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## 2017-18 Key Strategic Issues List

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**U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE**  
**KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES LIST**

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2018**

**U.S. Army War College Press**

**Part I: Chief of Staff of the Army Special Interest  
Topics**

**Part II: Army Priorities for Strategic Analysis**

**Academic Year 2018**

07 Aug 2017

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Comments pertaining to this publication are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, 47 Ashburn Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013-5010.

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For over a decade, the USAWC has published the annual Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) to inform students, faculty, and external research associates of strategic topics requiring research and analysis. Part I of the Academic Year (AY) 2018 KSIL, referred to as the Chief of Staff of the Army Special Interest Topics, consists of critical topics demanding special attention. A subset of these topics will be addressed by the USAWC as Integrated Research Projects. Part II: Army Priorities for Strategic Analysis, has been developed by the U.S. Army War College in coordination with Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) and Major Commands throughout the Army. The KSIL will help prioritize strategic research and analysis conducted by USAWC students and faculty, USAWC Fellows, and external researchers, to link their research efforts and results more effectively to the Army's highest priority topics.

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# FOREWORD

Today's global security environment remains volatile, uncertain, and complex. Resurgent, revanchist, and unstable states, and radical terrorist organizations continue to challenge the international order, undermine peace and stability, and threaten U.S. interests. In the face of this, the United States Army remains America's combat force of decision. If the political leaders of the United States decide to deploy its Army, the Nation's opponents know they will be defeated. This certainty is the foundation of America's deterrent capability.

Near-term readiness remains the Army's most pressing focus but we also must anticipate the broad nature of the future challenges, potential threats, and the military options that the Army and Joint Force will need to present to America's political leaders.

The Army's educational institutions and its larger network of thinkers are instrumental in helping meet both near-term and future challenges, particularly by using rigorous research and analysis to develop ideas for Army leaders. The U.S. Army War College's Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL), which is developed in coordination with Headquarters, Department of the Army and major Army commands, helps insure that researchers fulfill this task by focusing on the most pressing strategic issues.

The KSIL is built around broad themes which will remain of interest to the Army in the coming years. Each theme associates specific research issues meriting analysis. In a broad sense, the strategic issues deal with developing and using the Army in ways that maximize its effectiveness and strategic utility across the wide range of potential missions. This includes both military operations and the efficient management of the institutional Army.

Since these are issues which Army leaders collectively have identified as important, I strongly encourage researchers throughout the military professional educational system and across the Army's network of thinkers to use them as platforms for generating ideas. This will help the Army prepare for the future and remain ready to address America's present security threats, as well as those it might face in the future.



John S. Kern  
Major General  
Commandant, U.S. Army War College



## INTRODUCTION

The United States Army War College (USAWC) prepares the Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) annually to help focus the research community on topics important to the U.S. Army, as determined by three criteria:

*Relevance.* Research on KSIL topics must have the potential to shape Army actions or policies rather than being background information or for "situational awareness."

*Priority.* Selection of KSIL topics is informed by Department of Defense, Joint, and Army strategic guidance and through the collaboration of defense scholars and military experts.

*Suitability.* The KSIL is tailored to the research capabilities of the USAWC. Highly technical issues requiring specialized or perishable expertise are better handled by other research and analysis organizations.

The KSIL is organized into eight enduring strategic themes. The third theme, regional in focus, is subdivided into six sub-themes. Listed under each theme and sub-theme are high-priority strategic issues that focus potential research.

Each annual update of the KSIL considers the previous year's strategic themes and issues. While the strategic themes tend to remain constant from year to year, the strategic issues change often in response to the security environment, defense policy, and ongoing research.

In order to cultivate original thinking in research, rather than plow over the same ground, there are no points of contact listed in the KSIL this year.

The Army Study Program Management Office (ASPMO), a subordinate element of the Army G8, publishes annually a list of focus areas for research. The Fiscal Year 2018 list, reproduced below, covers a broad range of topics that exceeds the scope of the KSIL. The KSIL may thus be viewed as addressing a subset of the ASPMO list, but, at the strategic level.

- Total Force Readiness;
- Expeditionary Army Capabilities and Capacity;
- Challenges to Army in the Future Fight;
- Current and Emerging Gaps: Fires, Air/Missile/Unmanned-Aerial-System;
- Defense, Armor, Cyberspace, Information/Coercion, Electronic Warfare, Multi-Domain, Anti-Access Area Denial;



- Training and Leader Development;
- Soldier & Family Resiliency;
- Organic Industrial Base, Munitions, and Enterprise Logistics;
- Generating Force Readiness: Army Workforce Mix;
- Security Assistance, Stabilization, and Counter-Extremism;
- Army Financial Management, Information Technology, Real Property Management, Health Care Management, Human Resources, and Procurement.

While the KSIL is published annually, the revision process is continuous. Send feedback and suggestions for future KSIL themes and issues to Colonel Todd Key at [todd.e.key.mil@mail.mil](mailto:todd.e.key.mil@mail.mil).

