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**Photo Credit: U.S. Army Africa photo by Mollie Miller** Capt. Ritchie Rhodes, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team "Dagger," 1st Infantry Division, works with an African role player during the field training portion of Dagger University, May 10, 2013, at Fort Riley, Kan.



**Photo Credit: U.S. Army Africa Public Affairs Sgt. 1st Class Grady Hyatt**, with U.S. Army Africa, leads an AAR with Ghana Army soldiers. Hyatt is part of the Army's "regionally aligned forces" concept, pairing Army units with combatant commanders.



**Photo Credit: U.S. Army Africa photo by Mollie Miller.** The U.S. Army Capstone Concept stresses regional alignment with commitments to partners and allies. Here, a Soldier from 3rd Special Forces Group trains Malian soldiers in Tombouctou, Mali.

# FORCE FORWARD

*A Suggested Step Forward to Maintain Readiness Across the Army and gain Access and Placement to influence and shape outcomes through global positioning – Strategic Landpower in Execution*

*The views expressed are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Defense, U.S. Army, or the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.*

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# Force Forward

## OBJECTIVE

The intent of this article is to leverage current discussions on regionally aligned forces, overseas training, security cooperation, forward deployments, the National Guard's State Partnership Programs, and Active, Guard, Reserve seamless integration and General Purpose and Special Operations Forces interdependence within the overarching concept of "Strategic Landpower". We suggest additive training opportunities that can prepare the Total Army for the inevitable engagements of the future across the range of military operations from shaping the future by building positive military to civilian/military relationships in foreign lands, to deterring those who dare to threaten global security, to defeating aggressors, and to maintaining the peace and stability.

The concept we propose is called "The Force Forward Model," a cost informed, multi-compo, training strategy that concurrently and transparently provides expeditionary response capability, if time and circumstances demand. To meet these requirements and the compressed timelines to respond to the contingencies that we will inevitably face, we need to have access overseas, the ability to temporarily lodge Soldiers and their equipment, and the will to push this initiative or a refined version against the current political winds of defense retrenchment, withdrawal from foreign engagements, and shortsighted fiscal reallocations.

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## **Force Forward**

*A Suggested Step Forward to Maintain Readiness Across the Army and gain Access and Placement to influence and shape outcomes through positioning.*

Transformative change requires bold ideas and the wherewithal to implement those ideas that make organizational, fiscal, and operational sense. Over the past 12 years of war, our Army has wrested Afghanistan from a brutish Taliban regime, overcame the Iraqi military in a matter of weeks, resurrected counterinsurgency doctrine to pull Iraq from the brink of civil war, and integrated international and multi-agency support for the protection of the Afghan people and the empowerment of a modestly competent central government in Kabul. The United States Army across its Active, Guard, and Army Reserve Components has demonstrated the ability to fight as a multi-component and joint team, has developed and deployed technology and enabled individual Soldier competency to prevail in the counterinsurgency fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, while concurrently providing Soldiers and their families with supportive programs and medical care unsurpassed in the Army's history.

Today, however, with public support for overseas commitments declining amid the swelling public demand to redirect increasingly scarce Federal fiscal resources from national defense to other domestic priorities and to debt reduction, the Army must change. America's Army will be forced to assess and array its capabilities to respond to both present and emerging threats across the full range of conflict, in a period of challenged resources, and then figure out how to prevail and win against these risks to our Nation's security. The Army must be *operationally ready*, today, and prepared for an ill-defined future to execute boldly, with the

right equipment, personnel, formations, and well thought out doctrine everything from security cooperation engagements with Allies and future partners, to peacekeeping, stability operations, counterinsurgency campaigns/international police actions, cyber attacks, and to peer to peer conflicts that could escalate, if not quickly arrested, to truly existential threats to this Country's survival. It is entirely reasonable to speculate that the nature of many future conflicts will be fast, furious, commencing on little or no notice and compounded by the presence of non-state actors, conflicting political agendas from reluctant military allies, and the employment by our adversaries of weapons ranging from 19th/20th century British Enfield rifles to chemical, biological, radiological agents, dirty nuclear devices, and, perhaps devastating electromagnetic and network attacks from cyberspace.

