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## Welcome to Keepin' it Green Newsletter

While traveling overseas and across the United States over the past year in DAMO-SS (HQDA G-35), many of you have shared an interest to better understand what's going on at HQDA. Having also served many tours outside of HQDA and the Army, I know well how easy it is to feel detached from the Army. This newsletter is our attempt to help informally bridge this divide and provide an additional way to strengthen our profession.

My goal is to send out Keepin' It Green every other month. As DAMO-SS includes proponents for our Army's 48, 52, and 59 communities, we'll target these teammates, especially those working in non-Army units. I also welcome sharing updates with other Army communities. Each edition will include a short note from me, a few articles highlighting big ongoing efforts in HQDA, and a note from each of the proponent managers. Keepin' It Green will remain unclassified, so I encourage you to reach out to the article authors if you'd like to dive into any of the topics at a higher classification.

Finally, this is our first pilot edition. Please share what we missed, what was helpful, and any corrections needed. Our goal is to keep communications open, share key efforts from here, and hopefully allow everyone to better contribute in their day job wherever the Army is currently asking you to serve.

**This we'll defend !**



**Keepin' It Green**

Stephanie R. Ahern  
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Director, Strategy, Plans and Policy Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff,  
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## FA48 Foreign Area Officer Proponent Update

As the Army's regional experts, providing essential cultural, linguistic, and diplomatic expertise that enables successful mil-to-mil engagements and operations in an increasingly complex global environment, FAO has tackled many efforts the past year to increase our value to the Army. We want to highlight changes in Intermediate Level Education (ILE) at Foreign Staff Colleges, new recruiting mechanisms through the FAO Direct Commissioning Program (DCP), and streamlining unique Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) challenges facing the FAO community.

**ILE Credit at All Foreign Colleges.** Foreign staff college programs deliver unparalleled regional expertise, language immersion, and global professional networks while satisfying MEL-4 education requirements alongside future foreign military leaders. However, the accreditation process to certify each individual course oftentimes took years to approve. In October 2024, the Joint Staff J-7 replaced case-by-case validation of foreign staff colleges with a blanket determination that none meet DOD standards. Instead, the J-7 developed a 60-hour asynchronous foundational course (P950) enabling all officers to attend any staff college globally. Furthermore, with the Army ending the Satellite ILE program, whose campuses enabled 50 FAOs annually to be CGSC complete, all officers have an additional option to complete ILE at foreign staff colleges in addition to the distance learning option. Please contact FAO Proponent if interested in attending a foreign staff college. Every year there are a few FAO and/or School of Other Nation seats that are unencumbered due to lack of availability of officers or the timing of the courses.



**Direct Commission Pilot.** FAO Proponent piloted a DCP targeting NCOs, warrant officers, and civilians with regional experience, advanced degrees, and relevant professional experience. This pathway to entry recognizes there is exceptional talent beyond the key development-qualified CPTs selected during the VTIP process, which could address capability gaps with mature professionals not normally eligible to become Army FAOs. As HRC continues to

tweak the right number of Voluntary Transfer Incentive Program cycles to align personnel to the Branches/Functional Areas, this pathway offers another tool in the FAO arsenal for finding the best talent. Lessons learned on advertising the nascent program will be available after the MILPER application window closes on 8 SEP 2025.

**Enterprise EFMP Modifications.** Nearly 35% of Army FAOs have at least one family member enrolled in EFMP by the time they become a LTC. Though not all of these cases make the service member and/or family non-deployable, remote postings and widely variable healthcare in every country create significant challenges in ensuring our officers are mission deployable. FAO Proponent has been working with OSD, TriCare, and the DOD global health enterprise to advise the rewriting of the DODI to streamline the EFMP screening process required of all soldiers serving in embassies. We will keep you informed on updates to changes in the EFMP process in subsequent editions. If you will serve in an Embassy and have questions about your EFMP situation, please do not hesitate to reach out to FAO Proponent.

