

# Total Army capabilities to execute the Army's mission

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To fight and win our nation's wars.

**Talking points:** Kenneth J. Crawford, COL, USA(Ret)

**Topic Point Focus:** future size and mix of the Force to *ensure success in any future engagement* and they need to fully understand the *complexities of modern warfare*

**Opportunity:** maximizing the capabilities of our RC/NG components with available resources (personnel, budget, available training time, equipment availability, and limitations of force modernization).

**Vignette:** Lawrence of Arabia didn't have a plan of what to do once he seized Damascus, the U.S. Government lacked a plan of what to do shortly before and/or following their victories over Germany and Japan, therefore the Marshall Plan became the means of rebuilding these war-torn nations. Why do we continue to repeat these mistakes when we're fully capable of learning from them and applying the resources that are readily available to us within our RC/NG components?

## **Discussion Points:**

- deploying with multi compo units – each may have challenges, but they all positively contribute to the success of the mission!
- full breadth of capabilities in the AC, Reserve, and NG across the full spectrum of warfighting functions....the battle isn't over until "ENDEX" is called and real conflict doesn't have an ENDEX!
- abilities of the warfighter vs enabler – specifically engineers, logisticians, agriculturalists, public works, city management, etc.
- the ability for each to prepare to deploy (estimated time it takes, costs, etc) from a skill set employed on a limited basis rather than tapping the expertise of what lies readily available but dormant in RC/NG units because of unit types.
- deploy and execute their primary mission – could you imagine what capabilities states would have to respond to natural disasters if post-conflict expertise could be leveraged in the planning and execution phases?
- redeploy/demob/refit/dwell times for RC/NG units are critical to ensure we maintain the force strength – but when they are task organized to AC components, we must engage and readily identify their "hidden" skillsets to maximize the capability gap in the active component for many post conflict tasks.

## **Personal Experience:**

1. For OIF II, the 1CD Engineer Brigade was very fortunate to align and task organize with a RC Engineer Group and three additional engineer battalions for operations in and around Baghdad, Iraq. These great Americans came from the Pacific Rim, Oklahoma, Texas, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and individual augmentees from across every state! They received quality mobilization training, equipment, and they were all highly professional and capable in their mission capacity.
2. Prior to 2001, I recall aligning with our RC/NG components for training, partnering, and some deployments. We often referred to these capabilities as “Wartrace” or “Roundout” units which provided enabling capabilities to the organization. Seizing the opportunity to establish a positive connection to these units provides the ability to establish relationships throughout the full breadth of ARFORGEN execution.
3. Building relationships, understanding capabilities and limitations, and enhancing the combat readiness of RC/NG units takes time.
  - 3.1. Some units were unable to effect a meaningful relationship until they met for the first time in Camps Doha and Beuring. This affords very little time to ensure competencies are fully in place and capability gaps are narrowed beyond what is provided during unit certification prior to deployment.
  - 3.2. Equipping the RC/NG forces will remain a burden for deployment as they are lower on the DAMPL. Operational Needs preclude RC/NG units from receiving sufficient time to effectively train (or sustain) skills and drills required for combat execution. Pre-Deployment Training Sets located at mobilization stations and active installations provide relief, but not at the magnitude required for units to remain in the band of excellence across the full spectrum of operations.
    - 3.2.1. To effectively train Soldiers to move, shoot, and communicate in a tactical vehicle they will use in combat, they need that piece of equipment prior to deployment rather than attempting to “mock-up” or pretend a M998 is an M1114, M1151, MRAP, or Buffalo most commonly used in current urban combat operations.
    - 3.2.2. “Wartracing” or “Roundout” opportunities enable training partnerships between RC/NG and AC units as they will fight while deployed.
4. The units task organized to the 1st Cav Engineer Brigade brought forth the organic capability to conduct urban search and rescue, architectural design, engineering (to include civil, structural, electrical, and mechanical), municipal expertise, and a multitude of other enabling individual capabilities across each formation – these capabilities, are not taught at our CTCs or evaluated during deployment certification training! Why not begin to consider cross training with Departments of State, Agriculture, and Homeland Security to build DoD relationships with these Departments and unify future operations (combat operations, humanitarian relief, disaster relief, and security just to name a few)?

5. One of our construction battalions rarely left Camp Taji because their primary mission was to increase the capacity of that FOB and its supporting aircraft MOG for rotary and fixed wing aircraft. They performed outstanding in every facet of construction and project management but had limits in their tactical maneuver capabilities and capacity. The success of the mission at Camp Taji was hinged on the preservation of their capabilities as a construction battalion and the 1CD recognized that during planning and execution.

**Points of Consideration:**

1. It is not feasible to expect RC/NG to focus on “full spectrum” due to their limits of training resources (personnel, equipment, and time). Focusing on their existing internal enabling capabilities that will critically enhance and influence the combat power of units to which they are attached will benefit the end results and our unified objectives.
2. Perhaps, our focus should be on elements that are organic to their Soldiers’ skills, talents, and experience that may benefit the warfighter in and after combat operations as well as their home stations and states during dwell and refit periods.
3. Unless we can positively influence equipping the force equitability across all components while downsizing and facing budget cuts and potential impacts on retiree benefits, we need to consider the incredible capabilities our RC/NG Soldiers can provide based on their civilian skill sets.

**Summary:** We have the opportunity to expand the capacity and capabilities beyond the direct ballistic engagement fight while increasing our Army’s resolve at home and abroad prior to, during, and after combat operations, increase the unification of the U.S. departments of Defense and State by leveraging the integral skills our RC & NG components bring to bear.