

The Field Grade Leader

Organizational Leadership in the US Army

Force Integration: The Process and Challenges



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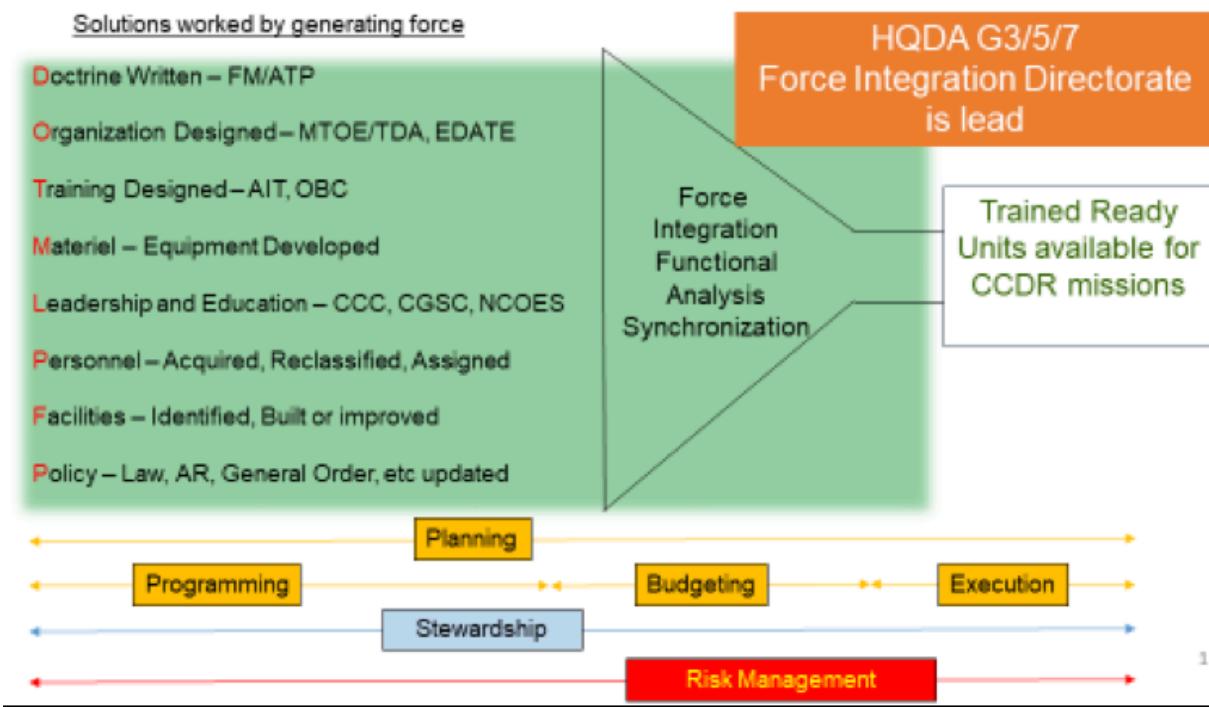


Think of all the activities and actions needed to plan a family vacation: parents making a budget, making reservations, researching activities to do with the kids, travel plans, determining who is going, and who will pay for what. The Army conducts similar actions when creating a new unit, relocates a unit to another installation, or makes changes to structure or equipment in an existing unit. The Army process to manage the numerous aspects of these changes is called Force Integration which is the synchronized, resource-constrained, systematic management of approved change and consideration of the potential implications of decisions and actions taken within the execution process.

The Department of the Army approves numerous large and small changes every year. However, many of these changes will not be completed for several years. So how does the Army manage all of these changes and why do these changes take so long? This article will address both of these questions by explaining, in broad terms, Force Integration in the hopes of educating the force about some aspects of change that are considered, the interconnectedness of many factors, and some complications that may affect planning and execution.

What is Force Integration?

The synchronization in time and space of DOTMLPF-P solutions IAW Army priorities to build a required capability.



