

A CENTRALIZED, WEB-BASED ANNUAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
FOR A DECENTRALIZED ADJUTANT GENERAL CORPS WILL IMPROVE THE LEVEL
OF HUMAN RESOURCES PROFICIENCY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
PROFESSIONALS IN THE U.S. ACTIVE ARMY, U.S. ARMY
RESERVE AND U.S. NATIONAL GUARD COMPONENTS

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degree

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General Studies

by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

A CENTRALIZED, WEB-BASED ANNUAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR A DECENTRALIZED ADJUTANT GENERAL CORPS WILL IMPROVE THE LEVEL OF HUMAN RESOURCES PROFICIENCY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS IN THE U.S. ACTIVE ARMY, U.S. ARMY RESERVE AND U.S. NATIONAL GUARD COMPONENTS, by Major John Kao Mott, 150 pages.

The on-going transformation of human resources responsibilities and functions under the army personnel services delivery redesign has increased the workload of human resource professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard. The majority of those additional responsibilities transferred to the transformation-enabled Battalion and Brigade S1. In addition, the elimination of Personnel Service Battalions, Groups, and Commands compounds the issue by taking away multi-tiered support organizations with technical expertise in specific areas of concentration. This added workload has put an increased strain on human resource professionals with a direct, significant impact on the customers they support. As a result of this transformation, the Adjutant General Corps has migrated from being command-centric to S1-centric, meaning less emphasis on leadership and more on technical knowledge for human resource personnel. Although Army human resource resident courses are spaced years apart, Military Personnel Messages, policies and procedures change daily. Since resident courses cannot address these high operational tempo changes, the central research question is will A Centralized, Web-based Annual Training and Certification Program for a Decentralized Adjutant General Corps Improve the Level of Human Resources Proficiency for Human Resource Professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard Components?

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ACRONYMS

01A	Branch Immaterial Duty Position
1LT/P	First Lieutenant Promotable
2LT	Second Lieutenant
AAR	After Action Review
ACS	Army Community Service
ADSO	Active Duty Service Obligation
ADT	Active Duty Training
AG	Adjutant General
AGCCC	Adjutant General Captain's Career Course
AGCRA	Adjutant General's Corps Regimental Association
ALARACT	All Army Activities
AKO	Army Knowledge Online
AOC	Advanced Operations Course
AOWC	Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course
ARFORGEN	Army Force Generation
ASCC	Army Service Component Command
ATRRS	Army Training Requirements and Resource System
AUTL	Army Universal Task List
BASOPs	Base Operations
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
BDE	Brigade
BFA	Battlefield Functional Area
BN	Battalion

BOLC	Basic Officer Leader's Course
BST	Branch Specific Time (Training)
CATS	Combined Arms Training Strategy
CFLCC	Coalition Forces Land Component Command
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
COA	Course of Action
CONUS	Continental United States
CPT	Captain
CSRB	Critical Skills Retention Bonus
DA	Department of the Army
DANTES	Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support
DDE	Department of Distance Education (for the Command and General Staff College)
DIMHRS	Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System
DOD	Department of Defense
EDAS	Enlisted Distribution and Assessment System
eMILPO	Electronic Military Personnel Office
EPMD	Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate
FM	Field Manual
FMI	Field Manual Interim
FY	Fiscal Year
HQ	Headquarters
HQDA	Headquarters Department of the Army
HR	Human Resources
HRC	Human Resources Command

HRMQC	Human Resources Management Qualification Course
HRMQC-RC	Human Resources Management Qualification Course-Reserve Component
HRSC	Human Resources Sustainment Center
ICW	In Conjunction With
ID(L)	Infantry Division (Light)
IA	Information Assurance
IAW	In Accordance With
IDT	Inactive Duty Training
ILE	Intermediate Level Education
INSCOM	U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command
IMA	Installation Management Command
KD	Key Developmental
LPD	Leader Professional Development
LT	Lieutenant
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel
MAJ	Major
MDMP	Military Decision-Making Process
MEDCOM	U.S. Army Medical Command
MIL-CIV	Military-to-civilian
MILPER	Military Personnel Message
MMAS	Master of Military Art and Science
MOIP	Menu of Incentives Program
MOS	Military Occupational Skill
MPD	Military Personnel Division

MTOE	Modification Table of Organization and Equipment
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NCOES	Non-Commissioned Officer Education System
NCOPD	Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development
NETCOM	U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command
NOTT	New Organization Training Team
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operations
OPD	Officer Professional Development
OPMD	Officer Personnel Management Directorate
OPTEMPO	Operational Tempo
PAID	Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate
PASR	Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PERSCOM	Personnel Command
PRM	Personnel Readiness Management
PSB	Personnel Services Battalion
PSDR	Personnel Services Delivery Redesign
R5	Reception, Replacement, Return-to-Duty, Rest and Recuperation, Redeployment
S1	Battalion or Brigade Human Resources officer or section
SGA	Staff Group Advisor (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College)
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPO	Support Operations Course

SRC	Standard Requirement Code
SSD	Structured Self-Development courses
SSI	Soldier Support Institute
STRATCOM	Strategic Communications
TADLP	The Army Distributed Learning Program
TDA	Table of Distribution and Allowances
TDY	Temporary Duty
TOPMIS	Total Officer Personnel Management Information System
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
TSC	Theater Sustainment Command
TSS	Training Support System
TTPs	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
USAG-HI	U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii
USAREUR	U.S. Army Europe
WFF	Warfighting Function
WOAC	Warrant Officer Advanced Course
WOBC	Warrant Officer Basic Course
XO	Executive Officer

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Problem

There are many contributing factors involved that support the thesis of this paper that a centralized, web-based annual training and certification program for a decentralized Adjutant General (AG) Corps will improve the level of proficiency for human resource (HR) professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components. The problem statement includes contributing factors such as a decentralized AG Corps being created from Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR) implementation and the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) not being implemented. Considering 52 percent, the majority of the total Army force, is in the U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components with full-time civilian careers, a distance learning option to their education requirements offers the flexibility to complete online training simultaneously while performing civilian jobs.¹ The problem also includes inadequate battalion (BN) and brigade (BDE) S1 manning and equipment shortages, long periods between resident courses, and unavailable distance learning courses and training modules leading to a trend of BN and BDE S1s being relieved. These S1s were relieved for a combination of lack of PSDR and HR technical expertise, not meeting their commander's expectations, and a lack of leadership skills for their S1 shops.

The on-going transformation of Human Resources (HR) responsibilities and functions under PSDR has increased the workload of PSDR-enabled HR professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard. The elimination of

Personnel Services Battalions (PSBs) and other AG-centric organizations compounded the issue by taking away multi-tiered organizations with direct technical expertise in smaller areas of concentration. Under the PSDR concept, PSDR-enabled BN and BDE S1s (Adjutants) are now solely responsible for most of the functions the PSBs used to perform. This added workload has put an increased strain on AG Corps HR professionals with a direct impact on the individuals they support, their customers. As a result of this HR transformation, the AG Corps has transformed from being command-centric to S1-centric, meaning less emphasis on leadership and more on technical knowledge and expertise for officers and NCOs.

The U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute Key Strategic Issues List offers military and civilian researchers a "ready reference of topics" related to the Department of the Army and the Department of Defense, allowing them to address any of the "many strategic challenges identified with major defense organizations who seek to benefit from this focused research."² One of the possible research topics the Key Strategic Issues List identifies is "How do Soldiers as HR customers perceive the quality and timeliness of personnel services provided under PSDR structure?"³ Although this paper will not address this topic, answering this research question may help identify whether or not PSDR implementation is meeting customer needs and demands.

For the purpose of this paper, this thesis will only look at the four main resident courses available to active duty AG officers as an example of a career pattern and will not address resident courses available to AG enlisted Soldiers or HR civilians. These courses are the AG Basic Officer Leader's Course (BOLC), the Adjutant General's Captain's Career Course (AGCCC), Intermediate Level Education (ILE), and the Human Resources

Management Qualification Course (HRMQC). Resident HR training courses are limited to the BOLC upon commissioning as a Second Lieutenant (2LT), the AGCCC as a Captain (CPT) or promotable First Lieutenant (1LT/P), and ILE AG electives and the HRMQC as a Major (MAJ). Although ILE is a command-centric course, it is used in this paper to show there is some HR-specific training conducted with the potential to include more AG and HR-centric education and training. There are typically three to five years in between these resident courses, which is not conducive to maintaining perishable HR skills when Military Personnel (MILPER) messages change HR doctrine on a daily to weekly basis.⁴ The AG representative at the Command and General Staff College's ILE is developing and piloting a BDE S1 elective that ILE students will be able to take beginning around calendar year 2010.

Another issue is that HR professionals do not always continuously serve in an HR capacity. Many HR professionals work in branch immaterial (01A) positions, non-HR positions, or non-PSDR positions, which cause them to lose perishable HR and PSDR-related skills. This lack of knowledge degrades the HR readiness of HR professionals and directly impacts their customers until they are re-trained, removed or replaced. When they re-enter an HR position, or specifically a PSDR-related position, it rarely follows the same policies or procedures as when they left due to continuous MILPER messages changing HR doctrine. Most importantly, PSDR directly affected BN and BDE S1 PSDR-enabled positions, whereas other AG and HR positions do not have the same high levels of tasks and responsibilities. In a presentation from the AG Schoolhouse on February 5, 2009 given to AG officers in ILE Class 09-02, the AG Corps leadership stresses the importance of self-development.⁵

Due to limited resident HR courses, HR professionals working in non-HR positions, along with a constantly changing HR environment of daily or weekly MILPER messages, AG Corps professionals must constantly educate, update and train themselves on HR perishable skills on a regular basis in order to maintain the operational tempo (OPTEMPO) of today's HR environment. One of the ways HR professionals currently accomplish this is through the S1 Net. The S1 Net is a web-based forum for HR professionals to share training, discussions, blogs, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) with other HR professionals. The S1 Net voluntarily sends MILPER message updates to HR professionals as they are published. The S1 NET is currently an invaluable tool in maintaining perishable HR skills in a changing environment. Currently, HRC has no tracking mechanisms to determine whether HR professionals are receiving MILPER messages, AG branch news, HR policy changes, or AG updates to the field from the AG schoolhouse. Not all HR professionals or AG Soldiers are mandated to be members of the S1 Net. Although it is impossible to ensure all HR professionals read these messages and updates, it is possible to ensure all HR professionals receive them, giving them the tools they need to perform their HR duties.

A more recent and disturbing issue is the number of AG Majors serving as BDE S1s who have not satisfied their chains of command with their HR technical competencies or other factors and were asked to be replaced by more competent AG officers across the Army. Using one of the largest Army Service Component Commands (ASCC) as an example, 75 percent (three out of four) of the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) S1s were replaced by their chains of command between 2008 and 2009 due to

their inability to adapt to PSDR requirements, not meeting the expectations of BDE leadership, lack of leadership and management abilities, inability to multi-task, or poor organizational skills.⁶ The fourth, successful, BCT S1 was a Lieutenant Colonel who had already been in the BDE S1 position for well over a year.

The three soft-relieved officers were regular Army, branch-detailed Majors with comparative institutional knowledge skill sets and experience. More disturbing is the fact that one of these BDE S1 Majors was replaced by a First Lieutenant from a branch other than the AG Corps with five years less HR experience. This simple fact is counterintuitive to the thesis of this paper as it supports the theory that institutional knowledge and HR experience do not play a significant role in an HR professional's technical knowledge and abilities in meeting the expectations of commanders. Although it is only one data point and cannot be generalized for all, it does show that other factors contribute to successful mission accomplishment as a BDE S1.

On November 20, 2009, a fourth Maneuver, Fires and Effects BDE S1 from the same ASCC received notification of being soft-relieved after only being in the position for forty-four days. On the day of notification, the BDE leadership had even already identified a replacement from their higher headquarters and discussed initiating the full-cost operational move paperwork to bring the officer to BDE's geographic location. However, the BDE S1 who was being soft-relieved received neither an initial counseling nor a negative counseling for poor performance. Moreover, the BDE S1's chain of command did not develop a corrective training plan, with or without senior HR leaders, to teach, coach, and mentor this BDE S1 to correct specific deficiencies or address the BDE Commander's concerns. The BDE S1 being soft-relieved had over thirty months

experience as a BN S1 with over twenty months in a PSDR-enabled BN, so the officer was experienced in PSDR tasks. Another issue was the BDE S1's replacement was coming from the unit's higher headquarters in a separate geographic location, a non-paired community, so it was costing the government two full-cost, or permanent change of station, operational moves to swap the officers.

To use another example at the BN level within the same ASCC, a subordinate BN S1 received a referred Officer Evaluation Review (OER) for poor duty performance as the officer was overwhelmed by PSDR duties and responsibilities per the BN Executive Officer (XO).⁷ This officer had been called to active duty for a period of three years, so this was the first active duty assignment. When the officer was reassigned to an HR Company to serve as an XO, the officer's performance improved greatly per the officer's XO and the Company Commander.⁸ In this example, the officer's lack of HR technical skills in PSDR made the position overwhelming, whereas the officer did well in a non PSDR-centric position.

Army Regulation 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development*, states the "Army's training challenge is to optimize, synchronize, and support training in schools, training in units, and self-development to produce highly professional Soldiers, leaders, and units thoroughly trained in core competencies capable of winning against aggressive and adaptive enemies."⁹ For an HR professional, continually changing MILPER messages, policies, and procedures coupled with expanded PSDR tasks given limited manpower executing perishable HR skills through 67 automation systems due to DIMHRS not being implemented is a formidable enemy. The Army's training goals are to "receive expert feedback on performance, validate readiness on core competencies,

and provide a Training Support System (TSS) that enables the performance of Soldiers, leaders, and units at schools, home station, and under self-development utilizing the best mix of integrated live, virtual, and constructive training support simulations, devices, and products at each training location for training on the tasks that support core competencies.”¹⁰ The Army’s training goals also include “developing competent and confident Department of the Army (DA) civilian and military leaders to meet the Army’s current and future needs by providing them with an automated capability to manage training.”¹¹ The Army Distributed Learning Program (TADLP) “enhances the readiness posture of the Army by distributing standardized training at the right place and time from Army training proponents who serve as knowledge centers that create, store, maintain, market, validate, and deliver distributed-learning products to Soldiers, leaders, and DA civilians in units and organizations Army-wide to help satisfy Army training and readiness requirements by actively seeking cost-effective ways to employ distributed-learning capabilities.”¹² This includes expanding, changing, or fielding new systems to meet these goals, such as expanding current web-based HR systems to implement an annual training and certification program while providing HR leadership with visibility on HR professionals meeting program objectives. The three Army components do not have branch-specific, mandatory annual web-based training and certification programs focused on HR core competencies that the initial research has discovered other than typical web-based training requirements such as in Information Assurance annual training requirements.

These facts support my thesis that a centralized, web-based annual training and certification program for a decentralized AG Corps will improve the level of HR

proficiency for AG professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components. This program will mitigate the issues identified above under the PSDR transformation and continue to serve HR professionals as a centralized training and certification system to maintain perishable HR skills and update knowledge for years to come. This program would augment invaluable resident HR courses and is not intended to replace them. Resident courses offer face-to-face instruction and allow HR professionals to build friends and camaraderie that last their entire career that sometimes can't be achieved through distance learning due to the impersonal and distant nature of these programs, communicating with others through electronic, inhuman means.

Background of the Study

The Army's HR transformation under PSDR began in 2005, stemming from an Army-wide transformation into a modular, Brigade-centric fighting force to streamline and improve the accessibility, quality and timeliness of HR support to commanders and Soldiers. The Army's HR community had to transform in order to provide HR support to an Army transforming into a modular, BDE-centric expeditionary force, capable of conducting independent operations.¹³ In January 2005, the Soldier Support Institute (SSI) began a PSDR Concept Validation Pilot Program to initiate the PSDR concept. This pilot program expanded the 600-plus HR tasks, added over 20 new HR tasks performed by a PSB, and transferred the execution of all of these HR tasks to pilot BDE and BN S1s in the 101st Airborne Division.¹⁴

Because this pilot program revised the way the Army executed HR functions at the BDE and BN levels as a part of the Army's modularization, it was evaluated by representatives from the Department of the Army G1, Human Resources Command

(HRC), the Army Personnel Transformation Directorate, SSI, Installation Management Agency (IMA), and Forces Command Power and Projection Evaluation Team who ultimately declared the pilot program a success in May 2005.¹⁵ Thus, Army leadership approved implementation of the PSDR program across the three Army components, U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserves, and U.S. National Guard.¹⁶ The Army G1 said the PSDR concept will be the “most significant change in the HR business AG officers have seen in their careers as the intent is to improve the level of HR support provided to a unit.”¹⁷

As PSDR was specifically designed for transformation at the BDE and BN S1 levels, organizations such as Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA), separate companies and detachments, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Schools, joint units, and G1 sections at the division, corps, and ASCC levels were not transformed under PSDR. In fact, some HR organizations became the bill-payers by their authorizations being reduced to provide more HR professionals to PSDR-enabled organizations at the BN and BDE levels. Corps G1 shops were reduced from 56 to 30 personnel and Division G1 shops went from 49 down to 28 personnel.¹⁸ For non PSDR-enabled units, HR functions would be performed by their local installation Military Personnel Division (MPD).¹⁹ PSDR implementation has been completed for the U.S. Active Army and U.S. Army Reserves and was scheduled for implementation in the U.S. National Guard by August 31, 2009.²⁰

PSDR provides BCT or BDE and BN Commanders the “capacity, capability, and structure required to execute essential personnel services, personnel accounting and strength reporting, and personnel readiness and information management with organic

assets.”²¹ Part of this strategy was authorizing and changing the branch coding for BDE and BN S1 positions to Branch 42 and placing HR-trained AG Corps personnel into these authorized slots. Previously, BDE S1 positions were mostly coded as Functional Area 43, Human Resource Management, who were officers new to the HR community. Prior to PSDR implementation, Assistant BDE S1s and BN S1s were filled by officers from the unit’s organic military designation, meaning non-AG officers who were not HR-trained filled these slots. PSDR added HR Soldier and civilian authorizations and related HR equipment into both the Modification Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) of PSDR-enabled, or modularized brigades and battalions and TDA for non-PSDR-enabled organizations. The new BDE S1 structure is typically 13 personnel, but only about nine for the Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM), the Medical Command (MEDCOM), and the Network Command (NETCOM). PSDR added two enlisted positions to previous BN S1 MTOEs for an average of ten in a BN S1. These manpower increases increased the capabilities at the BDE and BN S1 levels to compensate for the additional HR workloads at the Brigade and Battalion levels.

General Cody, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, directed the implementation of PSDR and recognized that these additional personnel would require more sophisticated and additional human resources equipment and systems access in order to perform PSDR-enabled duties, so he directed appropriate levels of automation and communications equipment be added as well.²² This additional connectivity equipment was necessary as legacy AG organizations were inactivated under the PSDR transformation. PSDR eliminated AG-centric organizations such Personnel Commands (PERSCOMs), Personnel Groups, Personnel Management Centers, and PSBs that used to

be the conduit for actions processing between Battalions, Brigades, Divisions, Corps and HRC. Instead, PSDR-enabled BDE and BN S1s would now be granted HR systems permissions and accesses to Department of the Army-level systems at HRC.²³ PSDR-enabled units are responsible for processing actions such as awards, promotions, evaluation reports, replacements, reassignments, and reclassification directly with HRC for the U.S. Active Army and U.S. Army Reserves or with the respective state's Joint Force Headquarters for National Guard units.²⁴ These actions were previously performed by various sections within Personnel Commands, Personnel Groups, and PSBs prior to their inactivation under PSDR transformation.