## Part I:

### Précis of Chief of Staff of the Army Special Interest Topics

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- Are the Army's current deployment and distribution processes and systems adequate to support an expeditionary force in future operating environments? What lessons have previous studies revealed that should inform future deployment and distribution capability choices for the Army?
- Does the U.S. possess the capabilities and capacity to ensure long-term stability on the Korean Peninsula after combat operations? If not, what functions must the U.S. Army be prepared to perform to ensure success during post-conflict operations?
- How do decisions and actions of intergovernmental organizations, such as NATO and the EU, impact U.S. land force missions and associated organizations, functions, capabilities, and capacity? How can the Army ensure adequate regional access and capabilities are available when required in Europe?
- How prepared is the Army to make ready, deploy, employ, and sustain a totally mobilized Army? What actions can the Army take to prepare the mobilization enterprise, the national industrial base, and strategic transportation to support such mobilization?
- What are the potential impacts of climate change on: a) the character of war, b) vital U.S. national interests; c) emerging security challenges for the United States? How could these impacts affect landpower and the organization, training, and equipping of the U.S. Army?

What strategic components are essential for durable U.S. military advantage across and within the land, air, sea, space, cyber, information, and electromagnetic spectrum (EMS) domains in the Indo-Asia-Pacific (IAP) region by 2028? Considering the Multi-Domain threats the U.S. will face in the next decade, what strategy and policy initiatives are critical to ensure the Joint Force can continue to meet enduring defense objectives against all purposeful IAP threats?

## Part II:

# ARMY PRIORITIES FOR STRATEGIC ANALYSIS ACADEMIC YEAR 2018

***Bold Italic: Connotes Chief of Staff of the Army Special Interest Topics***

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### **Theme 1: How can the U.S. Army be more effective in complex operational environments?**

- 1.1. ***Are the Army's current deployment and distribution processes and systems adequate to support an expeditionary force in future operating environments? What lessons have previous studies revealed that should inform future deployment and distribution capability choices for the Army?***
- 1.2. Evaluate whether the changing strategic environment and character of war requires a corresponding change in the way Army leaders think about war.
- 1.3. Assess the Army's readiness and force structure to respond to a humanitarian / disaster relief and stabilization operation, resulting from the use of a weapon of mass destruction (e.g., highly contagious biological weapon or dirty bomb). Assess the effectiveness of U.S. Army relationships with partners to confront regional hegemony and secure vital U.S. interests.
- 1.4. Assess the Army's ability to conduct joint operations in a contested cyber and space environment.
- 1.5. Assess the Army's readiness to conduct joint operations in a megacity.
- 1.6. Analyze how U.S. land forces can reverse or counter Russia's anti-access and area-denial (A2AD) capabilities in northeastern Europe.
- 1.7. Given the past decade of contracted service support to forces in the field, assess the Army's force structure and capacity to support the Joint Force logistically (Common User Logistics / Executive Agency) during major combat operations.
- 1.8. Evaluate the Army's requirement to be expeditionary considering the changing security environment.
- 1.9. Evaluate the operational advantages and disadvantages of sharing sensitive technology with our most capable, and most likely future coalition partners.

- 1.10. Assess the Army's ability to execute mission command and control on a multi-domain battlefield that includes: friendly and adversary unmanned systems, semi-autonomous (human in the loop) robotic systems, and autonomous (no human in the loop) robotic systems.
- 1.11. Evaluate the efficacy of the U.S. Army in conducting local governance in the wake of combat or humanitarian operations.
- 1.12. Identify how the Joint Force can better leverage capabilities transregionally through innovative authorities to address transregional threats.
- 1.13. Assess Army multi-function Intelligence capabilities to support a multi-domain battlefield.
- 1.14. Analyze and assess the use of automated identity capabilities to support joint and multinational operations in a force on force environment.
- 1.15. Analyze the concept of employing "group think" wiki capabilities for the development and dissemination of intelligence reporting.
- 1.16. Assess the degree to which hybrid warfare and constant competition in the information domain to achieve political objectives short of war have changed the Joint Phasing Construct; how should an expeditionary Army adapt?
- 1.17. Evaluate the Army's requirement to be forward positioned, considering the changing security environment (and increasing usage of proxy wars.)
- 1.18. Evaluate the extent of U.S. interoperability with NATO partners and the value of increased interoperability to counter A2AD in Europe.
- 1.19. What impact have reductions to the size and numbers of echelons above Corps headquarters had on the Army's ability to command and control deployed forces on the highly mobile, complex, and dispersed battlefields of the future?

