

## From the Editor-in-Chief

**I**n this issue, we focus on how Army acquisition creates and sustains an efficient force. What constitutes “efficient” is open to much interpretation and many, many studies. Generally, efficiency is seen as achieving a goal with the fewest wasted resources, like time, energy or money. Way back at the dawn of the Industrial Age in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Frederick Winslow Taylor, an American mechanical engineer, precisely measured the time it took to perform specific tasks to find the “one best way” to complete a task. Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, a husband-and-wife team who were both industrial engineers and efficiency experts, focused on understanding the motions involved in a task and improving them. Combined, they created the concept of a Time and Motion study that is still used today but, more refined, is commonly known as the Lean Six Sigma approaches to efficiency.

However, efficiency is not a straight line of time and motion—it has many tangents: Costs, open system architecture, contracting, longevity, sustainability, supply chain management, modularity and much more. The Army is revolutionizing efficiencies across these areas through a focus on cost effectiveness, longevity and adaptability. Investing in durable, long-lasting technology and infrastructure ensures that resources are used optimally over time, reducing the need for frequent replacements (think M1 Abrams tank, CH-47 Chinook helicopter and the M2 Browning .50 caliber machine gun). Modular systems, which can be easily upgraded or modified, enhance operational flexibility and readiness. Streamlining contracting processes and improving workforce efficiency leads to faster, more responsive procurement and deployment of resources. Supply chain logistics are a critical component, ensuring the timely and efficient delivery of materials and equipment to where they are needed most. Innovations such as 3D printing are transforming the production of ammunition and equipment, allowing for on-demand manufacturing and reducing dependency on traditional supply chains. This technology significantly cuts lead times and costs, enabling rapid adaption to changing battlefield conditions.

By integrating these elements, the Army aims to build a resilient, agile and sustainable acquisition framework. While we cannot cover all the efficiency initiatives the Army Acquisition Workforce is undertaking, a few are covered in detail in this issue and are quite interesting. For instance, for anyone who has ever pitched a camo net and hated every minute of it, there is help on the way. In “A Soldier-Led Solution,” on Page 32, read about how the Marne Innovation Center at Fort Stewart, Georgia, partnered with the University of Florida to develop a new, more efficient camo net prototype called the Vehicle-Integrated Camouflage System. This adaptive ground-based mount for an armored vehicle cuts down the time and manpower used for setup by half. It takes less than 15 minutes to set up and can stay in place if the vehicle is moved. Magic! And, as mentioned above, the Army invests heavily in durable, long-lasting systems such as the M1 Abrams tank. A great current example of that is found on Page 42, in “AFATDS Gets an Upgrade.” The article describes how The Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System (AFATDS)—the Army’s 30-year-old software for fires—is getting an upgrade. The need for quick, effective and intuitive software that will help Soldiers execute fires is crucial to a unit’s ability to fight in fast-moving and large-scale combat operations. Finally, efficiency and sustainability don’t happen by themselves—it takes a trained, nimble workforce. Learn why the Army acquisition enterprise is well-situated to realize transformation in contact by developing an agile—and, by extension, sustainable—workforce in “Manage the Load” on Page 20.

As always, if you have a story, a story idea or just a general comment, contact us at [armyalt@army.mil](mailto:armyalt@army.mil). We look forward to hearing from you.



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