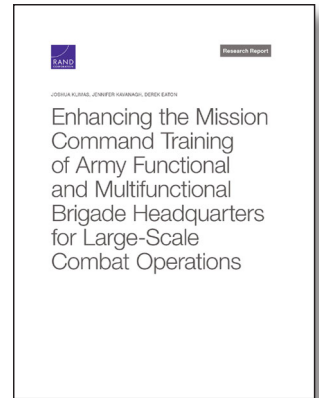




# Enhancing the Mission Command Training of Army Functional and Multifunctional Brigade Headquarters for Large-Scale Combat Operations

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The authors examine the effectiveness of mission command training conducted by different types of functional and multifunctional brigade headquarters in preparation for large-scale combat operations. RAND researchers' objective was to identify gaps in current training approaches for these operations and to recommend ways that those gaps could be filled.



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the gaps in current Army training approaches for functional and multifunctional brigade headquarters in preparation for LSCO?
- How can those gaps be filled?



## KEY FINDINGS

### Mission Command Training Valuable Overall, but LSCO Exercises Might Fall Short

- Overall, researchers found that the Army provides valuable mission command training opportunities for many F/MF brigade headquarters. However, various limitations mean that training falls short of a true gold standard for LSCO.
- The Warfighter Exercise (WFX) provides what is arguably the Army's premier mission training opportunity for F/MF brigade headquarters, but capability and capacity constraints limit its effectiveness in meeting the training objectives of participating F/MF brigade headquarters.
- Most importantly, the training objectives of F/MF brigade headquarters that do attend a WFX are secondary to those of participating division and corps headquarters; F/MF brigade headquarters cannot train in ways that might risk the ability of divisions and corps to meet their training objectives.
- The Army also lacks the capacity to include all types of F/MF brigade headquarters as WFX training

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audiences. However, given resource constraints, the types of F/MF brigade headquarters included represent those that should derive the most benefit from WFX participation.

- In addition to the WFX, home station training and joint and combined exercises also provide venues with significant training benefits, but these often complement, rather than substitute for, the training that a WFX provides.
- F/MF brigade headquarters staff generally estimated that the risks were not significant and could be overcome in a relatively short period of time at the start of an operation. However, most personnel have focused on counterinsurgency since 2003, and they might be limited in their ability to fully assess risk for LSCO.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- The Army should focus enhanced WFX training opportunities on specific F/MF brigade headquarters with the highest-priority LSCO missions.
- For prioritized units, the Army should experiment with conducting longer-duration enhanced WFXs, adapted to better meet the training goals of F/MF brigade headquarters.
- If feasible, the Army should also experiment with including a field training component as part of an enhanced WFX.
- The Army should provide F/MF brigade headquarters with external evaluations as provided for in Army training doctrine and should consider whether it is feasible and desirable to associate these evaluations with enhanced WFXs for brigades that participate in such exercises.
- The Army should consider priority F/MF brigade headquarters when sourcing joint and multinational exercises—particularly for brigade types that are not included as WFX training audiences.
- Army forums should disseminate examples of innovative home station training, and Army guidance should encourage broader implementation—particularly regarding opportunities that could involve permissions and coordination across multiple stakeholders.
- Certain brigade headquarters lack an organic signal company, such as engineer brigades and expeditionary military intelligence brigades. The Army should study the challenges this causes for home station training and options for mitigation.