Because the decidedly optimistic and perfectly human expectation is that our most recent war or military campaign will be the last – that the human race, globally interconnected, and mutually dependent, will at least mitigate and might finally forswear armed conflict between states, it is politically difficult to persuade the decision makers to spend the requisite monies across the Services to maintain military preparedness for both the near and far term. For those whose business is to protect national security, there is a counterintuitive and historically corroborated understanding that we need an operational capable and ready force today to deter present threats and the concurrent development of a future force that will be relevant, fully capable, sustainable, and decisive. In order to win present and future conflicts *we must be better prepared than any adversary.* As articulated by US Army's Training and Doctrine's Command's General Robert J. Cone, "We (the Army) will move from an army of execution, with a focus on resourcing the fight and near term readiness, to an army of preparation which will balance near and long term readiness and invest in the future."

The challenge is easier said than done because resolving issues of budgets, manning, prioritization for training resources, and determining the right mix of Active and Reserve Components units and personnel to bring to the requisite state of readiness are daunting. The intent of this article is to align current discussions on regionally aligned forces, overseas training, security cooperation, forward deployments, the National Guard's State Partnership Program, and Active, Guard, Reserve and Special Operations Forces seamless integration with the capstone concept of "Strategic Landpower" as a justification for America's ground forces.

We suggest an engagement/training concept, to include professional education, enhanced unit/collective training grounded in relevant operational environments delivered live and/or constructively at home stations, and repeated overseas employments ranging from two weeks to several months - that can prepare the Total Army for the inevitable engagements of the future across the range of military operations. The concept we propose is called "The Force Forward," a cost informed, multi-compo, training strategy, providing opportunity for Soldiers long before the commencement of natural or manmade crises to better understand, communicate, and work abroad, in the complex land spaces, influenced by geography, environment, economy, and culture within which our friends, allies, regional partners and potential enemies call "home". The concept concurrently and transparently reinforces the Army's ability to deploy overseas, secure access and lodgment of Soldiers and their equipment, and "win the clash of wills" within the relevant operational environment.

The concept is nothing more nor less than a active articulation of Sun Tzu's fundamental precept in his Art of War, that "Know your enemy and know yourself and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster. For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. To fight and

conquer in all our battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.”

