

Commandant's Note

Readying for LSCO: Building on the Fundamentals

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For well over a century, *Infantry* was recognized as our branch magazine. The publication was distributed at no cost to units and offered Soldiers tactical, doctrinal, and technical information, professional development guidance, lessons learned from units in combat, and myriad other useful data important to Soldiers. Officers, NCOs, retirees, and other subscribers around the world all eagerly waited for the latest issue to reach their mailboxes and training rooms. Fort Benning honored reciprocal subscription arrangements with over 48 partnered nations and jointly published articles of interest to allied readers. Hard copies of *Infantry* were shared with distinguished world-wide visitors. Our branch magazine was a valued adjunct to the visibility and respect that Fort Benning enjoyed among the world's armed forces, allies, and neutral nations. In 2013, after a century of being a print publication, *Infantry* became a web-based publication. Today, as our Army evolves, we recognize the potential for the magazine to be published in multiple mediums (one web-based and one printed) to complement each other. As we explore the feasibility of resuming publication of *Infantry* for unit distribution, we welcome your comments on the format, content, and layout of this new issue for the 2019 Maneuver Warfighter Conference.

The theme of the 2019 Maneuver Warfighter Conference is readying the Brigade Combat Team for Large Scale Combat Operations (LSCO). The purpose of this year's conference is to prepare the maneuver force for future challenges and examine how we train individual Soldier and collective skills. Near-peer competitors continue to improve their operational and tactical capabilities to achieve standoff against our capabilities. In this issue of *Infantry*, Dr. Lester W. Grau invites our attention to the mine warfare of the Soviet-Afghan War which accounted for 30-40 percent of trauma cases treated by Soviet medics. Mines and other explosive devices are a familiar subject to most Soldiers and virtually all Infantrymen and have been a subject of *Infantry* Magazine for well over a century.

As our Army, and our Infantry in particular, strives to regain overmatch against our adversaries, leaders across the maneuver force will discuss Soldier and squad modernization efforts necessary to fight and win on a hyperactive and increasingly lethal modern battlefield. Success is not reliant on new material or technology alone. Our innovative leaders remain decisive. Their skill requires our collective emphasis on thorough, and doctrinally correct, instructor certification and leader development. This provides the foundation for training future leaders

in a manner that ultimately defines our lethality. The innate value of instructor certification has never been more clearly demonstrated than in Training Circular (TC) 3-20.40, *Training and Qualification, Individual Weapons*, which defines goals and requirements for each weapon system and element. TC 3-20.40 features major updates to current rifle qualification, criteria, and authorized target systems to hone the marksmanship proficiency of the Infantryman. This approach reemphasizes weapon proficiency as described in TC 3-20.0, *Integrated Weapons Training Strategy (IWTS)*, stressing rapid deployment tactics and techniques and highlighting the role and benefits of simulations. The desired end state of the new marksmanship qualification system is the standardization of weapons training and qualification and increased lethality for all Soldiers, a key determinant of victory on the future battlefield. The background, criteria, and the Rifle and Carbine Qualification are discussed in detail as the lead Infantry News feature in this issue.

Your Infantry Branch is also redefining how we prepare initial entry Infantry Soldiers for the rigors of tomorrow's battlefields. Foremost among these is the 22-week Infantry One Station Unit Training (OSUT). The first 22-week course had an attrition rate of under 6 percent, a marked improvement over the previous 10-12 percent attrition rate of the most recent 14-week course. The success rate of the new course is attributed to strict adherence to the fundamentals of physical training, Soldier discipline, land navigation, combat lifesaver skills, combat water survival, and marksmanship. Two fundamentals inherent in the profession of arms are survivability and lethality, and both of these stand out in any discussion of this initiative. A less obvious, but significant, factor is the bonding and teamwork that results from Soldiers undergoing challenges, hardships, and shared accomplishments during the 22 weeks. The success of the U.S. Army Infantry School is a direct result of our committed investment in the acquisition, training, and support of the top-notch officers and NCOs to whom we entrust the training of our initial entry Soldiers.

In closing, your Infantry School dedicates our efforts to training Infantry Soldiers to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver in order to destroy or capture him, or to repel his assault with fire, close combat, or counterattack. As our Army modernizes and adapts to meet future challenges, this is an important time for our Infantry. It is also the right time to share the discussion in our branch magazine. Thanks for your support and thanks for all you do for our branch.

I am the Infantry! Follow me!