



Changing the Army's Weapon Training Strategies to Meet Operational Requirements More Efficiently and Effectively

James C. Crowley, Bryan W. Hallmark, Michael G. Shanley, Jerry M. Sollinger

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This report presents the results of a project supporting the Army's efforts to adapt its weapon training strategies to better support operational requirements and unit readiness processes, take full advantage of training technologies, and increase efficiency. It outlines directions the Army could take to improve its weapon training strategies and the processes for adapting them.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What implications do changes to operational requirements and unit readiness processes have for unit weapon training strategies and standards?
- How can current and emerging training technologies enhance weapon training strategies and make them more efficient?
- What are the Army's current processes for developing and adapting weapon training strategies and how could they be improved?
- What directions could the Army take to improve its current weapon training strategies?



KEY FINDINGS

Weapon strategy support of operational requirements and unit readiness processes

- Current small arms training standards do not include many combat critical engagement tasks and skills.
- Current weapon training strategies do not align with progressive unit manning and training readiness strategies, and better alignment could achieve needed readiness levels more efficiently.

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Potential of training technologies to enhance weapon training strategies

- Virtual technologies are already used extensively in weapon training strategies.
- Training strategies could be improved through better use of training technologies, but such improvement will require effort and study.

Weapon training strategy development processes

- Proponents develop weapon training strategies with little Army-level guidance and direction.
- Processes are adequate to support evolutionary improvement but not the major changes that may be needed to support changed operational requirements and unit readiness processes and to exploit the potential of training technologies.
- Processes for integrating weapon training strategies and the resources to support them internally (e.g., ammunition, ranges and targetry, and simulators) and with other training strategy components (e.g., mission command and tactical unit maneuver) are informal rather than systematic.
- A lack of data on unit training practices undercuts the ability to make needed improvements.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review and improve weapon training standards to ensure they include all combat-critical engagement skills.
- Improve the alignment of weapon training strategies with changing unit manning and training readiness strategies.
- Review and improve weapon training strategies to ensure that the mix of live and virtual simulator modalities supports greater effectiveness and efficiency.
- Further define Army-level processes for developing, improving, and coordinating weapon training strategies.
- Collect and analyze data on unit weapon training programs and proficiency levels to better support the development of weapon training strategies.
- Develop and improve weapon training strategies as part of a larger, integrated training strategy development process.



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