

From the Commandant's desk

Farewell from the 51st Chief of the Field Artillery



Brigadier General William A. Turner

I want to start off by saying I am proud to have been the 51st Chief of the Field Artillery and Commandant of the U.S. Army Field Artillery School.

As I depart, I will be looking back at Fort Sill, Okla., with fondness, respect and admiration. Fondness for the friendships and relationships I have made, admiration for the community that is within and surrounds Fort Sill, and respect for the people I have worked with for the past two years.

While here, I was fortunate enough to team up with many talented people throughout the branch who have given tremendous energy on several initiatives.

These initiatives have centered on training and educating adaptive and innovative Soldiers and Leaders, the re-integration of our redesigned Division Artilleries into the Operational Force, modernization of the Field Artillery branch, and finally, the ongoing effort to recruit, assess and retain a quality force.

All of these endeavors have merged into the Field Artillery's vision of producing the nation's premier Fires Force; which is organized, equipped, and trained to employ and deliver Joint and Combined Arms Fires to enable Unified Land Operations.

I won't go into details about all we have accomplished over the last two years; but I do want to address a few highlights that illustrate the tremendous amount of effort and the teamwork that it took to achieve our objectives.

Together we have worked on vital organizational changes, training and leader development initiatives, and talent management – in an effort to modernize and continue to strengthen the Field Artillery force.

Division Field Artillery

First and foremost, it is important the Field Artillery stays focused on our primary mission to support Maneuver forces in Unified Land Operations, so for us as a branch that has meant scrutinizing our organizational structure to identify where we can improve and what we can sustain within our allocated resources.

For us as a branch this has meant getting our Division Artillery force structure re-implemented.

You have made it happen. 10 DIVARTYs are now fully operational providing support for each of our Divisions.

This has been great news, as our DIVARTYs shore up two shortfalls in our force; the need for Division executed operational-level fires, and the need for trained and ready Fires Formations that are disciplined and standards based enabling freedom of Maneuver for our Brigade Combat Teams.

Our DIVARTYs and each of the Field Artillery Brigades organic to the Brigade Combat Teams are operating exceedingly well in Warfighters, at the Combat Training Centers, and on deployments around the globe.

Field Artillery Brigades

While standing up our DIVARTYs we simultaneously re-invigorated our FA Brigades to provide integrated FA capabilities to the Corps, Joint Task Force and the Joint Force Land Component Commanders.

Our FABS continue to provide superb support. For example, in the last couple of years the 17th, 75th and the 18th FABs have deployed to the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility to serve as

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the Theater Coalition Forces Land Component Command Force Field Artillery Headquarters. While there they expertly conducted mission command of firing units across the region, developed targets and synchronized intelligence collection, and lead theater security cooperation activities with seven partner nations.

Another example, is the 210th Field Artillery Brigade and how it continues its mission to deter North Korean aggression and maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula.

These are just a few examples of how our FABs are deploying around the globe and providing world class support.

While our DIVARTYs and FABs are doing great, our Battlefield Coordination Detachments continue to serve with equal distinction.



Battlefield Coordination Detachments

Our BCDs serve as a bridge between the senior U.S. Army headquarters element and the senior Air Force headquarters in each respective U.S. combatant command or theater of operations. Our BCDs enable the coordination of Army-Air Force mission command, fire support, integrated air and missile defense, intelligence sharing, airspace management, and airlift. Additional Space, Cyber, and Electronic Warfare augmentation allow each BCD to further enable the designated Army Force Commander across the complete spectrum of warfare.

By the end of the year we will have four active component BCDs --4th BCD located at Shaw AFB, South Carolina; 5th BCD located at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; 19th BCD located at Ramstein Air Base, Germany; and 3rd BCD-K located at Osan Air Base, South Korea.

All are performing exceptionally well, and will continue to do so in the future. Furthermore, two Army National Guard BCDs will form in the next two years for added capability.

It is unquestionable, we have the most combat tested and experienced force today than at any time in our nation's history.

While we have worked hard at revamping our organizational structure, we have also further enabled our Fires Force through educational, training and leadership

development opportunities.

Fires Targeting Center

One opportunity that we are particularly proud of is the Fires Targeting Center, which we got off the ground this year. Creating the FTC has enabled the Fires Center of Excellence to chart the course for the Fires Force thus giving us a say on when and how we conduct business. It has also given us representation in the Joint, Inter-agency, and International commands.

The FCoE is now the proponent for joint targeting accreditation, the developer of targeting doctrine and policy, and has the responsibility of integrating and developing target materials for all lethal and nonlethal capabilities.

The FTC will continue to transform into the Army Targeting Center, making it the Army's lead for joint targeting issues to include Army targeting doctrine and policy. Additionally, the ATC will also manage the Army's targeting certification programs.

JFO and Precision Fires

While examining our training, one initiative naturally floated to the top... what we are doing to enhance our

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Fire Support community through the bolstering of our Joint Fires Observer training and certification.

Over the past few years, we have learned how important JFOs can be to the fight, and how a Soldier who is trained as a JFO can extend operational reach.

So, we redefined the 13F, Forward Observer to Joint Fires Support Specialist, and expanded that MOS skill set by placing an increased emphasis on accuracy and leveraging our precision munitions.