## **Theme 2: To what extent does the Army optimize its effectiveness at the individual, organizational, and societal levels of the human dimension?**

- 2.1. Analyze the Army's effectiveness in identifying the traits, education, training, and experience necessary for leaders of military organizations to be effective in the future environment.
- 2.2. What internal and external factors, affect cognition and decision-making in senior leaders across a broad spectrum of decision categories, within operational and strategic contexts, and in what manner do they do so?
- 2.3. Analyze how the Army can achieve consistent officer quality without detrimentally affecting diversity.
- 2.4. Evaluate if the Army is developing and assessing leaders correctly.
- 2.5. Evaluate whether the Army is retaining and promoting the right people.
- 2.6. Evaluate the effect of different Army retirement policies.
- 2.7. Analyze if professional Army education is fulfilling its mission.
- 2.8. Evaluate whether the Army now has the "culture of trust" essential to behavior as a profession, vice a government bureaucracy, and how well the Army is inculcating its own professional ethic into individuals, unit climates, and institutional culture; recommend adaptations as needed.
- 2.9. Analyze how the U.S. Army can best export military professionalism to its international partners, while accounting for local and regional political, social, and cultural concerns.
- 2.10. Analyze the nature of mission command at the strategic level and evaluate the Army's ability to employ this concept effectively.
- 2.11. Assess the impact on war planning on the insertion of artificially intelligent systems and achieving technological singularity.
- 2.12. Assess impact of accompanied (3 years) vs unaccompanied (1 year rotational) tours for OCONUS unit stationing.

## **Theme 3a: What is the best use of the Army to promote U.S. interests in the Asia Pacific region?**

- 3.a.1. *Does the U.S. possess the capabilities and capacity to ensure long-term stability on the Korean Peninsula after combat operations? If not, what functions must the U.S. Army be prepared to perform to ensure success during post-conflict operations?***
- 3.a.2. Analyze the evolution of Chinese “gray zone” approaches and the U.S./allied role in countering them effectively.
- 3.a.3. Assess U.S. land force’s role in Air-Sea Battle and 3rd Offset concepts.
- 3.a.4. Evaluate China’s military strategy and tactics in the Western Pacific and assess the effectiveness of U.S. Army responses to counter those actions.
- 3.a.5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the U.S. military strategy and the use of U.S. land forces toward North Korea and Northeast Asia. Suggest an alternative strategy.
- 3.a.6. Evaluate the value of forward Army basing/presence in the Asia-Pacific in achieving U.S. national interests.
- 3.a.7. Assess the Army’s readiness to mobilize, rapidly grow the force and deploy for major war in the Asia-Pacific region.
- 3.a.8. Assess the Army’s effectiveness in accomplishing or supporting Asia-Pacific theater security cooperation plan objectives.
- 3.a.9. Assess the implications for U.S. land forces to China’s growing support to U.N. peacekeeping operations worldwide.
- 3.a.10. Evaluate the Army’s effectiveness in furthering U.S. interests by supporting Humanitarian and Disaster Relief in the Asia Pacific Region.
- 3.a.11. Evaluate the effectiveness of USARPAC or a JFLCC’s employment of U.S. land forces in the Asia Pacific region in furthering U.S. national interests.
- 3.a.12. Analyze USARPAC's options for employing the Forensic Exploitation Laboratory-PACOM as a regional forensic exploitation hub within the Asia-Pacific Region.
- 3.a.13. What role does the Army have in support of Special Operations Forces (SOF) activities within the pre-crisis space to counter Chinese “gray zone” actions?
- 3.a.14. Assess the impact of Chinese economic dominance (and modernizing ground forces) in Central Asia for U.S. land forces.

- 3.a.15. Assess the progress of Multi-Domain Battle (MDB) concept development in USARPAC.
- 3.a.16. How can the U.S. work with ASEAN and its related institutions to encourage China to become a multilateral partner in the region that accepts the precepts of international law; and what role can the U.S. military play with respect to ASEAN?
- 3.a.17. What land power capabilities resident in the physical and information domains are most useful to a whole-of-government effort to promote stability, access, and inter-state confidence in East and South East Asia over the coming decade?
- 3.a.18. MDB "purpose": neutralizing adversary Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2AD) capabilities; how is this best achieved from a Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) perspective? Is this the right purpose? What are the key responsibilities each JIIM partner has as it relates to long-range A2AD?
- 3.a.19. Does MDB signify a revolution in military affairs, or does it more simply signify a natural evolution in modern military operations? Analyze through the lens of Pacific Theater land warfare.
- 3.a.20. How should the Army respond and provide mission command in contingencies involving treaty partners (i.e. South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Philippines, and Australia)? What capabilities are needed for steady state activities and for rapid response requirements?
- 3.a.21. How can U.S. Army Pacific best support the Department of State, DoD, the Joint Staff, and USPACOM engagement strategies with China? How can the Army develop a comprehensive military partnership with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and incentivize greater participation in USARPAC activities and exercises that are within NDAA guidance?
- 3.a.22. What countries or allies and partners are best postured to contribute to deterrence of Chinese aggression or to mitigate escalation if aggression occurs and how can we strengthen their posture?
- 3.a.23. What are the existing and emerging opportunities for U.S. Military operations, activities and actions to create multiple, complex, and compelling dilemmas for the Peoples Republic of China from the PRC perspective, thus contributing to achieving U.S. interests in the Pacific Region and beyond? Provide assessments and recommendations on policies, capabilities, posture, and forces required to create such dilemmas. (Note: it is important to assess activities that would compel interest, concern, and provide stimulus for change based on what motivates the PRC/PLA and not from a U.S. perspective or value system).