**The Force Forward Model is the Execution of the Regionally Aligned Force Strategy in a  
Microcosm**

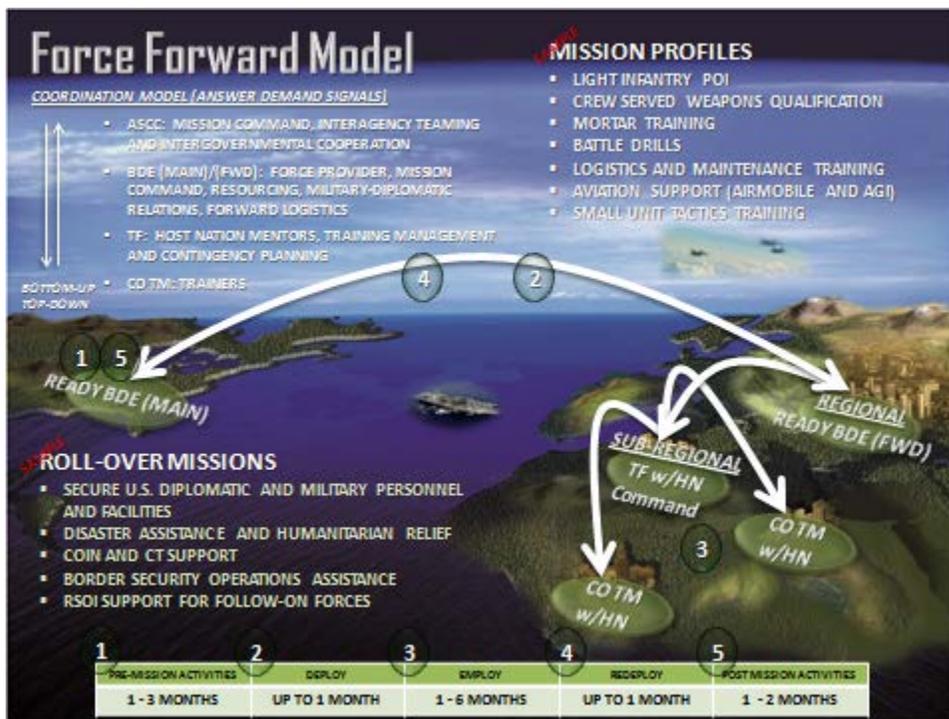
The strategic concept of Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) has emerged as the mechanism to base land forces at home, but allow US forces to stay engaged forward. Army units are being allocated to specified Army Service Component Commands in order to build a portfolio of regional expertise through localized engagement. RAF introduces a new term “alignment” to describe transitory but predictable relationships between designated Army units and Combatant Commands. It is, at its heart, a resurrection of a historically proven understanding that U.S. forces, in this instance, land forces, that are pushed forward to engage with foreign militaries on their own turf, offer significant tangible security and training benefits to both parties. In that sense, U.S. forces assigned to the Korean Peninsula, Japan, Germany, Italy, and Turkey are “regionally aligned.” For the last 60 years, US forces, often-special operations forces, have executed multiple expeditionary missions and actions, from humanitarian assistance, to counter drug support, to advising and assisting foreign militaries around the world (Columbia, Mali, Kenya, Thailand, Israel, etc.). At the same time National Guard “Citizen Soldiers” through the “State Partnership Program” and Army Reserve units have built bridges, provided medical care, and trained basic soldier skills and the tenets of mission command by pairing with the militaries of 65 nations to support the security cooperation objectives of the geographic Combatant Commanders.

The new concept of “regional alignment” as articulated by the Chief of Staff of the Army emphasizes the anticipated breadth and frequency of such engagements. The concept affirms the cardinal axiom that stability, and security, in the end, can only result from the positive interaction between human beings, and in extremis, the isolation or violent destruction of those who threaten the peace. The deliberate and robust implementation of the RAF concept helps preserve the hard won appreciation by U.S. forces and its leadership painfully learned over the last decade of conflict in Southwest and Central Asia, that understanding the demographics, culture, religious preferences, history, local language, politics, and the economic environments – the “human dimension” is essential to successfully securing strategic security goals, to include prevailing in ground combat and preserving that success. Or to say it another way, by continuing to engage overseas, the Army will not abandon the underlying principles of counterinsurgency warfare which are equally applicable across the full spectrum of military engagements, i.e., that understanding and respecting the people where they live and where the Army chooses or where it is forced to operate is the prerequisite for strategic accomplishment.

Under “Force Forward” units periodically leave their garrisons and deploy to assist host nations to engage with their military forces and their civilian populations, in order to maintain and sharpen key Soldier skills, language and cultural expertise, and expeditionary capabilities. What marks our contribution to the intellectual discussion about “the regional alignment” of U.S. land forces as a tangible and vigorous affirmation of “strategic land power” is our emphasis *on training and education, both at home and abroad throughout a Soldier’s enlistment or career in support of these overseas engagements.* Translating concept into action, we present, “a way” to implement the appropriate force design and train its cohorts. While the preferred unit under RAF concept is the Army’s Brigade Combat Team the likelihood of a “host” nation voluntarily

accepting a U.S. Brigade with its massive support tail is problematic. There is a far greater likelihood that a tailored battalion size task force, composed of companies and detachments able to operate away from battalion headquarters, would be accommodated by the host nation and effective within the range of missions suitable and directed for these units. While these units would work within the ambit of the U.S. Ambassador supporting the host nation and under the operational authority of the responsible geographic combatant commander, there is nothing that would preclude a CONUS based Brigade or higher echelon exerting long distance tactical oversight consistent with the guiding principle of “mission command.” That is that the higher headquarters, as part of its own training, clearly articulates the mission, identifies the objective, and demonstrates “trust” in the competency and ability of the Force Forward small unit commander to “get the job done the best he or she knows how.”

