



PEO STRI

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ARMY STRONG.

U.S. ARMY PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICE
FOR SIMULATION, TRAINING AND INSTRUMENTATION

Contacts

Program Executive Officer
Dr. James Blake
407-384-3502

Deputy Program Executive Officer
Col. Ken Wheeler
407-384-3524

Business Operations Executive
Mr. Rob Reyenga
407-384-3505

Customer Support Executive
Mr. Pete Marion
407-384-3799

Project Support Executive
Ms. Traci Jones
407-384-3770

Project Manager Combined Arms
Tactical Trainers (PM CATT)
Col. Francisco Espallat
407-384-3600

Project Manager Constructive
Simulation (PM ConSim)
Col. Karen Saunders
407-384-3651

Program Manager Field Operations
(PM Field OPS)
Mr. Russ McBride
407-384-3690

Project Manager Future Force
(Simulation) (PM FF(S))
Jeff Simons
407-243-3448

Project Manager Instrumentation,
Targets and Threat Simulators
(PM ITTS)
Col. David Lockhart
407-384-5250

Project Manager Training Devices
(PM TRADE)
Col. Fred Mullins
407-384-5200

Principal Assistant Responsible for
Contracting (PARC)
Ken Tedeschi
407-384-5113



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PEO STRI At a Glance

Who We Are

- ★ Military, government civilians and contractor teams working together.
- ★ Member of Team Orlando: Central Florida military, industry and academic institutions.
- ★ Acquisition agency executing a \$3.5 billion budget in support of the Army.

What We Do

- ★ Develop, acquire, field and sustain cutting-edge training and testing devices.
- ★ Support multi-domain training in the live, virtual, constructive and gaming areas.

How We Do It

- ★ Charter emphasizes a joint perspective to support U.S. defense initiatives.
- ★ Training aids, devices and simulations supporting U.S. and coalition service members.
- ★ An Army Acquisition Center of Excellence with Head of Contracting Activity authority.

Mission

- ★ To provide responsive interoperable simulation, training, and testing solutions and acquisition services for the Warfighters and the nation.

Critical Tasks

- ★ Provide simulation, training and testing products and services.
- ★ Expand beyond the traditional products and services.
- ★ Provide an integrated and interoperable infrastructure.
- ★ Shape a world-class workforce with acquisition, functional and leadership skills.
- ★ Provide a full range of contracting and acquisition services for effective, efficient and responsive life-cycle management.
- ★ Implement U.S. Army policy for acquisition of system training devices.

Public Affairs Office
407-384-5224

Industry Customer Contact
407-384-3773

General Information
407-384-3500

www.peostri.army.mil



JAMES T. BLAKE, PH.D.

Program Executive Officer U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation

Dr. James T. Blake serves as the program executive officer for the U.S. Army PEO STRI and head of contracting activity for Army simulation, training and instrumentation. He is responsible for providing materiel solutions and services in modeling, simulation, training and test-instrumentation to support the Warfighter.

Blake retired as an Army colonel after a distinguished military career. In his last assignment, Blake was the Army's senior uniformed scientist. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the Defense Systems Management College, and the U.S. Army War College. He has a Ph.D. in computer science from Duke University.

Following his military career, Blake held several technical and executive positions in industry before joining academia where he served as a senior research scientist at Texas A&M University. While at Texas A&M, Blake joined the Simulation, Training and Instrumentation Command as the program manager for the Institute for Creative Technologies.

In March 2003, he became a member of the Senior Executive Service. From March 2003 until June 2005, Blake served as the deputy program executive officer for PEO STRI.

A Message from the PEO

We are in an era of persistent conflict, so therefore it is clear that our Army and its capability will be in high demand for many years to come.

At PEO STRI, we are truly cognizant of this state of affairs, and as such, we are preparing the Soldier of today, and the Soldier of tomorrow, with the best available training enablers. Whether our force is engaged in peace keeping missions, counterinsurgency, or major combat operations, we pledge to provide timely, realistic, readily-available, cost efficient and safe training to America's greatest asset, its Warfighters.

When we learned of the critical need for operator training for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, PEO STRI quickly responded by getting MRAP driver and egress trainers into the hands of our Warfighters.

Similarly, we have become strikingly aware of the benefits that gaming technology provides our younger Soldiers in honing their decision-making, communication and team building skills. In response, PEO STRI replaced the original game we were fielding with one that is more attuned to the situations our Soldiers face on today's battlefield.

