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Winter 2010

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U.S. ARMY

BATTLE COMMAND KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM

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The Army Operational Knowledge Management Proponent Office

LTC Joyner, Chief, AOKM Proponent Office

In August 2007, HQ, Department of the Army G-3/5/7 appointed the Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) as the Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM) proponent in accordance with Army Regulation 5-22, The Army Force Modernization Proponent System.

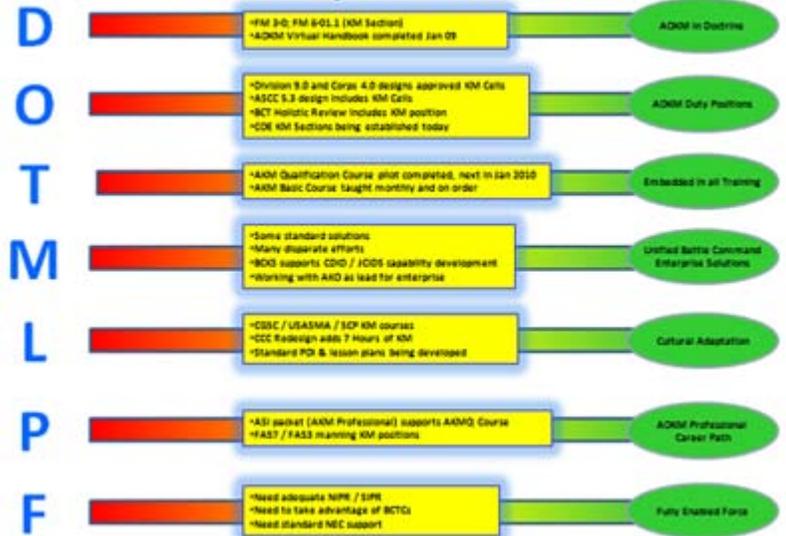
As such, CAC is responsible for requirements definition, force development, combat developments, doctrine developments, training developments, materiel developments, leadership development and education, personnel developments, and facilities developments. In practical terms, that means CAC determines the required capabilities and then develops those capabilities by developing doctrine, organization, training, material, leader development and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTmLPPF) solutions which bring those capabilities to the force.

The AOKM Proponent, while minimally staffed, developed and executed the Army Knowledge Management Qualification Course, obtained approval for an Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) of 1E (KM Professional) for graduates of the course, and got KM instruction inserted into the Captains' Career Courses.

Additionally, the Proponent developed the first KM doctrine, FM 6-01.1, Knowledge Management Section, and designed the organization for KM sections at ASCC, corps, and division-level, which are now approved and are being manned in units today.

In November 2009, responsibility for managing the proponent office shifted from the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) to the Combined Arms Center – Knowledge Directorate (CAC-K). Under CAC-K, the AOKM proponent office will be conducting a Capabilities Based Assessment (CBA) for AOKM.

AOKM Proponent Activities



In the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System process, a CBA determines the required capabilities for any function. As part of an Integrated Capabilities Development Team, the proponent office will write a Concept Capability Plan (CCP) which provides the concept for how the Army will conduct Operational Knowledge Management in the future. This CCP will also describe KM capabilities required to execute the concept.

When directed by the Army Capability Integration Center (ARCIC), a Functional Area Analysis will further define what KM capabilities are needed and what capabilities currently exist in the force. This will be followed by a Functional Needs Analysis, which will identify gaps and shortfalls in KM capabilities and prioritize those gaps and shortfalls. Finally, a Functional Solutions Analysis will assess potential DOTmLPF solutions to address those gaps and shortfalls.

Once complete, the results of the CBA will be used to develop a DOTmLPF Change Request for non-material solutions or solutions requiring no new material development (hence the small "m"), and/or an Initial Capabilities Document for material solutions. Together, these documents identify the means to bring the required knowledge management capabilities to the force.

In addition to conducting the CBA, the proponent office is responsible for DOTmLPF relating to AOKM across the Army. In this capacity, the proponent will help integrate AOKM into the force to ensure the Army becomes the adaptable, learning organization it needs to be in order to win the Nation's wars in the 21st century.

For further discussion on this topic, visit [KMNet](#).

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2nd Pilot of the Army Knowledge Management Qualification Course (AKMQC)

Kelvin Wilkerson, AKMQC Administrator

The second of three planned pilots for the AKMQC began January 11. This pilot has many new changes, most of which are the result of student feedback from the first pilot. The biggest change is the elimination of an entire week of course instruction, reducing the course length from five weeks to four weeks. In addition to a reduction in course length, the course developers redesigned the sequence of the course modules to create a more coherent flow.

Another major change is that officers and NCOs will no longer train in separate tracks. Across the Army, many Knowledge Management Sections are under-staffed and thus many of the key players within these Sections perform multiple roles, requiring all members of the Section to be fully trained on all aspects of KM.