Processes

The Army Force Integration process is utilized to ensure the synchronization of all Title 10 functions involved in stationing, manning, training, and equipping to create ready units. The Army Force Integration Division within the Headquarters Department of the Army G-3/5/7 Force Management Directorate is the lead for this process. The authoritative document that governs the process is Army Regulation 71-32. This office holds weekly Force Management Synchronization teleconferences with the major generating force organizations responsible for coordinating actions: Army Materiel Command (AMC), Forces Command (FORSCOM), Installation Management Command (IMCOM), Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA (AL&T)), the Army Staff and other stakeholders.

Domain	Proponent	Actions
Doctrine	TRADOC	Development and evaluation of doctrine
Organization	HQDA G-3/7	Documenting the materiel and personnel requirements as Tables of Organization and Equipment (TOE) or Tables of Distribution and Allowances (TDA)
Training	TRADOC	Conducting initial training of new recruits to a new skill

Materiel	ASA (AL&T) and AMC, HQDA G8	Development of new equipment ASA (AL&T), distribution of new equipment (HQDA G8) and redistribution of current equipment (AMC)
Leader Development and Education	TRADOC	Development of leaders within the Non-Commissioned, Warrant and Commissioned Officer Education systems
Personnel	HQDA G1	Determining personnel policies for each MOS, retaining and recruiting
Facilities	IMCOM	Building and maintaining Army facilities
Policy	Army Staff	Developing new policy or advocating with DoD and Congress

The overarching driving factor in the force integration process is the Dynamic Army Requirements Priorities List (DARPL), an established order of precedence that guides the distribution of resources against requirements. Because implementation plans are always ongoing, changes to the DARPL often impacts plans based on the current needs of the Army.

The force integration process is simple – in theory. The proponent of each of the DOTMLPF-P domain develops and implements their actions. All actions must be accomplished before the expected Effective Date (EDATE) of the new unit is planned. These are synchronized with each of the other domain leads. However, there are hundreds of plans in the works and factors that impact these simple processes that make Force Integration not as simple as one might expect. A description of each to the DOTMLPF-F domains and some of the major factors that take time to develop and implement:

Doctrine: Before an idea is approved, the organization is a mere concept but not fully tested and evaluated. Generally, TRADOC will conduct simulations and war-gaming to test the validity of the concept and develops a field manual outlining the way the organization will operate. This process is designed to develop the best doctrine and organization and reduce friction later. Generally, completion of a field manual can take 18-24 months of development, staffing and legal reviews.

Organization: The Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) is a document that contains the required personnel and equipment for the organization. In order to create this document, the TRADOC Capability Manager at the Proponent will develop the Force Design Update (FDU). The FDU is a formal packet that outlines the creation or change of an organization that explains the mission, equipment, and personnel requirements. TRADOC sends the completed document to Army Staff for approval. Once approved, the U.S. Army Force Management Support Activity (USAFMSA) documents the organizational design as the TOE and assigns the approved Effective Date (EDATE) in FMSWeb. The decision then appears in the Army Structure Memorandum (ARSTRUC). The ARSTRUC outlines the structure of the Army for the next 2-7 years and the Army Command Plan is basically the operations order outlining structure changes). These enable the generating force to plan actions to affect the approved change: HRC can plan for personnel moves, AMC plans equipment deliveries, and Program Managers plan to field new equipment and Installation Management Command (IMCOM) to provide ready facilities by the unit EDATE.

Training: TRADOC COEs are responsible for determining the individual and collective training necessary for the type of unit. This domain includes courses and additions to structure which may cause potential increases in current courses or addition of new courses into existing training schedules. Personnel must be identified to attend these courses with follow-on assignments to the new SFAB. Programs of Instruction (POI) may need to be adjusted or developed for new courses. Development of new courses may need to be completed before courses can start.

Materiel: Often, new capability requirements require a modification or upgrade to existing equipment or development of a new materiel solution. The ideal timing of materiel delivery is to occur before the effective date of the unit MTOE. Army Materiel Command is the lead agent for redistribution of equipment in the Army inventory while the Army G8 is responsible for distribution of new or recapitalized equipment from depots. The Army used the Basis of Issue Plan (BOIP) to modernize a unit's equipment including associated items. Each Army program of record has a BOIP. These organizations utilize the Decision Support Tool as the common operating picture for equipment distribution and redistribution. The Army holds the Army Equipping Conference semi-annually for organizations and the Army Staff to synchronize equipment modernized and distribution approximately 12-18 months in the future with a review of longer-term requirements as needed.