- 3.a.24. Consolidation of a GCC and its service components: is there a relevant historical example in the U.S. experience? What are the costs and benefits? What are the redundancies and what potential exists to free up personnel to cover shortages? What are the PACOM and component capability and capacity gaps (personnel) during steady state and crisis?
- 3.a.25. To what extent does India represent a counter-balance in the Indo-Asia Pacific to help ensure China remains a status quo power; and how can the U.S. reinforce that counter-balance generally, and from a military standpoint?
- 3.a.26. Korea pressurization options and long-term posture change: does pressure work and how can you change posture to truly affect pressure?
- 3.a.27. Projecting power and fighting on a CBRN battlefield: how does the Army get better?
- 3.a.28. How does the Army look at wartrace with a significantly smaller force than was implemented in the 1990s? How does the joint strategic mobility triad implement practical change to increase readiness, boost deference, and assure allies and partners?
- 3.a.29. How can the Army and the rest of DOD (in coordination with other government agencies and host nations) optimize funding, composition, location, and utilization of pre-positioned equipment activity sets for use in operations short of Major Combat Operations (HA/DR, PKO, Training, and Capacity Building)?
- 3.a.30. Conduct a comparative analyses of the roles of ASCCs across multiple geographic combatant commands. Identify similarities, differences, best practices, opportunities, and challenges. Include a comparison of ASCC policies, plans, and doctrines for command and control of component forces; and a comparison of ASCC security cooperation strategies, policies, and plans.
- 3.a.31. If the DPRK implodes and becomes an ungoverned space, what are the most plausible scenarios in consideration of U.S., Russian, and Chinese interests? What are the most appropriate courses of action for U.S. policy and strategy in the context of each scenario?
- 3.a.32. How should U.S. Army Pacific support the Japan Ground Self Defense Force transformation efforts, in light of recent changes in the interpretation of Japan's security law; and how can USARPAC assist in allaying the concerns of other Pacific nations regarding Japanese militarism.
- 3.a.33. What levers are available to the U.S. to further its interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region? How can the U.S. use these levers and elements of national power to embrace change in the status quo that has benefitted the U.S. since the end of World War II?



- 3.a.34. Assess the capabilities of land forces to contribute to maritime domain awareness and sea control in the Pacific region through innovative use of current U.S. Army capabilities; and through building the capacity of foreign Army partners. Develop concepts of operation for specific Army systems or combinations of systems.
- 3.a.35. Are we neglecting the "human" domain as it relates to MDB? Is it inherently part of all the other domains, or should it stand alone? How can U.S. forces expect to be best dominate this domain?

## **Theme 3b: What is the best use of the Army to promote U.S. interests in the Middle East?**

- 3.b.1. Are U.S. security cooperation and partner building programs and activities in the Middle East adequate to assure U.S. interests in the region and promote long-term stability?
- 3.b.2. Evaluate Army implications of heightened Sunni-Shi'a sectarianism.
- 3.b.3. Analyze land force options for limiting Iranian influence in the region.
- 3.b.4. Analyze Army implications of growing Russian activism in the Middle East.
- 3.b.5. Analyze if Army forces can stabilize and reconstruct regional states after civil wars.
- 3.b.6. Assess the Army's effectiveness in accomplishing Middle East U.S. theater security cooperation plan objectives with special emphasis on Egypt and in maintaining regional peace.
- 3.b.7. Evaluate the strategic utility of a "light footprint" approach relying on SOF, stand-off strikes, and building partner capacity in the Middle East.
- 3.b.8. Assess Army options to balance direct action, advisory roles, and capacity development when partnering with Middle Eastern and Central Asian militaries combating transnational violent extremist organizations.
- 3.b.9. Assess options for preventing extremists from leaving one battlefield in one part of the world to join another in a different part of the world. (Extremist migration).
- 3.b.10 Analyze how Captured Enemy Material (CEM) flow through forensic exploitation facilities in the Middle East can be improved to ensure the most timely and efficient method for exploiting CEM with theater assets.

### **Theme 3c: What is the best use of the Army to promote U.S. interests in South and Central Asia?**

- 3.c.1. Assess the Army's effectiveness in accomplishing U.S. theater security cooperation plan objectives in South and Central Asia.
- 3.c.2. Assess the role and impact of deploying U.S. land forces' between Pakistan and India during a Kashmir crisis.
- 3.c.3. Evaluate U.S. land force options to address the resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan.
- 3.c.4. Evaluate U.S. land force options to mitigate the impact of ISIS in Afghanistan.
- 3.c.5. Analyze U.S. land force options for limiting Iranian influence in the region.
- 3.c.6. Analyze the impact and options of U.S. land forces faced with increasing Russian activism in Afghanistan.
- 3.c.7. Evaluate U.S. land force options for improving U.S. relations with Pakistan.
- 3.c.8. Assess the appropriate role of U.S. Army assistance for India.
- 3.c.9. Assess the impact of Chinese economic dominance in Central Asia for U.S. land forces.
- 3.c.10. Assess U.S. land force options for partnering with Eurasian forces to combat terrorism while addressing Russian assertiveness.
- 3.c.11. Assess U.S. land forces potential rolls and requirements in sustaining and supporting a long term SOF operational presence in Afghanistan.