Proponent Corner (FA48)  
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**2025 FA52 Qualification Course.** Congratulations to the FA52s who completed their qualification course on 1 Aug at the Defense Nuclear Weapons School. Throughout the course, students focused on the critical role of the land component commander on future nuclear battlefields, joint force strategies for sustaining mobility in the face of biological threats, and the modernization implications of conventional-nuclear integration (CNI). Capstone briefings on these topics to senior FA52s enabled a robust discussion of how Army and joint commanders balance WMD considerations against competing risks on a dynamic multi domain battlefield. Graduates will immediately apply these precepts on behalf of the land component commander within follow-on assignments across the Department.

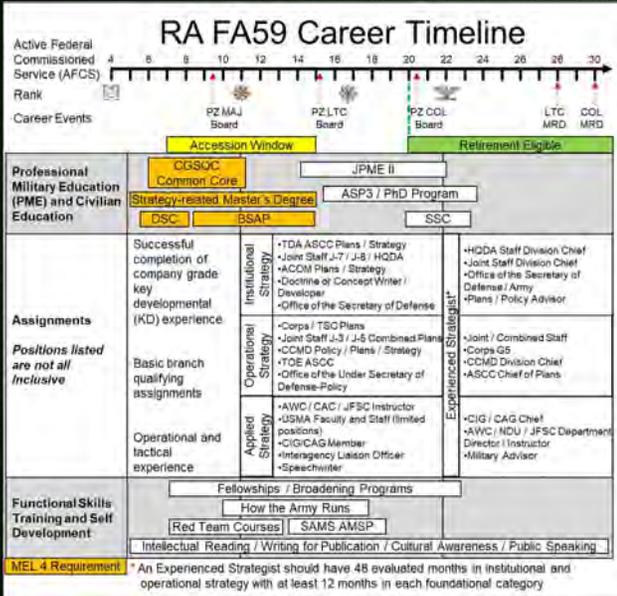
**Critical Task Site Selection Board.** FA52s increasingly comprise the core of the joint community's nuclear and CWMD expertise within a rapidly changing global security environment. The FA52 Proponent will convene its first Critical Task Site Selection Board (CTSSB) in November to reevaluate FA52 core competencies against emerging DoD demands. The CTSSB will provide the basis for refinement of FY26 FA52 qualification course, clarified classification of joint FA52 positions, and an update to core competencies within DA PAM 600-3. We look forward to increasing the community's ability to support Army and joint commanders via this process.

**Upcoming Site Visits.** The proponent team completed their visit to USNORTHCOM, USSPACECOM, SMDC, and SOCNORTH on 19-22 Aug. The next proponent visit from 8-17 Sep will include USFK, USFJ, USARPAC, and INDOPACOM.

For more information on site visits, or any of these topics, please contact MAJ Zach Scott at [Zachary.r.scott4.mil@army.mil](mailto:Zachary.r.scott4.mil@army.mil) or Mr. Bill Coffin at [william.j.coffin.civ@army.mil](mailto:william.j.coffin.civ@army.mil)



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Beginning in mid-2024, the FA59 proponent office made several changes to transition the legacy Harvard Strategist Program (HSP) to the FA59 Scholars Program which took effect in the recent FY26 BOP catalog. The goal of these changes is to provide more opportunities for high-potential officers to become FA59s, expand educational opportunities, improve utilization, and provide more return on investment for the Army.