The second AKMQC pilot has 20 students in the class, a 40 percent increase from the first pilot. The students bring with them a plethora of military experience and come from a variety of duty stations and branches, including:

- 4th Inf Div, Fort Hood
- Special Operations Command CENTCOM (SOCCENT)
- 113th Signal Command, Hawaii
- 196th Inf Bde, Fort Shafter, Hawaii
- Fires Center of Excellence, Fort Sill
- Soldier Support Institute at Fort Jackson
- HQ, US Army Europe (USAREUR)
- HQ, US Army Africa (USARAF)
- Medical Readiness & Training Command, San Antonio
- Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), Fort Leavenworth
- Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC), Fort Monroe
- Capability Development Integration Directorate, Fort Leavenworth

The class consists of active duty and reserve Soldiers, and government civilians. Most are already performing KM duties and are looking forward to exchanging lessons learned and best practices with their peers and subject matter experts in the course.



Every AKMOC instructor went through a rigorous rehearsal process in which the instructor and the evaluating staff worked hand-in-hand to enhance the course for the students. After successful completion of the course, active duty and reserve Soldiers receive a skill identifier, 1E (Knowledge Management Professional), certifying that they possess the skills necessary to perform their KM roles.

Each graduate is entered into an online BCKS training database, joining a network of other AKMOC graduates for peer to peer, team peer assist and reach-back capabilities and assistance.

AKMOC graduates can continue the overall learning process about knowledge management through membership in KMNet, one of the BCKS Professional Forums. KMNet connects KM professionals and practitioners with similar interests and challenges.

The AKMOC trains students on basic knowledge management, forum facilitation, virtual collaboration, cognitive task analysis, developing a Share-Point site, knowledge assessments, enterprise content management, AKO, Adobe Connect, and Knowledge Management Section operations. At the end of these modules, students receive an evaluation to assess their learning comprehension. Students also receive presentations via Defense Connect Online from Knowledge Management Officers stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and hear guest speakers who are subject matter experts within their field.

Throughout the course, students can make recommendations for course changes that will affect future classes. The BCKS training staff receives recommended changes and other suggestions for improvement during weekly After Action Reviews with the students.

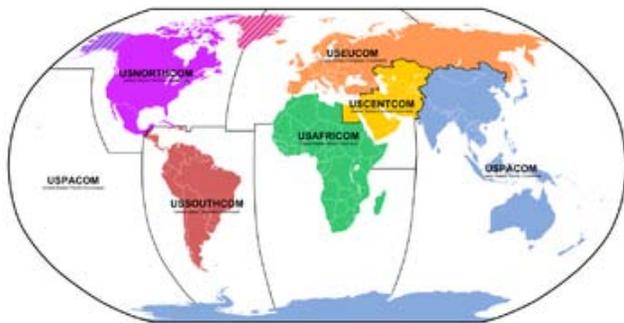
The last of the three pilots for the AKMOC is scheduled from 6 June - 1 July at Fort Leavenworth.

For further discussion on this topic, visit [KMNet](#).

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New ASCCNet

*Mr. Ben Marsee, Deputy Knowledge Officer, US Army Africa
Ms. Carin Smith, Forum Facilitator, ASCCNET*



U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) began hosting ASCCNET last month. ASCCNET is a professional forum for Soldiers and civilians assigned to Army Service Component Commands (ASCC). According to FM 3-0 (Operations), ASCCs focus on combatant command-level landpower employment, as well as Army support to joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational forces in their area of responsibility. Their functions include: reception; staging; onward movement; integration; logistics; over-the-shore operations; and security coordination.

The six geographic ASCCs and the combatant command they support are:

1. US Army Central (USARCENT) – United States Central Command (USCENTCOM)
2. US Army Europe (USAREUR) – United States European Command (USEUCOM)
3. US Army Pacific (USARPAC) – United States Pacific Command (USPACOM)
4. US Army South (USARSOUTH) – United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM)
5. US Army North (USARNORTH) – United States North Command (USNORTHCOM)
6. US Army Africa (USARAF) – United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM)

The Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) that supports U.S. Forces Korea (USFK), subordinate to USPACOM, also has some ASCC responsibilities and is categorized as such, although not one of the main six. The Army also has three additional non-geographic based ASCCs which we anticipate may begin participating in ASCCNET in the near future.

The purpose of ASCCNET is to share knowledge within and between the ASCCs. Whether you're new to an ASCC or starting a new program within an ASCC, there is probably someone who is part of another ASCC who has the knowledge and information you need. ASCCNET provides the venue for the exchange of knowledge and experiences of those assigned to ASCCs.

"Transitioning from a JTF Headquarters to an Army Service Component Command is a significant challenge. US Army Africa hopes to ease the transition by learning 'what works, and what doesn't work' from more mature component commands. This new forum provides an excellent opportunity to share this type of knowledge throughout the field," said LTC JD Koch, Chief, USARAF KM.

There are numerous BCKS professional forums for discussion of issues, by rank, positions or special functional area, but there currently are no forums dedicated to discussions of issues for units at echelons above division level. ASCCNET supports the Warfighter by facilitating collaboration within and throughout the ASCCs in order to solve everyday work problems. ASCCNET also serves as a means for the Army to obtain feedback from the field which may be used to adjust policies and procedures.