In order to inactivate large HR organizations and transfer all of the HR functions to small BDE and BN S1 teams, the new, streamlined electronic integrated personnel and pay system DIMHRS was necessary. This new system was a single application, merging 67 different Army HR systems into one user-friendly automated system that combines the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard components along with other Department of Defense (DOD) services.²⁵ This new system was a very important step in streamlining the number of systems, passwords, and actions required of HR professionals given the additional HR responsibilities for PSDR-enabled BDE and BN S1s. More importantly, DIMHRS would empower individuals to perform actions themselves through self-service modules. DIMHRS was scheduled to be implemented on March 1, 2009. Unfortunately, the Army revoked the order for DIMHRS implementation and the Initial Operation Capability to a date to be determined.²⁶ On 20 August 2009, the Deputy Secretary of Defense approved the services to build-out their own personnel and pay systems using the DIMHRS core investment.²⁷ The Army is developing its own,

Army-only system for the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard tentatively called the Integrated Personnel and Pay System to be developed with a release date to be determined.²⁸

The BN and BDE S1 structures are “not nearly adequate to perform HR duties as they were specifically structured around the implementation of DIMHRS,” but the Army is not able to modify these structures in the short-term by immediately augmenting additional HR personnel to compensate, even though it is expected to “take three to five years to implement a DIMHRS-like system.”²⁹ The negative effect on the suspension of a DIMHRS-like system is an increased workload on PSDR-enabled BDE and BN S1s as they must now continue to use the 67 different systems across the Active Duty, U.S. Army Reserves, and U.S. National Guard components.³⁰ In addition, each personnel transaction executed in DIMHRS automatically initiated the appropriate financial transaction in DIMHRS, so the BN and BDE S1 structures did not include financial management specialists. Without implementation of DIMHRS, there are no financial management specialists in BN and BDE S1 shops to perform these inter-related transactions, so financial management responsibilities now fall on BN and BDE S1 shops to perform in addition to all HR tasks, duties and responsibilities. The U.S. Army would be “number two on the Fortune 500 list; if it made the list, it would be the only organization not to have an integrated personnel and pay system.”³¹ This implies the importance of large organizations having integrated systems due to the complex nature of taking care of employees through synchronized systems.

Another issue the HR community faces with requiring experienced HR professionals is the recent change to double below-the-zone promotions for Majors.³²

With this change, “leaders are concerned that Captains are leaving company command, being promoted double below-the-zone to Major and put into positions as BDE S1s, a position designed for officers with Major-level experiences.”³³ These officers face even “greater demands” as they will lack the HR technical knowledge “not taught in the AG School house and will not have the level of maturity, experience and expertise commanders are looking for.”³⁴ These individuals are considered the minority for this paper, which is limited to focusing on the majority of typical officers.

The PSDR transformation also added the theater level Human Resource Sustainment Centers (HRSC) and HR Companies under a Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) to provide more flexible, deployable theater-level HR functions. The Army also dispatched New Organization Training Teams (NOTT) throughout the Army to train these HR professionals on the PSDR implementation.³⁵ This paper will mainly focus on PSDR implementation at the BDE and BN levels, however.

Statement of the Problem

A centralized HR training mechanism is necessary in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard due to a decentralized AG Corps created from PSDR implementation, DIMHRs not being implemented, inadequate BN and BDE S1 manning and equipment shortages, long periods between resident courses, and unavailable distance learning courses and training modules.

Purpose of the Study

The first purpose of this study is to show that a centralized web-based annual training and certification program is necessary to increase HR proficiency in HR

professionals across all three Army components. The second purpose of the study is to provide recommendations to improve professional self-development for HR professionals across all three Army components.

Rationale

If an annual HR training and certification program is implemented, HR professionals would have a regular training and certification program available at all times regardless of physical location, whether in garrison or deployed, as a refreshing training tool in addition to the mandatory training requirement to maintain perishable HR skills. Another benefit is Army leadership would have a training tool to keep up with the high OPTEMPO of policy and MILPER message changes for immediate turn-around and direct application to the field. Army leadership would be able to see the level of training of individuals under a program such as this, as well as identifying systemic trends and deficiencies across the force. Once developed, this program could be modified to address and correct these issues much more quickly than resident courses with immediate impact. Another benefit to a program such as this is that HR professionals would have a minimal foundation of retained, current HR knowledge, which is currently not the case. HR professionals could serve in branch immaterial (01A) or non-HR positions while still maintaining their HR proficiency.

New distance learning courses to provide this HR training could be either developed from existing curriculum or current resident courses such as BOLC and the AGCCC could be offered in a distance learning modality. New distance learning courses could utilize training material from the various AG school house courses to form a more complete courseware for all HR professionals. Or, current resident courses could just be

offered in a distance learning setting for those who complete the resident course. This way, HR professionals could attend resident schooling and re-take the distance learning variation of the resident course as refresher training to maintain their perishable HR skills. Another option is to open the distance learning courses to all HR professionals.

Primary Research Question

Will a centralized, web-based annual training and certification program for a decentralized AG Corps improve the level of HR proficiency for HR professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components?

First Supporting Research Question

Is a web-based training and certification program best-suited for HR professions in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components?

Second Supporting Research Question

What distance learning programs exist and which would be best suited for HR professions in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components?

Third Supporting Research Question

How should this web-based training and certification program be structured?

Fourth Supporting Research Question

What should this web-based training and certification program focus be on and why?

Significance of the Study

This thesis is significant because it will provide evidence necessary to decide if a centralized, web-based annual training and certification program for a decentralized AG Corps is appropriate in improving the level of HR proficiency for HR professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components. The implications of that knowledge could include the actual implementation of this program across the components to improve the HR readiness and technical proficiency of HR professionals. Further studies of this thesis could include the positive impacts HR professionals under this program would have on their customers including improved readiness levels, better quality of service and increased quantity of service.

Assumptions

The first assumption is that the changing HR military climate under PSDR implementation suggests that a more immediate alternative to traditional, currently available resident and distance learning courses is needed due to DIMHRS not being implemented and the fact that augmenting BN and BDE S1 structures with additional personnel will take longer to implement.³⁶ Doing nothing is not a viable course of action. A web-based annual training and certification program is needed to augment resident courses, mitigate a current lack of PSDR and general HR knowledge and proficiency and improve HR professionals to better serve customers. The current HR resident courses, S1 Net and other means are not sufficient to maintain the OPTEMPO of constantly changing MILPER messages and the fact that HR professionals do not always serve in an HR capacity, steadily losing perishable HR skills until they re-enter another HR position. There is too great a span (three to five years) between resident courses to incorporate this

many HR policy and procedure changes effectively. The S1 Net is a voluntary augmentation for HR professionals to join and share ideas and receive these MILPER message changes, but it is not mandated and HR professionals are not automatically signed up. Chapter Two expands on these issues.

A second assumption is the RAND study described in Chapter Two quantifies the cost savings of distance learning courses over Permanent Change of Station (PCS) and Temporary Duty (TDY) courses. This cost assumption is for the variables that were not quantified in that study or those that cannot be quantified such as: the time it takes to identify poor individual performance; actions associated with firing an individual for poor performance; researching available personnel, then hiring and moving a replacement if available; moving both individuals and possibly family members to new organizations; retraining the new individual to unit-specific SOPs; the cost of poor performance in not processing an individual's personnel actions relating to personnel not being promoted, awarded on-time, etc. The overall assumption here is that the associated costs of creating a web-based system to ensure HR professionals are trained to perform their HR functions are insignificant compared to S1s not being able to perform their HR duties and responsibilities, having negative effects on their customers and morale.

A third assumption is the implementation of future HR systems such as DIMHRS will not be released in the near future. DIMHRS was not released on March 1, 2009 as planned; meaning HR professionals must continue to manage the 67 computer-based systems to manage full spectrum HR functions.³⁷ This further highlights the importance in establishing a viable alternative to existing HR resident and distance learning courses.

A fourth assumption is the Army will support an AG annual online training and certification program and implement such a web-based system as it does the annual Information Assurance (IA) mandatory training (e.g. include in AR 350-1 Training requirements). “To support the warfighter in a highly effective and professional manner, the Army must ensure that appropriate levels of IA awareness, training, education, certification, and workforce management are provided to the IA workforce and information systems users that commensurate with their respective responsibilities.”³⁸ DOD policy 8570.1 states the “IA workforce knowledge and skills must be verified through standard certification and testing.”³⁹ The main assumption here is that the Army considers the customer service provided to Soldiers, civilians, and family members just as highly as it does protecting them from external threats. By ensuring HR professionals are trained and certified on an annual basis, the Army is ensuring HR professionals maintain a minimum level of HR proficiency to do just that. Without this training and certification mandate, there is no assurance that HR professionals will maintain HR proficiency on their own. There is also no way for HR leaders to determine the level of proficiency of HR professionals across all three Army components.

A fifth assumption is separate web-based system modules could be created by AG School resident U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard experts for the three Army components or the current Army Training Network applications can be utilized. An example of this is the distance learning Human Resources Management Qualification Course-Reserve Component (HRMQC-RC) only offered to U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers. The AG School could use this distance learning model and apply it to

distance learning modules for U.S. National Guard and Active Component personnel as well.

The assumption is this annual training and certification requirement can be mandated and implemented without affecting an HR professional's eligibility for promotion. This requirement is designed to augment resident schooling and only serves as refresher training to maintain perishable HR skills to provide the best level of HR customer service. If an HR professional were to fail this annual training and certification requirement, the assumption is that no repercussions would take place, but rather the individual would be contacted and mandated to retake the certification in a reasonable timeframe. After several failed attempts to pass, another assumption is that course instructors would be alerted to provide additional training themselves or contact the individual's HR leadership in the respective geographic region to provide the additional instruction without affecting the HR professional's eligibility for promotion.

Limitations

This thesis is limited to studying the need for an alternative to delivering resident-based instruction to HR professionals. This thesis will address the availability of resident courses to officers as an example of a career pattern for analysis and what type of program would improve the level of HR proficiency of HR professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components. This thesis will not address the levels of effectiveness of various alternative solutions, specifically between the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard. This thesis will not study the appropriate level of centralized management of such an alternative to standard, resident education (e.g. Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) G1,

SSI, AG School, or other). Secondary analysis on success and failure rates of BCT S1s constitute a convenient sampling of Army component performance and are limited to U.S. Army Europe active duty AG Majors in BCT S1 positions from February 2008 through August 2009.

Anticipated Problems and Possible Solutions

Since there are no studies conducted on the measured levels of effectiveness of implementing such a program regarding the quality and quantity of services offered, it will be difficult to impossible to measure the effectiveness of such a program in this study. The U.S. Active Army does not have branch-specific, mandatory annual web-based training and certification programs focused on core competencies that the initial research has discovered other than typical web-based training requirements such as in Information Assurance annual training requirements. The research will mitigate the issue of measuring effectiveness by using other Army distance learning programs and their effectiveness.

¹BG William D. R. Waff, Electronic correspondence with author, 25 November 2009.

²U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, “Key Strategic Issues List 2008: Foreword,” <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?PubID=860> (accessed October 16, 2009).

³Ibid., 27.

⁴U.S. Army Human Resources Command, “Military Personnel Message Index,” <https://perscomnd04.army.mil/milpermsgs.nsf/WebFrameset?OpenFrameSet> (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁵LTC Rick Carpenter, “Professional Development: Intermediate Level Education” (Lecture, Marshall Auditorium, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, February 5, 2009).

⁶eTOPMIS, Multiple “DA Form 4037 Officer Record Brief” from U.S. Army Europe officers, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, <https://www.isdrad16.army.mil/ETOPMIS/acceptTerms.do> (accessed September 21, 2009).

⁷Executive Officer, 173d Special Troops Battalion and the Executive Officer and Commander, 38th HR Company, email message to author, various dates; author served in U.S. Army Europe Officer Personnel Management Division (OPMD) managing AG officers from February 2007 through January 2009.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007), 2.

¹⁰Ibid., 3.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., 15.

¹³LTG Michael D. Rochelle, *Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR)*, Memorandum for the Human Resource Community, 29 November 2009.

¹⁴LTC Larry Wark and MSG Charles Kersey, “PSDR Validation Program in Effect,” *Perspective* (Spring 2005): 23.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶GEN Richard A. Cody, Memorandum for the Army Staff, “Personnel Services Delivery Redesign,” 24 October 2005.

¹⁷LTG Michael D. Rochelle, *Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR)*, Memorandum for the Human Resource Community, 29 November 2009.

¹⁸LTC Don Bachler, Command and General Staff College, A443 Human Resources Course, slide 32 with notes, “Army Human Resources Transformation and Personnel Services Delivery Redesign,” Command and General Staff College, https://courses.leavenworth.army.mil/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_14_1 (accessed November 2, 2009).

¹⁹Booze Allen Hamilton, “Delivering Personnel Support to a Transformed Army,” https://aptd.us.army.mil/PSDR/PSDR_White_Paper_8Nov04.doc November 2004 (accessed October 27, 2009).

²⁰U.S. Army Human Resources Command, “Army DIMHRS Program Office Top Story,” https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/CDID/PSDR/html/implementation_schedule.htm (accessed September 27, 2009).

²¹GEN Richard A. Cody, Memorandum for the Army Staff, “Personnel Services Delivery Redesign,” 24 October 2005.

²²Ibid.

²³The Adjutant General School, “Adjutant General Corps FDU 05-2 Human Resources Transformation Concept Paper,” February 8, 2006, 28.

²⁴U.S. Army Human Resources Command, “U.S. Army National Guard PSDR Implementation,” https://www.hrc.army.mil/SITE/ACTIVE/tagd/CDID/PSDR/PSDR_ARNG/documents/PSDR_Implementation.pdf (accessed September 27, 2009).

²⁵U.S. Army Human Resources Command, “Army DIMHRS Program Office Top Story,” https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/CDID/PSDR/html/implementation_schedule.htm (accessed September 27, 2009).

²⁶Headquarters, Department of the Army, ALARACT Message 298/2008, “FRAGO 2 to Operations Order 08-02,” 12 December 2008.

²⁷U.S. Army Human Resources Command, “Implementation Schedule,” <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/ArmyDIMHRS/index.html> (accessed September 25, 2009).

²⁸LTC Don Bachler, Electronic correspondence with author, November 6, 2009.

²⁹BG Mark A. McAlister, “Address to ILE Classes 09-02 and 10-01” (Lecture, Marshall Auditorium, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, October 30, 2009).

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Military Personnel Message 08-025, “Amended Zones of Consideration for the FY08 Major, Maneuver, Fires and Effects (MFE), Operations Support (OS), and Force Sustainment (FS) Promotion Selection Boards,” 25 January 2008.

³³BG Mark A. McAlister, “Address to ILE Classes 09-02 and 10-01” (Lecture, Marshall Auditorium, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, October 30, 2009).

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵LTC David A. Smoot, “On the Road to HR Transformation,” *1775, The Journal of the Adjutant General’s Corps Regimental Association* (Summer/Fall 2006): 20.

³⁶BG Mark A. McAlister, “Address to ILE Classes 09-02 and 10-01” (Lecture, Marshall Auditorium, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, October 30, 2009).

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸Information Assurance Training Center, “Army Addendum to DOD Information Assurance (IA) User Awareness Training,” U.S. Army Signal Center, <https://ia.signal.army.mil/090528/dodiaadefault.asp>, accessed December 6, 2009.

³⁹*Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Current Human Resource Trends Across the Army Components

To determine if a web-based training and certification program is best suited for Human Resource (HR) professions in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components, it is beneficial to first look at current HR trends in these components. In a technical, knowledge-based branch such the AG Corps, the cultural norm for the three components has shifted the focus from being command-centric to S1-centric, meaning more individual skills-based as the U.S. Active Army and U.S. Army Reserve have completely transformed and implemented the Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR) and the U.S. National Guard was scheduled to complete implementation by August 31, 2009.

A potential professional development issue was created with PSDR implementation in the development of AG officers and HR professionals as well. Prior to PSDR implementation, HR professionals served in PSBs, Personnel Groups, Division G1s or Corps G1s who would hold Officer Professional Development (OPD) training sessions for officers, Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development (NCOPD) sessions for Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and enlisted Soldiers, or general Leader Professional Development (LPD) training opportunities to help develop officer, enlisted and civilian subordinates' HR technical knowledge and professional development needs. Under the Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR), brigade (BDE) S1s may be the senior AG professionals in the chain of command as their higher headquarters at division or corps levels may be deployed to a different theater. With

higher headquarters now deploying separately from BDEs and not able to provide teaching, coaching, and mentoring due to differing deployment schedules, it now falls on the BDE S1 to teach, coach, and mentor subordinate battalion (BN) S1s and their teams. Moreover, Adjutant General (AG) officers serving as BDE and BN S1s are now counseled and rated on their evaluations by Maneuver, Fires and Effects, Operations Support, Force Sustainment, or Health Service branch personnel who are not HR-trained. AG leaders for BDEs may be in a different theater, so the only way to teach, coach, and mentor their subordinate HR professionals may be through electronic means such as telephone, video teleconferencing, internet methods, or email. This presents a leadership development dilemma within the AG Corps, as well as a systemic issue of a cultural shift in AG Corps teaching, coaching and mentoring. Thus, as the trend of the Army shifts toward a more modular, Brigade-centric force, HR professionals are becoming more decentralized, reducing the opportunities for centralized training at the unit levels.

For example, in figure 1, the organizations color-coded blue under the Army's "Current" structure are listed as Standard Requirements Code (SRC) 12, which relates to the nine-position, alpha-numeric code on an organization's Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) document that "prescribes the wartime mission, capabilities, organizational structure, and mission essential personnel and equipment requirements for military units."¹ Under the Army's "Modular Army" structure, these SRC 12 organizations inactivate, leaving the HR functions to be performed by the non-SRC 12 organizations under the "Modular Army" structure. The old SRC 12 organizations were the conduit between BDE S1s and HRC with a depth and wealth of

subject matter experts that BDE and BN S1s could rely on to assist with technical questions.

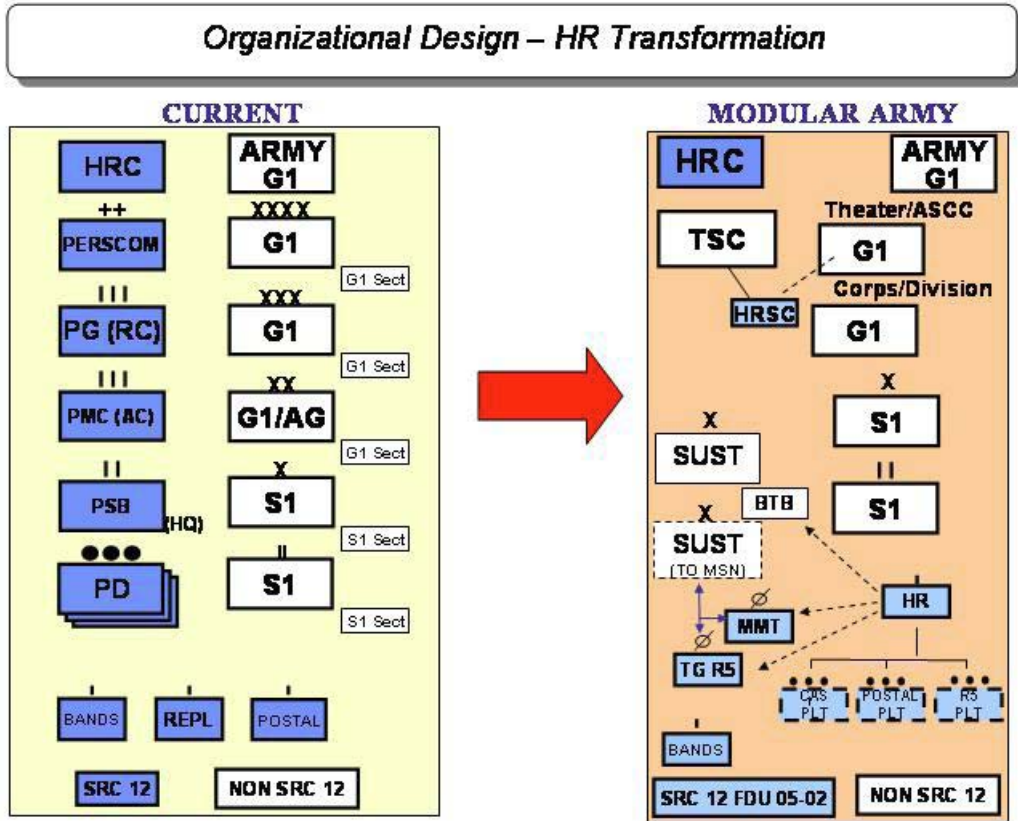


Figure 1. Organizational Design-HR Transformation

Source: Personnel Services Delivery Redesign webpage, "PSDR Overview," U.S. Army Human Resources Command, <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/CDID/PSDR/documents/information/PSDRArticlev4.pdf> (accessed September 25, 2009).

