Army National Guard Distributed Learning Program

What is it? The Army National Guard (ARNG) Distributed Learning (DL) Program uses information technology to develop and deliver instruction that enhances and extends traditional methods of learning. The ARNG DL Program provides several DL methods and technologies to improve the readiness of Soldiers and units through the flexible delivery of standardized individual and collective training at the point of need. The ARNG DL Program is part of The Army DL Program (TADLP) and is funded by Headquarters, Department of the Army. The ARNG DL Program has three major components: Courseware Development, Guard University, and DL Classrooms, all of which support ARNG Soldiers and units as they train for Full-Spectrum Operations during all phases of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process.

What has the ARNG done?

Courseware Development: The ARNG DL Development Center (DLDC) produces DL products for Military Occupational Specialty Qualification training, Professional Military Education, functional training, and Mobilization Training that Soldiers and units use to attain individual and unit readiness.

Guard University: ARNG training leaders determined the need for expanded online learning capabilities for ARNG Soldiers and the ARNG Distributed Learning Branch fielded Guard Univerity.   GuardU was launched on 17 May 11 and within the first 90 days of operation over 6,000 students enrolled for training and we recorded over 3,600 course completions.

Distributed Learning Classrooms: The ARNG DL Program funds and manages the operation of 339 fixed DL Classrooms (DLCs) in all States and Territories (figure 1). The DLCs provide computer workstations and video-teletraining capabilities (which access the Internet through a dedicated, high-speed network) and audio-visual equipment. The DLCs enable Soldiers to receive training at home station, reducing travel time and costs. The DLCs also enable commanders to schedule training that otherwise would be inaccessible, increasing the scope of available training and expanding opportunities to conduct training.

The ARNG DL Program coordinates with the Army's Project Directorate, Distributed Learning System to obtain Deployed Digital Training Campuses (DDTCs) for ARNG combat brigades deploying overseas. The DDTC is a transportable, networked classroom with workstations, video-teletraining, and access to the World Wide Web, the Army Learning Management System (ALMS), and other web-based training products and simulations via satellite communications.

Why is this important to the ARNG?

The ARNG Distributed Learning Program provides:

- Distributed learning products assist ARNG leaders to attain necessary levels of certification and readiness within constrained resources

- Alternative methods for commanders to conduct required training for their Soldiers, enabling flexible training schedules and expanded training opportunities

- A nationwide network of distributed learning classrooms that support the conduct of distributed simulations, enabling staffs and units at remote locations to participate in exercises that otherwise would require them to travel to simulation centers

Updated as of December 2011   Army National Guard
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- Alternative methods for Soldiers to accomplish required training at the point of need, reducing time away from home station and providing access to courses that they otherwise could not attend

- Opportunities for ARNG Soldiers to acquire additional skills, either for self-development or readiness requirements

- Opportunities for ARNG Soldiers to improve their computer literacy if they otherwise do not have access to information technology resources

What continued efforts does the ARNG have in the future?

Courseware Development: The ARNG DLDC plans to produced over 600 hours of courseware in FY11. The DLDC is validating requirements for FY12 (and beyond) courseware production, with an anticipated emphasis on mobilization training, reclassification training, critical functional training, and Professional Military Education.

Guard University: The ARNG DL Program will expand GuardU content and capabilities during FY12 based on evaluation of its effectiveness and utilization. As we gain experience and additional users, GuardU will provide States, units, and Regional Training Institutes with an online capability to create and manage training.

Distributed Learning Classrooms: To further improve access to DLCs, the DL Program fielded six Mobile DL Classrooms (MDLCs) during FY11 as a test for future replacement of fixed DLCs. The MDLCs will replace fixed DLCs one-for-one, and will normally be used at the site of the original fixed DLC. But, whenever States or units want to move an MDLC to another location, they can pack the equipment into inexpensive yet durable cases, transport the entire MDLC in a standard commercial light truck or van, and set up the MDLC at any site with access to the National Guard's operational network.

The DL Program will continue collaboration with TADLP to ensure all ARNG DL "platforms" remain compatible with US Army and USAR systems, and to ensure the ARNG is positioned to implement the latest TADLP developments. The DL Program will also continue coordination with the Army's Project Directorate, Distributed Learning System, to obtain DDTCs for deploying ARNG combat brigades.

For additional information:

http://www.arng.army.mil/aboutus/guardtraining/Pages/default.aspx

https://gkoportal.ngb.army.mil/sites/G3_ART/DL/default.aspx