ASCCNET, sponsored by US Army Africa



Decrease the Distance

As the newest ASCC, USARAF can benefit greatly from the experience of the other ASCCs, several of whom are not much older than USARAF. Anyone assigned to an ASCC, as well as those in the Joint community who may temporarily perform ASCC missions and functions, can benefit from ASCCNET in sharing knowledge pertinent to the emerging and ever-changing environment of the ASCC. From continuing changes in doctrine, such as the establishment of the Knowledge Management Sections, to changes resulting from decision points in the Army Campaign Plan, ASCCNET provides a secure place where people can discuss how and where they are going to start to implement these changes.

Sometimes it seems that there isn't much that the Army hasn't done before. But if you are breaking new ASCC ground, or have an idea about how to do something at an ASCC, we invite you to post your lessons learned, best practices and your questions to help out the next organization. And if you have done it before, we invite you to log-on, become a member and help the rest of us.

If you already have an AKO/DKO account, you can access ASCCNET by clicking on the link below. Once you get to the ASCCNET Home Page, click on "Become a Member" in the upper left corner:

<https://asccnet.bcks.army.mil>

We look forward to you joining and participating in this new and exciting professional forum. Your contributions and those of Soldiers with ASCC experience will make ASCCNET a robust community and an invaluable addition to the Army's KM toolkit.

For further discussion on this topic, visit ASCCNet.

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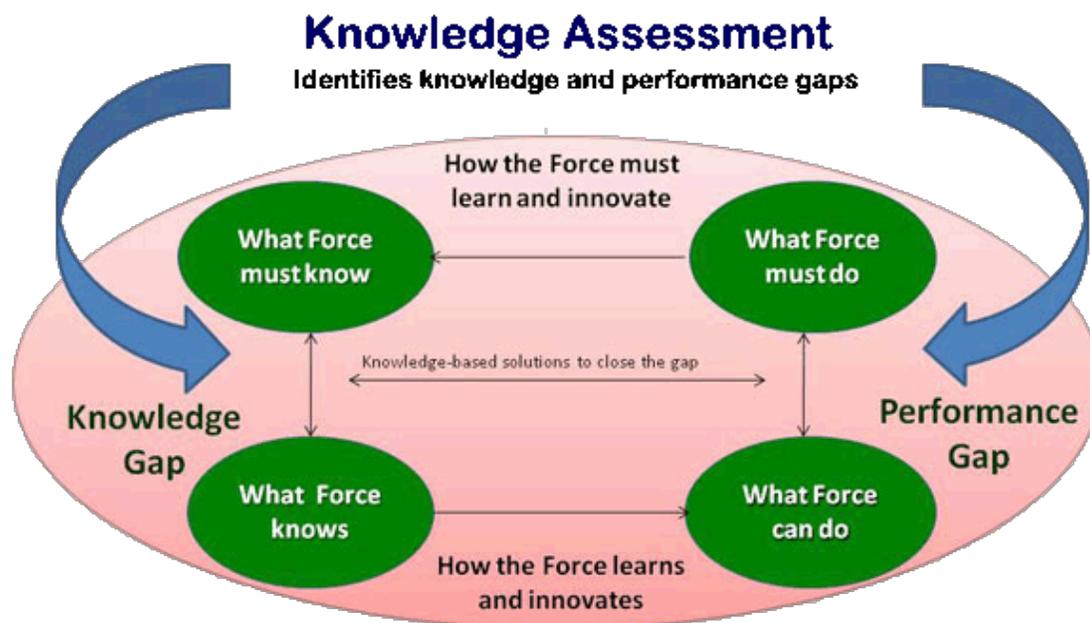
Trends in Knowledge Assessments

Linda McGurn, Knowledge Assessments Coordinator

Due to the rapid pace and complexity of operations confronting units and organizations today, it is not unusual for there to be performance gaps between what the organization is doing and what it should be doing. This is often a result of the gap between what the organization currently knows and what it should know to perform at the desired level. Knowledge Assessments are a systematic process for

identifying these gaps. Assessments help organizations obtain an indication of their health in terms of knowledge flow, knowledge creation and transfer, as well as knowledge management processes, strategies, and approaches. Ultimately, they lead to the development of a knowledge strategy, which in turn helps the organization incorporate knowledge management approaches and methods to close the identified gaps.

The Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) Knowledge Assessment Process is designed to help an organization move from its current state to its desired state by providing a thorough examination of the organization's people, processes, technology applications, structure, and culture. Each knowledge assessment is performed by a team from BCKS and involves a series of interviews with key leaders, mid-level managers, and employees in the organization.



Adapted from Michael H. Zack "Developing a Knowledge Strategy," in The Strategic Management of Intellectual Capital and Operational Knowledge, edited by Chun Wei Choo and Nick Bontis (Oxford et al: Oxford University Press, 2002), figure 15.3, 262.

As of December 2009, BCKS has completed six knowledge assessments, and is actively engaged in three more. In these knowledge assessments, trends have emerged in both knowledge activities, and knowledge gaps. Knowledge activities are the actions that the organization undertakes to manage knowledge. Within organizations assessed to date, knowledge activities fall into several major categories including: knowledge planning; knowledge creation, capture and transfer; and content management. The number of activities undertaken by organizations depended on its knowledge management maturity and the availability of resources.