Under the Army's modular, BDE-centric design, the BDE's division and Corps may be deployed to a different theater, leaving the BDE S1 team as the senior AG team to teach, coach and mentor subordinate BN S1 teams. Training for HR managers "must begin as Lieutenants (LTs) and Captains (CPTs) because at the strategic level, HR managers will need multi-dimensional and well-integrated competencies to excel in

combined and joint environments.”² More importantly, the development of HR professionals should be a “deliberate process using more agile and innovative techniques in its leader development programs to provide HR professionals the skills and competencies to fully support a transforming Army.”³

PSDR implementation necessitated more HR manpower requirements than available inventory of personnel across the Army components for HR civilians and at the field grade and company grade levels. At the field grade level, Human Resources Command (HRC) approved merging AG Branch, personnel systems management, and Functional Area 43A, HR management, populations into the single officer area of concentration of 42H in order to “bring the population pool of available HR Majors together to provide the most effective professional HR support to the modular Army as possible.”⁴ At the company grade level, PSDR necessitated an increase in both LT and CPT authorizations across the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard. In fact, “the U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard could not fill all of their PSDR billets as they could only fill nine out of 30 Adjutant General; Captain’s Career Course (AGCCC) allocations for training.”⁵ “AG LT positions were projected to increase from 75 to 337 by September 2008 and CPTs positions from 486 to 717.”⁶

To mitigate the population shortages and produce officers to fill these deltas, the “Army increased AG LT assessments and reduced the number of AG officers participating in the Branch Detail program or authorized curtailments of their details from four years to three years.”⁷ As a result, “by fiscal year (FY) 2009, the projected available LT population was projected to fill over 93 percent of AG LT positions, a goal which was met.”⁸ However, a resulting issue stemming from this lack of available AG officers is a

surge of Second Lieutenants (2LTs) with little to no experience filling positions created for First Lieutenants (1LTs) or CPTs at the Assistant BDE S1 or BN S1 level. HRC's personnel assignments system of the Officer Personnel Management System has the goal of "getting the right officer (trained, experienced, and qualified) in the right job (key developmental) at the right time (career progression)."⁹

Given a shortage of AG CPTs and an excess of AG LTs, inexperienced LTs were required to fill CPTs positions at the BN S1 level. To make up for these inexperienced BN S1s, the BDE S1 has had to take on a greater role in teaching, coaching, and mentoring subordinate BN S1s. Thus, the "impact of not having the officers to fully support the increase in BDE and BN S1 positions directly impacts the HR community's ability to support Army transformation" and potential Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), previously referred to as the Global War on Terror, with high Operations Tempo (OPTEMPO); therefore, it is "imperative that the HR community develops well-trained and prepared AG officers to maintain credibility across the Army and ensures battalion commanders receive their authorized and capable AG company grade officers."¹⁰

Due to an Army-wide shortage of company grade officers in 2007, the Army released Military Personnel (MILPER) Messages 07-237 and 07-347 offering a Menu of Incentives Program for officer retention of junior and mid-grade officers to meet the current and anticipated demands and challenges of the nation in an effort to mitigate the shortage of these officers as the Army transformed into a modular force.¹¹ In exchange for a menu of incentives including a critical skills retention bonus, graduate school, military schooling, branch, functional area, or duty station of choice, officers accepted an Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) extension of one to three years. These options

were available to regular Army CPTs initially assessed on Active Duty in the AG Corps as well as many other shortage branches. In February, 2008, the Chief of Staff of the Army was “greatly concerned with the decline in the number of captains leading to a crippling gap in the officer ranks because the Army has invested about 10 years in their career development to get them to that level of leadership.”¹² The Army “fell short of its goal of having 80 percent of the 14,000 eligible officers take one of the menu of incentives to stay on active duty – missing the mark by over 2,100 captains with only 68 percent signing the contract.”¹³ The program “failed to achieve the objectives because the Menu of Incentives Program (MOIP) execution instructions were not published until months after the ADSO expired for many captains as a short-term solution to a long-term problem; plus the Critical Skills Retention Bonus (CSRB) was not large enough to entice more officers to take this incentive.”¹⁴

The Army “forecasts that annual shortages in excess of 3,000 officers will persist through FY13 unless accessions (the number of new lieutenants brought to active duty annually) are increased and retention is improved.”¹⁵ Another trend caused by PSDR is that some HR professionals were not trained on PSDR-specific tasks during PSDR implementation. The PSDR concept under the Army’s BDE-centric modularization is specifically focused at the BDE and BN levels for PSDR-enabled units and Military Personnel Divisions (MPDs) for non-PSDR-enabled units. PSDR transformation also includes functions at the theater-level. If an HR professional was serving in a position outside the BN, BDE, or MPD level, he or she probably did not receive formal PSDR implementation training. During PSDR implementation, the Army sent out New Organization Training Teams (NOTT) to assist in the transition.¹⁶ However, not all HR

professionals received this training due to limited seats at NOTT training sites. Another reason not all HR professionals received the training was because not all HR professionals were working PSDR-related functions during PSDR implementation, such as those HR professionals working at higher headquarters positions such as in Personnel Command or Group officer and enlisted strength management sections. For example, when the NOTT team trained the 510th Personnel Services Battalion (PSB) in 2006 at Mannheim, Germany, the subordinate unit co-located with the BN, Detachment A, received no seats for the NOTT training.¹⁷ Instead, it was left up to the 510th PSB to conduct train-the-trainer, meaning a senior HR professional from the 510th PSB would attend the formal NOTT training, then return to the PSB to develop a training plan to train others in the battalion along with subordinate units.

HRC is trying to capture issues such as these by reorganizing the Concept Development and Integration Division (CDID) into the Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate (PAID). PAID's "expanded mission includes assessing the impacts of PSDR implementation across the entire HR spectrum on the quality of services and support provided to Soldiers and commanders, identifying systemic HR shortfalls and gaps resulting from the PSDR transformation in order to provide potential solutions."¹⁸ From HRC's PSDR and PAID website last updated October 2, 2008, there are no reports that PSDR has been implemented across all three Army components on August 31, 2009, nor does it list the impacts of PSDR implementation on the three Army components.¹⁹

An initial After Action Review (AAR) of PSDR implementation found that the "division of PSDR responsibilities should be spelled out in doctrine such as Field Manual

(FM) 1-0 and not left up to individual installations as modularity demands standardization to avoid continuing resourcing issues of personnel and equipment; exceptions to policy should only be granted for deployed commanders with lessons learned shared for possible Army-wide implementation.”²⁰ A second AAR deficiency was that the “division of strength management responsibilities between Brigade Combat Team (BCT) or BDE S-1s and G-1 was unclear as the role of the modular G-1 in strength management formally changed from a “management” role to one of “monitoring” as the function is now performed directly between BDEs and HRC.”²¹ Because the modular G-1 retains responsibility to monitor unit fill, translate the Commander’s intent, and perform Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting (PASR), some G-1 sections have not adopted this policy.

Most BDEs in U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR), for example, still fall under 1st Armored Division, V Corps, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, and USAREUR G1 Officer Personnel Management Directorate (OPMD) or Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate (EPMD) for personnel fills from HRC.²² The AAR also reported that commanders and S-1’s expressed a strong desire for S-1 specific training since the majority of training provided by the NOTT pilot training teams was system specific for the Electronic Military Personnel Office (eMILPO), Enlisted Distribution and Assignment System (EDAS), and the Total Officer Personnel Management System (TOPMIS) and to only select unit S1 personnel. One of the recommended solutions to this problem was to implement sustainment training at the installation managed by the G-1 or MPD.²³ This AAR also found that training for PSDR-enabled personnel in two to three day blocks of instruction each month was not sufficient. The AAR discussion

leading to a recommendation included scheduling NOTT training classes to allow units to rotate personnel without disrupting S-1 or MPD operations.²⁴

This did not happen in the European theater due to the limited number of seats available for NOTT training, requiring units to perform train-the-trainer classes to ensure all personnel received NOTT training. As an extension to PAID's assessment of the PSDR implementation Army-wide, Dr. Stephen H. Axelrad, Senior Consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton, lists his on-going project with PAID as "analyzing data obtained from a Soldier satisfaction survey of the implementation of HR services after the Army-wide PSDR effort to inform Army HRC officials about improvements and ongoing challenges that have resulted from PSDR."²⁵

A third trend stemming from PSDR implementation is that not all HR professionals were institutionally developed to succeed in such vast HR technical competencies. For example, a Year Group 1999 officer, currently a Major, served as an AG Lieutenant and Captain under the command-centric career progression model and might have one or multiple company commands with no BN S1 or PSDR-related experience. These officers were groomed to take one or multiple company commands in order to prepare for future leadership positions such as BN and BDE commands. Since most S1 positions were not coded AG-specific, these officers focused more on a command track directed on leadership versus an S1 track directed on technical knowledge on HR functions. If the AG officer attended the AGCCC prior to fiscal year 2006 such as AGCCC Class 1-06, the training and testing was on the superseded Field Manual 12-6 Personnel Doctrine and was not PSDR-specific. Moreover, students in this class were not given access to or detailed training on the 67 automation systems HR

professionals use to provide HR support. Thus, when a Major under these or similar circumstances is assigned as a BDE S1 in a PSDR-enabled BDE or BCT, he or she may not have served as BN S1, will have little to no PSDR experience, and may not have had any formal, institutional training on PSDR tasks or the automated systems expected of HR professionals. This same officer, however, is expected to lead a BDE S1 shop as well as teach, coach, and mentor subordinate BN S1s, all performing the full breadth of PSDR functions with no PSBs in support. BDE S1s usually manage officers for the brigade and thus need to have access to officer management automations systems such as one of the TOPMIS. Moreover, in a deployed environment, BN and BDE S1 shops may be separated on the battlefield, meaning the officer in charge may be the only person available to provide the commander with information from any one of the 67 automated systems HR professionals currently use. This is also the case in a garrison environment when the BN or BDE S1 works late after the HR Warrant Officer, enlisted Soldiers and civilians have gone home for the day.

A systemic issue resulting from the PSDR implementation is that PSDR was designed to be executed in conjunction with the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS), a Congressionally-mandated, Department of Defense (DoD)-wide HR system that was supposed to provide the DOD branches of service with an integrated, multi-component, personnel and pay system. DIMHRS was supposed to be implemented across the Army on October 1, 2008, but was delayed until March 1, 2009 and is now delayed to a date to be determined. HRC's PSDR website describes the criticality of DIMHRS as part of the PSDR transformation stating "Coupled with the future fielding of DIMHRS, PSDR will significantly improve the accessibility, quality,

and timeliness of HR support to commanders and Soldiers.”²⁶ DIMHRS was designed to support the PSDR transformation by performing the following ten functions:

- Integrate personnel and pay
- Enable full integration of human resource customer service for the Service member and the DOD
- Integrate Active, Reserve and National Guard personnel management and pay into one human resource process
- Provide a single, comprehensive record of service throughout a Service Member's life
- Enable cross-service support capability
- Enable full self-service support capability
- Track personnel on temporary duty assignments and document health and safety incidents in the permanent record
- Ensure accountability and care for family members
- Provide timely and accurate cross-service information on personnel qualifications and retention
- Track all skill sets and match Service Members with appropriate assignments.²⁷

A key component to DIMHRS was its ability to allow individuals to self-serve themselves, relieving pressure on HR professionals, specifically BDE and BN S1s. This “improved self-service was intended to allow service members to view and update personal information, update benefits, manage learning (Air Force only), report time, update payroll information and view their compensation, and manage their careers.”²⁸ Approved self-service requests and updates were supposed to feed into the individual’s personnel data records and automatically be reflected in their pay. DIMHRS system enhancements were also designed to “quickly respond to legislative or policy changes, have automated workflows to route transactions for review and approval to streamline handling processes, and allow mass update capabilities to update multiple service member records with the same transaction.”²⁹ DIMHRS was a key component to PSDR implementation to ease this burden on HR professionals to ensure continuity in taking care of Soldiers and civilians across all components of the Army as well as in a joint environment for the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine services. Without the single-

system DIMHRS, BDE and BN S1s must now continue to use the 67 legacy systems to perform the same functions, potentially causing a reduction in the personnel services provided due to manpower shortages, lack of experience and time, and excessive workloads.³⁰ Thus, after reviewing current HR trends in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components, an overall pattern emerges that directs attention to the following systemic issues for HR professionals:

1. Cultural shift in the AG Corps from command-centric to S1-centric, leaving some year group officers at a disadvantage if they were following a command track versus an S1 career track

2. Potential professional development and training issues due to the loss of centralized, AG-centric organizations as AG officers have become more decentralized as BDE and BN S1s

3. PSDR created immediate company grade shortages of AG LTs and CPTs; one of HRC's solutions was to create a surge of inexperienced LTs to mitigate this shortage

4. Not all HR professionals received formal PSDR training in order to prepare them for a PSDR position, leaving them to use informal training methods or on-the-job training when they enter PSDR-related positions

5. DIMHRS was an integral part of PSDR implementation to ease the automation burden for HR professionals, but its implementation has been revoked until a date to be determined.

For these reasons, “training, an equitable distribution of assignments and professional development opportunities, and HR senior leader involvement will be the keys to

successfully mitigate the potential negative impacts of PSDR across the Army components.”³¹

HR Resident Courses: The Importance of Creating Bonds and Personal Contacts for Support Throughout a Career

Now that current HR trends in the three Army components have been identified, it is important to next look at the pros and cons of the various residence courses available for HR professionals in order to determine if a web-based training and certification program is better suited. For the purpose of this paper, this thesis will only look at the four main resident courses available to AG officers as an example of a career pattern and will not address resident courses available to AG enlisted Soldiers or HR civilians. These courses are the AG Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC), the Adjutant General’s Captain’s Career Course (AGCCC), Intermediate Level Education (ILE), and the Human Resources Management Qualification Course (HRMQC).

Basic Officer Leaders Course

AG officers who are branch detailed attend their respective detailed branch BOLC and thus do not receive any AG or HR training as new Lieutenants. AG officers who are not branch detailed into another branch attend BOLC after commissioning as a 2LT. Officers who are branched AG, but branch detailed into a donor branch attend their respective branch detail Basic Officer Leader Course, complete their branch detail in their detailed branch, and then return to their basic branch of AG. This resident school allows AG officers the opportunity to meet other 2LTs and build peer friendships and contacts that can span a career. BOLC has been revamped from a command-centric approach to an S1-centric focus and teaches newly commissioned AG officers the AG

core competencies and human resource fundamentals to assume S1 positions in a garrison and deployed environment.

There are 211 hours of HR technical training on the critical tasks of managing military orders, Personnel Readiness Management, officer and enlisted distribution and assignments, Unit Status Reporting, Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting, Identification Cards, Personnel Information Management, casualty, Line of Duty Investigations, evaluations, awards and decorations, enlisted and officer promotions, reception, rest and recuperation, replacement, return-to-duty, redeployment, postal operations, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation and support activities as well as 116 hours of exercises including a Command Post Exercise and a Field Training Exercise.³² Due to Training and Doctrine Command's (TRADOC's) shift from "training" to "education" to "teach officers how to think versus what to think," LTs do not receive specific, hands-on training on the 67 automation systems they will utilize in the execution of their daily duties because of the "limited time provided to the AG School for HR technical training as commanders in the field are not willing to wait additional time to receive their inbound LTs, even though they require AG LTs with more technical knowledge."³³ Another issue is the "AG School requires access to automation databases from the U.S. Army Human Resources Command to train LTs on that the AG School currently doesn't have."³⁴ Compounding the issue of LTs not receiving more HR training is the fact that once they leave this resident course, it will be about four years until their next resident course. It is up to the individual AG officer and his or her leadership to continue to maintain and refine their HR technical expertise by enrolling in the S1 Net and joining and participating in local chapter Adjutant General Corps' Regimental

Association (AGCRA) meetings to stay in-tune with the HR community policy and procedural changes and updating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with these changes including daily to weekly MILPER messages. The AG Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC) has the exact same HR technical training classes and exercises as BOLC on HR critical tasks with an additional 18 hours of VSAT training, no online Casualty Notification Officer or Casualty Assistance Officer verification, with eight hours less on the Command Post Exercise.³⁵

In accordance with Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 600-3, a 2LT will be assigned out of BOLC based on the “needs of the Army, professional development requirements, and officer’s preferences.”³⁶ Under DIMHRS, a strength manager would be able to see an AG officer’s prior service previous assignments and branch as a method of determining professional development needs or where best to utilize the officer. However, under eTOPMIS, that information is not available unless the officer’s prior service DA Photo was merged into their new officer records, which only provides limited information such as their rank at the date of the photo and their branch. Regardless, strength managers may contact the inbound officer coming from BOLC to ask their personal preference or needs of the Army and priority of fill usually dictate an inbound officer’s pinpoint assignment within the Army Service Component Command (ASCC). Given the Army’s shortage of company grade AG officers during PSDR implementation, this could mean the 2LT would most likely be pinpointed by a strength manager into an Assistant BDE S1 position, BN S1 position if no available senior 1LTs or CPTs, or possibly a Postal Platoon Leader position for any ASCC’s who have not inactivated them. Officer professional development and utilization policy in the European

theater is designed to “branch-qualify officers early in their tours and help prepare them for subsequent assignments.”³⁷ The typical assignment for AG 2LTs graduating from BOLC reporting to USAREUR between February 2007 and January 2009 was Postal Platoon Leader or Assistant BDE S1 in order to gain, acquire, reinforce, and hone troop leading, technical, tactical, logistics, and administrative skills as part of their early development.³⁸ Whether as a Postal Platoon Leader or an Assistant BDE S1, 2LTs received direct, AG mentorship from either the Postal Company Commander or the BDE S1. After completion of at least 12 months in either of those positions, the 2LT would generally be moved into a PSDR-enabled BN S1 position due to the lack of senior AG company grade officers (1LT and CPT) and the priority of fill to deploying PSDR-enabled BNs in USAREUR over this same time period, generally completing their tour in Europe in this position and execute a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) to the resident AGCCC.³⁹ BN S1s assigned to one of the two divisions in USAREUR relied on the mentorship of their BDE S1s as 1st Infantry Division returned to the Continental United States (CONUS) and 1st Armored Division deployed as a headquarters in support Operation Iraqi Freedom, leaving their subordinate BDEs in Europe. Due to the merger of Functional Area 43 with basic branch 42 officers into 42H branch, some functional area 43 officers did not have a lot of PSDR experience, which had a negative impact on new BN S1s, specifically LTs filling vacant CPTs billets as BN S1s.

Adjutant General’s Captain’s Career Course

AG officers generally attend the AG Captain’s Career Course (AGCCC) at their 4th year of service, so there could be an average of about four years between BOLC and AGCCC resident schooling. Considering MILPER messages change on a daily to weekly

basis, resident schooling with years in between is not sufficient to capture policy and procedural changes between BOLC and AGCCC. All AG officers attend AGCCC, whether they were branch detailed or not. This resident course has 800 total hours compared to only 416 in BOLC on HR critical tasks. Significant differences include an added 42 hour Combined Arms Exercise, a 40-hour S1 Functions team briefs and OPDs, a 9-hour Personnel Estimate course, and a 6.2-hour Joint HR Operations course; the AGCCC deletes the 6-hour Managing Military Orders, the 7-hour Personnel Office Computations, and the 10.5-hour Officer Promotions courses from the BOLC model.⁴⁰ The Reserve Component CCC consists of four phases over two years consisting of 220 hours of Active Duty training and 179 hours of inactive duty training on HR critical tasks.⁴¹ The Warrant Officer equivalent at this level, the 352-hour Warrant Officer Advanced Course, deletes the 72-hour Field Training Exercise and the 42-hour Combined Arms Exercise, reduces the Command Post Exercise by 8 hours, and has 48 less hours on HR critical tasks and does not include managing identification cards, personnel evaluation systems, awards and decorations, and enlisted promotions like the AGCCC.⁴² The AGCCC focuses on the AG core competencies to stress the diversity of human resource functions under PSDR with an emphasis on BDE and BN S1 as well as theater-level AG organizations and functions under the Army's modular transformation. AGCCC provides AG officers the opportunity to get re-acquainted with BOLC comrades and build new friendships and increase points of contact with other AG officers to share each other's experiences and assist when needed throughout their careers. AG officers may meet officers they have seen contributing or conversing online through the S1 Net, so the AGCCC provides the opportunity to put a face to a name, greatly enhancing the personal

relationship of these business associates. After AGCCC, there is no mandatory AG-specific schooling for AG officers. The next level of AG schooling is the HRMQC designed for BDE S1s.

