



OCT 03 2017



Modernization Priorities for the United States Army

We have the most skilled, ethical, and combat hardened Army in our Nation's history. Our Army remains globally engaged in a complex, dynamic and increasingly uncertain world and we stand ready to fight and win our nation's wars.

The competitive advantage that the United States has long enjoyed, however, is eroding. We are being challenged in every domain of warfare: land, maritime, air, cyber and space, and the challenges are growing in scale and complexity. Our recent focus on fighting wars of insurgency and terrorism allowed our adversaries to make improvements on their modernization efforts and erode our advantages enjoyed since World War II. Our Army must regain our overmatch and competitive advantage against emerging threats, competitors, and adversaries. We have worked hard in recent years to increase our readiness and strengthen our formations and now must modernize our capabilities to increase our lethality against emerging regional and global near-peer adversaries.

This modernization strategy has one simple focus: make Soldiers and units more lethal. To be successful, we must turn ideas into actions through continuous experimenting and prototyping, improving acquisition business processes, pursuing appropriate commercial/off-the-shelf options, and improving training. Additionally, our modernized capabilities must have interoperability with allies built-in.

The American people expect us to win, and we win on the offense by mastering the fundamentals of shoot, move, communicate and sustain better than any other Army. We mass fires with precision, we seize and retain the initiative, we retain the mobility to maneuver while protecting our forces, and we gain critical information to think and act decisively, all of this backed up by world-class logistics, and led by world class leaders.

Based on these fundamentals, our modernization priorities are:

1. A Long-Range Precision Fires capability that restores US Army dominance in range, munitions, and target acquisition.
2. A Next Generation Combat Vehicle – along with other close combat capabilities in manned, unmanned, and optionally-manned variants – with the most modern firepower, protection, mobility, and power generation capabilities, to ensure our combat formations can fight and win against any foe.
3. Future of Vertical Lift platforms – attack, lift, recon – in manned, unmanned, and optionally-manned variants that are survivable on the modern and future battlefield.
4. An Army Network with hardware, software, and infrastructure – sufficiently mobile and expeditionary – that can be used to fight cohesively in any environment where the electromagnetic spectrum is denied or degraded.

5. Air and Missile Defense capabilities that ensure our future combat formations are protected from modern and advanced air and missile delivered fires, including drones.

6. Finally, Soldier lethality that spans all fundamentals – shooting, moving, communicating, protecting and sustaining. We will field not only next generation individual and squad combat weapons, but also improved body armor, sensors, radios, and load-bearing exoskeletons. Putting this all together, we must improve human performance and decision making by increasing training and assessment, starting at the Soldier level. This will require a rapid expansion of our synthetic training environment and deeper distribution of simulations capabilities down to battalion and companies, with simulation capability to model combat in megacities, a likely battlefield of the future.

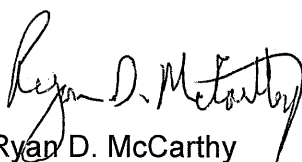
Today, our Army is not institutionally organized to deliver modern, critical capabilities to Soldiers and combat formations quickly. Our current modernization system is an Industrial Age model. It was sufficient for past threats, but insufficient to ensure future overmatch and rapid procurement of the six modernization priorities. Our processes are staff-centric and often stove-piped, which inhibits integration within or across programs. Our requirements process is slow and overly bureaucratic. Our talent management process needs to adapt to ensure the right people develop the right capabilities for future battlefield success.

To implement the necessary changes, our Army will establish unity of command and unity of effort that consolidates the modernization process under one roof. This realignment of responsibilities is not additional force structure, but rather a streamlining of work, which will serve as the custodian of our modernization effort to overcome the bureaucratic inertia and stove-piping found in the Army's current construct. It will directly incorporate requirements from the warfighter into the acquisitions process and allow us to prototype concepts. It will enable disruption – the messy, chaotic work that is the hallmark of truly innovative organizations. It will employ agile, responsive cross-functional teams for each of the six modernization priorities, which will report regularly to Under Secretary of the Army and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army to ensure leadership involvement in early stages of the process. We will reduce the 'time to deliver' for the new systems we need to regain our competitive advantage before the next first battle.

Our Army will implement these modernization priorities to improve our acquisition and modernization processes to ensure that future generations of Soldiers continue to be in the most lethal fighting force in the world, for the next seven decades and beyond.



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