While the knowledge activities may vary from organization to organization, the knowledge gaps observed have been very similar. Here are the most prevalent gaps:

- **Email not used effectively.** Email is used as the primary tool for discussions, collaboration, and tasking even though more appropriate tools are available. Frequent use of "reply all" adds to user email overload and results in redundancy.
- **Meetings are not managed.** There are too many meetings, and the meetings that are held are not well-organized and do not include the right attendees. There are no clear agendas. There is often short, or no, notification of meetings, making preparation difficult for attendees.
- **Calendars are not managed.** Organizations are using multiple calendars as opposed to a common, synchronized calendar to maintain visibility on what the Command and its leadership are doing. There is no SOP on what calendars to use, or how to use calendars effectively. Individuals are manually inputting information on multiple calendars rather than using built in software features to automate the process.
- **Content is not managed.** Content management SOPs are insufficient or nonexistent. Information is stored in multiple locations and difficult to find. File structures and naming conventions are inconsistent. Many organizations are still using shared drives as central repositories.

The BCKS assessment team has helped organizations close these gaps by recommending practical and operational knowledge solutions. BCKS uses subject matter experts in areas such as content management and SharePoint to identify best practices. Depending on the needs of the organization, the recommendations can include a KM roadmap with prioritized tasks and measures of effectiveness.

To find out more about the knowledge assessment process, visit the Knowledge Assessment page on AKO: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/598135>.

To request a BCKS knowledge assessment, please visit:
<https://survey.bcks.army.mil/secure/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=94LM4m2>

For further discussion on this topic, visit KMNet.

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Virtual BattleSpace 2 (VBS2)

The first of a new class of 3D collective tactical level knowledge transfer tools

*Rob Bowen, Chief, TCM Gaming
Bob Dalton, MilGaming Forum Facilitator*

Many knowledge managers are not yet aware of VBS2, nor the impact it may have on their operations. It is important that military knowledge managers understand how technology can enable knowledge creation and transfer at the tactical level. The adaptation of new technologies, such as Virtual BattleSpace 2 (VBS2), into our tactical KM programs helps ensure training remains fresh and relevant to Soldiers.

VBS2 is a commercial, off-the-shelf, game-based training platform that incorporates a very high-fidelity virtual environment, scenario editors, after-action review, HLA/DIS compliance and a powerful development suite. The unique VBS2 simulation engine provides extremely realistic virtual environments with large, dynamic terrain areas, platoon level operations and civilian entities, and a range of geo-typical and geo-specific terrain areas. The Army (PEO STRI) purchased an enterprise license for VBS2. Army organizations can request free licenses on at <http://vbs2-usarmy.com/>.

Trainees move about in a shared, immersive, first-person environment that supports mounted and dismounted operations, multiple combat platforms, small arms and vehicle-mounted weapons. VBS2 is used in daily training by the U.S. Army, USMC, NATO and ABCA (American, British, Canadian, Australian) nations.

Starting in second quarter of FY09, 70 VBS2 training systems, consisting of 53 computers, were fielded to 53 Operational, Institutional, Reserve and National Guard sites both CONUS/OCONUS. This comprises a fielding of more than 3,600+ computer systems dedicated specifically to VBS2! This VBS2 fielding is designed for tactical and combined arms training and mission rehearsal, and can be used for a wide range of virtual simulation purposes, including visualization, development of training packages, UAV training and IED defeat. An additional training use of VBS2 is machinima videos depicting historical events or tasks. The Joint Training Counter-IED Operations Integration Center uses VBS2 in this manner to recreate actual events from theater. CALL (Center for Army Lessons Learned) also has included VBS2 videos on DVDs in the back of their handbooks for Snap Traffic Control Points, 5-25-200 meter Battle Drill and others.

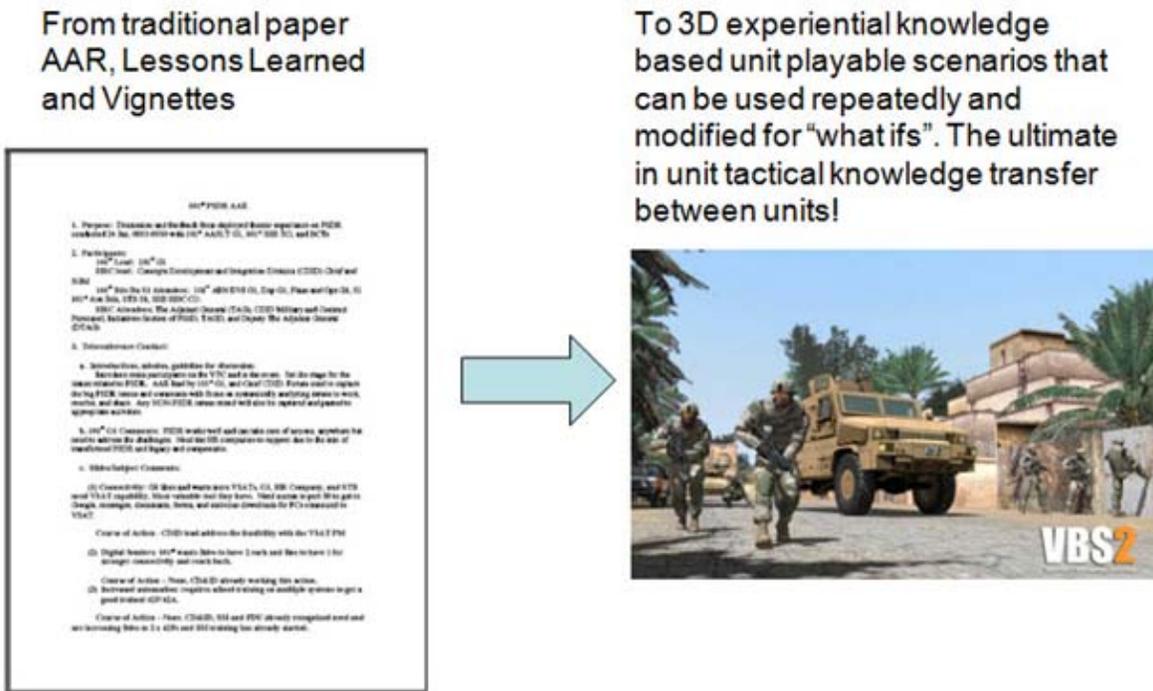
In addition to the 70 hardware kit packages being fielded at 53 different CONUS and overseas locations, the Army plans to make a VBS2 Lite software CD or DVD available to every U.S. Army Soldier and DA civilian who wants one.