### **Theme 3d: What is the best use of the Army to promote U.S. interests in Latin America and the Caribbean?**

- 3.d.1. Evaluate how the U.S. Army can most effectively leverage the National Guard and State Partnership Programs in its engagements in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 3.d.2. Evaluate the U.S. Army's opportunities and challenges with Cuba's reintegration into the international community.
- 3.d.3. Assess Russian and Chinese activities in the Americas and the appropriate U.S. Army response.
- 3.d.4. Assess the activities of Iran and Islamic extremists in the Americas and the appropriate U.S. Army response.
- 3.d.5. Assess the challenge posed by transnational and transregional threat networks in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean and the appropriate U.S. Army response.
- 3.d.6. Assess the challenges posed by the potential collapse of Venezuela for its neighbors, the region, and the U.S., and the appropriate U.S. military response.
- 3.d.7. Assess the U.S. Army's challenges posed by the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia, including its impact on the activities of the National Liberation Army (ELN) and criminal bands operating in the country.
- 3.d.8. Evaluate how the U.S. Army can best engage with capable Latin American and Caribbean partners such as Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia and Mexico to encourage or expand their participation in international peacekeeping activities.
- 3.d.9. Assess challenges in Haiti, particularly those related to the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) withdrawal, and what Army opportunities exist for security cooperation with its federal police and MOI.
- 3.d.10. Evaluate how the U.S. Army can mitigate the potential for mass migration from Latin America and the Caribbean, better anticipate potential migration events, and improve preparedness for a migration-related crisis response.
- 3.d.11. Analyze USARSO's options for employing an Army Forensic Exploitation Laboratory as a regional forensic exploitation hub in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 3.d.12. Assess the roll and opportunities for Army forces supporting law enforcement actions to counter the criminal / terrorist nexus emanating from South and Central America.

## **Theme 3e: What is the best use of the Army to promote U.S. interests in Eurasia?**

- 3.e.1. *How do decisions and actions of intergovernmental organizations, such as NATO and the EU, impact U.S. land force missions and associated organizations, functions, capabilities, and capacity? How can the Army ensure adequate regional access and capabilities are available when required in Europe?***
- 3.e.2. Assess the Army's effectiveness in accomplishing U.S. theater security cooperation plan objectives in Eurasia.
- 3.e.3. Assess the evolution of Russian "gray zone" approaches and the U.S. Army and allied role in effectively countering them.
- 3.e.4. Assess how the Army can best influence force planning and force structure among key allies in Europe.
- 3.e.5. Analyze how U.S. land forces can reverse or counter Russia's A2AD capabilities in northeastern Europe.
- 3.e.6. Assess the role of U.S. Army and allied military forces in responding to state-sponsored disinformation.
- 3.e.7. Analyze the role NATO member states' forces might play in helping U.S. land forces fulfill operational requirements in Europe.
- 3.e.8. Evaluate the security challenges for U.S. land forces should oil prices in Europe and Eurasia remain low.
- 3.e.9. Assess the Army's ability to conduct large scale land operations [multi-corps] in Europe, given current Army headquarters reductions.

## **Theme 3f: What is the best use of the Army to promote U.S. interests in Africa?**

- 3.f.1. Evaluate the ramifications of China's and/or Russia's interests in Africa for U.S. land forces and suggest options, both to compete and to cooperate, to further U.S. interests.
- 3.f.2. Evaluate the role of U.S. land forces in the stabilization of an African megacity and whether existing doctrine, training, equipment, and cultural expertise would be adequate.
- 3.f.3. Analyze U.S. land forces contribution and effectiveness in reducing transnational Islamic extremism in Africa.
- 3.f.4. Evaluate U.S. Army methods for approaching and developing military professionalism within African militaries despite potential violations to the Leahy amendment.
- 3.f.5. Analyze how the U.S. Army can help African militaries be more effective at increasing stability on the continent, countering the illicit trafficking of WMD materials, and providing assistance to other African partners.
- 3.f.6. Analyze how the U.S. Army and other non-African militaries can collectively promote regional security.
- 3.f.7. Assess U.S. Army Africa's effectiveness in accomplishing Theater Campaign Plan objectives.
- 3.f.8. Assess the effectiveness of U.S. Army Africa's mission command capability to respond to small-scale contingencies, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief, or to respond to U.S. Government requests to contain outbreaks of pandemic influenza and other infectious diseases.
- 3.f.9. Identify how the U.S. Army can best contribute to developing Somalia National Security Forces to enable transition of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to Somalia National Security Forces.
- 3.f.10. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of a land-centric, forward component in East Africa / the Horn of Africa supporting operations, conducting security cooperation activities, and reducing violence in the region without assigned forces.
- 3.f.11. Identify how the U.S. Army can develop the institutional and force generation capacity of Libya security forces to support both political reconciliation as well as counter-violent extremist organization (VEO) operations.

