance. We also reviewed briefings and other documentation provided by the Army G-3/5/7 regarding the CTC tables of distribution and allowances, as well as historical and projected staffing levels of Observer/Controllers at JRTC and NTC.

Use of Computer-Processed Data. We did not use computer-processed data to perform this audit.

Government Accountability Office High-Risk Area. The Government Accountability Office has identified several high-risk areas in DoD. However, this report does not address any of the identified high-risk areas.

Prior Coverage

During the last 5 years, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has issued five reports discussing DoD training. Unrestricted GAO reports can be accessed over the Internet at <http://www.gao.gov>.

GAO-07-936, "Military Training: Actions Needed to More Fully Develop the Army's Training Strategy for Training Modular Brigades and Address Implementation Challenges," August 6, 2007

GAO-06-802, "Military Training: Management Actions Needed to Enhance DoD's Investment in the Joint National Training Capability," August 11, 2006

GAO-06-193, "Military Training: Funding Requests for Joint Urban Operations Training and Facilities Should Be Based on Sound Strategy and Requirements," December 8, 2005

GAO-05-548, "Military Training: Action Needed to Enhance DoD's Program to Transform Joint Training," June 21, 2005

GAO-04-547, "Military Operations: Recent Campaigns Benefited from Improved Communications, but Barriers to Continued Progress Remain," June 28, 2004

Appendix B. Report Distribution

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Department of the Army Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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DAPE-MPE

19 Nov 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR Inspector General, Department of Defense, 400 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22202-4704

SUBJECT: Report on Training for U.S. Ground Forces at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers (MCTC) (Project No. D2007-D000LH-0108.000)

1. Purpose: To provide comments on draft report as requested in memorandum dated 27 September 2007.

2. Discussion:

a. Background.

(1) On 1 October 2007, the DCS, G-1 received a draft Inspector General report indicating that future training of U.S. ground forces could be negatively impacted due to planned restructuring of Army MCTC Operations Groups. The report specifically addresses the realignment of Observer/Controller authorizations at CONUS Army MCTCs and the subsequent impact on training for units preparing to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The report further requests DCS, G-1, Director of Military Personnel Management comments.

(2) In October 2004, the Army G-3/5/7 tasked TRADOC to coordinate a holistic review of the Combat Training Center (CTC) Program. TRADOC made several recommendations, including the restructuring of Operations Groups and the establishment of an Exportable Training Capability (ETC) to mitigate the CONUS CTC capacity shortfall. The Army G-3/5/7 approved the recommended changes in April 2007.

b. Comments.

(1) The report contends that the current realignment plan reduces the number of Observer/Controller positions, negatively impacting the MCTCs effectiveness and availability for training. However, the redesign of the TDAs at both the National Training Center (NTC) and the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) were required to support the new Modular Brigade Combat Team (BCT) structure and capabilities. To staff the ETC, TRADOC will realign 278 (JRTC-240, NTC-38) active component military authorizations from the MCTCs to the ETC Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) and HQDA will realign 246 authorizations to resource the remainder of the ETC and

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SUBJECT: Report on Training for U.S. Ground Forces at Army Maneuver Combat Training Centers (Project No. D2007-D000LH-0108.000)

growth within the BCTP. It is important to note that neither the JRTC nor NTC had personnel assigned against these authorizations that were transferred to the ETC.

(2) Under the restructuring plan, CONUS CTCs realize a net gain of 86 total authorizations and JRTC obtains an additional 72 coded Observer/Controller positions in FY09. In addition, the ETC, which will be a sub-element of JRTC that will travel to unit home-stations to conduct training events and evaluations, will consist of 364 positions, of which 299 are Observer/Controller coded positions.

(3) Additional conditions decrement TRADOC manning to include a shortage of officers Army wide, significant requirements to fill Transition Teams, WIAS and Joint Manning Document Positions. TRADOC will continue to see designated Priority Missions (Drill Sergeants, Recruiters, Initial Entry Training Company Commanders/Executive Officers, USAREC Company Commanders) filled to a floor of 100 percent aggregate strength while the remainder of its units will be filled in accordance with the available Army inventory. Redeploying units in the next 6-8 months should provide additional personnel which can be used to fill some TRADOC shortages.

(4) The Army is pressed to meet established manning goals. Rising non-deployable unit averages and number of Soldiers assigned to Rear Detachments have resulted in a higher targeting of Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) in order to meet manning goals. As a result, the Rest of the Army (ROTA), to include TRADOC, is being decremented to facilitate manning of currently deployed and next to deploy forces.

(5) The Army is currently reviewing the Active Component Manning Guidance to include an in-depth analysis of all Army organizations to include the currently deployed force, next deploying units and TRADOC. Your report will be useful in this review.

3. Thank You for the opportunity to comment on this report. Point of contact is Colonel Debra Head, Chief, Enlisted Career Systems Division, 703-695-7992.

FOR THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G-1:


GINA S. FARRISEE
Brigadier General, GS
Director of Military
Personnel Management

Team Members

The Department of Defense Office of the Deputy Inspector General for Auditing, Readiness and Operations Support prepared this report. Personnel of the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General who contributed to the report are listed below.

Wanda A. Scott
Robert F. Prinzbach
Timothy M. Wimette
Melissa M. Quealy
Hillary J. Smith
Deanne B. Curry
Michael N. Hepler
Matthew D. Schwersenska
Monica L. Noell
Allison E. Tarmann



Inspector General
Department of Defense