During December 2009, more than 40 representatives from Army and Marine Corps organizations involved with the development, production and distribution of VBS2 Lite met at Fort Leavenworth to

build and launch MilGaming, a military gaming Community of Practice (CoP). The group also developed the marketing and promotion plan for VBS2 Lite, and discussed organization of a library to maintain scenarios and other gaming files.

MilGaming is the latest professional forum to join the stable of more than 60 BCKS professional forums. MilGaming is an online community for gamers, educators, gaming developers and trainers to meet virtually and exchange knowledge, tips and ideas on military gaming. It is a community for professionals, not a site for exchanging "cheat codes" or other tricks to beat the games.

VBS2 represents the first of a new class of mass-issued, tactical-level 3D collective knowledge sharing and transfer tools available to military knowledge managers. Until now, only the 2D Adobe Connect or equivalent tools were widely available for collective knowledge transfer at the small unit level. VBS2 offers a mass issue tool that supports collective knowledge sharing and transfer in an engaging 3D high-fidelity graphic environment. Where does this tool fit into the military knowledge manager's toolkit? The following graphic sums it up best:



It all comes down to: Would you rather read about it or experience it yourself?

In the past, Soldiers and units prepared after action reports (AARs), lessons learned or vignettes on significant tactical events to help other units and Soldiers learn from their experiences. However, these documents could only be read and what was experienced could not be repeated by those who read such documents. VBS2 changes that.

In summary, VBS2 is a tool that knowledge managers should become very familiar with and learn to use. Almost every Army installation has at least one set of VBS2. So start the process today. Plan to visit that location and get trained on this valuable new tactical knowledge transfer tool!

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2009 AOKM Conference

Eileen Pember, AOKM Conference Coordinator

More than 370 knowledge management (KM) professionals and practitioners gathered in Kansas City, October 19-23, for the 5th Annual Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM) Conference, sponsored by the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) and hosted by the Battle Command

Knowledge System (BCKS).

Military and civilian personnel from the Army, Navy and Air Force joined with international officers, KM consultants, private sector leaders and educators for a week-long opportunity to share and exchange the latest KM industry information and military KM best practices, processes and lessons learned.

Kicking off the conference, Mr. Dale Ormond, Deputy to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth, described how CAC, specifically the Combined Arms Center-Knowledge or CAC-K, employs the Knowledge Value Stream to drive change and adaptive learning across the Army. He also noted how CAC uses knowledge management techniques, tools and procedures to support the lines of operation of the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and CAC's core competencies, especially leader development.

In his taped remarks to open the conference, GEN Martin Dempsey, TRADOC Commanding General, said a trend in the Army's current operational environment is the "certainty of uncertainty." He added, "Knowledge Management is a tool that will enable us to more effectively deal with uncertainty and the rapid pace of change. ... Knowledge management will also enable us to prevail in the competitive learning environment and ultimately adapt more quickly than our adversaries."

The theme for this year's conference, "Winning the Current Fight," was driven by a sense of urgency to support the current operations. Program topics included Warfighting KM, KM best practices and updates on cutting edge knowledge exploration initiatives. The conference incorporated blended face-to-face presentations and virtual Internet sessions, some with currently deployed leaders, throughout the three interlocking parts of the conference... plenum sessions, track sessions and training sessions.



"If you are going to be an effective commander today, you have to be able to manage information... what you all are doing here today is vitally important to our profession." – BG Edward Cardon, Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Deputy Commandant, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

A sampling of the training sessions included:

- KM in the Field: Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells and Working Groups
- Using Social Media to communicate with the force
- KM in the Future

During the track sessions, conference participants created six action plans addressing KM challenges and issues in: organizations and units at all echelons; technology; doctrine; Army Schools and Centers; and governance. Each action plan outlined the strategies and priorities, along with the challenges and opportunities for their respective topic. Action plan teams will continue to collaborate to review progress and adjust priorities for their respective areas over the next few months.

