

Lead The Way

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I hope that all of our engineer Soldiers and families had a happy and safe holiday season! As I reflect back on the many accomplishments of the past year, I am constantly reminded of the tremendous contributions and sacrifices made by our Active, Guard, and Reserve Soldiers and their families while our nation is at war. And as we begin the new year, I would like to welcome Major General William McCoy and his wife Jill back to Fort Leonard Wood as the Maneuver Support Center (MANSCEN) commander and commandant of the Engineer School.



In our continuing efforts to *Transform, Train, and Take Care of the Regiment*, I will provide you some insight by addressing the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES), situational awareness, and modularity.

NCOES. As we continue to transform the Regiment in concert with the Army, we are constantly adjusting our NCOES by implementing current lessons learned in our programs of instruction (POIs). Our goal is to maintain information relevant to missions our NCOs are performing. I am pleased to say that the engineer Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC) and the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC) are meeting this challenge head-on.

The continued construction of the MANSCEN NCO Academy forward operating base (FOB) by engineer NCOES students has added a great sense of realism to all tactical training, serving as an outstanding base of operations as well as providing realistic conditions for vertical and horizontal construction missions. In addition, ANCOC and BNCOC are continuously updating course material to keep up to date with the fielding of new equipment and techniques.

Soldiers enrolled in ANCOC and BNCOC will also have the opportunity to receive portions of the Search Advisor Course and will receive emphasis on sewage, water, electricity, academics, and trash (SWEAT); vertical and horizontal construction projects; lessons learned; and counterinsurgency operations. Lastly, to aid our leaders in training, we are leveraging the assets on Fort Leonard Wood by integrating search and mine dogs through demonstration and implementation during the special training exercise (STX).

Situational Awareness. One of the many challenges facing our Soldiers on a daily basis is situational awareness. To combat the information gap, the NCOES is testing recognition of combatants in urban environment, (ROC-U), recognition of combatants and improvised explosive devices (ROC-IED), and recognition of combatant suicide bombers (ROC-SB). These programs are designed as virtual trainers that a Soldier can use as a situational awareness training model dealing with combatants, IEDs, and suicide bombers.

The NCOES is working hand in hand with the Night Vision Laboratory to develop what may become one of the single most important predeployment training tools to help Soldiers and leaders know what's taking place on the battlefield. In addition, all Soldiers attending ANCOC and BNCOC will receive exposure to three programs and provide feedback directly to the Night Vision Laboratory to make the product better. Eventually, the ROC-U, ROC-IED, and the ROC-SB will be a Web-based individual self-development tool that every Soldier can access to train on virtual scenarios that they may be faced with while deployed. The training tool can be updated as the environment and conditions change.

Modularity. The Fusion Cell continues to facilitate weekly discussions on engineer units that are converting, activating to the new modular design with help from FORSCOM, HRC, and DA. The activations of the 4th Engineer Battalion, Fort Carson, Colorado; 7th Engineer Battalion, Fort Drum, New York; and 326th Engineer Battalion, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in October bring the total number of modular engineer battalions to seven. The 11th Engineer Battalion, Fort Benning, Georgia; 5th Engineer Battalion, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; and 14th Engineer Battalion, Fort Lewis, Washington, will become modular units within the next few months.

In closing, I am extremely proud of our Regiment's Soldiers for their contributions and positive impact over the past year. I am especially proud of the sappers who are deployed around the world in harm's way. To those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of freedom, justice, and the American way of life, neither you nor your families will be forgotten.

God Bless America!