In order to get these training enablers to our Warfighters in an accelerated manner, we are committed to an efficient approach to Army acquisition. Our recent award of the second STRI Omnibus Contract, or STOC II, is a clear example of our commitment.

PEO STRI is one element of the Army's acquisition team in which we work closely with our combat developers to find solutions to procurement challenges. Without a doubt, we could not accomplish this large task without a highly professional and well-educated workforce. In order to keep our team at an optimal level, we have created an Acquisition Academy to introduce new employees to the federal workforce through an 11-week Army internship program.

In the next few pages, you will find many examples of what derives from a strong workforce coupled with an unwavering dedication to the Warfighter. Mission first, people always. Army Strong! ☆



New MRAP Vehicles Call for New Training

As the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) family of fighting vehicles became the highest-sought mode of transportation in the combat zone, PEO STRI responded with a driver and egress trainer to prepare Soldiers for the new vehicle they would be operating.

Specifically, Soldiers at Camp Shelby, Miss., were the first to receive the driver trainer Jan. 27, 2009, and Warfighters in Iraq will be the first to get the egress trainer the end of February 2009. In total, 20 driver trainers are expected to be delivered over the next year, and nearly 30 egress trainers are scheduled to be fielded in the coming months.

The driver trainer, called the Common Driver Trainer MRAP variant, “trains critical driver tasks in a virtual simulator that are too dangerous or infrequently trained in the live training environment,” said Lt. Col. Charlie Stein, product manager for ground combat tactical trainers.

Some of the dangerous situations that Soldiers are currently encountering in theater that this trainer takes into consideration are bad driving conditions like dilapidated roads and weak bridges, combat conditions like roadside bombs or ambushes, and mere driver error.

While the training mission is relatively the same for all the Soldiers using the simulation, the type of vehicle they will be operating in the war zone could very well vary as there are a handful of different MRAP vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As a result, PEO STRI will field five types of MRAP vehicles: a mine-resistant light armored vehicle (RG-33L), a multipurpose mine-protected vehicle (RG-31), an armored fighting vehicle (MaxxPro), an armored vehicle with a V-hull design based on the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (Caiman), and the Marines’ armored fighting vehicle (Cougar).

“With the driver trainer, we are

focusing on the fidelity of the vehicle and its dynamics—the point at which the vehicle will rollover,” Stein explained. “To accurately do this, we’ve worked with the subject matter experts in this field: equipment manufacturers and Soldiers who’ve operated an MRAP in theater.”

The CDT-MRAP variant is based on PEO STRI’s original driver trainer for the Stryker vehicle and the follow-on improvements made with the tank variant.

“It was beneficial to model the new MRAP driver trainers on previous driver trainers because we were able leverage the same motion base and instructor stations on the Stryker and tank variants,” Stein said.

“This gives units the flexibility to change cabs and train on the MRAP, Stryker, tank, and some day in the near future, a tactical wheeled vehicle,” he noted.

Much like the Stryker and tank driver trainers, the MRAP trainer also includes a motion platform, image generators, an instructor/operator station and an after action review station. Most importantly, the Common Driver Trainer family of driving simulations is modular, interchangeable and allows multiple variants to be compatible with the common training platform.

“All these qualities are important because they contribute to maintainability, sustainability and a cost-avoidance to the Army,” Stein said.

As with the driver trainer, the egress trainer enables the Soldier to become proficient in tasks that cannot be taught in a live environment.

The MRAP egress trainer is modeled on PEO STRI’s High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle Egress Assistance Trainer, and much like its predecessor, the “MRAP trainer proves to be an Army solution to an Army problem,” noted Dr. James Blake, program executive officer for PEO STRI.

Many organizations within the Army came together to make both egress trainers a reality. The Tank-Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center designed and built the prototype. The effort was funded by the Army and the Marines’ joint office, Program Manager MRAP.

Once the prototype was certified for safety, the Red River Army Depot began production of the trainers based on the prototype.

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U.S. Army Photo/Norbert Granchi

The Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles are a family of armored fighting vehicles designed to increase survivability of improvised explosive device attacks and ambushes in Iraq and Afghanistan. An MRAP vehicle located at Firebase Ripley, pictured above, in the southern region of Afghanistan.

Contracting Vehicle Positions PEO STRI to Better Support U.S. and Coalition Troops

PEO STRI granted 142 awards to more than 120 companies for the second STRI Omnibus Contract, known as STOC II, Jan. 27, 2009. STOC II, valued at \$17.5 billion over the next 10 years, serves as an efficient contracting vehicle in order to quickly get simulation and training products and services into the hands of U.S. and coalition service members.