A first-class mix of military and civilian speakers spearheaded the plenum and track sessions. Speaker highlights:

- BG Allen Batschelet, Deputy Chief of Staff-G3, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, discussed numerous KM lessons learned and tools used during 4th Infantry Division's Counterinsurgency Operations in Iraq.
- BG Nicolas Matern, Deputy Commanding General-Operations, XVIII Airborne Corps, Ft. Bragg, shared KM tools, techniques and procedures used while deployed in Iraq and the IT challenges using those same tools at home station.
- BG Jeffery Marshall, Director, Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, US European Command (EUCOM), identified KM challenges for operating in the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIIM) environment due to security issues when operating behind Army Knowledge Online (AKO).
- BG Edward Cardon, Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Deputy Commandant, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College — in response to a question from one of the international officers who attended the conference, BG Cardon discussed challenges and opportunities in working with mission partner-units from other countries.
- Dr. Mark Nissen, C2 Chair and Director of Center for Edge Power, Naval Postgraduate School, talked about knowledge dynamics in military learning organizations, noting that the performance

of organizations is directly proportional to the speed of knowledge flow.

- COL Earl D. Noble, Project Manager, AKO/Defense Knowledge Online (DKO) discussed AKO and Web 2.0, highlighting AKO's recently unveiled mobile computing initiative.
- Dr. Nancy M. Dixon, Founder and President, Common Knowledge Associates, led a discussion about integrating Military Web 2.0 (milSuite) with Lessons Learned Integration (L2I) and Warfighters' Forums (WfF) and Professional Forums to create and transfer common knowledge.
- Jack Holt, Senior Strategist for Emerging Media, Department of Defense, discussed the challenges of implementing social media in a military environment. His remarks set the stage for the Social Media Panel, one of the best attended training sessions.

LTG P.K. (Ken) Keen, Military Deputy Commander, US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), delivered the keynote address, discussing EUCOM's efforts to increase collaboration among the members of Defense Cooperation Office teams operating in their area of operations. He elaborated on the Teams of Leaders initiative and the role CAC/BCKS played in developing the concept, which was successfully used during the Republic of Georgia crisis in 2008.

A highlight of the conference was a live, Internet collaborative session with LTC Stewart Liles in Baghdad, Iraq. The MNC-I/XVIII Airborne Corps Knowledge Management Officer (KMO) used streaming live audio and the Web conference tool Adobe Connect to discuss how the headquarters is using SharePoint portals and other online information sharing tools on the battlefield.

The KM professionals and practitioners departed the conference with a better understanding of knowledge management efforts across the Army and a broader social network of experts with whom to share knowledge.

For further discussion on this topic, visit [KMNet](#).

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Web 2.0 Vendors Integrate with SharePoint

Dave Foreman, SharePoint Administrator



Over the past year we have seen all the major Web 2.0 applications announce integration with Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS), mostly through the creation of custom web parts. Given that SharePoint is not a Web 2.0 application, but has some basic 2.0 components, what's the buzz all about?

The latest production version of SharePoint is MOSS 2007 and Windows SharePoint Services (WSS 3.0). The first year it was in production Microsoft sold over 85 million copies and that was

just the first year. Nearly all Fortune 1000 companies and thousands of other companies are using SharePoint to host their intranet and Internet sites.

While not a pure Web 2.0 application suite, SharePoint does have an impressive array of features and functions that enhance collaboration. They have many of the rudimentary Web 2.0 functions, such as wikis, blogs and RSS. In addition, SharePoint provides hooks into security functions and it has a decent search function that Microsoft is constantly enhancing.

SharePoint has other less obvious capabilities; one of the most valuable is the empowerment it provides end users. SharePoint can be configured and implemented with no programming. All of the sites, including even workflows, can be built using wizards and a browser. This isn't to say that sites cannot prosper from the use of a developer, but the need for one is greatly reduced and the time and cost to roll out an organization-level functional site is significantly less.

SharePoint has many hooks into all the MS Office products, so creating content is as simple as opening

your favorite MS Office application and publishing. A consistent interface, templates and browser-based tools accelerate the learning cycle and adaptation of SharePoint.

So what does this do if you have a Web 2.0 application that you want to roll out to your organization? Adaptation becomes a lot easier if the interface to those applications is one you have already been using. The goal of Web 2.0 is to break down information silos, making knowledge available for effective utilization. However, organizations have a responsibility to secure and manage the intellectual property of that organization. SharePoint provides a way of managing security that is inherent in the product. Layering Web 2.0 on top facilitates effective communication and collaboration of that knowledge to those who can make the greatest use of it.

Tomoye ECCO is a community of practice software that BCKS hosts for the Army. The newest version, called Communities for SharePoint, integrates Web 2.0 features with SharePoint. Features include making the rich content that is created in SharePoint available to relevant communities in Tomoye. By using Tomoye, you can pull together people who have different jobs and are in different organizations but have a need to access the same information, making that information available to all of them. This can reduce time to make decisions and learning cycles, while improving continuity and the opportunity for mission success.

For example, consider deployment in and out of theater. Presently incoming and outgoing units spend a significant amount of time overlapping one another. This provides incoming units an opportunity to get oriented and learn who all the contacts are, and adjust to the in-theater systems. Communities of Practice provide incoming and outgoing units a capability to begin knowledge transfer long before the physical movement of units occur. Documents are already available and rated for relevance. Explicit knowledge is shared and tacit knowledge may be transferred to the incoming units. In addition, the outgoing units can continue to mentor the units in theater so the SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) access is maintained.