- 3.f.12. Identify what skill sets and capabilities the U.S. Army should develop for the proposed Security Force Assistance Corps HQ that will facilitate defense institution building (DIB) at the executive direction and generating force levels. Identify how this contributes to more effective governance.
- 3.f.13. Identify how the U.S. Army can develop the institutional and force generation capacity of African contributors to regional and/or continental missions.
- 3.f.14. Assess the U.S. Army's currently available, or readily adaptable, capabilities (for analysis, planning, execution, and assessment) and capacity to contribute to influence operations in Africa per the "Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations", 19 October 2016." (USAFRICOM and the U.S. Government have very few means allotted to influence and / or deter (credibly) African political leaders (legitimate and illegitimate) for the purpose of de-escalating and/or defusing looming violent upheavals.
- 3.f.15. Evaluate the effectiveness of defense institution building (DIB) in countries that are unable to sustain these efforts through self-funding.
- 3.f.16. Assess the ability of U.S. Army Africa to sustain small-scale, widely distributed joint force operations in the USAFRICOM AOR.
- 3.f.17. Analyze how the U.S. Army can best apply its available authorities and limited resources for the greatest effect, to advance U.S. interests in Africa (i.e., where should the Army focus its efforts)?
- 3.f.18. Analyze USARAF's options for employing an Army Forensic Exploitation Laboratory as a regional forensic exploitation hub in Africa.
- 3.f.19. Are U.S. counterterrorism efforts in Africa sufficient to assist in mitigating the terrorist threat to our partners in Europe? Does the Army need to relook its counterterrorism assistance programs in light of rising threats to Western Europe?

## **Theme 4: What is the best use of the Army to help defend the U.S. homeland and North America?**

- 4.1. *How prepared is the Army to make ready, deploy, employ, and sustain a totally mobilized Army? What actions can the Army take to prepare the mobilization enterprise, the national industrial base, and strategic transportation to support a Full Mobilization?***
- 4.2. Assess the U.S. Army role in preparing for and responding to a cyberattack on the nation's critical infrastructure and the impact on the military's ability to support civil authorities while deploying forces in response to an overseas crisis.
- 4.3. Assess the Joint Force's current capability and capacity to protect the United States and its' territories from the emerging North Korea and Iranian ballistic and cruise missile threats.
- 4.4. Compare the cost for readiness of Active versus National Guard Units and propose the best force mix (active/NG) for the future security environment.
- 4.5. Assess the appropriate and inappropriate roles the U.S. Army can play in addressing homeland security and support to civil authorities.
- 4.6. Assess the appropriateness of transferring Army equipment to U.S. civilian police organizations and under what conditions should what equipment be considered for transfer.
- 4.7. Assess the role of U.S. Army forces, in conjunction with other Services including the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Department of State in promoting U.S. interests in the Arctic.
- 4.8. Assess current Army CBRNE capabilities against requirements for a major disaster scenario such as the New Madrid Earthquake or Cascadia Subduction Zone and offer risk mitigation options.
- 4.9. Analyze and compare authorities and procedures for the U.S. Army's role in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance inside vs. outside U.S. territory and suggest policy changes to improve response efforts.
- 4.10. Analyze the capability and capacity of the U.S. Army to conduct large scale Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HA/DR) while doing simultaneous major combat operations in Europe.
- 4.11. What industrial base capacity is needed in order to rebuild the Army after two near simultaneous wars and do we repair forward or return to the depots?



- 4.12. Assess the vulnerability of installations to attack and disruption in Multi-Domain Battle and the need for resiliency and a new approach to installation preparedness, protection and doctrine, given new technologies, such as cyber threats, UAVs, robotics, etc.
- 4.13. Does the Army have clearly defined roles and missions to prepare for and respond to cyberattacks on National Critical Infrastructure (NCI)? What capabilities does the Army require to continue to protect NCI and support civil authorities, while simultaneously deploying forces in response to an overseas crisis?
- 4.14. Is the Army prepared to provide Defense Support to Civilian Agencies (DSCA), Defense Support to Civil Law Enforcement Agencies (DSCLEA) and post-event support necessitated by the use of a weapon of mass destruction on the Homeland? What capabilities must the Army possess to adequately support civil authorities before, during, and after a WMD event in the Homeland?