Below is a snapshot of the Force Forward model, showing the deployment of multiple Force Forward small units, operating as a Brigade mission command slice, with sample mission profiles and sample rollover missions. A timeline is also provided to address the rotational sequencing of the force. An illustrative Force Forward example would be a Brigade Headquarters providing tactical direction, either from Home Station in the US or at a regional hub, JTF-HOA, with Company Teams throughout each host nation conducting a range of missions such as a light-infantry security assistance mission, combined medical-civic action or supporting a maintenance training program at the host nation military's main depot.



Incorporation of the Army Reserve and National Guard’s State Partnership Program and integrating their company size units on a predictable rotational basis into the Force Forward is also part of the concept. Designating Reserve Component formations as Force Forward units shapes and justifies their pre-deployment training in both military skills and the language and culture of the host nation, supports their force generation timelines, and preserves lessons learned while working over the last twelve years with the Active Component. It affords the Active Component the opportunity to oversee Reserve training, mandate common standards, tactics, and procedures, and support robust resourcing of the Reserve Component units with equipment and training dollars.

Force Forward also contemplates foreign militaries coming to the U.S. to participate in major exercises in support of U.S. formations, whether at the Combat Training Centers or in more regionalized Guard exercises at Division or below and/or USAR Warrior Exercises and

Combat Support Training Exercises. Their presence and participation will inevitably add complexity to the planning and probable confusion in the execution of these exercises, which would closely replicate the recent experiences of American Soldiers who have spent their combat tours working, sometimes frustratingly, with their Iraqi and Afghan counterparts. The goal is for the invited militaries to impart knowledge of their own political, military, economic, social infrastructure, situations and provide lessons in culture and language to our formations participating in a Force Forward engagement.

Successfully employing the Force Forward for any of the mission sets abroad demands alignment and sequencing of Army general purpose and support units across the Army's three components consistent with US security objectives, with Force Forward units supported by the other services, the Department of State, the Department of Justice, Homeland Security, and the intelligence services whose capabilities when properly integrated and resourced, have positively benefited American operations over the last decade of war. Force Forward engagement by Army units within the host nation would range from intermittent, to periodic, to continuous based upon predictive analysis and a determined level of engagement. Though not entirely accurate, such analysis can suggest the next hot spot and offer a general timeline when that region or operational environment could jeopardize regional or global security. Then a Force Forward commitment of an Army unit can be made and a level of effort calculated to best support US interests and the stated needs of the host nation.

In order to effectively complete these missions abroad, it is essential that "Force Forward" Soldiers have an understanding of the cultures, geography, languages, and militaries of the countries where they are most likely to be employed, as well as the expertise in how to

impart military knowledge and skills to others. Most theater security cooperation engagements will not require that designated Force Forward units be at 90% or better operational readiness – meaning that a full complement of trained personnel and equipment as specified in unit’s structure documents are on hand. Nor would Force Forward units require recent collective training at a Combat Training Center before deployment.

However, these Soldiers across all the “Force Forward” general-purpose formations in which they serve must be afforded progressive education and training throughout their careers equivalent to their duties and responsibilities in the relevant subjects that support the Army’s articulation and projection of strategic landpower around the globe. All Soldiers cannot attend the Department of Defense’s University of Foreign Military Cultural Studies or the Defense Language Institute.