AG CPTs' completion of the AGCCC and assignment as a BN S1, BDE S1, HR Plans and Operations Officer, Assistant HR Support Officer, Division G1 HR, Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting Officer, Personnel Readiness Management Officer, Postal Officer, or a branch 42-coded company command or operations officer position is "critical in providing the skill base and experience required of a CPT before attaining the rank of MAJ."⁴³ AGCCC graduates on orders for USAREUR were in short supply from February 2007 through January 2009 where aggregate AG CPT strength was at 53 percent; these graduates were usually assigned to PSDR-enabled BN S1 positions as AG LTs were being utilized in these positions to mitigate the shortage of CPTs.⁴⁴ Due to the cultural shift from command-centric to S1-centric, some AG CPTs had progressed along the command track and were not trained in PSDR until this formal AGCCC training.

Command and General Staff College Intermediate
Level Education Resident Course

The Chief of Staff of the Army, through TRADOC tasked the Combined Arms Center Commander to develop a concept for all Active Component Category officers to receive a common field grade education, so the CGSC led a universal Military Education Level-4 study group and developed a concept for Intermediate Level Education (ILE) for all field grade officers that provides an ILE common core course acceptable and standardized across all career fields and functional areas to establish a common Army operational warfighting culture which prepares all field grade officers for service in

division, corps, echelons above corps, and joint staffs.⁴⁵ Due to this common training focus, AG branch-specific training does not occur in the ILE Common Core phase. Out of 297 total instruction hours of ILE Common Core, only eleven hours are provided for Force Sustainment instruction including Tactical and Strategic Logistics; Movement, Maneuver, and Sustainment; and U.S. Army Capabilities with another 18 hours in Force Management.⁴⁶ This translates to literally only minutes focused on HR depending on the individual instructor and students' focus and direction of discussion.

The second four month phase of ILE, Advanced Operations Course (AOC), formally the Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course (AOWC), has the purpose of “developing operations career field officers with a warfighting focus for battalion and brigade command capable of conducting full spectrum operations in joint-multinational-interagency environments, and who have the requisite competencies to serve successfully as division through echelons above corps staff officers.”⁴⁷ AOC is broken down into three modules of training at the Operational Warfighting level focused on a Combined (or Coalition) Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), Division Operations as a division staff, and BCT staff level. These three modules are series W100, W200, and W300, respectively. During each module, students are assigned positions on the CFLCC, Division, and BDE staffs, so there is an opportunity for officers to serve as the CFLCC C/J1, Division G1, and BDE S1 for the three core blocks of instructions and culminating exercises.

Although the AG representative at CGSC is not responsible for formally counseling, teaching, coaching, and mentoring AG officers during the AOC period, there is an opportunity for TRADOC to ensure the AG representative does so through all three

modules of the AOC portion. Each of the exercises receives an operations order from higher headquarters, so there is an opportunity to teach and reinforce duties, roles and responsibilities of AG officers at each of the three levels and create Personnel and Casualty Estimates, Personnel Annexes, and associated HR planning tools for each exercise during these three AOC modules in the Joint Operational Planning Process at the CFLCC level and MDMP at the division and BDE levels,.

Previously during a similarly-designed AOC portion of ILE, students spent 70 hours of branch immaterial time and 30 hours in their respective Battlefield Functional Areas (BFAs), now referred to as Warfighting Functions (WFF).⁴⁸ Students would begin CFLCC, Division, and BCT MDMP together as a group, break out into their respective WFF for branch-specific planning, then regroup to complete MDMP and the orders process. Under the current AOC curriculum, there is no formal, branch-specific instruction, coaching or mentoring during the W100, W200, or W300 blocks of instruction or culminating exercises at the CFLCC, division, and BDE levels, respectively.

As of FY10 beginning with students starting ILE Class 10-01, the AOC phase will include more of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process and consist of three modules including O100 - Campaign Planning, O200 – Force Generation, and O300 – Full Spectrum Operations. The O100 Campaign Planning module will either focus at the Corps level as a Land Component Command or at the division level as a Joint Task Force command. Special Operations Forces (SOF), sister service and inter-agency personnel may be exempt from some lessons in the O100, O200 , and O300 modules IOT conduct specialized lessons. Depending on the negative impacts on Soldiers in the field from

failing BDE S1 officers, it is possible for AG branch to request TRADOC to allow AG officers to also be exempt from some non-HR-related lessons to focus on HR-specific training.

The third of four month phases of ILE is the electives period, which is the most branch-specific portion of ILE. Each student is required to complete a minimum of 192 hours, or eight electives to satisfy ILR graduation requirements, including at least one regional elective.⁴⁹ The Master of Military Art and Science (MMAS) program counts towards four elective credits and the ILE student is awarded an MMAS degree. ILE students serving as either Small Group, Section, or Class Adjutant are also awarded one elective credit. AG officers are mandated to take the two-credit Support Operations (SPO) Course, consisting of an on-line prerequisite course self-enrolled through the Army Training Requirements and Resource System (ATRRS) and 48 hours for Phase II resident instruction.⁵⁰ Thus, an AG officer serving in an Adjutant role, completing the MMAS program with mandatory SPO and regional elective courses would have eight out of nine elective credits. Although not mandatory for AG officers, ILE students can also register for the two available recommended HR electives: the more HR general “A443, Human Resources Support” and the PSDR-oriented “A442, BCT S-1” elective. The BCT S-1 elective is a pilot course designed by the CGSC AG branch representative during (FY10) as implemented for ILE Class 09-02.⁵¹

These HR electives could be mandated that all AG officers must take them as the SPO course is mandated, but it’s possible the ILE student would exceed electives requirements given above scenario. It is acceptable for an ILE student to take more than the required nine electives, as well as take an elective in an “audit” status in which no

grade would be given. The Commander of the Soldier Support Institute said the “HRMQC could be brought to CGSC’s ILE as long as there is interest.”⁵²

There were Strategic Communication (STRATCOM) requirements for ILE students in Class 09-02 from January through December 2009 in order to graduate CGSC. Each ILE student was mandated to conduct a media interview, blog in a military-related forum, submit a military-related article for publication in a professional journal, participate in a community outreach program such to improve relationships, facilitate understanding, and build trust between the civilian sector and the military. One of the SOF electives requires students to compose an article on a SOF topic “suitable for publication” in one of the various military periodicals or journals based on the premise that “field grade officers are mid-level managers and need to transition from consumers to producers and begin to take responsibility, ownership of training, knowledge, associative, ethical, certification bodies and processes.”⁵³ This writing requirement is meant to contribute to and maintain the SOF community’s professionalism. Per the course author, it is acceptable to submit the same writing requirement to meet both the CGSC-directed and SOF elective requirement with prior approval as long as the topic is SOF-related.

Considering ILE students must meet the four Command and General Staff College (CGSC)-directed STRATCOM requirements, the AG electives could also require this STRATCOM requirement to submit for publication, thus contributing to maintain the body of knowledge and professionalism of the AG Corps. AG officers will attend CGSC’s ILE as CPTs or MAJs, approximately three to five years after the AGCCC. As with the time between BOLC and AGCCC, this long time-span between resident courses

is not sufficient in providing HR professionals with MILPER message policy and procedural updates and training. DA PAM 600-3, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management, states “all AG Majors must complete ILE and become Joint Professional Military Education-1 qualified.”⁵⁴ This qualification is generic in nature and not branch, or HR-specific.

The mission of ILE is to educate and develop leaders for full spectrum joint, interagency and multinational operations; and advances the art and science of the profession of arms in order to support the operational requirements of the Army. Although CGSC focuses on how to think vs. what to think and on the future assignments ten years out model, TRADOC currently does not provide balance to this model by mandating the AG branch representative to formally counsel, teach, coach, and mentor during all three phases of ILE. This would require more than one AG branch representative as the FY09 AG Branch representative was responsible for being the Course Author for the two HR electives, would have to teach, coach, mentor, and counsel eight AG officers in ILE Class 09-02 and 43 officers in Class 10-01, in addition to additionally serving on MMAS thesis committees and CGSC departmental duties. Civilian HR professionals on the CGSC faculty are available that could possibly augment AG cadre to perform this function as well. This local teaching, coaching, counseling, and mentorship could augment the AG Branch Manager’s typical visit to each ILE class.

The AG Branch Manager’s guidance for assignments to MAJs in the CGSC ILE Class 10-01 Assignment Cycle stated “MAJs who graduated or will soon be graduating ILE and have not completed a key developmental (KD) assignment or served as a BDE S1 for 12 to 24 months as a major, respectively, should select BDE or BCT S1 positions

as their top 5 preferences.”⁵⁵ KD assignments include BDE level S1, Human Resources Operations Branch Officer in Charge, & Human Resources Company Commander. AG MAJs graduating from ILE should complete one technical, key developmental assignment such as BDE S1, Sustainment BDE HR Support Operations Officer, Deputy Division G1, HR Company Commander, Division or Corps G1 Plans and Operations Officer, HRSC Team Chief, or joint positions as a MAJ to “enhance their competitiveness for promotion.”⁵⁶ In conjunction with (ICW) the AG Branch Manager’s guidance, ILE graduate Majors reporting to USAREUR will be distributed fairly across the Major Subordinate Commands (MSCs) and “usually be initially assigned to an organization in which they can become qualified in their basic branch or functional area, specifically BDE or BCT S1 positions.”⁵⁷

In January 2009, 3,476 former CGSC ILE Common Core graduates from academic years 2006-2008 responded to an email survey administered to 9,910 graduates. 16 percent (554 of 3471) of the officers responded that ILE “did not achieve the core purpose,” explaining that “ILE was not relevant to their job in the Army, the course was too academic to instill the warrior ethos portion of the ILE Core purpose, the course is too generic to meet the intent of the ILE Core purpose” so they’d like to see a more narrow focus; or the “interagency, multinational, joint portion of the ILE Core purpose was not effective.”⁵⁸ For the question based on their experiences since completing ILE of what wasn’t taught that should have been to better prepare them for the positions they have had or anticipate having, 11 percent of 1828 respondents stated either “Force Sustainment” or “staff officer tasks.”⁵⁹ The majority of surveyed officers responded that since completing ILE, the “instruction was applicable to positions they have had or

anticipated having,” except they needed “more curriculum on interagency, coalition, multinational, and culture,” and that many subjects should be included in the ILE curriculum such as “transformation, emotional intelligence, systems theory, critical reasoning and creative thinking, campaign planning, homeland security, targeting, intelligence preparation of the battlefield.”⁶⁰ Only 693, or 20 percent of these officers were from Force Sustainment. Since specific survey comments were grouped into career branches such as Force Sustainment and Maneuver, Fires and Effects, and not specific branches such as Adjutant General, it is impossible to extract AG officer responses.

For Academic Year 2003-2004 ILE students, the curriculum included Branch Specialty Time (BST), commonly referred to as “Yellow Time” that covered the AOWC portion in Block 2 (W300) to “prepare a staff generalist and specialist to analyze specific functions and responsibilities at an advanced level” and Block 3 (W500) to “prepare a BN and BDE CDR with specific Battlefield Operating Systems competencies.”⁶¹ The purpose of BST was for students to receive tailored, branch-specific training from subject matter experts within their own branch with other students from their branch. The AG portion of BST had two instructors for 36 students participating in a 20-hour Division G1 module (W401) that met over five class periods and a 22-hour Human Resources and Finance module (W622) that met over six class periods.⁶² 88 percent of the respondents stated it was helpful to have BST within ILE because it would be “helpful to them in future positions.”⁶³ With two instructors and BST, the AG Corps had immediate impact on the training and development of AG officers attending ILE. For the current ILE class in FY10, there is no BST.

CGSC currently has two permanent party cadre AG branch representatives on their staff. Although these AG branch representatives are not required to provide formal quarterly counseling, teach, coach, and mentor AG officers attending ILE through OPDs or other means, TRADOC could potentially implement policies to do so. Officers attending ILE are formally counseled initially and quarterly by their Small Group Advisors, who are usually civilian and may or may not have retired from the military and most likely did not come from a military HR background as is the case with the large majority of Small Group Instructors for ILE Class 09-02. ILE Class 09-02 had only eight AG officers as students, so there would only be a 1:4 cadre to student ratio, which is feasible for effective counseling if that decision was approved. However, ILE Class 10-01 had 43 AG officers as students, so an opportunity exists to perform more informal group counselings in an OPD forum due to the large 1:21 cadre to student ratio. If CGSC has two Army HR officers, that ration drops to only 1:2 and 1:10 for classes 09-02 and 10-01, respectively. Regardless, the benefits of this augmented, informal counseling outweigh the cost of only having the Small Group Advisors provide formal counselings for the year of ILE.

Human Resources Management Qualification Course

The Adjutant General School's Human Resources Management Qualification Course (HRMQC) is "focused on educating entry-level Field Grade HR providers and other HR professionals across the spectrum of personnel policies, programs, and processes; training HR systems and tools; and inspiring HR professionals to become subject matter experts."⁶⁴ The resident four-week HRMQC was originally designed specifically for Functional Area 43 officers new to the HR community, but has been

revamped due to the merger of Functional Area 43 and Branch-coded 42 officers into Branch 42H. The course has the goal of “indoctrinating an understanding of HR transformation by reinforcing the relationship between the doctrinal AG Core Competencies and enabling HR systems by developing technical competence at the BCT S1 level and proficiency in personnel planning at the theater level.”⁶⁵

The resident HRMQC is now designed to prepare Active Duty and National Guard personnel to assume BDE S1 or theater-level AG management positions under the PSDR design concept and focuses across all three Army components of HR doctrine with 160 hours focused on HR automation systems and associated equipment. The course also covers, the S1 Net, roles and responsibilities of the BDE S1 and theater HR structures and operations, directing Personnel Information Management, Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting, Personnel Readiness Management, Soldier Readiness Processing, Unit Status Reporting, National Security Personnel System, Casualty, awards and decorations, mobilization and the Reserve Component Automation System, officer and enlisted promotions, evaluations, identification documents, personnel actions, military pay operations, postal and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation operations, and provides overviews on the National Guard Bureau and Army Reserve, with personnel planning considerations for MDMP and the Joint Operational Planning Process.⁶⁶ Key to the resident HRMQC are the demonstrations on the Deployed Theater Accountability System, the Tactical Personnel System, eMILPO, EDAS, TOPMIS, the Common Operating Picture Synchronizer, the Medical Protection System, and the Defense Casualty Information Processing System to provide HR managers an overview of some of the 67 automation systems they must utilize to perform HR functions due to the

implementation of DIMHRS or a new unified automation system being postponed to a date to be determined. This knowledge is critical as commanders have stated they want HR professionals with more technical knowledge. Unfortunately, commanders have to agree to release HR professionals to attend this month-long course. Since commanders have stated they want their inbound HR personnel as soon as possible, HR professionals may not have the opportunity to attend this school.⁶⁷

This course also emphasizes the Active Component and reserve component integration challenges and the separate automation systems that must be used due to DIMHRS not being implemented as scheduled. After completing the HRMQC, graduates will be able to relate and apply operational knowledge of HR processes, systems, tools, resources and policies to their organization, and design a wartime HR plan for their organization. For these reasons, this resident course has been instrumental in setting MAJs with little to no exposure to PSDR transformation up for the successful assumption of BDE S1 positions in USAREUR.⁶⁸ The resident HRMQC will end its Phase II ILE course for Functional Area 43 officers due to the merger between Functional Area 43 and Branch 42 officers, but the four-week resident course will remain for Active Duty and National Guard personnel. U.S. Army Reserve personnel receive a blended learning methodology of instruction including an online phase and a resident phase of HRMQC.

The Importance of Counseling and Mentorship: How AG Branch
is Reaching Out to AG Corps and HR Professionals

Counseling is “one of the most important leadership development responsibilities for Army leaders as the Army’s future and the legacy of today’s Army leaders rests on the shoulders of those they help prepare for greater responsibility.”⁶⁹ Counseling shows

subordinates that a leader is directly responsible for and interested in their career progression and well-being. Mentorship is an integral part of this leader-subordinate relationship. One of the most significant design features of ILE is the “interdisciplinary teaching team approach designed to ensure students are mentored by a dedicated team of multi-disciplined professionals with continuous faculty professional development through academic and educational innovation ahead of the demands of Army Transformation.”⁷⁰ Unfortunately, this dedicated team of multi-disciplined professionals are not branch-specific, meaning students don’t receive branch-specific mentorship except from the CGSC AG Branch representative.

In a 1999 study by Modis Professional Services, 73 percent of employees surveyed stated that “mentorship increased employee retention.”⁷¹ The U.S. Army has experienced an issue with retaining company grade officers over the last few years. The U.S. Army War College’s Strategic Studies Institute Key Strategic Issues List asks “How effective mentorship is in today’s Army” and “If the current voluntary mentorship program is sufficient to meet the needs of tomorrow’s leaders” or if the Army needs to structure the mentorship program in the same manner as is found in the corporate arena.⁷² The Key Strategic Issues List also lists the possible research topic of the “Impact of high unit OPTEMPO on counseling and mentorship provided to junior officers.”⁷³ In 2007, the “Army’s MOIP fell 2,100 officers short of its goal in retaining 11,200 company grade officers, even though it offered them station of choice, monetary CSRB, graduate or military schooling, branch or functional area of choice, or duty station of choice.”⁷⁴

Mentorship under Army modularization while fighting Overseas Contingency Operations, formerly referred to as the Global War on Terror, in two theaters has been

difficult due to high operational tempos. Mentorship under PSDR implementation presents a challenge for HR leaders as AG-centric organizations inactivated, decentralizing the AG Corps of HR professionals. Moreover, BDE S1's division and Corps G1 teams may deploy to a different theater, leaving the BDE S1 as the senior HR professional in the chain of command to mentor subordinate S1s. It will be important for HR professionals in these situations to draw experience and mentorship from other HR professionals in their geographic region or through electronic means.

There are HR systems and messages that also extend instruction, mentoring, and coaching to HR professionals. The S1 Net allows HR professionals membership to draw on the total experiences and products of the HR community through user-friendly, online internet application. The AG Corps Branch Chief creates an "AG Update to the Field" on a regular basis that should be sent through AKO email to all AG officers and HR professionals as not all are members of the S1 Net, the method these updates is usually distributed through.

Adjutant General's Corps Regimental Association

The Adjutant General's Corps Regimental Association (AGCRA) is a private, nonprofit organization for all U.S. Army Active, Reserve, National Guard and retired Adjutant General Corps officers, warrant officers, enlisted members, and civilians. The AGCRA "aids in preserving the proud heritage of the U.S. Army Adjutant General's Corps for posterity by encouraging improvements in research and development programs in the fields of personnel, administration, and human resource management."⁷⁵ The Association "provides a forum for the mutual exchange and discussion of ideas and information of interest to members of the Association and devotes its efforts and

activities in sponsoring new methods for improved techniques, developments, and other innovations designed to increase the efficiency of the United States Army, while promoting high standards of proficiency in members of the Adjutant General Corps.”⁷⁶

Although all three Army components have over 49,000 AG and HR Soldiers and civilians assigned, only 1,880, or 3.7 percent are AGCRA members, so the Executive Council of the AGCRA is implementing phase I of the AGCRA 2009-2010 Campaign Plan from May through December 2009 to “reinvigorate and increase membership of the AGCRA within the Army’s HR community, specifically, senior AG and HR leaders, while effectively and efficiently communicating with all AG and HR Soldiers, civilians and retirees.”⁷⁷ Phase II of the plan greatly depends on the successful recruitment of HR leaders to increase, activate, and reactivate local AGCRA chapters across the Army component geographic regions. These local chapters bring regional HR personnel together to “share knowledge, conduct LPDs, gain contacts, and maintain esprit de corps in the AG Corps through continued emphasis on doctrinal updates and Army HR developments vital for career enhancement.”⁷⁸

With high operational tempo of deployments and mission requirements, AGCRA local chapters may be the best alternative to bringing HR professionals together from various ASCCs and Major Subordinate Commands in geographic regions across the globe. AGCRA is also revamping its regular magazine it publishes, “1775,” and increasing its publication to three times a year as well as tailoring it more to professional development readings than just stories and articles. AGCRA will also publish newsletters in between publishing the 1775 magazine to keep members informed of the latest HR

trends and news in the HR community. These efforts are would most definitely provide opportunities to increase mentorship for HR professionals.