Leader Development and Education: The heart of our Army, professional Soldiers and Leaders, cannot be compromised. This domain is often confused with Training, but this domain takes our Soldiers and Officers and develops them into better skilled leaders and improves their technical skills. This domain includes the NCOES and OES systems.

Personnel: This domain is concerned with acquiring and managing the human dimension of the Army. The TOE identified the grade and MOS of personnel assigned to a unit. Promotions, Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), Additional Skill Identifiers, reassignment, and retention policies are also within this domain.

Facilities: A typical unit requires offices, motor pools, barracks, dining facilities, medical care facilities and training areas. There are two options for stationing new units when it pertains to facilities. The first option is new construction. This requires congressionally approved funds called MILCON (Military Construction) which normally takes five years for forecasting and approval then construction time. For perspective, in the private sector, large construction takes a long time as well. Planning for a new school in a county might take up to 10 years before it opens. The other option is to renovate existing facilities which leads us to IMCOM (Installation Management Command). IMCOM is allocated funds to renovate and modernize existing buildings. This is the least expensive and quickest way to provide facilities for a stationing action.

Policies: The Army Staff will develop policies to enable the generating force to develop the new capability or allow the new operating force to train. These can range from Army regulations or updates to current assignment policies, expediting acquisition or advocating with states, Department of Defense, Department of State, or Congress for changes to policies or laws. There are numerous DOD, interagency, or international policy issues that may prevent effective implementation of changes in the other seven DOTMLPF-P elemental areas. For overseas locations, Status of Forces Agreements set limits on the number of family members that can accompany the Soldier. Other examples are electromagnetic spectrum rules, noise levels, and driving on roads. Policies can take differing timelines to be approved and should ideally be done before personnel moves and equipment delivery.

Once the capability solutions are approved, the Force Integration process starts to synchronize all the disparate ongoing efforts. This enormous task falls to the HQDA G-3/5/7 Force Integration Directorate. This staff section is responsible for planning and managing the synchronization of all the actions being done to develop the capability but further examines the integration through a process called Force Integration Functional Analysis. This process involves analysis of the capability development within nine categories: structuring, manning, equipping, training, sustaining, deploying, stationing, funding, and readiness. Some of these categories correlate directly to the earlier DOTMLPF-P domains. This article will only address the stationing, funding, and readiness areas. The real focus of the FIFA is to coordinate the development of the capability and analyze risk for issues that will inevitably arise.

Stationing: This involves determining where the units will be physically located. There is significant research and study that goes into making these decisions. Such considerations might be capacity of local schools, medical facilities, and housing to accept new families; training areas for weapons systems; availability of facilities for orderly rooms, motor pools, barracks; and infrastructure to support deployment. Additionally, the bigger the unit the more politics plays a role

with Congress wanting the new influx of money into their districts. The Army uses the Military Value Analysis process to assist decision makers with objective standards. The recent decision to place the last three active duty SFABs at Fort Hood, TX, Fort Carson, CO and Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA is an example of this.

Funding: Every decision cost or saves money. Therefore, awareness of future costs of decisions during Force Integration must be an integral part of the planning process. This function ensures that resources are identified, programmed, resourced, and available to support the directed action.

Readiness: This domain tracks the personnel and equipment allocation as the capability develops to meet certain targets. The unit is ready when the targeted personnel, equipment and training rating meet Army goals. As a general rule, the unit must be Fully Operationally Capable (FOC) 12 months after the EDATE. To meet readiness levels, areas of Personnel, Materiel on hand, Material readiness and Training are measured.

Challenges to Force Integration

All of these processes and procedures have challenges that are often outside the control of the Army or are just a necessary physical part of doing business. This section will identify some of the possible challenges within each domain.

Doctrine: All Army doctrine cannot be updated and linked together at the same time. Many of the Army documents are not related such as sustainment and signal doctrine. However, most are inextricably linked to combat arms doctrine. When doctrine changes are developed, staffed and published, other branches are updating their doctrine as required. The Army recently updated FM 3-0, Operations, which impacts many branches who will then update their doctrinal manuals. This causes gaps in the interim until associated doctrine is updated. This creates challenges in what to train on in the interim until new organizational doctrine is updated. Until new doctrine is published, schools have to decide when to stop teaching the soon to be outdated doctrine.