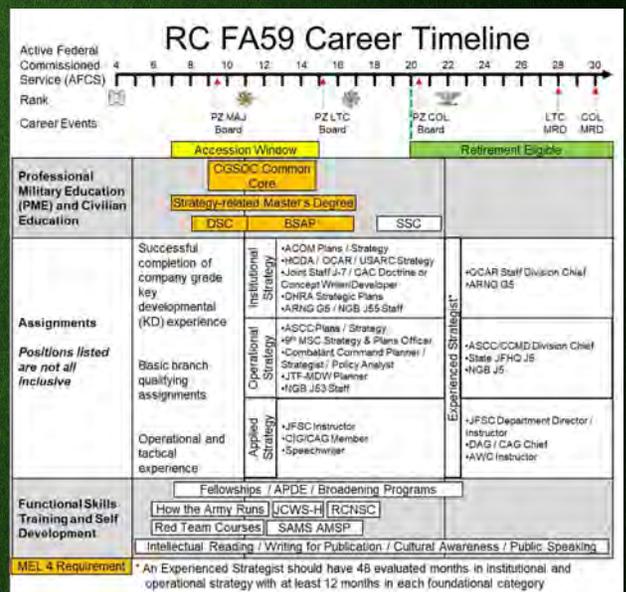
The FA59 Scholars Program expands the applicant pool to include all Captains—even if they are pre-KD or pre-CCC. This enables highly qualified officers to consider changing their career path to FA59 at a career phase where many consider and choose to separate from the Army—a juncture that previously preceded HSP or VTIP eligibility. This promises benefits for FA59 as well as the Army in terms of retention incentives.

Utilization tours for the Scholars program will be more appropriate for junior FA59s, as program graduates will be sent to Corps, ASCC, or similar assignments instead of the HQDA G-3/5/7. This allows increased flexibility for program graduates, and also opens up assignment opportunities in the Pentagon for a wider pool of more experienced Strategists from across the force.

Finally, the FA59 Scholars Program offers increased return on investment for the Army. Other universities across the nation offer more competitive tuition rates, are willing to provide discounts to the Army, and are more flexible in terms of officers' timelines. HKS was a one-year program that, despite its reputation, offers similar educational benefit for new FA59s at a much higher cost.

Please help spread the word about the new FA59 Scholars Program! Application numbers for this first iteration of the updated program already exceed those of the last five years. Please contact FA59 Proponent at:

matthew.f.cohen.mil@army.mil or kyle.r.hallowell.mil@army.mil if you are interested, or if you know a qualified potential Strategist you would like to point in our direction.



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## Shaping the Future Army: The Army Transformation Initiative

The Army is undergoing a significant transformation to address evolving threats and maintain a competitive advantage in the 21st-century security environment. The Army Transformation Initiative (ATI) isn't simply about new equipment; it's a fundamental shift in how we organize, train, and operate – impacting force development, regional alignment, and strategic depth.

ATI streamlines decision-making, prioritizes Soldiers' needs, eliminates obsolete systems, modernizes the force, and addresses inefficiencies within the business aspects of the Army. It moves away from a system driven by parochial interests towards one focused on lethality and adaptability. ATI ends investment in obsolete systems, reinvesting those funds into modernization, and enables Soldiers to repair their own equipment.



To facilitate this shift, the Army is establishing two new commands: Transformation and Training Command (T2C) to oversee modernization efforts and ensure units are prepared to field new capabilities, and Western Hemisphere Command (WHC) to strengthen regional partnerships and address emerging threats related to the homeland. Both commands are the result of realigning organizations: T2C comes from the integration of TRADOC and Army Futures Command, while WHC consolidates Army North, Army South, and FORSCOM. The establishment of these commands streamlines headquarters while increasing warfighting capabilities.

ATI is a multi-year effort that complements the Army's "Continuous Transformation" initiatives. Program cuts redirect funding towards efforts that have proven effective in Ukraine, multilateral exercises across the Indo-Pacific, and Combat Training Centers. The Army will divest in Humvees (HMMWVs), Joint Light Tactical Vehicles (JLTVs), and older AH-64D to make way for developments in drones, loitering munitions, long-range fires, and Integrated Air and Missile Defense systems (IAMD). The Army is changing at the speed of combat.