The potential for Web 2.0 tools and SharePoint to enhance unit readiness and effectiveness is tremendous. The success of any implementation of these tools rests with the development and implementation of a sound unit knowledge strategy.

For further discussion on this topic, visit [KMNet](#).

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Army Online Professional Forums Save Lives, Time and Money

John Nelson, Plans & Operations

An Army survey reported that the online Professional Forums hosted by the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) helped save more than 1,400 lives from June 2008 to June 2009.

Almost 2,500 of the more than 100,000 members of 12 Forums responded to the survey conducted between May and June last year. The respondents also said the Forums had conservatively saved them or their unit 6,749 labor hours during the last year. Likewise, they reported that the things they had seen, read or downloaded from the Forums saved the Army nearly \$1.6 million.

The Professional Forums provide 24x7 access to online discussions, Best Practices and TTPs (Tactics, Techniques, Procedures) that facilitate knowledge sharing, promote learning and accelerate decision making, all of which helps Soldier and unit readiness in combat situations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The Professional Forums hosted by BCKS promote a culture of learning in the Army and play a vital role in forming agile and adaptive leaders," said Mr. Dale Ormond, Deputy to the Commanding General, Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. "The survey clearly shows the value Soldiers place on the knowledge they glean from the online discussions and documents in the Forums."

Access to the online professional forums requires Army Knowledge Online (AKO) membership. BCKS hosts more than 60 online professional forums for the Army, and provides professional facilitation for 25

of them. Sponsored by a variety of organizations throughout the Army, the Forums focus on functional areas (e.g. personnel and logistics), leaders (e.g. NCO, warrant officer, commander, S-3 and XO) and operations roles (e.g. Counterinsurgency, Transition Teams). The Forums are similar to civilian Communities of Practice but have professional facilitation and a clear link to supporting the organization's mission.

Comments from Survey participants about the value of the Professional Forums hosted by BCKS included:



1. *I used the quick notification of the Army Combat Helmet recall and forwarded it to my supply sergeant to notify the Soldiers of my unit to check their helmets for the recalled stock numbers. No doubt that has saved lives.*

2. *The S-1 Net has saved countless hours for me as a 1SG. Having one source to find the information I need allows me to help Soldiers with their issues which has led to fewer problems and reduced stress within my unit. S-1 Net has helped me to be a better leader for my*



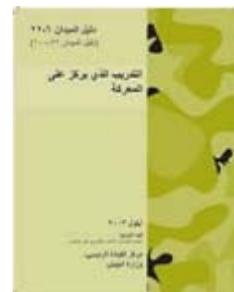
Soldiers.

3. *Our unit is currently deployed and we had a deceased Soldier. I was able to get a sample of a memorial and ramp ceremony in order to properly honor our fallen Soldier.*



4. *...searched and found a Ranger Handbook translated into Russian for an operation that my Detachment was deploying. In finding this translation I didn't need to have it translated by an interpreter saving my detachment almost \$1000.*

5. *A red team in theater asked for help in answering questions put to the team by the CG of the supported division. I placed the questions on Red Team central and within hours every red team and member of the net provided feedback to the deployed team. Brilliant success.*



6. *As a unit deployed in Iraq, we used information from the IED Defeat and the Sniper Defeat forums. The information was timely and accurate.*



The Forums serve as easily accessible repositories of lessons learned and stories that provide context. The members have relevant and useful expertise, experiences and tools they want to share. The Forums also provide blogs and other interactive opportunities to share insights and knowledge.

BCKS Director Colonel Charles J. Burnett said the value of the Forums will only continue to grow. "BCKS is paving the way for Soldiers to have the same tools/access 'CONUS' as they do deployed. Also, we are expanding the membership in the Forums by enhancing some of the features and capabilities." Recent enhancements include new social networking tools, such as status updates and tagging.

For further discussion on this topic, visit [KMNet](#).

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What's Hot in the BCKS Professional Forums!

Forum Trivia:

The longest active member in the BCKS Professional Forums is LTC Curtis Johnson, creating his account on 8 February 2003. He is currently serving as the Battalion Commander of the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne), deployed to

On **NCONet**: "**Do Company and Platoon Soldiers Need UAVs?**" Is a discussion that has generated **244** replies from December 14, 2009 - December 16, 2009 referencing the benefits and disadvantages of using Unmanned Aerial Reconnaissance Vehicles at the Company and Platoon Levels.

On **Maneuver NET**: "**AAR: Seizing the Initiative - An argument for the return to true light infantry doctrine in OEF.**" This is an

Afghanistan in support of OEF X (TF Bayonet). He maintains membership in S3-XO Net, SustainNet, and Senior Command Net.

"BCKS Forums help me stay connected to others facing many of the same challenges and provides an invaluable tool for commanders - **collective knowledge**," said LTC Johnson. "I just recently used a product highlighted in the January 2010 S3-XO Newsletter (Knowledge Management Officer Guide) to help shape my battalion's KM efforts."

excellent AAR written by members at the company-level. Includes tactical and equipment recommendations that received a very positive response from the Infantry Center. The authors were also invited to speak at the 2009 Infantry Conference.

