



US ARMY COMBINED ARMS CENTER  
*"Intellectual Center of the Army"*  
**Battle Command Knowledge System**

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**Army Knowledge Management Conference Explores New KM Collaboration Tools**

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan., December 11, 2008— More than 200 knowledge management (KM) practitioners gathered in Kansas City, October 27-31, for the Battle Command Knowledge System's (BCKS) 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM) Conference.

Military and civilian personnel from the Army, Navy and Air Force joined with two Australian Army KM officers, KM consultants, private sector leaders and educators for a week-long opportunity to share and exchange the latest KM industry information and military KM best practices, processes and lessons learned.

A one-day Joint KM Trainers Workshop preceded the conference. KM trainers from the Army, Navy and Air Force exchanged ideas and best practices about KM training and how to best develop some commonality in the KM training and education of deploying units and leaders.

"The Joint KM trainers believe that the way we train in KM will play a vital role in how we fight, especially in a joint environment," said John Wright, BCKS Lead, KM Education, Training and Professional Development, who coordinated the workshop.

In kicking off the official opening of the conference, Dale Ormond, Deputy to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth, outlined how KM is supporting CAC's comprehensive approach to operations among the services, interagency and coalition partners.

"In many ways, KM is the engine that drives many of the things we do at CAC, especially in terms of collective training, capabilities development and integration, and doctrine development," said Ormond. "Time and again, the application of KM principles has proven to help leaders save time, lives and money, as well as improve training and enhance procedures," he added. The entire process of exchanging knowledge needs to become "more intuitive, more simplified, more seamless, more transparent," he said.

A highlight of the conference was a live, Internet collaborative session with Army Lt. Col.

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Howard Lim in Baghdad, Iraq. The MNC-I/XVIII Airborne Corps Knowledge Management Officer (KMO) used streaming live audio and the web conference tool Adobe Connect to discuss how the headquarters is using SharePoint portals and other online information sharing tools on the battlefield.

Steve Barth, a senior KM consultant working with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, demonstrated how collaboration, “fontology” and new, evolving technology, can enrich and simplify the experience of sharing information through the content in online documents and publications.

During the conference keynote address, Dr. Mike Prevou, BCKS Knowledge Networks Division, teamed with Dr. Jeff Stamps and Dr. Jessica Lipnack, NetAge, Inc., to describe the BCKS development of Teams of Leaders (ToL), a new KM approach to collaboration with disparate organizations. Utilizing cutting edge team communication tools, collaborative KM processes and advanced learning in the form of judgment exercises and decision games, teams can increase their performance exponentially.

Other conference events included:

- Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Hower, U.S. Air Force Air University, offered the conference a perspective on Air Force professional forums
- Navy Cmdr. Ray Drake, United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM), discussed how USJFCOM has used HARMONIEWeb to create an Internet accessible, virtual environment for the exchange of unclassified information between Department of Defense (DoD) and non-DoD organizations, especially those involved in stability operations or humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.
- Army Lt. Col. Pete Kilner, United States Military Academy, West Point, demonstrated MILSPACE, a new software capability West Point is piloting that leverages technology to connect junior Army leaders in conversation. With the inclusion of iLink to enable amazon.com-like features, MILSPACE incorporates “leader challenge” virtual simulations and allows Soldiers to keep in touch with others with similar interests.
- Dr. Anna Cianciolo, Command Performance Research, Inc., Joe Pearson, BCKS NCO Net, and Dr. Richard McDermott, McDermott Consulting, described the power of the narratives, visuals and audio in digital stories to communicating values, knowledge and experience. Digital stories are widely distributed and easily shared in online forums. They provide elaborate, detailed context for knowledge, and they are more emotionally stimulating and memorable.

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- A panel about the evolution of Warfighters' Forums as online knowledge centers discussed teaching, training and collaboration among the Army's brigades.
- A Joint KM Best Practices Panel of industry, academia and joint practitioners, explored with conference attendees the "best of breed" knowledge solutions and concepts as potential solutions for the joint community.
- Air Force Lt. Col. Stephen Dzincielewski, USEUCOM, presented an overview of the ToL pilot currently underway at USEUCOM, which is using the ToL strategy to enable Joint-Interagency-Intergovernmental-Multinational (JIIM) operations within the USEUCOM area of responsibility. Retired Army Lt. Gen. Frederick Brown is guiding USEUCOM in the application of technology and process to enable these networked, high-performing teams of leaders.
- Dr. Nancy Dixon, Command Knowledge Associates, and Kent Greenes, Greenes Consulting, talked about the challenges in leveraging collective knowledge across boundaries, an especially relevant issue in joint operations. They offered strategies and techniques to help leaders learn how to leverage collective knowledge, such as collaborative team and workgroup tasks, blogging, and formatting meetings as conversations rather than reporting.

Dan Kirsch, Chief Operating Officer, Knowledge Management Professional Society, presented the BCKS Team with the first ever Knowledge Management Achievement Award (KMA2) "in recognition of accomplishments in the field of knowledge management."

In his videotaped remarks to the conference, Gen. Scott Wallace, Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, said, "This conference is all about knowledge management and enabling capabilities as we continue to work through the process of expanding knowledge systems across the force operating within a joint and interagency framework. In the future—and even today—we're going to have to operate at almost every level in close collaboration with joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational partners.

The KM practitioners departed the conference and Kansas City with a better understanding of knowledge management efforts across DoD and a broader social network of experts with whom to share knowledge.

### ***About BCKS***

*Headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) is a subordinate organization of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC). As the proponent for*

*implementing Army Knowledge Management (AKM) across the Army, BCKS is responsible for developing and implementing KM products and services that support collaboration among Soldiers and units. BCKS hosts more than 80 online professional forums that serve the needs of approximately 100,000 DoD Active, Reserve and National Guard leaders. BCKS is a component of the CAC-Knowledge, which also includes the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD), Military Review journal and Combat Studies Institute (CSI). <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/bcks>*