War on Rocks Podcast with Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army on ATI:

<https://warontherocks.com/2025/05/the-armys-upcoming-transformation-with-secretary-driscoll-and-gen-george/>

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## Strengthening the Homeland: The Army's Renewed Focus on Homeland Defense

The U.S. Army is strengthening its Homeland Defense (HD) capabilities, operating in direct alignment with Presidential Proclamations, Executive Orders, the 2025 Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance, and the 2025 Defense Planning Guidance. This renewed focus reflects a growing recognition of the evolving threats to the homeland and the critical role the Army plays in safeguarding the nation.

In particular, Army forces are supporting interagency efforts to secure the Southern Border and develop the Golden Dome for America. The Golden Dome for America aims to defend the U.S. homeland from a range of threats, including ballistic, hypersonic, and cruise missiles, and advanced aerial attacks.

Protection of Defense Critical Infrastructure (DCI) remains a key component of HD. DCI encompasses both DoD-owned assets and those operated by non-DoD entities – including private sector companies and governmental organizations – that are essential to supporting DoD missions. To support this effort, DAMO-SS is developing a “Non-DoD DCI Playbook” to outline the integration and dependencies of DoD and non-DoD critical infrastructure. It further enables infrastructure owners to mitigate vulnerabilities and build resiliency of non-DoD owned critical infrastructure that supports DoD.

DAMO-SS is sponsoring two key studies with the RAND Corporation focusing on the homeland. The first, in partnership with the Army National Guard (ARNG), identifies potential gaps and risks between ARNG force structure and projected demands in 2040. The second, in a joint study with DAMO-Fires, examines DCI and Golden Dome for America, informing future concepts, force structure, force allocation, and resource to protect critical infrastructure. These studies will provide data-driven insights to guide future force development and investment decisions.

The Army's commitment to Homeland Defense through border security, missile defense initiatives like Golden Dome for America, and critical infrastructure protection represents a proactive and strategic investment in the security and resilience of the nation. These combined efforts ensure the Army is prepared to defend the homeland against evolving threats and safeguard the critical infrastructure upon which both the DoD and our nation depend.



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## ARSTRUC DELIVERS ATI

The Secretary approved the Army Structure Memorandum (ARSTRUC) Fiscal Years 2028-2032, the culmination of the Total Army Analysis process and includes many core aspects of the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI) across all components. The ARSTRUC focuses on increasing lethality by expanding long-range fires (e.g., HIMARS) and integrated air defense units (e.g., Patriot and Integrated Fire Protection Capability (IFPC)).



Leveraging lessons learned from Transformation in Contact prototyping, it converts all Regular Army Infantry Brigade Combat Teams and some ARNG Brigade Combat Teams to Mobile Brigade Combat Teams (MBCT), prioritizing mobility and speed through the Infantry Squad Vehicle. Maneuver brigades will also integrate emerging technology, helping the Army adapt in a UAS saturated battlefield complicated by electronic warfare.

Besides activating both Western Hemisphere Command (WHC) and Transformation and Training Command (T2COM), the ARSTRUC creates four Multi Domain Commands (MDC) (Pacific, Japan, Europe, Army). While all four MDCs will be unique, each will provide C2 for at least one MDTF and additional capabilities helpful to its area of operation.

The ARSTRUC also identified cuts to prioritize warfighting in the next conflict, such as canceling the activation of Mobile Protected Firepower Battalions (e.g. M10 Booker). It also consolidates aviation assets to one Combat Aviation Brigade per Division and a partial one in Europe.

This key document provides the first step towards implementing ruthless prioritization and influences all aspects of how the Army delivers, develops, and designs forces. HQDA will publish a TAA 28-32 Addendum in November 2025 to codify final organizational designs still being staffed such as T2COM and WHC. Beyond the addendum, the ARSTRUC will inform the development of a new Army Campaign Plan.



**What do you want to see in our next edition?**



**Submissions and ideas:**

**Submit your article as an MS Word Document**

**Submit any photos, images, or charts as separate files in the highest resolution possible.**

**Please include caption, specific units, soldiers, action etc.**

**SEND ALL DOCUMENTS AND FILES TO:  
mauricio.gonzalezarriola.ctr@army.mil**

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