

# Human Resources Personnel Need to Train as They Fight

With the planned withdrawal from Afghanistan, HR personnel must find a way to ensure that they maintain an expeditionary mindset.

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kymila K. Cheese

**T**he last combat troops leaving Iraq in December 2011 marked the end of a long fought war in Iraq. Since the proclamation of ending the war in Afghanistan in 2014, the Army has been going through a major drawdown to return to its prewar operational strength. The question is how the drawdown will affect our human resources (HR) Standard Requirement Code 12 (SRC 12) force structure.

## SRC 12 Force Structure

Field Manual (FM) 1-0, Human Resources Support, says that the SRC 12 force structure must consist of the following elements: a human resources sustainment center (HRSC), a military mail terminal team, a theater gateway personnel accountability team, a human resources company headquarters, and subordinate postal and HR platoons.

When discussing the SRC 12 force structure, personnel services delivery redesign must be added as a point of reference. Many would argue that the personnel services delivery redesign in the SRC 12 force structure was designed for the operating tempo of the Global War on Terrorism. This is not completely accurate. Personnel services delivery redesign was a result of the Army mandating modularity along with the directive that the HR community would deactivate all commands above the company level.

Personnel services delivery redesign is the Army's HR strategic vision. During Army transformation and modularity, HR went from a legacy stovepipe force structure to an SRC 12 force structure that incorporated personnel services delivery redesign. Many people believe that this was a helpful and necessary new direction for the brigade-centric Army.

## HRSC Establishment and Structure

An HRSC is the largest unit with an SRC 12 force structure in the Army. During the modular transformation, personnel commands (PERSCOMs) were redesignated as HRSCs. For example, the 8th PERSCOM in

Korea was deactivated in 2005 and redesignated as the 8th HRSC in Hawaii in 2006. FM 1-0, paragraph 2-56, states, "The HRSC is a multifunctional, modular SRC 12 organization (staff element), and theater-level center assigned to a TSC [theater sustainment command] that integrates and executes PA [personnel accountability], casualty, and postal functions throughout the theater and as defined by the policies and priorities established by the ASCC [Army service component command] G-1/AG [Adjutant General]."

The force structure of an HRSC is similar to a PERSCOM but without the command staff. The main similarity is that both force structures were designed to provide theater-level support. The now rescinded FM 12-6, Personnel Doctrine, said that "the theater PERSCOM mission is to sustain personnel readiness and exercise command and control over assigned theater-level personnel units. The theater PERSCOM manages critical personnel systems and synchronizes personnel network operations throughout the theater." [FM 12-6 was replaced by FM 1-0.]

## Changes in HR Roles

The brigade and battalion S-1s are essential in providing internal HR services and support. Many of the essential personnel services performed by the personnel services battalions (PSBs) have shifted to the brigade S-1s. FM 1-0, paragraph 1-33, states "the role of the G-1/AG and S-1 section remains constant and they continue to be responsible for performing all HR core competencies and key functions. G-1/AGs and S-1s focus their support on providing internal HR support to their unit."

The roles and functions of the S-1s and G-1s will not change during the drawdown. The functions that S-1s perform at home station are the same as when deployed—just with a different priority based on the mission. For example, essential personnel services, such as awards, promotions, and evaluations, are peacetime and wartime functions. But while deployed, the priority

for the S-1 is personnel accountability and casualty operations.

### **HR Company Headquarters Functions**

Both the PSB and HR company headquarters have SRC 12 force structures. PSBs were deactivated after the Army decided that HR units would be company level and lower. PSBs had both theater-level and customer service functions. The PSB mission was to operate the personnel information and casualty management systems and provide commanders, Soldiers, and Army civilians with essential personnel services. The HR company headquarters mission is to provide theater-level functions, including casualty operations, postal operations, and personnel accountability.

The slight difference in the functions of the PSB and the HR company headquarters is that PSBs were designed to support divisions and provide essential personnel services such as identification cards, promotions and reductions, awards, and evaluations. As mentioned earlier, these critical tasks and functions shifted to brigade and battalion S-1s.

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### **Train as You Fight**

HRSCs and HR company headquarters have no garrison customer service mission. The question remains: What do these units do when they are not deployed? Many would argue that the HR community should increase the force structure of the brigade and battalion S-1s and decrease the size of the HRSCs and HR operations branches while the units are at home station.

I believe the answer is that we should do what we were doing before the Global War on Terrorism: train as we fight. HR leaders must take their rightful seats at the conference table to be included in planning and executing home station training plans.

When I was assigned to 8th PERSCOM in 1997, the major training exercise covered reception, staging, onward movement, and integration. The 8th PERSCOM conducted a full spectrum of HR training with its subordinate units and the 8th Army G-1. I believe that the HR community needs to return to this practice. HR leaders across the Army need to develop home station training

plans that focus on the full spectrum of HR operations from peacekeeping, enforcement, and stabilization to high-intensity conflict.

The Soldier Support Institute has combined arms training strategies for all SRC 12 force structure units to support HR leaders in developing realistic and relevant training. In addition to the combined arms training strategies, the Soldier Support Institute has an HR Plans and Operations Course at the Adjutant General School. This course is excellent for HR leaders who are currently assigned or will be assigned to an HRSC or HR operations branch.

HR professionals must maintain an expeditionary mindset. The location of the war does not matter because the basic doctrine and core functions of HR will not change.

### **Recommended HR Training**

HR professionals are already training at Silver Scimitar before they deploy. [Silver Scimitar is the annual HR full-spectrum training event for HR professionals who are scheduled to deploy.] I recommend that the HR community implement a full spectrum of HR training integrated at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., or the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.

FM 1-0, paragraph 1-0, says that “the objective of HR support is to maximize operational effectiveness of the total force by anticipating, manning and sustaining military operations across a full spectrum of conflict.” In other words, HR professionals support the rest of the Soldiers. Therefore, the HR professionals should conduct a full spectrum of training, including HR planning and operations, with the rest of the Soldiers just as any other unit would conduct training when not deployed.

HRSCs can train and inspect the HR companies as they go through training at their home stations. For example, the 90th HR Company could conduct its mission-essential task list and quarterly training plan at a field training exercise while the 14th HRSC inspects and assesses it and ensures that the company is meeting the requirements set forth in FM 7-15, The Army Universal Task List, and FM 1-0.

As the Army downsizes, HR professionals should remain steadfast with the HR mission concept and provide quality HR services and support to all assigned Soldiers. Continuing to train as we fight will ensure success in these roles on the battlefields of tomorrow.

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