On **ASCC Net**: "**Theater Army O&O Approved.**" The Deputy to the CAC Commander approved the Theater Army Organization and Operations Concept Plan (O&O) on 11 Dec 2009. The O&O was approved as a CAC Command Publication, which makes it an authoritative document for all CAC subordinates and TRADOC schools

and centers for use in developing Programs of Instruction, educational briefings and presentations, and use as a reference tool. The O&O will also be provided to HQDA and ASCC commanders as a doctrinal and organizational design reference which may serve as the basis for developing detailed unit TACSOPs. Finally, the O&O will serve as the basis for FM 3-93, Theater Army Operations, which CAC/CADD intends to release for staffing (author's draft) around the end of January 2010.

click for ALL Professional Forums

More than 150,000 members and growing



All BCKS Professional Forums require **AKO** access. Most BCKS forums require membership to view or participate in the forums. To join a forum, it's a simple 3-step process:

1. Access the BCKS Professional Forum page at: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil>.
2. Select the link to forum you want to join.
3. Then select "Become a Member," fill out the profile and submit.

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Call for Articles

Are you a KM professional or someone who's just getting involved with KM? Would you like to share a KM experience, Best Practice or TTP with the other Soldiers? **Submit an article** for publication in **CONNECTED**. KM is about sharing and exchanging knowledge, and **CONNECTED** can serve as your platform for doing that.

This is an opportunity for you to discuss your experience with KM and how it helped you or your unit save lives, time or money; prevent injuries; or improve training, a process or a procedure. Many people would have the opportunity to read your article in **CONNECTED** and it would also be preserved in archived copies of **CONNECTED** that are available online. Whether you'd like to contribute an article or suggest a topic for **CONNECTED** to cover, we hope to hear from you soon at leav-bcks-webmaster@conus.army.mil

CONNECTED
Army Operational Knowledge Management

2009 Army Operational Knowledge Management (AKM) Conference: Winning the Current Fight

Army KM Qualification Course Kicked Off This Week

BCKS
Army Command Center

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Index of Links

Links Disclaimer: The appearance of hyperlinks in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement by the Defense Department, U.S. Army or U.S. Army Command Arms Center of those websites or the information,

products or services contained therein. Such links are provided consistent with the stated purpose of this DoD website.

Some NECs (Network Enterprise Centers), formerly DOIM, may have some sites linked from this publication restricted.

- The Army Operational Knowledge Management Proponent Office
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=976462>
- 2nd Pilot of the Army Knowledge Management Qualification (AKMQ) Course
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=976303>
- New ASCCNet: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/communitybrowser.aspx?id=840559>
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=977141>
- Virtual BattleSpace 2 (VBS2)
- Trends in Knowledge Assessments
 - Knowledge Assessments (AKO): <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/598135>
 - Request a Knowledge Assessment: <https://survey.bcks.army.mil/secure/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=94LM4m2>
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=976457>
- 2009 AOKM Conference
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=976450>
- Web 2.0 Vendors Integrate with SharePoint
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=976441>
- Army Online Professional Forums Save Lives, Time and Money
 - Further Discussion: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=976434>
- What's Hot in the BCKS Professional Forums! (AKO account required)
 - NCO Net: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=556>
 - Do Company and Platoon Soldiers Need UAVs?: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=956449>
 - Maneuver NET: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=69839>
 - AAR: Seizing the Initiative - An argument for the return to true light infantry doctrine in OEF.: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=955855>
 - ASCC Net: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=840559>
 - Theater Army O&O Approved.: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=864023>
 - AKO Access: <https://www.us.army.mil>
 - BCKS Professional Forum page: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil>
- Links to Other KM Periodicals
 - Navy's KM newsletter: http://www.chips.navy.mil/archives/08_Jul/web_pages/index.html
 - KMCI Journal: <http://www.kmci.org/kijournal.html>
 - KM World magazine: <http://www.kmworld.com>
 - Journal of Knowledge Management Practice (JKMP): <http://tlainc.com/issue1.htm>
 - The Systems Thinker: <http://www.thesystemsthinker.com/>
 - Knowledge Management Review: <http://www.melcram.com/products/journals/kmr.shtml>
 - The Collaborator, The 2008 Collection  : <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/BCKS/2008%20collection.pdf>
 - Knowledge Transfer ...Through People  : <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/BCKS/Knowledge%20Transfer%20Book.pdf>

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Publisher Information

CONNECTED is published quarterly by the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS), the lead agent for the Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM) proponent, headquartered at the Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS. CONNECTED disseminates AOKM news, TTPs and best practices, and is a forum for expressing original, creative and innovative thought about knowledge management.

Information provided is intended to help the Army improve Soldier and unit readiness, training and performance. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. Links throughout CONNECTED will work if you have an active Internet connection. Otherwise, you will need to copy and paste the URLs provided into your browser. Some links require AKO (**Army Knowledge Online**) access.

Send submissions, suggestions or questions for this publication to CONNECTED, BCKS, 627 McClellan Ave., Bldg. 43, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027; or via e-mail to leav-bcks-webmaster@conus.army.mil.

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