Characteristics of Adult Learners

Now that current HR trends of the three Army components have been described, the next step in determining whether or not a web-based training and certification program is best suited for HR professions in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components is to understand the characteristics of adult learners.

A pioneer in adult learning identified similar characteristics of adult learners, describing them as “autonomous and self-directed, requiring their teachers to serve as facilitators to guide these practical students through goals and value-added, relevant course objectives.”⁷⁹ The author added that they require “active participation to draw upon their perspectives and foundation of life experiences and knowledge, relating theories and concepts to the participants so they can recognize the value of experience in learning, goal-oriented, relevancy-oriented, practical, thus expecting respect.”⁸⁰ This is exactly how the curriculum at CGSC’s ILE was developed. The resident course has the advantage of face-to-face interaction, but the CGSC distance learning program’s distance education portions in AOC maximize use of electronic education techniques to simulate this experience.

Another important characteristic of adult learners is their grouping in society. Most company grade officers fall into either Generation X or Generation Y; those born between 1964 and 1979, and those born between 1979 and 2000 respectively.⁸¹ These different generations share similarities regarding balancing work, life, and education.

Generation X officers “believe the job is still central, but want to create a balance between life and work; their loyalty is based on a bond of trust between the Army and the officer instead of lifelong employment; and education is important to them.”⁸² Generation Y officers also “want a work, life and education balance, but want ownership and control of their own fate, and would like mentors engaged in their professional development.”⁸³ Thus, responsibility falls on BDE S1s to manage ways to teach, coach, and mentor company grade officers, specifically in BN S1 positions in order to meet their generational education needs.

How Certain Learned Skills Are Perishable and Need to be Refreshed or Lost

In 1996, after switching Soldiers’ missions from a conventional fight to a peacekeeping mission for nearly a year in Bosnia, junior enlisted Soldiers up to senior Army leaders all admitted that “American Soldiers had lost some of their ability to fight in a conventional war and would require anywhere from six to eighteen months to rest, retrain, and practice traditional warfare to recapture even the most basic military skills.”⁸⁴ The fact is that skills are perishable unless they are trained on a regular basis.

FM 7-0 states the importance of the individual Soldier “first learning how to perform individual and leader skills to standard in the institutional training base and the necessity to hone and maintain those skills effectively through periodic repetition in the operational Army.”⁸⁵ In the HR community, not all HR positions are PSDR-enabled, so HR professionals may have different HR functions for different positions. For example, a Postal Company commander will focus on the AG Core Competency of Postal Operations, but not necessarily on the other nine Core Competencies because the mission

is different. In order to maintain the other nine competencies, that commander and the Soldiers would have to train on them in addition to their primary mission Core Competencies. The benefit of this situation is that they are all HR professionals who understand they will most likely serve in a PSDR position and can train on the other AG Core Competencies together as a cohesive organization.

On the other hand, some HR professionals are utilized in O1A, or branch immaterial positions where their mission is outside the ten AG Core Competencies. In this case, it is up to the individual to maintain perishable HR skills by staying active in the local Adjutant General Corps Regimental Association chapter, through the S1 Net, or just keeping up with MILPER message and All Army Activity (ALARACT) changes in policies and procedures. This is much more difficult as O1A positions usually have a much different mission-set than traditional AG functions.

A larger challenge is putting an HR professional into a PSDR-enabled BCT S1 position to become KD qualified, as professional development requires for promotion, who has no PSDR experience, but previous postal and O1A experience. In this case, resident HR training in the HRMQC is almost a necessity unless the officer has been proactive and receiving MILPER and ALARACT message updates and has familiarity with the 67 automation systems HR professionals utilize. Such is the case with the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade S1 in USAREUR in late 2008.⁸⁶ The incoming BDE S1 had 51 previous months serving in O1A positions and as a postal company commander. To mitigate the lack of PSDR exposure and non-familiarity with some of the 67 automation systems used under PSDR, the officer was sent to the HRMQC resident course. Considering three out of four BCT S1s were soft-relieved during this same time period,

the HRMQC was very effective in meeting its goals of “indoctrinating an understanding of HR transformation by reinforcing the relationship between the doctrinal AG Core Competencies and enabling HR systems by developing technical competence at the BCT S1 level and proficiency in personnel planning at the theater level.”⁸⁷

How the Army Is Increasing Proficiency Through Training

Field Manual (FM) 7-0, Training for Full Spectrum Operations states the “military must be prepared for unified action involving joint and multinational forces, interagency, nongovernmental, intergovernmental organizations, Army civilians, and contractors at the tactical level to include civil support operations involving Regular Army and Reserve Component Soldiers and civilians on short notice.”⁸⁸ The Army requires “agile and adaptive leaders able to handle the challenges of full spectrum operations in an era of persistent conflict, proficient in their core competencies, flexible enough to operate across the spectrum of conflict, able to operate with joint and multinational, military and civilian organizations, and to leverage the capabilities of others to achieve their objectives.”⁸⁹ Simply stated in HR terms, HR professionals must be prepared to work with the U.S. Army Reserve, U.S. National Guard, and the other U.S. branches of service and the different automation systems each service utilizes including joint systems. Plus, HR professionals must understand their roles and responsibilities when working with multi-national forces.

In order to understand these roles and responsibilities, HR professionals must first be trained. FM 7-0 states “effective training focused on the doctrinal mission is the cornerstone of operational success that allows leaders, Soldiers, and units to achieve the tactical and technical competence that builds confidence and agility by sustaining their

capabilities and adapting training priorities to address actual and anticipated operations.”⁹⁰ This manual also discusses the risk to readiness in relation to training to be prepared for all missions. In the HR community, it is crucial that HR professionals remain vigilant in maintaining perishable HR skills, especially when not in a PSDR-related position. FM 7-0 also states that “leaders incorporate sustainment into training core individual and collective skills by following nine tenets including training and retraining critical tasks to sustain proficiency because memory and skills are perishable without frequent practice and deteriorate without regular use and periodic challenges.”⁹¹

HR professionals directly affect everyone in their organization. If an HR professional is not trained and ready to perform the AG Core Competencies expected in that position, it will have a direct, negative impact on the individual customers of that organization. This, in turn, affects the readiness of those individuals because their morale would have dropped due to a personnel action not being processed, or possibly a missed promotion, unreported or misreported casualty.

One of the ways the Army Community Service is expanding its training program and increasing its proficiency across the Army is through a new Department of the Army training initiative to be implemented on every Army installation called the Army Community Service (ACS) Master Trainer Course. This train-the-trainer course certifies Master Trainers to instruct the ACS Instructor Training Course, Briefer Training Course, and Facilitator Training Course at their installations and increases the proficiency by certifying local instructors, briefers, and facilitators in meeting the Army’s goal of standardizing training.⁹² This model could be applied to the HR community by creating train-the-trainers on every installation who could administer the certification portion of

an annual training and certification program. The AG School could monitor and centrally manage these train-the-trainers and the web-based system to ensure HR professionals are certified across all three Army components. These train-the-trainers could also augment training and serve as a local conduit to AG Branch.

Although AG Branch is expanding its AGCRA campaign and the S1 Net remains strong, currently, HRC has no tracking mechanisms to determine whether or not HR professionals are receiving MILPER messages, AG branch news, HR policy changes, or AG updates to the field, nor are HR professionals or AG Soldiers mandated to be members of the S1 Net. To explain the importance of one small aspect of the S1 Net, there were 22 MILPER messages released in August, 2009, which equates to almost one per day. Selecting a busier day that month as an example, on August 17, 2009, there were seven MILPER messages released that changed policies and procedures on a variety of areas such as the reinstatement of the Qualitative Management Program for Sergeant Majors and Command Sergeant Majors, distribution instruction changes for Department of Defense Form 214: Release from Active Duty, along with five messages pertaining to promotion zones of consideration from ranks through Major General.

Unless an HR professional is a member of the S1 Net which consolidates and forwards MILPER and ALARACT messages to S1 Net members, an HR professional would have to go to the MILPER message site themselves. If an HR professional is not working in a PSDR-related position, he or she may not necessarily read MILPER messages on a regular basis that don't pertain to their direct duties and responsibilities. Therefore, when that individual moves into a PSDR-related position, such as BDE S1, he or she will be at a huge disadvantage and have to read these MILPER messages to

understand changes in regulations, policies and procedures. If HR professionals were mandated to or automatically enrolled in the S1 Net, all HR professionals would receive these MILPER messages on a regular, mostly weekly, basis and be connected to other HR professionals automatically.

Now that the first supporting research question has been studied, it is necessary to answer the second supporting research question of what distance learning programs currently exist and which would be best suited for HR professions in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components? To do this, this thesis will study current Army trends moving towards and expanding distance learning methods.

Trend Towards Army Components Expanding Distance Learning Programs

Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 600-3, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management states “All officers are encouraged to further their branch or Functional Area education through appropriate courses of nonresident instruction, an equivalent level to, but does not rule out, future attendance at a resident course of instruction, to advance their professional education and their careers, thereby enhancing their overall performance and potential.”⁹³ The Army can “exploit the potential of DL by providing continuous education through DL by augmenting resident courses in an almost ideal 1:1 student to teacher ratio with real-time or near-real time feedback to ensure HR professionals receive accurate, up-to-the-minute instruction.”⁹⁴

For Army Reserves and National Guard members, the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) has expanded their DL program. DANTES

has about 150 institutions to support service member enrollment in distant learning programs.⁹⁵

General Martin Dempsey, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commander, led the Combined Arms Center Senior Leader Conference from February 4-5, 2009 at the Lewis and Clark Center in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. At this conference, GEN Dempsey “advocated the use of new technology as a means of training,” challenging branch school commandants and their leaders to figure out how we “internet- and web-enable our education system to mitigate manpower shortages and dwindling resources.”⁹⁶

RAND Study

At the request of the Army’s Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel in 2001, the RAND Arroyo Center’s Manpower and Training Program, a federally funded research and development center sponsored by the United States Army, conducted a study to analyze distance learning from a personnel readiness perspective. The Personnel Policy Implications of Army Distance Learning study was initiated as the Army components began to invest approximately \$850 million through 2015 by implementing The Army Distance Learning Program (TADLP) to “improve the efficiency and effectiveness of military education and training by leveraging DL potential to improve Army readiness.”⁹⁷

The study recommended that the Army should “emphasize and exploit DL’s capabilities in courses for officer and non-commissioned officer development courses including Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) skill-producing courses in specialties with chronic or large shortages,” especially those with large student loads and long residence requirements such as what the AG Corps’ HR professionals face under PSDR

implementation and the consolidation of MOS's such as the case with 43A and 42B into 42H.⁹⁸

In relation to overwhelming MILPER message changes to policy, the RAND study found that “training on-demand through DL will make it much easier for all three Army components to stay current in their fields by refreshing skills as needed and interacting in near-real time with training institutions and with other HR professionals in the field to share ideas and techniques.”⁹⁹ The study also found that the “best way to leverage DL capabilities is through asynchronous modules made available on web-sites where students complete online courseware at their own time and pace;” the other option of synchronous training “requires much more capital investments of classrooms, instructors, and coordination of time for all involved.”¹⁰⁰ Whether synchronous or asynchronous, DL provides the “necessary flexibility to the training process, enables some training to be accomplished more quickly, and reduces the time needed for resident training.”¹⁰¹

A separate RAND study found that web-based distance learning enables training proponents such as AG Branch to “deliver training as responsively as instantly for asynchronous training while monitoring the immediate impact Army-wide rather than waiting for personnel to attend resident courses, keeping personnel current in their branch.”¹⁰² The RAND study estimated that the Army had about 8,500 Soldiers who did not receive full training for the positions they held in 1999.

Such is the case in the example used earlier regarding a year group 1999 AG officer who was a command-track versus an S1-centric track, attended the AGCCC using FM 12-6 and not the new FM-1 series, who is about to become a BDE S1 but never served as a BN S1. With an overwhelming amount of material to learn in a short time,

DL can help in this case, even if the officer attends the HRMQC. DL could offer some of the work to be completed in small segments at home station prior to attendance to the resident school and possibly test-out of some portions of the course. The RAND study showed that “DL improved cross-training, creating a more versatile Soldier who can work effectively across a broader range of skills,” which is exactly what an HR professional is expected to do under the PSDR design.¹⁰³ Most importantly, if the DL course exists, all HR professionals across all three Army components would at least have the option to maintain and improve their HR technical skills, whether it’s in preparation for a resident schooling or a new position. Considering HR professionals are expected to manage 67 automation systems, DL offers the opportunity to access short refresher courses or online assistance when dealing with a vast amount of systems and MILPER policy changes.

The study also showed that travel and per diem cost savings will accrue only in those cases where DL can help shorten courses that are already being done in a Temporary Duty (TDY) mode. Considering the reduced time away from home station and the lower travel costs as ancillary benefits of distance learning, the RAND study showed that these “benefits were large enough to warrant greater emphasis on developing DL segments for Active Component officer and NCO professional development courses.”¹⁰⁴ A separate RAND study recommended the Army “continue PCS courses” such as CCC and ILE because “the cost of these PCS schools is relatively the same as sending personnel TDY with the added benefit of bringing their families.”¹⁰⁵

In cases where full conversion to DL eliminates a TDY travel requirement, the RAND study found that the Army could “save on round-trip transportation as well as on

lodging and per diem payments up to \$3 million if implemented for all shorter, TDY-type Army courses in this category.”¹⁰⁶ Besides the savings over these TDY courses, the opportunity to offer the course material at home stations when and where individuals and units need the training far exceeds cost calculations. However, for courses that require specific training or certification, it may be required for individuals or specialized equipment to be on-hand. Rather than flying these instructors and equipment out to training sites across the Army, the RAND study recommends the Army utilize existing personnel at the training sites to administer certifications and share equipment for the community.

The Army is executing its distance learning expansion through the enlisted ranks on a grand scale. Beginning October 1, 2009, all enlisted Soldiers will have to complete about 400 hours of online training throughout their career under the Non-Commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) as part of the Army’s new Structured Self-Development course. Under the current system, enlisted Soldiers typically spend about 14 months in resident courses over their career, where the new SSD program will blend resident and distance learning courses for career-long learning. This new strategy fundamentally changes how the Army trains and is designed to focus on education rather than training. SGM Raymond Chandler, the first enlisted Soldier to serve as the Commandant of the Sergeants Major Academy, defines “training” as “What Soldiers do to prepare for the known,” whereas he defines “education” as “What prepares Soldiers for the unknown.”¹⁰⁷ Chandler continues to state that enlisted Soldiers are trained and train others, whereas officers are educated. This is a fundamental difference between enlisted Soldiers and officers.

Army Knowledge Online

Army Knowledge Online's (AKOs) traditional purpose has been to ensure all Army Soldiers had a uniform, commonly accessible email address and could easily locate Army personnel contact information. Without a doubt, email has been the most popular service AKO provides as 78 percent of users indicated that email (accessed through webmail) was the one AKO service they would not want to live without in a recent AKO home page poll conducted in early 2009.¹⁰⁸ The AKO Enterprise Email Suite has a Global Access List to look-up all Army personnel to create contact lists of friends and peers we gain contacts through workplace environments, at resident courses, or through distance learning schools. This email suite also has task lists users can utilize to manage projects for work or schooling. AKO has also expanded its applications to include many other applications in addition to email, specifically training. AKO's "My Training" listed under the "Self-Service" tab lists Soldiers' "My Training Dashboard," which contains training records, training requirements, scheduled classes, and training schedules. There is a "Mandatory Training" module already built-in along with a link to the Army Training Knowledge Online that manages Soldiers' "My Training Homepage" that includes tasks, courses, career maps, services and training account information.¹⁰⁹

AKO incorporated the Distributed Learning System (DLS), a "modernized information technology infrastructure that provides free access to individual U.S. Active Army, the U.S. Army Reserves, the Army National Guard, and Department of Army Civilians for unit and collective training, Army Modernization Training, and self-development courses."¹¹⁰ The advantage to DLS is that it is available to Soldiers and units, "anywhere, anytime using multiple means and technologies in support of the Army goals

of improved individual and unit readiness, less disruption of Army families, standardization of training and training management across the Army, and cost savings or cost avoidance for training events, while maintaining the quality of the training experience.”¹¹¹ The Army Learning Management System, a component of the Army Distributed Learning System, is the Army’s “automated system for individual training management for Soldiers and civilians to manage training information, provide training collaboration, scheduling, and career planning capabilities in both resident and non-resident training environments.”¹¹²

Army eLearning

The Army e-Learning Environment provides free Individual Army Training for every U.S. Active Army, U.S. National Guard, U.S. Reservist, Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadet and DA Civilians, offering over 4,300 courses ranging from information technology certification preparatory programs, business and leadership skills, Rosetta Stone foreign language programs, all with 24 hours a day, seven days a week on-line subject matter experts and mentors, on-line meeting rooms, whiteboards, and chat rooms.¹¹³ Army eLearning offers over 50 HR-related courses mainly for professional development during an HR professional’s military career as well as for civilian marketing purposes. Other distance learning courses besides Army eLearning courses include Army Correspondence Course programs, Defense Acquisition University courses, Defense Visual Information Directorate courses, Distributed Learning System courses, National Guard Bureau courses, Defense Automated Visual Information System courses, Defense Instructional Information System courses, and Reimer Digital Library courses.¹¹⁴

AG School Homepage

The AG School Homepage is a web-based tool that allows HR professionals to access branch-specific information such as the AG School Commandant's Update-to-the-Field, branch orientation for new AG and HR professionals, officers, warrant officers, and enlisted resident and distance learning course information, points of contact, regimental information, and general information related to HR professionals. While conducting research for this thesis, the AG School webpage and all sub-links at "<http://www.ags.army.mil/>" were not easily accessible during the months of September through October 2009. When emailing the AG School Homepage Webmaster at "AGSWEB@jackson.army.mil" for technical assistance, the email was returned undeliverable as "Unknown address error 550-5.1.1 User unknown."¹¹⁵ Both Internet Explorer and Firefox displayed "Cannot display the webpage" as the majority of the links on the webpage did not work.¹¹⁶

Trying to access the AG School homepage from AKO was very difficult and confusing as well. Access to the AG School homepage cannot be found from the AKO homepage by clicking on "Files, Organizations, DOD Organizations, Army, Army Commands, TRADOC, Schools, and AG School." The only way to access the AG School Homepage during this research was to first type "AG School Homepage" into the "Search" line on the AKO homepage, which opened the AKO search engine webpage at "<https://search.us.army.mil/AKOsearch/>" with two HR-related topics, neither of which is the AG School Homepage. From this new AKO search engine page, it was necessary to retype "AG School Homepage" and then scroll down to the twenty-second entry "AG School Homepage" which is the only way discovered to access the AG School webpage

during this research. The AG School Homepage is under a tab in “AKO Files” called “Schools--TRADOC” that cannot be found by going through the dropdown folders in the “Files” button on the AKO homepage as previously described.

After going through multiple searches, it was discovered that access to the AG School Homepage is restricted with the message “You do not have the privileges to access the requested resource” adding “please request access using the form below” as this document is in a “Knowledge Center that requires registration prior to access.” Thus, it is first necessary to first click on “Register Now!” and then “Request Access” to even get to the AG School Homepage. Thus, unless an HR professional conducts a detailed search in AKO for the AG School Homepage, it is either impossible or very difficult to access through the “AKO Files” method without using the AKO search engines.

HR Distance Learning Courses

The Soldier Support Institute (SSI) Domain manages the Brigade-Centric HR Training of the Adjutant General School on the SSI Blackboard. The information contained within the classes of this course has been developed specifically for the HR Soldier in the field. The classes in this course are similar to the classroom instruction given at the AG School during BOLC, the AGCCC, and WOAC. The training classes offered on the SSI Blackboard may be used to enhance the training already received at the AG School. They may also be used to provide leaders and Soldiers in the field with the most current doctrinal methodologies in reference to the HR Core Competencies as taught in the classroom as part of pre-deployment preparation or sustainment training.¹¹⁷ This DL course offers the following 13 lessons:

- Conduct Personnel Readiness Management – Overview
- Manage Officer Distribution and Assignments
- Manage Enlisted Distribution and Assignments
- Manage the Unit Status Reporting System
- Manage the Deployment Cycle Support Program
- Manage Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting
- Manage Personnel Information Management
- Manage Reception, Replacement, Return-to-Duty, Rest and Recuperation, and Redeployment Operations
 - Manage Casualty Operations
 - Manage Unit Postal Operations
 - Manage Unit Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Operations
 - Manage the Personnel Estimate
 - Manage Joint Human Resources Operations.¹¹⁸

These courses include external links to assist in DL learning, points of contact for administrators of the courses, as well as practical exercises that are being developed and approved by the AG School to enhance the DL learning experience. This course could potentially be mandated for all AG officers assuming BDE S1 positions.