“STOC II is PEO STRI’s newest contract vehicle providing continued responsiveness to the Warfighter,” noted John Daniele, deputy customer support executive for PEO STRI. “It is positioned and structured to meet the demands of the current and future operating environments with relevant and responsive solutions for the nation.”

Companies competing in STOC II were evaluated in two categories: the Full and Open Lot and the Partial Small Business Set Aside Lot. Small companies competing in the Full and Open Lot also had the opportunity to compete in the Partial Small Business Set-Aside Lot, and vice-versa. Two lots were established in order to enhance PEO STRI’s ability to achieve its small business goals.

In response to the STOC II Request for Proposal, PEO STRI evaluated 158 compliant proposals in which 127 proposals (60 large companies and 67 small companies) were entertained in the Full and Open Lot, and 98 proposals were assessed in the Partial Small Business Set-Aside Lot.

The proposals were evaluated based on four core factors detailed in the Request for Proposal: past performance, management, small business participation plan (applicable only to the large companies in the Full and Open Lot) and cost/price.

“The overall purpose of STOC II is to have highly-qualified contractors on-hand to rapidly satisfy the needs of our nation’s Warfighters,” explained Brian Murphy, the PEO STRI contracting officer responsible for STOC II.

Existing STOC I contracts—which were awarded in four different categories: Live, Virtual, Constructive and Test-Instrumentation—remain a viable solution during the transition period until each respective domain expires. The first domain, Test-Instrumentation, expires late February, 2009. The remaining domains expire March 2009.

“Leveraging experience with the STOC I contract, STOC II accommodates emerging requirements, technologies and innovation via access to an extensive array of industry and academia capabilities,” Daniele advised.

Companies outside of STOC II will still be able to do business with PEO STRI. Murphy advises, “STOC II is just one tool in a contracting officer’s toolkit.” ★



Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) Vehicles *Continued...*

Finally, PEO STRI is responsible for getting the device into the hands of the Warfighters in which the initial fielding schedule calls for 25 egress trainers to go to the Army in the theater of combat operations. Additionally, three devices will go to the Marines.

“Without a doubt, MRAP driver and egress trainers are important because many of the Soldiers and Marines driving MRAP vehicles down range won’t get the opportunity to operate these vehicle until they’re in the theater of combat operations. We are giving our Warfighters the opportunity to train prior to getting in the seat,” Stein said. ★



U.S. Army Photo/Red River Army Depot

PEO STRI’s Common Driver Trainer MRAP variant provides Soldiers the opportunity to train on a simulated vehicle before operating the actual MRAP in Iraq or Afghanistan. The first MRAP driver trainer, pictured above, was delivered to Camp Shelby, Miss., January 2008. A total of 20 trainers are expected to be fielded in 2009.

Army Takes Gaming to the Next Level

Soldiers all over the United States, and even in three locations abroad, will soon be training on the Army's newest game, Virtual Battlespace 2, or VBS-2 for short. In fact, Soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas, were the first to receive the Army's official game for training in early February 2009.

PEO STRI will continue the fielding of VBS-2 to Forts Bragg, N.C., Carson, Colo., and Lewis, Wash., through March 2009.

"The Army takes gaming technology seriously because small unit leaders are highly receptive to using a technology they have grown up with. Small units use games for training to refine decision-making skills associated with shoot, move and communicate collective tasks in a mounted or dismounted environment," explained Lt. Col. Gary Stephens, product manager for air and command tactical trainers.

VBS-2, the Army's next generation of games for training, was procured by PEO STRI in response to an operational needs statement from the U.S. Army Forces Command. The contract was awarded Dec. 19, 2008 to Laser Shot, Inc., for \$17.7 million over the next five years. In addition to the contract award for software, PEO STRI awarded a \$6 million contract to CDW-G for the actual computers.

From February to September 2009, PEO STRI will field 70 training systems to 53 locations across the continental United States, Germany, Italy and South Korea. Each system consists of 52 laptop computers and the associated peripheral gaming equipment.

Previous to VBS-2, PEO STRI fielded the original game for training Soldiers, DARWARS Ambush!. The effort fielded 3,000 copies of the game to the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Defense since 2006.

Much like DARWARS Ambush!, VBS-2 is a first-person shooter game that portrays a realistic operational environment. In addition, both games offer an after action review capability.