Organization: This domain is impacted by many Army processes. Two critical inputs are the congressionally mandated Army End Strength that can change yearly and the Army Budget that impacts the number of Soldiers and amount of equipment the Army can acquire and maintain. The annual Total Army Analysis (TAA) process determines how many of a certain unit type the Army will retain in the force structure based on planning scenarios and leadership guidance. By law, there are limits to how many people the Army can have in certain grades. The number of personnel and equipment drives barracks and motor pool space impacting the Facilities domain. A limiting factor is that all MTOE units must be identical.

Training: One of the largest training challenges to overcome is the course schedules. Course end dates are set according to the approved POI to ensure trained personnel are available for distribution to the force. These end dates do not always support the needs of units which may result in Soldiers or leaders being in school at the unit EDATE or during new equipment training. Additionally, new equipment is added to the training base early in the fielding timeline. This results in personnel receiving training on new equipment in school but possibly being sent to units that have not been fielded the new equipment. If new courses are added, this potentially increases TRADOC's requirement for instructors.

Materiel: There are probably more complexities within the Materiel domain than the others. Many outside influences can impact materiel development or delivery. Some recent actions that have caused delays are government quality checks stopping production, manufacturers going bankrupt, changes in modernization priorities, or the Army making force structure changes that add to or reduce the acquisition objective for an item. When units receive new equipment, this often means time for Soldiers to receive New Equipment Training (NET). Program Managers budget for a certain number of NET teams and the training may take weeks or months so the teams will travel to unit locations worldwide as fielding occurs. The fielding plan is based on the new production schedule and Army priorities for fielding or modernizing units. The manufacturer can only produce so many items and the Army will plan for a certain quantity to be

purchased on a monthly, quarterly or annual schedule in accordance with risk and available funds. Fielding will occur based on the Dynamic Army Resource Priorities List (DARPL) or other priorities at that time. Changes in the DARPL or training center rotations will cause an adjustment to the NET plan and thus impact other units. Due to the rapid growth of technology, it is always an important decision to either include new technology thus delaying production or continue with the initially developed version and incorporate the latest technology in a later model. Often equipment will be cascaded from the unit receiving the new equipment to other units which is why it is important for units to maintain all equipment in the best readiness condition.

Leader Development and Education: This is a continually evolving domain that requires a significant investment in time and resources. Making our Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers into operational and strategic leaders is of critical importance to the Army. TRADOC owns most of the Army schools. When and how many to send to school each year, what to teach in each Professional Military Education course changes all the time to meet the new demands of the Army. One example is the recent STEP (select, train, educate, promote) program, which requires NCOs to attend school to be eligible for promotion which increases the amount of personnel in school and potentially limits the best person for a job from going to that job.

Personnel: Manning cycles often are the driving factor in assignments. The majority of requirements and the available population to fill these are determined 6-9 months prior to assignments beginning. The Active Component Army Manning Guidance (ACMG) is a significant factor impacting levels of fill for all Active Army units. Unit Commanders are the ones that set the priority of fill for their unit projected shortages units based on ACMG directed percentage of fill. As mentioned earlier, personnel arrival can be impacted by the ending of school dates. The Army Human Resources Command places personnel on orders to units and maintains a standard set of rules to determine the availability of personnel. There can be exceptions to the rules, but these rules serve to protect the force and stabilize families and Soldiers for professional education and development reasons.

Facilities: Quick modifications of existing facilities often require funding to be redirected from other programs. Longer-term plans for new buildings require time to program funding from Congress and acquire building approvals. While this project is developing, if changes are made to the organization such as more people or equipment, building design plans may need to be amended thus costing more money or potentially delaying the construction. Often, organizations are placed in less than ideal facilities but within acceptable standards while construction is ongoing. Of note, MILCON costs vary depending on location. Building in Fort Bragg, NC is considerably less expensive than building overseas in places such as Hawaii or Alaska because of labor costs and supplies. This is significant because the total cost of the project can determine which of the aforementioned methods is used.