S1 Net

The S1 Net is another robust HR professional DL forum which exists to “serve the Army HR community and leaders in all branches, connecting “1’s” and HR professionals with Soldiers as the centerpiece to educate our profession.”¹¹⁹ HR professionals are able to review the latest changes in the Army and joint HR community, blog, open HR and supporting documents and links, and post documents to share with other HR professionals. The S1 Net is promoted at the AG school houses as a valuable distant learning method to share HR products and resources with other HR community members while maintaining and developing HR contacts throughout careers. “The self-directed nature of the DL forum and the ability to connect with members who have valuable experiences supports the problem-centered nature of our environment and

provides a useful means to communicate knowledge and assist the professional in learning.”¹²⁰

CGSC Distance Learning Program

As an option to the ILE resident course, CGSC created the Department of Distance Education (DDE) at the U.S. Army CGSC. DDE is “dedicated to supporting the growth of interagency and multinational operations through new approaches to teaching and instruction by utilizing an expansive set of technological tools to develop, distribute and administer CGSC’s distance education programs.”¹²¹ Some of the distance education programs the DDE uses includes the Total Army School System hybrid course (on-line and on-site classroom instruction), and the Army Distance Learning (ADL) course (on-line classroom instruction only) to Active and Reserve Component officers from all services and allied nations.

The mission of DDE is to “develop leaders prepared to execute full-spectrum joint, interagency and multinational operations through a variety of distance learning methods by enhancing educational opportunities to Soldier-students from any location world-wide.”¹²² The idea is to allow Soldiers to enroll and complete educational courses while serving their normal duties. As of October 2009, DDE had 3,613 military personnel and civilians enrolled in the DL program from all three Army components, sister services, and multi-national organizations with a backlog of students requesting the AOC portion on a waiting list.

CGSC’s Department of Education Technology acquired several new teaching technologies with embedded tutorials under the U.S. Army Lifelong Learning Center Program to facilitate the DL program. Some of these new technologies include

Blackboard as a course management tool, SharePoint to provide a collaborative working environment and data storage, and Adobe Connect as an online conference room and desktop net-meeting technologies, which are all used complementary as a combined system that provides extraordinary teaching enhancement capability.¹²³ “When combined, leveraging these teaching technologies in a complementary manner provide an extraordinary teaching enhancement capability to the faculty and serve as an equally exceptional learning resource for students.”¹²⁴

DDE offers the three-phased nonresident Common Core portion of the ILE curriculum in either web-based DL on the internet or The Army School System (TASS) which are partially battalion-led classes and partially web-based DL.¹²⁵ Personnel taking the web-based DL ILE-CC curriculum have 18-months to complete all three phases of this self-paced course with written requirements and online tests. Personnel taking the Battalion-led TASS ILE Common Core classes conduct the two week Phase I in an Active Duty Training (ADT) status during the summer, then attend ILE-CC Phase II in October, meeting one weekend a month in an Inactive Duty Training (IDT) status until the following May, finally completing ILE-Common Core Phase III in a two-week ADT status during the following summer.¹²⁶

DDE offers the AOC portion of ILE in facilitator-led DL modules to be completed in twelve months through Blackboard and SharePoint and requires associated DL equipment as online meetings are through Adobe Connect Room or Defense Connect Online.¹²⁷ The culminating module in the series, W300, is no longer offered in The Army School System.

CGSC also initiated a Blended Learning Course as a compromise to the ten month resident course and the distance learning course modalities because operational requirements make it difficult for many officers to attend the resident course, but officers also don't want to miss out on the opportunities the resident course brings such as face-to-face contacts between peers and instructors. The Command and General Staff College began its first two-phase Blended Learning Course with 33 students in ILE Class 2009-01. The Blended Learning Course has two phases: a 14-week resident phase for the ILE Common Core which began January 9, 2009, and a year-long, online credentialing phase called AOC as part of a small staff group facilitated by a Fort Leavenworth faculty member.¹²⁸ These 33 students graduated Phase I on April 24, 2009, and will began the year-long Phase II AOC online while serving back at their operational assignments.¹²⁹ The next 64 Blended Learning students started Phase I on May 8, 2009.

A recent Common Core graduate from Blended Learning class 2009-01 discussed how the resident portion provides students with points of contact and peer camaraderie and recommended the program to other officers considering CGSC distance learning.¹³⁰ The CGSC Deputy Commandant encouraged the first blended learning resident phase graduate students to "continue to utilize faculty connections long after their graduation."¹³¹ This shows that Army leaders understand the importance of creating and maintaining peer-to-peer and social networks throughout a career. The Blended Learning Program at Fort Leavenworth's CGSC is expected to end in December 2009 and stand up a satellite office at Redstone Arsenal in Alabama in January 2010.

A recent survey of the DL portions of ILE is being analyses by CGSC's Quality Assurance Office as of October 2009. The survey queried 232 Soldiers and civilians from

all three Army components who participated in the ILE Common Core and AOC portions through online and reserve schooling from classes 08-01 through 09-12 who took the online courses because they fit their work and travel schedules and they liked working online at their own pace.¹³² The survey found that 97 percent of the respondents had distance learning experience with the majority often completing coursework from their home computers every day for both professional work and schoolwork where the majority favored submitting assignments and tests online slightly over email.¹³³ Although the majority of respondents found having face-to-face contact with instructors and other students effective for learning, the majority also responded that using “real-time methods of interaction” such as online chat rooms, voice over the internet, online message boards, and email with telephonic contact with their instructor “effective for learning.”¹³⁴

Human Resource Management Qualification Course-Reserve Component Phase I

The Human Resource Management Qualification Course-Reserve Component (HRMQC-CC) Phase I is another DL program available for Reserve Component HR professionals through the Army Learning Management System. U.S. Active Army personnel are not permitted to register for this course through the ATRRS, so their only option to take the HRMQC is the resident course. The HRMQC-RC has an 80-hour distance learning phase I and an 80-hour resident learning Phase II that parallels the resident course based on the different automation systems between the Active and Reserve components.¹³⁵ This DL course offers three S1 Adjutant modules and four general HR modules. The modules are progressive and sequential and offer pre-tests so HR professionals can see how much they know about course material before taking the

course. Students can monitor their progress as they progress through the modules with a user-friendly menu that shows which modules have been completed and which module have not. Reserve Component officers who complete Phase I of the HRMQC receive 75 credit hours worth 25 inactive retirement points, so this course is incentive-based.¹³⁶

Considering 52 percent, the majority of the total Army force, is in the U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components with full-time civilian careers, this distance learning option offers the flexibility to complete the course while maintaining their civilian jobs.¹³⁷

The cap on “soft” retirement points has gone from 60 a year to 130 a year.¹³⁸ So, there would be an incentive for reserve component officers to do the 75 hours of Phase I HRMQC course work to get the 25 points. Even though drilling reservists typically will default to 63 points a year at a minimum (48 Inactive Duty Training (IDT) drill periods plus 15 membership points), the additional ceiling could make it an attractive delayed gratification retirement plus-up.¹³⁹

Now that the second supporting research question has been studied, it is important to address the third supporting research question to determine what the focus of this web-based training and certification program should be on and why. To do this, it is important to review HR doctrine. Field Manual 7-15 Army Universal Task List (AUTL) is the basis for determining specific Army HR tasks needed to support the execution of the Army’s tactical mission.

AG Core Competencies

The Army Universal Task List (AUTL) task of “Perform Human Resources Support” is defined as “performing the four main activities and tasks to sustain HR

functions of manning the force; providing HR services; providing personnel support; and conducting HR planning and operations in support of deployed forces to maximize operational effectiveness.¹⁴⁰ The goal is to facilitate support to Soldiers, their families, Army civilians, and contractors who deploy with the force. These are the AG Corps' four Core functions.

There are four HR manuals comprising Army HR doctrine that further describe these HR tasks: Field Manual (FM) 1-0 *Human Resources Support*, Field Manual Interim (FMI) 1-0.01 S-1 *Operations*, FMI 1-0.02 *Theater-Level Human Resources Support*, and Joint Publication 1-0 *Personnel Support to Joint Operations*. These four manuals provide the basis for HR functions and describe the three HR functional groupings of AG core functions which are Manning the Force, Providing HR Services, and Providing Personnel Support. These three functional groupings are further broken down into ten AG Core Competencies: Personnel Readiness Management; Personnel Accounting and Strength Reporting; Personnel Information Management; Reception, Rest and Recuperation, Return to Duty, Replacements, Redeployment; Essential Personnel Services, Casualty Operations; Postal Operations; Morale, Welfare and Recreation; Human Resources Planning and Operations., and Band operations. HR tasks for joint and multi-national forces are found in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3500.04C, *Universal Joint Task Listing*.

Field Manual 1-0, *Human Resources Support* promotes a common understanding of HR support fundamentals across all three Army components and breaks the four AUTL personnel tasks into the following ten HR core competencies that define the overall functional responsibilities

- Manning the Force: Personnel Readiness Management, Personnel Accountability and Strength Reporting, Personnel Information Management, Reception, replacement, return to duty, rest and recuperation, and redeployment
- HR Services: Casualty Operations Management, Essential Personnel Services
- Personnel Support: Postal Operations Management, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Operations, Band Support
- HR Planning and Staff Operations.¹⁴¹

FMI 1-0.01 S-1 *Operations* provides a common understanding of HR support fundamentals across all three Army components aligned under PSDR at BDE or BCT and BN S1 sections in both home station and deployed theater, but does not prescribe detailed procedures for the HR support functions.¹⁴² FMI 1-0.01 covers eight of the ten HR core competencies, leaving out MWR and Band Operations as they are not tailored at the BDE or BCT and BN S1 levels.

FMI 1-0.02 *Theater-Level Human Resources Support* provides a comprehensive view of HR support practices and functions HR professionals across all three Army components must perform and oversee at the deployed theater of operations including theater HR sustainment relationships, theater postal operations, theater R5 operations, theater casualty operations, theater PASR operations, and early entry into theater operations.¹⁴³

Joint Publication 1-0 *Personnel Support to Joint Operations* outlines the organization, functions, and principles of personnel support, provides a discussion of personnel support roles and responsibilities, and discusses manning a joint task force headquarters for joint operations.¹⁴⁴

These four manuals provide the focus of what a web-based training and certification program could include as they form the foundation of HR support to the

force, whether it's joint, multi-national, or the three components of the Army. The ten HR core competencies could be included as they describe HR support to the force. The manuals' description of roles of responsibilities of HR professionals and organizations could also be included to ensure HR professionals understand how they tie-in to other HR professionals and organizations in garrison and deployed environments. Leadership, teaching, coaching, and mentoring modules could be included as well to ensure leaders are developing their subordinates to mitigate the issue of a decentralized AG Corps under PSDR.

A second option that this web-based training and certification system could focus on is the Combined Arms Training Strategies (CATS) for HR. This replaces the Army Training and Evaluation Program for the HRSC and HR Company and was scheduled to be updated and completed by April 2009. As of September 2009, the Theater Sustainment Command folder in the CATS Executive Summaries in AKO Files was last approved February 27, 2007 and lists "Plan, coordinate, and manage HR activities" for the AG branch.¹⁴⁵ Once the Theater Sustainment Command portion of CATS is updated with FM 1-0, FMI 1-0.01 and FMI 1.0-02 terminology, specifically PSDR, it will provide a second option for this web-based training and certification model for theater-level HR training. CATS is the Army's "over-arching strategy for current and future training of the force based on a series of branch proponent, unit and institutional strategies describing training events, frequencies and resources on how the Army will train the total force to standard in institutions and unit through self-development."¹⁴⁶

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Organizations, DOD, Army, Army Command, TRADOC, Commands and Centers, Combined Arms Center, CTD, CATS, CATS Executive Summary,” portal <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portal/index.jsp> (accessed September 28, 2009).

¹⁴⁶Digital Training Management System, “What is CATS?” Combined Arms Training Strategy, <http://www.asat.army.mil/cats/catshome.htm> (accessed September 28, 2009).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To answer the first supporting research question to determine if a web-based training and certification program is best suited for Human Resource (HR) professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components, it was necessary to first look at current HR trends in the three Army components. These included current HR resident courses and the importance of creating bonds and personal contacts through face-to-face interaction. The research included resident courses such as the Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC), the Adjutant General Captain's Career Course (AGCCC), the Command and General Staff College's (CGSC) Intermediate Level Education (ILE), and the Human Resources Management Qualification Course (HRMQC). The research then turned to the importance of counseling and mentoring in HR professionals, characteristics of adult learners, and how HR organizations such as the Adjutant General Corps Regimental Association (AGCRA) meet those needs. The study then looked at how HR skills are perishable and need to be refreshed and how the Army increases proficiency through training.

In order to determine what distance learning programs exist and which would be best-suited for HR professionals in all three Army components, the research first looked at the Army's trend towards distance learning programs. These programs included Army Knowledge Online (AKO), Army eLearning, the AG School Homepage, the S1 Net, CGSC distance learning and blended learning programs, and the HRMQC-Reserve Component (HRMQC-RC). This research answered the third supporting research question of how the web-based training and certification program should be structured.

The research concluded by answering the fourth supporting research question of what the web-based training and certification program should focus on and why by examining HR functions packaged under the ten Adjutant General (AG) Core Competencies. At this point in the research, all of the supporting research questions were answered.

To determine if a web-based training and certification program is best suited for HR professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components it was necessary to determine whether or not the current training modalities are effective, specifically for Brigade (BDE) S1s considering the recent trend in BDE S1s failing. The research first addresses cultural norms for the three components and the shift from being command-centric to S1-centric under PSDR transformation as the Army transformed into a modularized, BDE-centric organization. The research then discovered potential professional development issues stemming from this cultural shift such as challenges in teaching, coaching, and mentoring the AG Corps of HR professionals as AG-centric organizations inactivated and the AG Corps became decentralized. The research then looked at how the Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR) implementation created additional HR positions across the three components of the Army, but manpower shortages created challenges in filling those positions. This shortage of company grade AG officers negatively affected the force and ultimately created negative effects on the HR community's customer base. The Army mitigated these manpower shortages by implementing various retention and recruiting techniques, which created another dilemma of having many inexperienced Second Lieutenants (2LTs) performing duties authorized for Captains (CPTs). This directed the research to

study how leaders compensated for this lack of experience and the importance of teaching, coaching and mentoring these new HR professionals. The research also looked at whether or not HR professionals received the proper PSDR training and whether or not the Army's PSDR implementation training plan was effective. The research also focused on critical components to PSDR implementation such as the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) and the criticality of the synchronization of their implementation.

The research then establishes a baseline of pros and cons of HR resident courses such as the BOLC, AGCCC, CGSC's ILE, and the HRMQC. This research focused on attendance, curriculums, career progression, and assignments after completion of various resident courses. It was then necessary to understand characteristics of adult learners and how they learn.

The research could then turn to the second and third supporting research questions of what distance learning programs exist and how should the web-based training and certification program be structured. The research looked at the CGSC Distance Learning Program, the CGSC Blended Learning Program, and Army component trends towards distance education utilizing programs such as AKO, eLearning, the Soldier Support Institute (SSI), the S1 Net, and the HRMQC-RC. It was then necessary to research the last supporting research question of what should the web-based training and certification program should focus on and why. For this, the research turned to the HR core competencies in the current four Army HR regulations and the Army's modularized Combined Arms Training Strategy (CATS) system.

Thus, the methodology used in this study constituted a retrospective literature review and included data collection supporting the research question and identified supporting questions. The data was extracted from unclassified government and scholarly information sources relevant to this study. The research inclusion criteria were all pertinent and recent data published between 2005 and 2009 with only a few sources dating back to 1991, 1993, and 2001. The next step included organization of the data, construction of a literature review, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations based on acquired information.

Research Design

During the course of the research, no formal studies of existing HR distance learning programs were discovered. Thus, this research includes current HR resident and distance learning modalities used across all three Army components because they can be analyzed, compared and contrasted to determine the best solution or alternative to the thesis problem. The research conducted for this thesis was a qualitative study based on secondary analysis and review of existing programs. The instrument used in this study is a Decision Matrix that compares and contrasts three courses of action (COAs) determined as possible solutions to the thesis problem consisting of a resident course, a distance learning course, and a blended learning course to determine which modality is best-suited for HR professionals. These three COAs were selected based on the challenges of the HR community across all three Army components. In order to support the thesis in a subjective manner, it was necessary to create two separate and distinct courses of action to test the thesis against. The three COAs were developed under the guidelines of Field Manual 5-0 Army Planning and Orders Production. All three COAs selected met the five

screening criteria selected: feasibility, acceptability, suitability, distinguishability, and completeness.¹ A fourth COA of doing nothing was not a viable option given the problem set and the negative impact on HR customers as it did not meet the screening criteria of acceptability, suitability, and completeness. To be feasible, each COA had to be realistic and able to be implemented by all three Army components. To be acceptable, the advantage gained in improving the level of HR proficiency in HR professionals in all three Army components had to outweigh the cost of implementing the programs. To be suitable, all three COAs had to provide additional HR technical training regarding the ten AG Core Competencies to all three Army components. To be distinguishable, all three COAs had to use different modalities in providing additional HR technical training to HR professionals. To be complete, all three COAs had to demonstrate that by implementing the program, HR professionals across all three components would increase their level of HR proficiency. By selecting two competing courses of action against the thesis of a strictly distance learning modality, a more accurate result can be achieved. Qualitative analysis will describe the characteristics of these three courses of action in order to identify the benefits and pitfalls of each. During the data analysis, the following five independent evaluation criteria were identified: (1) Time in training, (2) Accessibility to training, (3) Availability of HR personnel, (4) Cost of the program, and (5) Effectiveness of training. The variables were measured by using the U. S. Army Numerical Analysis Decision Matrix as an instrument. The Numerical Analysis Decision Matrix was selected over the Subjective Analysis and Broad Categories Decision Matrixes due to its empirical validity. Each variable in Numerical Analysis Decision Matrix was assigned a weight number based on its importance. The importance of each evaluation criteria was

determined based on its relevancy to training HR professionals to improve their HR competency. The weighted numbers assigned to the evaluation criteria ranged from one to five, where number one represented the most important and number five the least important. After assigning the weighting for each evaluation criteria the three courses of action were identified and selected for comparison (wargaming) against each other. Each evaluation criteria was assigned a numerical value reflecting the relative advantages or disadvantages of each variable for each policy. The numbers were rank-ordered from one to three, where one was the most advantageous and three was least advantageous. Lower is better, so the lowest number determines the best course of action. The initially assigned score in each column was multiplied by the weight and the product put in parentheses in the column. When using weighted value, the lower value assigned indicated the best option; again, lower is better. The numbers were totaled to provide a subjective evaluation of the best course of action without subjectively weighting one variable over another. The scores were then totaled to provide a “best” (lowest number value) course of action based on weights assigned. Thus, the lowest value denoted is the best objective solution (see Table # 1 example).

Reliability and Validity

Although the lowest number calculated from the Numerical Analysis Decision Matrix may indicate the best solution, the best solution may be more subjective than the objective numbers indicate. For that reason the Decision Matrix must be examined for sensitivity. For instance, course of action #1 (Table # 1 example) provides the best solution, but it may not be supportable by one of the variables (variable A was weighted a

five). The decision maker must then either determine if additional support is required, or the course of action needs to be altered or deleted.²

Table 1. Example Decision Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Weight 1-5 points Lower is better	COA #1 Rank-ordered from 1-3 Lower is better	COA #2 Rank-ordered from 1-3 Lower is better	COA #3 Rank-ordered from 1-3 Lower is better
A	5	1 (5)	2 (10)	3 (15)
B	2	2 (4)	1 (2)	3 (6)
C	1	1 (1)	3 (3)	2 (2)
Total (Lower is better)		10 Lowest = Best	15 Middle	23 Highest = Worst

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 3-55.

