This report describes the Army After Next (AAN) cycle of events during fiscal year (FY) 1999, discusses issues that arose during this cycle, and offers broad conclusions on progress in AAN to October 1999.

PURPOSE OF AAN

In February 1996, the Chief of Staff of the Army established the Army After Next program "to assist our leadership in developing a vision of future Army requirements."1 The mission of the program was stated to be “(1) to conduct broad studies of warfare to about the year 2025, (2) to frame issues vital to the development of the U.S. Army after about 2010, and (3) to provide issues to senior Army leadership in a format suitable for integration into TRADOC combat development programs.”2

The time frame envisioned for the research was roughly thirty years into the future. The CSA's guidance was to

- Connect Force XXI, the Army's process of change, to the long-term vision of the Army.
- Connect the vision to the Army's research and development programs.

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2 Ibid.
• Leverage the work already accomplished in the Office of the Secretary of Defense on the Revolution in Military Affairs initiative.

• Institutionalize the program to ensure continuity and quality of effort.

• Think joint and involve the other services.3

This long-term vision was designed to connect to the Army's research and development programs. The Strike Force initiative embodied AAN concepts and was to provide a bridge from current Army forces, using today's technologies, to future Army forces exploiting technological breakthroughs. The Strike Force concept was dropped from consideration while this report was being prepared. The Army Transformation Plan, initiated in October 1999, does, however, benefit from various concepts that had their origin in the Army After Next process.4

THE FIRST THREE YEARS

From a standing start four years ago, AAN evolved into a highly sophisticated process that included integrated idea teams, franchises (which specialize in certain functional areas such as space, medical, etc.), tactical-level analysis, and technology seminars, culminating in a high-level, free-play wargame whose results are briefed to senior Army leadership. In each of the three years from 1997 through 1999, AAN has made important advances in the examination of Battle Forces, which embody futuristic thinking about Army forces.

3 Ibid., p. 2.

4 The Army Transformation Plan envisions the transformation of the Army along three paths: the Objective Force, the Legacy Force, and the Interim Force. The objective is to produce a force that is responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable. The Objective Force will eventually encompass the entire Army. It will be capable of placing a combat brigade anywhere in the world in 96 hours; putting a division on the ground in 120 hours; and placing five divisions on the ground in theater in 30 days. The Legacy Force is essentially today's Army recapitalized through modernization programs such as the insertion of digital technologies. The Interim Force will bridge the gap in capabilities between today's Army and the Objective Force. See http://www.army.mil/armyvision/transform.htm for more information on Army Transformation.
The AAN process consists of three main features: studies, wargames, and analysis. This process became broader and deeper during the first three years of the project. Studies were conducted by TRADOC or other agencies to examine operational concepts and/or technologies. The annual wargames were the highlight of the year’s effort. Following the wargames, analysis was conducted to examine various issues that surfaced during the games or pregame studies.

In the first year, AAN envisioned radically different Army forces, which could globally self-deploy and maneuver vertically to engage enemy heavy forces in fire ambushes (air-mechanized Battle Forces). The purpose was to stimulate innovative thinking unconstrained by current doctrine or—for the time being—foreseeable technology.

In the second year, AAN constrained air-mechanized Battle Forces by foreseeable technology and tested them against opponents who understood the air-mechanized concept and could develop counters. The result was to expose limitations, including vulnerability to opposing air defenses, inability to hold ground, and lack of survivability in close combat, especially when imposed by urban terrain.

In the third year, AAN introduced a spectrum of Battle Forces, deployed in a variety of ways (airborne, airlifted, self-deploying by air, sealifted) and equipped with combat vehicles weighing from 2.5 to 26 tons. This set of five Battle Forces was examined during the series of events culminating in AAN SWG-99 (Spring 1999 Wargame). This allowed a broader look at futuristic Army forces and comparative analysis of competing concepts. Appendix C provides a brief summary of the different types of Battle Forces that were included in AAN SWG-99.

**ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT**

Chapter Two gives an overview of AAN-related events during FY99, including franchise games and the Army After Next SWG-99 series. Chapter Three presents major issues, framed as research questions related to the themes and objectives set for the AAN process. For each issue, it gives responses, which emerged from franchise games and AAN SWG-99. Finally, it offers analysis of implications for the future Army. Chapter Four offers conclusions. Appendix A relates issues identified in this report to themes and issues presented in the