Policies: These have to be staffed and all equities addressed. Additionally, these all require legal review to make sure they are in accordance with current policy and laws. The Army may need to engage with DoD or Congress, which can take months to years to gain support and approval. While the Army may see ideas as a priority, these may not be a priority for DoD or Congress.

Stationing: Because the Military Value Analysis is done before an announcement stationing decision, challenges are identified early in the decision cycle to be addressed. Some challenges could be the ability of local schools to absorb a large influx of dependent children.

Funding: Naturally, the farther out the action is to occur, the better resource programming can be. However, some decisions are made within the year of execution or next budget cycle. These funds have to be reprogrammed (moved) from other activities. Risk has to be identified when moving funds between authorized accounts. Depending on the amount, Congress may need to be notified. This also applies to renovation of facilities, PCS move costs, etc. that were not originally planned.

Readiness: This is tracked as personnel arrive and equipment is signed for by the activating unit. The challenge is to have the right personnel arrive before the equipment arrives for training purposes. The above Personnel and Materiel domains are closely coordinated but production and school date timelines often do not align with activation dates. Students may have to be graduated early or NCOs will have to receive training and train Soldiers on arrival.

Prudent Risk

Synchronizing all the above areas into a narrow window of time at a specific location requires complex plans. No decision or process is perfect, and as we have explained above there are many factors that are fact-of-life events, therefore prudent risk has to be accepted. This is a key factor that many in the force do not understand because they lack a baseline knowledge of the processes or lack of information on why the decisions were made or what level of risk leadership is willing to accept. Many factors come into play and depend on the priorities of the leadership. Potential areas of risk are the schedule of delivery, cost, readiness level, and reduced capability.

Conclusion

The Army is a large and complex organization and the one constant is change. Force integration has no perfect solution as there is always friction in the process that cannot be anticipated. Change must be managed with developed processes. As one can see, Force Integration within the Army is much like assembling a 10,000-piece puzzle where the picture changes every day and you do not get the new pieces for several months. The Army G-3/5/7 and the Army Major Commands lead the charge every day to synchronize the different aspects of force integration as close as possible to the expected completion date while mitigating challenges and identifying acceptable risk for leadership decisions. Force Integration might be the hardest most complex process within the Army, but it is a necessity to help build the force needed to fight and win in a multi-domain battlefield!

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Disclaimer: The SFAB was a project in development as of the time of the writing. Some of the information above may be outdated at publication but the principles being explained still apply.

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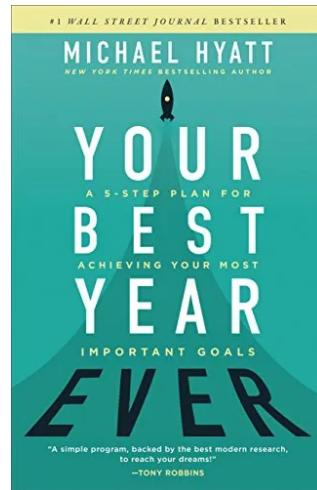
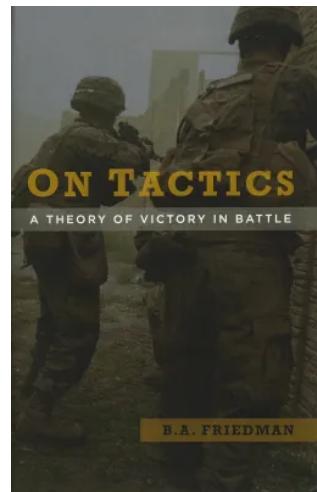
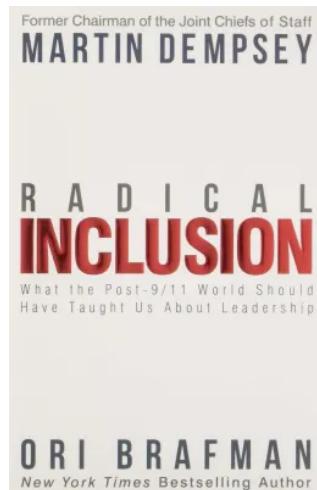
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