¹Headquarters, Department of the Army. Field Manual (FM) 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005).

²Ibid., 3-55.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

The research found that the Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR) created an issue with Leader Professional Development (LPD) sessions after Adjutant General (AG)-centric organizations inactivated. This issue decentralizes Human Resource (HR) professionals, making it more difficult to conduct LPD sessions. Moreover, a shortage of company grade AG officers brought less experience during the surge of Lieutenants (LTs) to mitigate the issue, putting more pressure on the Brigade (BDE) S1 to teach, coach, and mentor subordinate Battalion (BN) S1s as the Army's strategy to retain these officers fell short. Another issue was that not all HR professionals received PSDR training when PSDR was implemented, leaving a training gap across the three Army components. This research did not determine whether or not other factors, such as meeting the expectations of commanders and interpersonal relationships plays a critical role in the success of HR professionals. It is, however, logical to assume that these factors are significant in the success or failure of BN and BDE S1s and thus requires additional study. Thus, there is a lack of HR training and mentorship that needs to be addressed.

Although HRC currently has the Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate (PAID), they only assess PSDR-related issues and have not updated their website on any specific strategies on resolving these and other PSDR-related issues. PSDR After Action Review (AAR) comments included standardizing PSDR responsibilities, more clear strength management responsibilities following doctrine, and a desire for more S1 specific training. Another issue was created when AG Corps

switched from being command-centric to S1-centric, leaving those on a command track at a disadvantage. PSDR was designed to be implemented with the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) to consolidate 67 systems into one, but DIMHRS was suspended until a date to be determined, leaving HR professionals with additional PSDR tasks without the benefit of a streamlined system in which to accomplish these expanded tasks and new tasks. Analysis shows that the current HR BN and BDE manning structures and resident and distance learning training modalities are insufficient to train and maintain competencies on these systems, so additional training systems are required to improve the HR proficiency of HR professionals.

The research then looked at resident courses and their levels of effectiveness considering the potential for implementing a distance learning system for HR professionals. The Basic Officer's Leader Course (BOLC), the Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC), the Adjutant General Captain's Career Course (AGCCC), and the Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC) all provide AG officers the opportunity to make and sustain face-to-face contact and build a network of peers that is more difficult with online training. All four courses focus on the ten AG Core Competencies. In accordance with (IAW) the AG Branch Manager's guidance and Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet (Pam) 600-3, most officers coming out of these schools will be placed into PSDR-related positions, specifically BN and BDE S1 to receive key developmental positions to be branch qualified. However, the long time-span of three to five years between these resident courses offers a challenge to AG officers in sustaining HR technical knowledge. The research shows that additional formalized HR training is

necessary between these resident courses to maintain perishable HR skills for HR professionals.

In addition to the issue of a lack of formalized training to sustain HR technical knowledge, another issue is remaining in formal training for longer periods to receive adequate training in HR automation systems that will be used to perform HR duties. Commanders in the field stated they require AG officers with more technical knowledge, but are unwilling to wait for Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) schools to provide this additional training. This supports the argument that an augmentation to existing course structure is necessary in order to meet commanders' intent, meaning either adjusting existing course structures to incorporate HR technical training on automation systems or creating additional training in a resident or distance learning modality that allows HR professionals to report to their gaining unit and conduct the training at their new home station. Thus, regionally-based resident courses or a distance learning training and certification program is necessary to augment resident training as commanders in the field require their primary staff BN and BDE S1s as quickly as possible and are not willing to wait for them to receive additional training. A distance learning course would be better-suited to meet commanders' intent of retaining the individuals in their command while receiving this training, however.

Although the Support Operations Course (SPO) Course is a requirement for AG officers to complete in the Command and General Staff College's (CGSC) Intermediate Level Education (ILE), it does not focus on HR Core Competencies or the HR technical knowledge required of BDE S1s. Since the Human Resources Management Qualification Course (HRMQC) Course is not offered at CGSC's ILE, it is not an option for ILE

students as an elective or otherwise, so ILE graduates would have to gain approval from the AG Branch Manager and their gaining chains of command to attend the course at Fort Jackson, South Carolina en route to their follow-on assignment or after arriving at their follow-on assignment. Since commanders have already stated they want their inbound personnel as soon as possible and aren't willing to wait, this could mean their BDE S1s will not receive HRMQC training specifically designed for BDE S1s to perform their duties. If the HRMQC was offered during ILE, students could complete the course over the course of the almost year-long ILE and report to their gaining unit directly from ILE fully qualified in HRMQC. If the HRMQC was offered like the Reserve component HRMQC with an online phase and a resident phase, the AG School House could offer Phase I either online or via electives given during the ILE Common Core and the Advanced Operations Course (AOC) phases with a resident phase during ILE electives. Or, if the course was offered via a distance learning modality such as a web-based system, these officers could complete the course online prior to reporting to ILE, during ILE or when they report to their unit after completing ILE. A web-based system such as this offers more opportunities for HR professionals to complete the HRMQC.

The resident ILE course is not branch-specific with a very minimal amount of HR focus, but there is an opportunity for the AG and HR cadre of officers and civilians at the school to conduct both formal and informal counselings and Officer Professional Development (OPD) sessions throughout the year-long course in addition to the two HR electives to better prepare AG officers for their follow-on assignment as the main CGSC model only focuses on the ten years out mentality. These electives could require students to submit an article or writing for publication in an HR journal such "1775" to meet the

CGSC's Strategic Communication (STRATCOM) requirement and have AG officers contribute to the AG Corps through other means such as blogging on the S1 Net. The BCT S1 elective is a pilot program for ILE Class 09-02 and is modeled after the HRMQC, which is the appropriate level course for Majors. The HRMQC's goals focus on PSDR tasks at the BDE and theater level and would be best-suited as a model for a distance learning management training and certification program if implemented. The HRMQC is not offered online and Active Duty officers cannot enroll in the Reserve course which includes an online phase. HRMQC Course material is not currently online, but can be requested by HRMQC administrators via a CD or DVD. This material should be readily available to all HR professionals with testing applications through course management so HR professionals can either initially enroll in the course through distance learning, review course material, or retake exams to retest and recertify perishable HR skills. Earlier analysis showed that the current resident courses are not sufficient in sustaining HR professional AG Core Competencies, so this distance learning modality would fill that gap. Although this study was limited to examining AG officer courses, the principles can be applied to enlisted and civilian HR professionals as well.

The research also found that counseling and mentorship are critical in preparing future leaders and retention. The Army's high operational tempo (OPTEMPO) has created challenges in adequate mentorship. For HR professionals, this challenge is expanded due to geographic separation under PSDR without AG-centric organizations. The AG Corps leadership are mitigating these negative effects through the AGCRA campaign to increase senior leader membership and create local chapters to draw more junior leaders and junior HR professionals into the association. Local chapters offer

opportunities to conduct LPDs to mitigate the loss of the LPDs AG-centric organizations used to provide by bringing HR professionals together. Although this paper did not research the legalities of combining LPDs and AGCRA local chapter meetings, it is logical to assume that LPDs can be distinct and separate gatherings of HR professionals that could or could not be followed by chapter-specific meetings. Thus, further research on the legality of combining LPDs consisting of non-members and AGCRA local chapter meetings is necessary.

The research also found that adults are autonomous, self-directed goal-oriented, practical people with a foundation of life experiences they can share in an environment of mutual respect. CGSC is an example of a program modeled specifically for the adult learner. Company grade officers are mostly Generation X or Y and both share similarities regarding balancing work, life, and education. These officers would like mentors engaged in their professional development. Analysis shows the AGCRA is taking the proper measures to address the need for counseling and mentorship, but the campaign must be aggressive or come up with alternative methods if unsuccessful.

The S1 Net also provides an alternative to meeting the need for mentorship by having many subject matter experts managing subject forums and responding to questions from the field. However, online mentorship is limited and does not have the same impact as face-to-face as the research shows. In addition to the S1 Net, the AG School Homepage allows HR professionals to keep up with the latest points of contact, branch news, and changes to policies and procedures. However, it was impossible to access through a web browser during the course of this research and entirely too difficult to access through Army Knowledge Online (AKO). This is not conducive to aiding HR

professionals' distance learning or mentorship in any way and needs to be resolved immediately.

The research also determined that HR skills are perishable and must be refreshed and retrained to maintain proficiency. Due to the nature of the HR community and varying positions, HR skills are perishable and must be trained on a continuous basis due to constantly changing policies and procedures from ever-changing Military Personnel (MILPER) and All Army Activity (ALARACT) messages. Regardless, all HR professionals should train on AG Core Competencies and be ready for their next position, whether it's with other Army components, joint, inter-agency or multi-national services. As HR professionals directly affect everyone in the organization, they must be proficient in the AG Core Competencies to ensure customers receive world-class customer service. Otherwise, HR professionals will create a drop in morale or more serious issues within the organization due to the sensitive nature of the actions HR professionals' process. Analysis shows current training modalities are not sufficient without a robust and continuous training plan to sustain AG Core Competencies. If a web-based training and certification system is implemented across the three Army components, AG Branch could implement a train-the-trainer program to facilitate training and certification at local installations around the globe.

The research also determined that the three Army components should continue to expand their distant learning (DL) modalities in support of the large amounts of money invested towards leveraging DL capabilities to improve readiness. Asynchronous DL models were determined more effective than synchronous methods, but there are benefits to both modalities over strictly resident courses. DL offers many benefits such as offering

courses in smaller segments, lower costs than Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or Temporary Duty (TDY) schools, and DL allows individuals more time at home station with the unit and family. An example of the Army's move towards distance learning is epitomized as enlisted Soldiers will now be mandated to complete about 400 hours of online training throughout their career with a shift from training to education. AKO has expanded its applications from email and contact lists to training modules that manage training records, requirements, scheduled classes, and career maps. Army eLearning offers individuals across all three Army components free training with over 4,300 courses with a wide array of up-to-date DL training aids. The S1 Net is a robust HR DL forum HR professionals can join to stay connected to MILPER and ALARACT messages as well as other HR professionals. The ILE DL program offers individuals an alternative to the resident ILE course and meets students' objectives as well. The school's use of Blackboard, SharePoint, and Adobe Connect enhance teaching and learning capabilities. The HRMQC-RC is only available to U.S Army Reservists. Analysis shows that the S1 Net is an adequate forum for HR professionals to share experiences and knowledge and assist in learning. The HRMQC-RC course could potentially be expanded to the U.S. Active Army and U.S. National Guard as a web-based training and certification program. The ILE DL program does not offer HR-specific training, but could be expanded to do so as stated for the resident course.

In summary, the research shows that augmenting the current HR training programs is necessary. By only offering a training program, it is not guaranteed that HR professionals would actually utilize it, however. To ensure HR professionals are trained in the ten AG Core Competencies, it would be necessary to mandate this training under

the auspices that HR professionals directly affect every Soldier in a unit and have a direct impact on their morale and personnel actions. Three modalities to augment current training were selected for this study: a resident course, a distance learning course, and a blended learning course including a scaled-down resident course with a distance learning portion. A Decision Matrix was used to determine which of these three modalities would best augment current HR training. In order to explain the results of the Decision Matrix used to determine the best course of action to substantiate or unsubstantiate the thesis, it is first necessary to provide definitions of the evaluation criteria used and the courses of action (COA) themselves.

COA # 1: Resident Course is defined as AG School trainers managing the annual training and certification Army-wide at various geographic installations and non-paired communities in outside the continental U.S. locations. HR professionals would attend a resident course training culminating in a certification test managed by the AG School trainer. COA # 2: Distance Learning is defined as the AG School creating and managing a web-based, online distance learning course that HR professionals across all three Army components could take from their own installations at their leisure as long as they complete the mandatory training and certification on an annual basis. COA # 3: Blended Learning is defined as all of COA # 2: Distance Learning coupled with an abbreviated form of COA # 1, meaning HR professionals would take the COA # 2 online training and an AG School representative would go out Army-wide for a supplemental, abbreviated training period culminating in the administration of the certification portion.

The Evaluation Criteria must also be defined in order to complete the Decision Matrix. The first Evaluation Criteria, Time, is defined as the time it will take an HR

professional to complete the HR training and certification requirements of all three COAs. The second Evaluation Criteria, Accessibility, is defined as the ease in which an HR professional across all three Army components is able to access the training and certification programs in all three COAs. The third criteria, Availability, is defined as an HR professional's availability to complete the training and certification requirements in all three COAs. The fourth criteria, Cost, is defined as the cost associated with HR professionals receiving and completing the training and certification requirements across all three Army components, as well as the opportunity cost of not having the training readily available to individuals and units. The last criteria, Effectiveness, is defined as how effective all three COAs are in training and certifying HR professionals across all three Army components.

Now that the COAs and Evaluation Criteria have been defined, weights can be established on the Evaluation Criteria based on levels of importance. The lower the number, the higher the importance as lower is better in the Decision Matrix. The effectiveness of the COA is the most important factor of this thesis, so it receives a value of one as ensuring HR professionals are trained to standard and able to perform the full spectrum of HR operations to their customers and commanders is the ultimate goal of mission accomplishment. Availability of the training is the second most important weight as AG Branch must first make the training and certification available to HR professionals before accessibility can be factored in. Accessibility is the third weighted criteria as HR professionals must be able to access available training and certification programs. Time to complete this training and certification program is weighted with a factor of four. Although budgets are mandated and limited, the last weighted criteria in the Decision

Matrix is cost as it is almost impossible to put a price on taking care of Soldiers, civilians and contractors through HR customer service.

Now that the COAs and Evaluation Criteria have been defined and weighting established, the weights can be applied to the Evaluation Criteria for each COA. For the Evaluation Criteria of Time, it was determined that COA # 1 could be completed in the shortest amount of time as HR professionals could attend training and certification in a resident status away from their normal duties, then COA # 2 as HR professionals might be forced the training and certification after completion of their normal duties, and finally COA # 3 ranked as taking the most time as HR professionals would have to complete the distance learning portion online plus the resident supplemental training and certification.

For the Evaluation Criteria Accessibility, it was determined that distance learning was the most easily accessible from work or home, followed by the blended learning modality as it would be easier for U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard HR professionals to complete a distance learning portion coupled with a shorter residence portion that could be executed over a drill weekend than a longer residence portion that conflicts with annual training requirements. For Availability, rank order is identical to Accessibility as HR professionals across all three Army components are available for the three modalities of training and certification as the training is accessible. For the Evaluation Criteria Time, it was determined that the resident course would take the least amount of time with no distracters, whereas distance learning would take longer as HR professionals would most likely be performing their normal duties during the workday against competing and distracting personal time requirements, leading to a worse

dilemma for the blended learning modality trying to complete online training plus a resident portion.

For the Evaluation Criteria, Cost, it was determined from the RAND study example that starting up a distance learning program and sustaining it is less expensive to manage across all three Army components than either a PCS or TDY school, or sending an AG School trainer out to all of the Army installations worldwide to provide supplemental training and certifying HR professionals. For the last Evaluation Criteria, Effectiveness, it was determined that the most effective training and certification would be done face-to-face between instructors and students in a resident course, followed by a mixture of distance learning and resident course in the blended learning modality, with the least effectiveness as individual HR professionals complete their distance learning through electronic means without face-to-face contact.

After weighting the Evaluation Criteria against the rank-ordered COAs, it was determined that COA # 2 Distance Learning is the best modality to improve HR proficiency in HR professionals across all three Army components. This thesis clearly shows the need for augmenting or revising current training modalities with the need for web-based training driven by many factors. Table # 2 displays the Decision Matrix results. Although the resident course may provide the most effective training and certification, the distance learning modality allows the flexibility that all three Army components need due to high operational tempos and U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard schedule requirements.

Table 2. Decision Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Weight 1-5 points Lower is better	COA #1 Resident Course Rank-ordered from 1-3 Lower is better	COA #2 Distance Learning Rank-ordered from 1-3 Lower is better	COA #3 Blended Learning Rank-ordered from 1-3 Lower is better
Time	4	1 (4)	2 (8)	3 (12)
Accessibility	3	3 (9)	1 (3)	2 (6)
Availability	2	3 (6)	1 (2)	2 (4)
Cost	5	2 (10)	1 (5)	3 (15)
Effectiveness	1	1 (1)	3 (3)	2 (2)
Total (Lower is better)		30 = 2d Best	21 = Best	39 = Worst

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 5-0, *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 3-55.

A web-based, online training and certification program would be the fastest, most efficient method to train and certify the entire HR population simultaneously. A web-based course is the best modality for accessibility across all three Army components as

well. It would be available at all times, most importantly at the time and place when an HR professional needs the information around the globe regardless of time zone. Having such a program accessible online at all times eliminates the cost of HR professionals having to travel to resident courses or temporary duty locations, plus the cost of maintaining and managing a web-based system is still less than these requirements. More so, HR professionals can complete an online course from home station. Overall, this web-based training and certification system would be the most effective modality as it resolves some of the deficiencies and issues identified in this research.

Now that it's been determined that a web-based system is the best course of action, the 4th supporting research question of "what the web-based training and certification program should focus on and why" can be addressed. The Army Universal Task List (AUTL) and supporting HR doctrine all include and specifically address the ten AG Core Competencies. These ten Core Competencies are required for all HR professionals across the three Army components in order to perform our corps HR functions. Thus, these ten Core Competencies should be the focus of the web-based annual training and certification program.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Although this research did not discover specific results or assessments of Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR) implementation across the three Army components from organizations such as the Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate (PAID), the research did uncover specific HR systemic shortfalls, especially in HR training. For these reasons, this research demonstrates that Human Resource (HR) professionals need an augmentation to current HR training modalities. Important to the conclusions of this research is the necessity for change. Although this thesis neither unequivocally proves nor disproves the thesis, the greater value of the research is the identification of the many deficiencies and issues impacting the HR community across the three Army components.

Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR) implementation left HR professionals with additional HR tasks and the fact that the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) was not implemented to streamline functions added to that workload even further. Military Personnel (MILPER) and All Army Activity (ALRACT) messages change too frequently for any resident course to address and keep HR professionals up-to-date. As HR professionals directly impact every Soldier within the unit or organization, it is critical that HR professionals are trained and proficient to take care of Soldiers, civilians, and family members as HR actions directly affect readiness.

According to the findings of this thesis and the Decision Matrix results, it appears the best modality determined to augment current HR training and improve HR proficiency in HR personnel across all three Army components is a web-based distance learning system. This system includes asynchronous applications such as Blackboard to manage the courseware, SharePoint for instructors and students to share files, as well as synchronous applications such as Adobe Connect to provide live chat and video conferencing. Flexibility was the overwhelming determining factor of this analysis with the web-based system's ability to train the entire HR population simultaneously in the most efficient method possible while meeting commanders' intent. Considering 52 percent, the majority of the total Army force, is in the U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. National Guard components with full-time civilian careers, a distance learning option to their education requirements offers the flexibility to complete online training simultaneously while performing civilian jobs.¹ A high operational tempo coupled with the fact that commanders want their personnel in their commands and not extended in formal schools were factors for the U.S. Army Active Army.

This concludes that an asynchronous web-based system would be best for the purpose of this thesis. Local management of the certification of such a program could be managed through a centralized train-the-trainer to facilitate testing regionally or online. As an optional training program is left up to individuals to take, it would be necessary to mandate such a training program to ensure all HR professionals have received the most recent HR training available and are trained in the ten AG Core Competencies to provide the best service possible to their customers, mainly Soldiers.

The research also found that there is an opportunity to implement the Human Resources Management Qualification Course (HRMQC) at the Command and General Staff College's (CGSC) Intermediate Level Education (ILE). The Commanding General of the Soldier Support Institute said the Adjutant General (AG) School could bring the HRMQC to Fort Leavenworth's Command and General Staff College if necessary. The HRMQC certification is more important to HR professionals than the currently mandated SPO course, which neither covers the ten AG Core Competencies nor focuses on HR functions over the majority of the courseware. The HRMQC course could be mandated in place of the SPO course if approved to ensure HR officers are prepared and qualified for HR positions after graduating ILE instead of having a solid grasp of logistical operations. This will ensure all AG officers graduating from ILE are HRMQC certified and prepared to be BDE S1s or work theater-level HR functions in organizations such as the Human Resources Sustainment Center (HRSC). By completing the HRMQC course during ILE, there would be no need for HR officers to attend this course while serving in units, thus meeting commanders' intent of receiving their inbound officers as quickly as possible. The HRMQC and other HR courses could be offered online as either refresher courses for previous graduates of the courses to refresh their perishable HR skills or as initial enrollments for HR professionals to take to add to and enhance their HR skills.