The new game, however, has significant improvements over its predecessor. First, the geographical terrain database has increased from 13 kilometers by 13 kilometers to 100 kilometers by 100

kilometers. "The larger geographical space better represents the current operational environment," Stephens said.

Secondly, VBS-2 offers a three-dimensional mission editor that allows users to make changes to the training scenario in real time. Additionally, a more user-friendly mission editor permits users to easily create training scenarios that are designated to meet training objectives.

Furthermore, the new game includes a Distributed Interactive Simulation-High Level Architecture interface that allows the system to interoperate with other virtual, constructive and battle command systems.

While PEO STRI is responsible for acquiring and fielding the game, the Training and Doctrine Command Training Capabilities Manager for Gaming is responsible for determining requirements and what skills Soldiers should learn from the game.

The game replicates what Soldiers encounter on today's battlefield so that users can practice a multitude of kinetic and non-kinetic skills—everything from operating in an urban terrain and reacting to ambush operations to cultural and language awareness, explained Col. Mark McManigal, the TRADOC capabilities manager for gaming. ★



Did You know?

One of the Army's new field manuals, *Training for Full Spectrum Operations*, states that gaming is the use of technology employing commercial or government off-the-shelf, multi-genre games in a realistic, semi-immersive environment to support education and training. Although the Army has used games informally for many years, it had never established a formal sustainable program for the acquisition and use of games until April 2008. VBS-2 was developed as the first official Army game to train and educate Soldiers, leaders and organizations.



U.S. Army Photo/Training and Doctrine Command Capabilities Manager for Gaming Photo

PEO STRI began fielding Virtual Battlespace 2, the Army's newest computer game for training, February 2008. The game replicates the environment and situations that Soldiers are facing in the current theater of combat operations.



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Acquisition Academy: Helping to Improve the Way New Employees are Introduced to the Federal Government Workforce

In October 2008, PEO STRI graduated its first Acquisition Academy class of 21 contract specialist interns in which all of the students successfully completed the coursework and earned themselves a position in the organization's Acquisition Center. Due to the success of the inaugural class, PEO STRI will kick-off the second Acquisition Academy class March 2008.

While the first class focused primarily on Army contracting, the subsequent course covers an array of acquisition-related career fields: engineering, budget and program analysis, acquisition logistics, program management and contracting. As such, nearly 20 Acquisition Academy interns were hired into a specific career path.

"For the second class, we wanted to create an integrated product team environment," said Jean Burmester, dean of the Acquisition Academy. "With the multiple career programs integrated into one class, the interns will experience a typical work environment where many different people representing various functional areas work together on a program."

The class—comprised of two project directors, three program analysts, a logistics management specialist, two budget analysts, six contract specialists and four engineers—will learn about their functional areas by studying an actual PEO STRI program: the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System.

In addition to the career-specific work, the interns will accomplish a multitude of

administrative tasks during the 11-week multidisciplinary program. They will apply for and receive security clearances, e-mail accounts and identification badges. Interns will also learn important information about federal employment, like government benefits, how to correctly report time and attendance, and how to use the Defense Travel System. They will receive ethics training, an orientation from their functional career representative and information on the National Security Personnel System.

The interns will also learn about the PEO STRI mission, its strategic plan and the role of each of the project managers. They will be taught about Army organizations, installations, ranks and how the Army is structured.

"During the course, the class will travel to a nearby Army installation to see how Soldiers live and train," Burmester noted. "The interns will even see many of the training products and services they will be supporting at PEO STRI."

Upon the completion of the course, Burmester said success will be defined not only by attracting, but more importantly, retaining the new federal employees that, through the Academy, will have the essential knowledge and skills necessary for successful acquisition management at PEO STRI.

"Ensuring interns are provided the appropriate acquisition and functional requirements will go a long way in enabling PEO STRI to meet the Warfighters' vital mission requirements," Burmester noted. ★

DON'T MISS PEO STRI AT THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

GameTech User's Conference
March 9 - 12, 2009

Game Developers Conference
March 23 - 27, 2009

OneSAF Users Conference
March 30 - April 3, 2009

Army Aviation Association of America Convention
May 3-6, 2009

International Training Exhibition and Conference
May 12-14, 2009

Training, Simulation and Industry Symposium
June 10-11, 2009

AUSA Medical Conference
July 21-24, 2009

National Guard Association of the U.S. Conference
September 11-13, 2009

Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting
October 5-7, 2009

Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference
November 30 - December 3, 2009

**12350 RESEARCH PARKWAY
ORLANDO, FL 32826-3276**

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