

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 8 October 1988 the Commanding General, TRADOC, chartered the NCO Leader Development Task Force to develop a strategy and action plan for improving the Army's NCO leader development system which ensures the continued professional growth of the NCO corps. The Deputy Commanding General for Training, TRADOC, was designated Task Force Director. The U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA) was designated as the site for the study and the Commandant, USASMA, Executive Agent. Task Force members were provided by several commands and agencies having direct responsibilities or proponency for NCO leader development. These included 14 senior NCOs, 2 officers and 1 civilian representing PERSCOM, USASMA, Center for Army Leadership, LOGCEN, Soldier Support Center, the Reserve Components, Health Services Command, and Deputy Chief of Staff Training, TRADOC. The Chief Staff, Army and Commander, TRADOC, further directed that a senior advisory group (SAG) be established to provide a wide range of input on issues affecting leader development.

The Task Force solicited input from all SAG members and many of the Army's senior commanders and their CSMs on issues, findings, and recommendations. Concurrent with the field visits, the Task Force conducted a thorough literature search which included 17 previous studies concerning leadership and professional development. One of the more important among these studies was the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Study of 1985. That study put into motion many changes to improve NCO

- Functional Courses vs NCOES
- Leader Development Sustainment Mechanism
- Role of Civilian Education
- Unit Leader Development
- Communicative Skills
- Role of Individual Training Evaluation Program
- Role of Self-Development

These issues were examined in terms of institutional training, operational assignments, self-development, and support systems to determine the degree to which they supported or inhibited NCO leader development. Valid issues were then viewed in the context of the future environment consisting of four frames of reference: technology, military, social, and economic. The result was a set of findings which were categorized into one of the four elements of the leader development structure or a fifth category of general perceptions.

Analysis of the findings in conjunction with the skills, knowledge and attitudes required construction of synchronized and coordinated leader development models for both the active and reserve components. The models coordinated and synchronized the many subsystems and programs that comprise the four elements of the leader development structure. They provided the framework for translating findings into changes or refinements to the NCO leader development system.

professional development for the Total Army. As a result of these earlier improvements, the Task Force found, and the field verified, that the NCO corps is strong and getting stronger. Furthermore, NCOES is working and producing quality NCOs, and that only evolutionary adjustments are needed to the current NCO leader development system.

To determine what adjustments were needed, the Task Force used the following process to assess the NCO leader development system:

- Review current doctrine and gather input from the SAG and the field on the present state of the force.
- Determine the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required of NCO leaders for each rank.
- Identify and examine leader development activities that prepare NCO leaders in the competencies necessary for success.
- Determine what adjustments are needed.
- Develop and coordinate the recommendations.

The issues which were derived from a literature search and field input fell into the following categories:

- Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes
- Reserve Component Unique Requirements
- EPMS Support of Leader Development
- NCOES/Duty/Promotion Alignment

The final set of recommendations were derived directly from the leader development models. Taken in sum, the changes are evolutionary in scope and are designed to take a strong NCO Corps and make it better.