Mentorship is important to adult learners and company grade officers want mentors engaged in their professional development. By mentoring company grade officers, HR leaders can teach, coach, and mentor them to do the same with their subordinates all the way down the chain of command, influencing Soldiers and civilians at the lowest levels for the good of the corps. AG transformation inactivated AG

organizations that used to provide this mentorship on a large scale as HR professionals became more decentralized, reducing the opportunities for HR professionals to have local leaders conduct this mentorship.

The AGCRA is taking the appropriate steps to fill this gap and bring local HR professionals together. This function could also include LPD sessions in addition to local chapter membership functions to draw in more members and enhance the AG Corps and its professionals. Legal review and further research beyond the scope of this research is necessary to determine if HR leaders can hold LPD sessions either in conjunction with or followed by AGCRA local chapter meetings. The S1 Net and other online applications have limited mentorship capabilities and do not replace the important face-to-face aspects. However, ILE and other HR courses offer the opportunity to require students to contribute to the AG Corps by submitting articles for publication, blogging on the S1 Net, and other electronic means which serve as an online mentorship function.

Senior HR professionals such as Majors attending ILE and senior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) should be considered contributors rather than consumers and be mandated to contribute to the HR community forums either through blogging or submitting professional writings. HR-centric schools or schools with HR-specific courses such as ILE could mandate students contribute directly to the AG Corps by blogging or submitting products on the S1 Net and contributing articles for publication to the 1775 magazine. Due to the AG Corps' decentralized structures and the need for the S1 Net as a means of requesting and sharing HR information and tools, adding blogging and professional writing requirements will facilitate HR professionals to become more comfortable with them and possibly enable them to utilize these HR tools more readily.

Moreover, in a time-constrained environment such as PSDR-enabled organizations, having readily accessible information on the S1 Net, articles in 1775, or other professional journals and HR sources supplements the local mentorship program. HR professionals will not always be available at the right place and the right time, but if information is posted on an online forum available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, HR professionals could be empowered with the information they require when they need it.

Although only using one data point, it was discovered that BDE S1s are being fired or soft-relieved and replaced with little to no counseling or retraining from either BDE leadership or senior HR leaders from at least one Army Service Component Command (ASCC). Although the goal is to provide commanders with the personnel and tools necessary to successfully accomplish the mission, more can be done to first select BDE S1s, then intervene when a commander is considering firing or soft-relieving the BDE S1 for not meeting their intent. This leads to the second and third-order effects associated with the firing or soft-relieving of a BDE S1. Due to a shortage of available AG Majors who may be geographically dispersed in a theater, it may double the cost to the government to operationally move and swap officers in a theater if replacements are not available locally. If a BDE S1 is fired or soft-relieved too quickly, the BDE Commander may have lost a quality officer who only needed a little counseling, mentorship, or guidance to become more successful than the replacing officer. One of the Army's largest ASCC soft-relieved three out of four BCT S1s and one BDE S1 between 2008 and 2009 and replaced the officers with no remedial training plan. Because no

remedial training plan as described above existed, this resulted in inbound officers having to be diverted or full-cost moves to swap officers within theater.

Recommendations

The most immediate recommendation that can be implemented is for senior Army leadership to ensure commands across all three Army components reinforce the fact that their BN and BDE S1 structures were intended to operate under the merger of 67 automation systems under the implementation of DIMHRS, which did not happen. The result of that decision resulted in current battalion (BN) and brigade (BDE) S1 shops being bogged down with personnel and finance systems that do not work synchronously, so they should not be tasked with non-HR related duties in order to mitigate the negative effects on Soldiers, civilians, and family members. Legacy “Adjutant” functions typically performed by the Assistant BDE S1 are disappearing from HR doctrine and if considered necessary functions should be performed by non-AG Soldiers to free AG Assistant Brigade S1s to perform BDE S1 functions such as Personnel Readiness Management in accordance with HR doctrine. Since it is expected to take about eighteen months to five years for a DIMHRS-like system to be implemented and almost as long for HR structures to be approved and implemented, any help senior Army leadership can provide in reducing or eliminating additional taskings of HR personnel, specifically PSDR-enabled BN and BDE S1 personnel, will be necessary to ensure HR professionals have the assets and capabilities to perform HR tasks in taking care of Soldiers, civilians, and family members.

Critical in this effort of ensuring non-HR leaders understand HR challenges is the Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate (PAID). They can facilitate this

understanding by publishing the results of their mission to “assess the impacts of PSDR implementation across the entire HR spectrum on the quality of services and support provided to Soldiers and commanders, identifying systemic HR shortfalls and gaps resulting from the PSDR transformation in order to provide potential solutions.”² PAID should also update their website with any positive or negative assessments as the site was last updated on October 2, 2008.

Another aspect of this effort in helping non-HR leaders understand HR and PSDR challenges is in getting them directly involved with HR leaders. To ensure BDE S1s are mission-ready to lead their BDE S1 teams and be responsible for the thousands of Soldiers within a brigade, local BDE S1 boards could be created and chaired by local HR leaders and the BDE S1s’ gaining commanders to select and approve potential BDE S1s prior to being selected for that position. This could be a standardized Army-wide annual leader board exam conducted by the theater HR leadership or installation HR leaders in conjunction with local commanders with more mission-specific criteria and expectations.

This also ensures local leader involvement from the beginning of placing a BDE S1 into position and mitigates the decentralized nature of the PSDR community while ensuring the right HR professionals are placed in the right positions at the right times. This proactive approach could lead potential BDE S1s to seek mentorship to better prepare for the position as well as initiate senior AG leaders to teach, coach, and mentor their subordinates who are about to take a BDE S1 position and during their duty as BDE S1. Due to shortages coupled with high operational tempo (OPTEMPO), a modified version of this system could be reduced to a more informal process. The main idea here is that there is more leader involvement in the process.

The benefits of such a process continue while the BDE S1 serves in the BDE. If or when a BDE Commander feels the BDE S1 is not meeting his or her expectations or is performing poorly, that BDE Commander should have local senior HR leaders to contact first to provide remedial HR training to either correct the deficiencies of the BDE S1, confirm the roles and responsibilities of the BDE S1, or address and resolve specific issues. This should be the first course of action rather than just looking for replacements and soft-relieving or firing the BDE S1. This HR support structure centralizes a decentralized AG Corps and allows HR leaders to directly impact BDE S1s and help them meet commanders' expectations to successfully accomplish the mission. This approach should also drastically reduce the negative effects on Soldiers as well by providing BDE S1s with a support structure to address concerns before they become major issues.

The most significant recommendation is for AG Branch to work with the Department of the Army (DA) G1 and G3 to implement a synchronous web-based training and certification program that mandates HR professionals to complete annual online HR training and certification to maintain HR proficiency in the ten AG Corps Competencies. In accordance with Army Regulation 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, activities may request a waiver to the regulation by providing justification that includes a full analysis of the expected benefits and must include a formal review by the activity's senior legal officer, endorsed by the commander or senior leader of the requesting activity, forwarded through their higher headquarters to the policy proponent. This thesis provides the support of that analysis and the mitigating factors that benefit Soldiers, civilians, and family members. A system such as Blackboard already in use

throughout the Army could be used to administer the program. The AG School's current instruction and management team should develop and certify this annual web-based certification and training program so HR professionals either initially enroll and complete an online course or have the course material available online to review, retest and re-certify to retain perishable HR skills.

A third recommendation is for the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and schools such as ILE to continue making existing courses more open and flexible to AG branch to allow the opportunity to implement curriculum changes that sustain strengths and improve current and immediate weaknesses in the field. For example, the CGSC branch representative for the AG Corps could be responsible for formally counseling (quarterly) or augmenting the Small Group Advisor's (SGA) counseling while assisting in evaluating ILE students by teaching, coaching, and mentoring them during the Common Core, the Advanced Operations Course (AOC), and electives period. This includes the CGSC AG Branch representative conducting Officer Professional Development (OPD) sessions throughout ILE, conducting Mission Analysis (MA) sessions during the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) for the Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), Division, and Brigade exercises in AOC (W100, W200, W300), as well as preparing students for their next assignment during the ILE electives period.

A fourth recommendation is for TRADOC to continue resident courses such as the Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC), the Adjutant General Captain's Career Course (AGCCC), and ILE to maintain peer-to-peer contacts. These contacts build friendships and support chains that span a career. These contacts are vital when HR professionals

move between positions and offer an opportunity to share knowledge and experience bases between each other. These strong bonds of trust may not be created and developed in distance learning environments since they are less personal. Senior-level courses, specifically ILE HR electives, should mandate senior HR professionals to submit blogs and professional writings for publication in journals such as 1775. This strongly supports 1775 revamping its journal in a more professional development style format.

A fifth recommendation is to utilize the Adjutant General Corps' Regimental Association (AGCRA) to bring members together geographically in various theaters and regions to tie-in HR Leader Professional Development (LPD) sessions involving officers, warrant officers, enlisted and civilians, whether they're members of the local chapter or not. Local chapter AGCRA meetings could be preceded with an HR LPD, then followed by an AGCRA-specific agenda to allow non-members to stay to receive information on the local chapter or just leave after the LPD. Either way, it's a win-win situation as local chapters successfully bring HR professionals together to address area-specific issues through LPD sessions in a group forum while still meeting chapter goals. This technique may improve membership as well, but the intent mentioned here is the aforementioned as the goal is to bring HR professionals together locally and not harass or make them feel like LPDs are "recruiting" techniques for AGCRA local chapters.

A sixth recommendation is for HRC to more centrally manage HR professionals through AKO and other forums to ensure they are receiving MILPER messages, AG branch news, HR policy changes, and AG updates to the field. HR professionals should receive emails directly from AG leadership, especially from the AG School Commandant on the "Updates to the Field." This direct mailing more centralizes a decentralized AG

Corps and brings subordinates in touch with distant AG leaders. Just as all Soldiers automatically receive an Army Knowledge Online (AKO) email account, all existing and new HR professionals should be automatically registered membership into the S1 Net due to the significant impact AG professionals have on the accountability, promotions, evaluations, awards, pay, morale, and livelihood of their customers. Encouraging self-development to individual AG professionals by ensuring they have the tools necessary to help themselves is a critical first step for AG Branch leadership to subordinates and junior HR professionals.

A seventh recommendation is for AG Branch to work with TRADOC to get the HRMQC course implemented at ILE and mandate this course via AR 350-1 and other appropriate approval authorizations for AG officers in ILE whether on assignment to BDE S1 positions or theater-level organizations such as the HRSC or not. Even if an AG officer is not on follow-on assignment from ILE into a BDE S1 or theater-level position, per Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 600-3 and the AG Branch Manager's intent to get AG Majors Key Developmental (KD)-qualified as soon as possible, this HR course provides AG officers with both BDE-centric and theater-level HR training designed for KD qualifying positions. This mandate should come at the cost of eliminating the requirement for AG officers in ILE to take the mandated Support Operations (SPO) course, which counts as two electives, but is mainly tailored to logisticians under Force Sustainment.

This ILE HRMQC course could consist of entirely resident courseware or a combination of an online, pre-requisite portion and a resident course portion offered during the ILE electives phase in place of the SPO course. Considering the SPO course is

only forty eight hours total, the HRMQC course could be offered during ILE in a slightly reduced and modified format from the HRMQC-Reserve Component (HRMQC-RC).

This could be a three-to-one ratio between one hundred twelve hours of distance learning that could be started any time prior to reporting to ILE and continued during the ILE Common Core and AOC phases with forty eight hours of resident phase during the ILE electives phase. This HRMQC resident phase would replace the forty eight hour SPO course during ILE electives, which has a mandatory sixteen hour online pre-requisite phase. The overall delta between the ILE SPO course and the recommended ILE HRMQC is an additional ninety six hours of online training.

The last recommendation is that the AG School Homepage at <http://www.ags.army.mil/> must be corrected both on the civilian web browsers and through AKO “Files” to ease access for HR professionals. If HR-related websites are going to be revamped or shut-down for even short periods of time, notification messages should be sent out through the S1 Net or emailed directly to HR professionals via AKO email.

Suggestions for Further Research

As the PSDR Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate (PAID) website was last updated October 2008 and there were no studies discovered during the course of this research study on the effects of PSDR implementation, further quantitative research or PAID assessments should be conducted and posted. The effects of PSDR implementation across the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and U.S. National Guard should be known as the U.S. National Guard was the last to implement PSDR as scheduled by the end of August 2009. Part of this research should include how many personnel DIMHRS was supposed to replace in BN and BDE S1 shops when the 67

automated personnel and finance systems merged into one as well as any ways to mitigate the delta in the short-term until a DIMHRS-like system can be implemented. Another aspect of this research could include a topic from the War College's Key Strategic Issues List, which is how Soldiers as HR customers perceive the quality and timeliness of personnel services provided under the PSDR structure. This research should show perceptions in the field of HR professionals and help identify issues in training that will assist the AG School in modifying curriculum to compensate and address appropriately.

Another research topic relating to DIMHRS implementation could be conducted on exactly what DIMHRS was supposed to do, what it was actually capable of after years of development, and what a DIMHRS-like automation system should do under Army modularization. This research would be invaluable in the development or modification of the new DIMHRS-like automation system the Army is creating as every BN and BDE S1 shop across the Army components were preparing and training for that system and are currently waiting for an integrated personnel and pay system to be implemented as originally planned.

Researching the potential and immediate impact of locally augmenting BDE S1 shops with financial management specialists from the Finance Management (FM) Centers and other finance structures to mitigate the fact that DIMHRS wasn't implemented to automatically initiate financial management transactions with personnel transactions is another important research topic. This research would show if current FM Centers could utilize FM specialists to augment S1 sections to immediately and positively impact Soldiers, civilians, and family members.

Research could also be conducted on the importance of meeting commanders' expectations and the importance of inter-personal relationships between S1s and their commanders to determine if these factors play a significant role in the success or failure of BN and BDE S1s. The fact that three out of four BCT S1s and another Maneuver, Fires and Effects BDE S1 were soft-relieved in one ASCC is inconclusive without specific details regarding the dynamics of each situation. These dynamics could include a lack of HR technical expertise, a lack of management skills, poor inter-personal skills, learning how to deal with your boss and meet expectations, or any number of issues. This research could prove extremely useful in preparing future BDE S1s to be successful in this very demanding position.

Further research could be conducted on the effectiveness of current HR training. This research could study the percentage of HRMQC graduates who serve in successful BDE S1 positions compared with non-HRMQC graduates. This paper did not analyze enough data points across the Army and was only limited to a few officer case studies. The enlisted, Warrant Officer, officer, and civilian training modalities and methods focusing on "training" versus "education" may be what the AG officer corps needs to migrate to since our branch migrated from being command-centric to S1-centric.

Another research study relating to the effectiveness of earlier promotions could be done on the impacts of double below-the-zone promotions to Major for AG officers. This is especially important for Captains (CPTs) just completing company command, getting promoted double below-the-zone to Major to serve as BDE S1s, a position designed for officers with Major-level experiences. These officers face even greater demands as they will lack the level of maturity, experience and expertise required by commanders.

These additional research topics are offered to expand and improve the AG Corps of HR professionals. Through teamwork, dedication, and perseverance, the AG Corps will continue to succeed in difficult times and through HR transformation. Communication and shared knowledge of best business practices will be the key to success. Whether enlisted, Warrant Officer, officer, civilian, or contractor, it will take one team of committed professionals to drive through challenges and continuously improve efforts in taking care of Soldiers, civilians, and family members.

¹BG William D. R. Waff, Electronic correspondence with author, 25 November 2009.

²U.S. Army Human Resources Command, “Personnel Assessment and Integration Directorate,” U.S. Army Human Resources Command, <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/CDID/PSDR/html/paid.html> (accessed September 25, 2009).

GLOSSARY

- 01A. Branch-immaterial positions Soldiers can serve in outside their basic branch or military occupational skills (MOS)
- Base Operations. Non-deployable (TDA) organizations and functions, mainly for non PSDR-enabled units
- Blended Learning. A combination of resident learning and distance learning to complete a course. The resident learning portion can either be at home station or requiring the student to travel to the resident course location.
- Branch 42. Designation code for Human Resource professionals in the Adjutant General's Corps
- Branch Detail Program. The goal of this 48 month program is to ensure branches with large lieutenant requirements are filled to their required levels using lieutenants' donor branches (basic branches) with fewer lieutenant requirements such as Adjutant General, Finance, Military Police, Military Intelligence, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Signal, and Transportation. Recipient branches for the branch detail program are Air Defense Artillery, Armor, Chemical, Field Artillery and Infantry.
- Brigade S1s. This includes all S1s at the brigade level including but not limited to Brigade Combat Team S1s, Combat Aviation Brigade S1s, Sustainment Brigade S1s, Stryker Brigade Combat Team S1s.
- C/J1. HR professionals at the combined forces command and joint levels that support divisions and corps
- Centralized, web-based annual training and certification program. A program created, managed, and continuously updated for HR professionals to augment existing HR training to maintain perishable HR skills through annual web-based training with testing to officially certify HR professionals at a baseline of HR knowledge.
- Certification. As part of the thesis statement, defined as HR professionals completing prescribed training requirements to obtain or renew a certificate stating completion of AG Core Competencies. A form of private or government credentialing standards described as the process of meeting certain professional and technical standards and earning official recognition to ensure individuals meet the standards for their profession.¹ Standards could require a combination of the following: education, training, work or professional experience, examinations, other unique job-related requirements, how recently the training or experience took place, periodic renewal, typically every one to three years, continuing education requirements or reexamination requirements associated with renewal.²
- DIMHRS. The Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System is a Congressionally-mandated program with efforts spearheaded through the Department of Defense (DoD) that will provide the Services with an integrated, multi-component, personnel and pay system

Distance Education, or Distance Learning. Non-resident instruction provided at a distance to the physical location of a student through use of computers, video conferencing, internet, email, and other forms of media

Division G1. HR professionals at the division level that provide direct HR support to subordinate elements (brigades, separate battalions)

Functional Area 43. Designation code for Human Resource professionals in the Adjutant General's Corps who were merged with Branch 42 personnel

G1. HR professionals at the division and corps levels that support brigades and separate battalions

HR Professionals. Active Duty, U.S. Army Reserve, and National Guard Soldiers, civilians and contractors either in the Human Resources field or serving in a Human Resources position. As described below, the word Soldiers includes enlisted, Warrant Officers, and officers.

HR Readiness. The HR professional's level of proficiency in HR technical skills in providing the correct and appropriate HR customer service

KD. Key Developmental related to meeting branch requirements for qualification at certain ranks, formerly known as branch qualified

LPD, OPD, NCOPD. Leader, Officer, and Non-Commissioned Officer (respectively) Professional Development training sessions

MPD. Military Personnel Division, responsible for performing HR functions for non-PSDR-enabled units and organizations

Resident Education. Instruction provided at the same physical location of a student using face-to-face instructor-student relationships.

Redesignate. When an Army unit changes its name or higher headquarters (HQ)

Resident Learning. Physically attending a course either at home station or traveling to the resident course site or school.

S1 (Adjutants). HR professionals at the brigade and battalion level that support battalions and companies, respectively

S1-Centric. Relating to a career track centered on a more technically oriented Human Resources functions career track compared to a command-centric career track which focuses more on leadership traits

S1 NET. A voluntary, web-based HR inter-active application that allows members to interact via blogs, submit, and access HR-related material

Soft-Relieved. The process of unofficially firing and potentially replacing them without utilizing the referred evaluation process. This process may include negative counselings due to poor performance or not meeting commanders' intent.

Soldier. A person serving in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserves, or U.S. National Guard including enlisted, Warrant Officers, and officers.

Theater. In Army terminology, commonly referred to a deployed environment, such as Kuwait, Iraq, or Afghanistan.

Web-Based. An internet application all HR professionals in the U.S. Active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and National Guard will be able to access (through Army Knowledge Online (AKO) or other means)

¹Army Credentialing Opportunities Online, “What is credentialing and why is it so important?” https://www.cool.army.mil/credentialing_basics.htm (accessed October 14, 2009).

²Ibid.

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