Additionally, we increased 13F Advanced Individual Training (AIT). Soldiers now graduate 13F AIT with expanded knowledge of and how to use all fire support equipment, in order to achieve accurate target locations and an expanded knowledge on Joint Fire Observer's techniques. In the near future, 13F AIT graduates will receive qualifications as JFOs, in preparation for being certified at their units.

Additionally, all programs of instruction (POIs) for the Advanced Leaders Course (ALC) and the Senior Leader Course (SLC) have been updated to ensure that Soldiers attending each level of their NCOES are exposed to new concepts and technology and now graduate with a certification in Target Mensuration Only (TMO) and are familiarized with Collateral Damage Estimation (CDE) and Weaponing.

We have also added Joint Fires Observer Assignment Oriented Training to the Basic Officers Leader Course (BOLC-B) program of instruction. Every BOLC graduate with follow-on assignments to brigade combat teams (BCTs) will have the opportunity to complete JFO certification as an assignment oriented training course following graduation.

While looking at JFO, we have also shored up the training we provide to our Master Gunners.



Master Gunner

To assist the Fire Support community in meeting the tasks and standards within TC 3-09.8 Field Artillery Gunnery, we have added a 13F Fire Support module to the Field

Artillery Master Gunner Course.

Graduates of this new Master Gunners course will provide DIVARTY and FAB commanders with Fire Support Master Gunners who are trained to integrate, execute, and sustain Joint Fire Support training, the Fire Support Certification program, and who will serve as the primary Joint Fires Subject Matter Experts (SME) to the Fire Support Coordinator (FSCOORD).

We continue to also look at expanding our Master Gunner programs across the spectrum of our MOSs, to train them as subject matter experts as well as expert trainers on their systems.

Along that note, we also scrutinized the training we are providing our 131As (Warrant Officers).

131A Precision Fires Institutional Training

In an environment where collateral damage has operational or strategic implications, fires delivered with accuracy is a necessity.

We will continue to ensure our Targeting Warrant Officers, 131As, have opportunities to enhance their unique skill set to support the Commander's ability to meet this requirement anytime and anywhere.

As precision capabilities have grown, so has the requirement for FA Targeting Officers with the skill set necessary to employ munitions precisely.

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So Target Mensuration Only (TMO) and Collateral Damage Estimate (CDE) certification were incorporated into Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC) and Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC) instruction as a requirement for graduation.

The need for this requirement allows our 131As to support the momentum of our initiative to Modernize Field Artillery fires. To further modernize, we also took a holistic look at our 13 series MOS's.

MOS review

During the last several years, we have also conducted a comprehensive 13 series MOS review that began prior to me arriving at Fort Sill. This was a substantial undertaking led by our FA Proponency Office (FAPO), with the goal of looking at the possibilities, based on technology advancements within our FA systems, coupled with the phenomenal capabilities of our Soldiers, to consolidate our seven MOSs into five by 2020.

Going forward we will focus our training on the following MOS's –

- * **13M, Multiple Launch Rocket System Crewmember;**
- * **13B, Cannon Crewmember;**
- * **13J, Fire Control Specialist;**
- * **13R, Field Artillery Firefinder Radar Operator;**
- * **13F, Joint Fires Support Specialist**

We are confident these MOSs will continue to provide invaluable support to the Combined Arms Team and will set the conditions for success on the battlefield.

Soldier 2020

While inspecting our training, at the same time we have focused efforts on Soldier 2020 initiatives with a main goal of removing barriers, which will give all Soldiers the opportunity to serve in any position where he or she is capable of performing to the standard.

We have endeavored to be better able to select and train our Soldiers – regardless of gender or age – to be able to safely perform the physically demanding tasks of our MOS's.

Soldier 2020 is about increasing opportunities for all. If the Soldier possesses the necessary qualifications, they will be given the opportunity to perform that job. This will only make our Army stronger.

Earlier this year, it was decided that 13B (cannon crewmember) and 13D (field artillery automated tacti-

cal data system specialist) would be open to women. In April 2016, it was announced 13F is open to women.

Recently, we've had our first female graduate from 13B cannon crewmember Advance Individual Training (AIT), here at Fort Sill, Okla. PFC Katherine Beatty is a very impressive young Soldier and she has blazed a new trail for our 13Bs.

Going forward, we must remember that Soldier 2020 is about talent management; we must put the right Soldier, in the right job, where they not only can succeed, but excel.

High Physical Demands Test

One of ways we will continue to ensure we are putting the right people in the right jobs is by implementing a High Physical Demand Test – it's a way to assess the strength, endurance, and power required to do combat arms tasks – and that of course includes tasks that are required by our 13Bs, 13Ds & 13Fs.

For example, in order to graduate AIT and become a 13B, a Soldier is expected to move 15 ammunition shells weighing nearly 100 pounds in 15 minutes.

The expected end result is that our Soldiers will be able to meet the standards in the Army's most physically-demanding occupations and will contribute positively to our combat strength.

King of Battle

In closing, I would like my last words to be "Thank You." Thank you for everything you have done as a part of the Army team and the best Branch in the military.

I am excited with how things are coming together for the FA branch; how we are mastering our FA skills, cultivating our professional and leader development in the Fires Warfighting function, while synchronizing all Fires effects – commendably.

We are all achieving great things, and we are truly are on the right path to not only modernizing the Field Artillery, but the Fires Force.



King of Battle!

Fires Strong!

Brigadier General William A. Turner