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Army officials craft plan to implement recommendations from Network Integration Evaluations

Conference aligns requirements, acquisition, resourcing and research & development communities

(Bill Ackerly, Mission Command Center of Excellence)

FORT LEAVENWORTH, KS – Baseball season may be several months away, but Army network and acquisition leaders hit a home run at a Fort Leavenworth conference, January 17-20. “The Agile Process Synchronization Conference brought together all the right working groups and decision makers to synchronize the development of Army capabilities that come out of the Network Integration Evaluation (NIE) at Fort Bliss,” said Colonel Wayne W. Grigsby, Jr., Director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence (MC CoE) and host of the conference.

More than 200 military and civilian officials participated in the conference, representing organizations, such as: Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA); Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASA(ALT)); the Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC); TRADOC Analysis Center (TRAC); TRADOC Intelligence Support Activity (TRISA); the Army Test & Evaluation Command (ATEC); the Brigade Modernization Command (BMC) at Fort Bliss; Carnegie Mellon University; and each of the Army’s Centers of Excellence (Mission Command, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; Signal, Fort Gordon, Ga.; Fires, Fort Sill, Ok; Intelligence, Fort Huachuca, Az.; Maneuver, Fort Benning, Ga.; Maneuver Support, Fort Leonard-Wood, Mo.; Aviation, Fort Rucker, Al.; and Sustainment, Fort Eustis, Va.).

This was the first conference in which key network and acquisition elements within the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), supported by teammates from across the Army, have come together as one body, focused on developing integrated implementation recommendations that encompass doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF), all based on insights gained at the most recent NIE.

“While implementation recommendations from this conference will help shape decisions regarding subsequent NIEs, the conference was focused on action and producing recommendations for capabilities based on the results and analysis done at the NIEs,” said Grigsby.

The Agile Process

The Army is employing the Agile Process to transform Army business processes. The Agile Process is a systematic approach to rapidly assimilating new technologies in the Army and unites the requirements, acquisitions, resourcing and R&D communities to ensure cost-effective improvements (most “bang for the buck”) and maximize opportunity for innovation.

The objective of the Agile Process is to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce the amount of time and resources to respond to the rapid changes in Soldier requirements associated with current operations, emergent information technology and modifications to the Army force structure. The Agile Process consists of six phases which starts with the evaluation and identification of gaps and opportunities, highlighted by an NIE, and concludes with follow-on acquisition and fielding decisions to support the Army’s force generation process.

“Through everyone’s contribution at this conference, we were able to prevent the Agile Process from getting bogged down in other existing processes and ensure that innovative ideas and new technologies are placed on the fast track to get these recommended capabilities to Soldiers and units in the field,” said Jeff Witsken, Chief, Network Integration Branch, MC CoE.

The Network Integration Evaluation (NIE)

The rapid pace of technological change and changes in the Army Force Structure challenge the ability to coordinate rapid response solutions that add to the Army’s existing capability and can be incorporated into doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

The NIE is a way to address this concern. An ongoing series of semi-annual evaluations, the NIE brings together Soldiers, materiel developers, and engineers in a realistic operational environment. In gathering these communities together at one time, the NIE synchronizes and streamlines the evaluation and feedback approach, allowing for more useable test data and direct user feedback.

The NIE represents a new way of doing business – a fundamental change in how the Army develops and delivers solutions and capabilities to Soldiers. These solutions and capabilities must also be trained in the Army’s schoolhouses and Combat Training Centers. Training developers can be quickly brought into the NIE process to meet quick response initiatives, provide expertise and identify similar existing capabilities that potentially could be fielded more rapidly with the appropriate education and training. This will reduce the risk that a single-function/task solution is given to units without the requisite system integration and training for use and employment with their other mission command systems.

TRADOC Capability Manager (TCM)

TRADOC Capability Managers (TCMs) integrate and synchronize all aspects of DOTMLPF for designated systems and the associated capabilities. TCMs serve as the user representative and TRADOC representative to materiel developer forums; they also interface with the user and

represent the warfighter in the fielding, life cycle management, and evolving capabilities of current and future DOTMLPF solutions.

TCM Mission Command led a separate track at the Agile Process Synchronization Conference. This provided an opportunity to build on previous TCM Synchronization Conferences to coordinate requirements and materiel development efforts. More than 20 TCMs briefed their Mission Command portfolios. The groups discussed: issues from the recent HQDA Mission Command Capability Portfolio Review; Common Operating Environment development; Mission Command on-the-move; Airspace Integration Improvement Initiative; and server consolidation.

Viewed together, the Agile Process and the NIEs reflect the fundamental changes the Army is making in the way it develops, evaluates, tests, and delivers networked capability to its operating forces. The conference included presentations, discussions and tracks about the Network and the different phases of the Agile Process.

Headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., the Mission Command Center of Excellence (MC CoE) is a network of organizations that develops and integrates Mission Command DOTMLPF requirements and solutions across the six warfighting functions in order to prepare commanders and leaders to successfully conduct Unified Land Operations. To learn more about the MC CoE, visit <http://mccoe.army.mil>.

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Lt. Col. Marcellus Newson, Chief System Integration, TCM-BCT Mission Command from the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, Ga., facilitates a group discussion about one of the results from NIE 12.1.

Lt. Col. Gregory Grybowski, Assistant TCM-Radio from the Signal Center of Excellence at Fort Gordon, Ga., provides conference attendees an update on Army tactical radio programs.