## **Theme 5: How will major trends in the strategic environment, defense strategy or priorities, society, political authority, demographics, and technology affect the employment of Army forces?**

- 5.1. *What are the potential impacts of climate change on: a) the character of war, b) vital U.S. national interests; and c) emerging security challenges for the United States? How could these impacts affect landpower and the organization, training, and equipping of the U.S. Army?***
- 5.2. Evaluate the prospect for near- to mid-term “strategic shock”, its potential origin and character, and its prospective impact on defense strategy, concepts and capabilities.
- 5.3. Analyze how extreme weather conditions (climate change) will affect the employment of the Army.
- 5.4. Evaluate how technologies like Soldier enhancement programs, robotics, nanotechnology, new materials, new fuels, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality and micro air vehicles capable of delivering biological weapons will affect the employment of the Army and military strategy.
- 5.5. Assess the Army’s ability to sustain increased end strength, in light of future social, cultural, political, demographic, and economic changes.
- 5.6. Analyze assumption based planning as a means for informing Army leaders, priorities, and resource allocation.
- 5.7. Analyze the impact of "lawfare" on the U.S. Army.
- 5.8. Analyze how operational energy will affect the employment of the Army.
- 5.9. Assess the feasibility, suitability and acceptability of establishing a cybersecurity function for the National Guard in support of state and local infrastructure.
- 5.10. Evaluate the advantages and risks of mission command and its relevance and practicality on the multi-domain battlefield of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- 5.11. Assess the Army’s DOTLMPF impediments to leading and building a JTF-capable HQs capable of fighting hybrid, cyber and gray-area conflicts.
- 5.12. Evaluate how the Army's Deployable Forensic Exploitation Capabilities should evolve to support the Joint Force Commander in an environment characterized by complexity, chaos, and competition.
- 5.13. Assess the impact of economic inequality in western societies on defense strategies, addressing mass migration, dislocated populations, and the rise in the number of failed states.

- 5.14. Assess the impact of the removal of fossil fuel as a major supplier of energy and the replacement of the internal combustion engine in war operations.
- 5.15. Assess the concept of supply-less logistics.
- 5.16. Using innovative ideas, propose what logistics could look like in 2030-2050, taking into account our future operating environments.
- 5.17. Assess how energy and water security will be integrated into Army operations and contingency/enduring locations
- 5.18. Analyze the impact of transgender service on readiness and the impact of military service on transgender Soldiers.
- 5.19. Prioritize where the Army should invest in Science and Technology over the next 10, 20 and 30 years to increase combat power over emerging peer-threats.
- 5.20. Assess how political trends such as districting (gerrymandering), fundraising, and political action committees and polarization might impact the Army.

## **Theme 6: How will social, cultural, political, demographic, and economic changes affect the U.S. Army?**

- 6.1. Assess public attitudes and perceptions of the all-volunteer force and evaluate alternative strategies for countering any negative trends.
- 6.2. What legislative changes should the Army propose to improve readiness, quality of life, and mission effectiveness.
- 6.3. Assess how the rise of regional hegemons will impact U.S. Army decisions to forward deploy U.S. land forces or engage in proxy relationships.
- 6.4. Assess how changes in U.S. trade policy might affect U.S. security policy, alliance structures, and Army requirements.
- 6.5. Evaluate the long-term sustainability of increased Army forces given short-term budget increases.
- 6.6. Analyze the ethical integration of Soldier enhancement capabilities.
- 6.7. Assess the value of larger, less capable units compared to smaller more capable units given the complex strategic environment.
- 6.8. Analyze the impact of extending time-in-grade limits of Soldiers on active duty to "grow" the Army.
- 6.9. Evaluate the Army officer PME and assignment process for determining effectiveness in language and cultural proficiency and interagency skills.
- 6.10. Assess the impact of life extension capabilities (conquering of cancer, increase in life expectancy to hundreds of years) in force structure.
- 6.11. Assess the impact of budget constraints and budget unpredictability on U.S. Army readiness, personnel, and operations.

## **Theme 7: To what extent can the Army improve defense management to facilitate logistics, resource prioritization, decision making, and adaptation?**

- 7.1. Assess defense management structure, roles, and decision-support processes to enhance Army requirements generation and prioritization.
- 7.2. Assess the Army's planning and programing decision-support processes, and recommend actions to improve resource prioritization outcomes.
- 7.3. Compare Army requirements, programming, acquisition, and budget priorities to assess the effectiveness of system and process interface.
- 7.4. Assess the adequacy of the defense management structure, roles and decision-support processes necessary to support total mobilization, including three cases for expansion of the United States Army: 50%, 100%, and 200%.
- 7.5. Analyze the appropriate role of intuition, defense management processes, bargaining, and advisor networks in Army institutional enterprise level management choices.
- 7.6. Evaluate the impact and opportunities for the Army's force structure as it adapts to accommodate the expansion of Security Force Assistance Brigades composed of senior grade personnel.
- 7.7. Examine the right force mix and missions for Army active and reserve components and whether the Army can maintain this force mix with multi-component and/or cadre units.
- 7.8. Assess whether the Army develops the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities of its' leaders to effectively work at Department of the Army level.
- 7.9. Evaluate the Army's execution of its executive agency for DoD biometrics and forensics responsibilities and determine if the joint force is being provided the capabilities it needs to effectively conduct identity activities.
- 7.10. Assess and Analyze the impact of modern high causality producing munitions (thermobaric rounds, tactical nuclear) on the Army and how the Army will conduct MASCAL operations in an A2AD environment.
- 7.11. Assess and analyze the Army's current strategy for munitions stationing in relation to the four plus one problem set.
- 7.12. Analyze how munitions can be transported to a contested area when an adversary can strike with "carrier killer" missiles.

7.13. Are current and planned defense management structures, roles, and decision-support processes adequate to address requirements generation and prioritization in support of future Army and Joint Expeditionary Forces?

**Theme 8: How can the U.S. Army better integrate into the Joint Force to prepare for and conduct Multi-Domain Battle (MDB)?**

- 8.1 What strategic components are essential for durable U.S. military advantage across and within the land, air, sea, space, cyber, information, and EMS domains in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region by 2028? Considering the multi-domain threats the U.S. will face in the next decade, what strategy and policy initiatives are critical to ensure the Joint Force can continue to meet enduring defense objectives against all purposeful IAP threats?**
- 8.2. Evaluate how the evolving character of war will impact the strategic environment across all domains, and how the Army and the Joint Force should adapt in key DOTMLPF-P areas. Assess key inhibitors to needed change and possible ways of dealing with them.
- 8.3. Assess and analyze capability gaps and future requirements for Army forces to operate in cross-domain operations short of war—the Competition Period (phase 0-phase I). Describe how Army forces, as part of a Joint, Interagency, and Multinational team, could then operate and compete with peer competitors to defeat their subversive activities, unconventional warfare, and information warfare short of armed conflict.
- 8.4. Describe a new or modified operational framework to enable successful visualization and mission command of Army and Joint Forces across all domains in MDB operations (battles and campaigns) against peer competitors.
- 8.5. Explain how theater and/or operational level commanders might open windows of advantage and exploit the initiative in MDB. Account for the operating environment, peer competitors' capabilities, and emerging U.S. and allied capabilities to assess our abilities and challenges to “see” on a future battlefield.
- 8.6. Considering that peer competitors are developing ways to fracture the Joint Force and challenge us in all domains, describe how theater and operational commanders could target and engage targets across all domains and the electro-magnetic spectrum in MDB against peer competitors.
- 8.7. Evaluate how operational commanders can operate in and exploit contested and congested cyberspace, space domains, and the electro-magnetic spectrum. Assess and describe the organization, capabilities, and authorities required for these operational commanders and their staffs to operate against peer competitors who wield similar capabilities with different and often less-limited authorities.
- 8.8. Assess and analyze the institutional limitations, and corresponding solutions, that need to be overcome to achieve unity of command in MDB in the Competition Period (phases 0-I) and/or the Conflict Period (phases II-III).

- 8.9. Explain how theater and operational level commanders sustain dispersed formations, of varying unit sizes, across wide areas when domain superiority is not achieved. Consider actions in the Competition Period (phases 0-I) and the Conflict Period (phases II-III).
- 8.10. Assess and analyze current Army and Joint acquisition process challenges, and corresponding solutions, that need to be overcome in order to achieve converged DOTMLPF integration across the domains in sufficient time to meet emerging capabilities being presented by peer competitors.
- 8.11. Identify Echelon Above Bridge (EAB) roles and functions to support MDB across an expanded battlespace. Describe how EAB forces shape operations in support of MDB. Describe how EAB forces enable, direct, and support tactical (BCT and below) operations. Are EAB elements simply headquarters or are they fighting formations? Why?
- 8.12. Considering that peer competitors put a premium in operating and winning in the information environment both short of armed conflict and during conflict, identify and describe capabilities, authorities, and methods required for effective fires and maneuver in the information environment. How would these capabilities be employed in an MDB campaign both in the Competition Period (Phases 0-I) and the Conflict Period (Phases II-III)?
- 8.13. Define, describe, and explain how cross-domain maneuver and cross-domain fires will be executed in the multi-domain environment. What changes to DOTMLPF are required to successfully execute such an operation?
- 8.14. Describe how Multi-Domain Battle should (or should not) change leader development, readiness and training for the U.S. Army? What, if any, training will become obsolete? Describe the process by which a brigade-level unit would train and become ready to operate in support of an MDB operation?
- 8.15. Assess the U.S. Army Warfighting Functions and the impact MDB will have on them. Examine the DOTMLPF impacts and capabilities required to operationalize MDB. How should the U.S. Army adapt? What are the risks in these adaptations?
- 8.16. Assess how the U.S. Navy's Distributed Maritime Operations and MDB can integrate and support each other. Examine whether or not a combined concept is possible between the two ideas. How can the Army and Navy best create a cross-domain fires linkage, similar to the Army's Battlefield Coordination Detachment concept with the Air Force and beyond?



- 8.17. Evaluate the U.S. Air Force's Multi-Domain Command and Control concept and how it will integrate into the U.S. Army's mission command network. Identify opportunities, challenges, and risks in merging these approaches together, under MDB.
- 8.18. One working premise of MDB is that all formations of BCT and above must have access to all domains. Assess this assertion, accounting for the future operating environment, emerging threats, and possible ways of fighting and defeating a peer competitor. Describe the echelonment of future multi-domain capabilities from tactical to strategic; platoon to combatant command?
- 8.19. Assess and analyze the Army's role and use of watercraft in a multi-domain conflict.