While there is no expectation that Force Forward Soldiers reach levels of understanding and facility comparable to special operations forces, some minimal language, regional expertise, and cultural training must be incorporated at all levels of Professional Military Education (PME) from enlisted (E-4) Warrior Leader Courses, to Advance and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Courses, and to the Sergeant Major Academy. Even more vigorous instruction in these critical facets of the “human dimension” have to become a significant part of the Basic Officer Leadership, Captains’ Career Courses, and the Command and General Staff College for officers. There are current major institutional gaps in such relevant education and training in support of an expeditionary Army.

To mitigate these gaps, the Department of the Army has tasked TRADOC through its Combined Arms Center to develop the curricula and standardize training in basic language skills,

culture, and regional expertise across the Army Components in Professional Military Education courses. The instruction would consist of functional courses that all Soldiers would take at the commencement of their careers, followed by additional education imbedded into PME courses which develops skills necessary to train and advise, culminating in very specific “short immersion” courses in “human dimension” subjects (demographics, culture, religious preferences, history, local language, politics, and the economic environment) when units are preparing to deploy in support of RAF.

Concurrently, units designated for RAF/Force Forward deployment would also participate in live (preferably) and/or constructive collective training exercises at either home station, National Guard, and Army Reserve training bases, or simulation centers, supported by role players and TRADOC’s Training Brain Operations Center repository of training scenarios and real world data transmitted through the Army’s training network, where these units must face and overcome multiple tactical military challenges and come to grips with the problems of communication and culture associated with the destination country. In that vein, FORSCOM is directed to coordinate with Army National Guard (ARNG) and U.S. Army Reserves Command (USARC) to draft guidance for pre-deployment training and readiness validation of Reserve Component forces for overseas engagements. These encouraging developments, however, can only be institutionalized as part of the overarching RAF training strategy if adequate resourcing can be assured across multiple fiscal years.

# Force Forward: MacCarley, Hayes, Bogart and Riha

Institutional Professional Military Education (PME) Training & Education		Regional Aligned Forces (RAF) Training & Education
Foundational (Army-Wide)	Professional (Security Cooperation Activity Executors) - Does Not Apply to All	Assigned/Allocated/Habitually Aligned (Security Cooperation Focused)
Negotiations	Plan & Participate in a Multinational Exercise IAW Army Service Component Command Campaign Support Plan	Writing Security Cooperation Policy, Strategy, Doctrine, Plans
Mediation of Disputes	Participate in Military-to-Military Engagements	Understand Security Cooperation-Related Authorities & Associated Processes
Working with Interpreters	Manage a Security Cooperation Program	Trace Security Cooperation-Related Requirements from National Security Strategy thru Guidance for Employment of the Force to Army Campaign Support Plan
Communication and Rapport Building	Conduct Security Assistance IAW Geographic Combatant Command Theater Campaign Plan	Defense Support to Diplomacy
Fundamentals of Building Partner Capacity	Plan & Coordinate Security Cooperation Activities with Country Team	Security Cooperation Lexicon
Assessment of all levels of Security Cooperation	Draft, Coordinate & Execute Army Service Component Command Campaign Support Plan	Counter Narcotics Assistance
Stability Operations	Draft, Coordinate & Execute Army Command & Direct Reporting Unit Support of Army Service Component Command Security Cooperation Strategy	Facilities/Infrastructure Support Projects
Understanding Reform	Provide Engineer Support to Geographic Combatant Command and Army Service Component Command IAW Campaign Support Plan	Security Cooperation-Related Legal Authorities
Organizational Development	Employ Army National Guard State Partnership Program	Counter/Non-Proliferation
Understanding Media	TRADOC Support to Army Service Component Command Campaign Support Plan	International Armaments Cooperation
Some Language Diversity	Deliver Security Cooperation Professional Military Education	Humanitarian Assistance
Disclose Information Properly to Non-U.S. Forces	Security Cooperation Planning at Geographic Combatant Command, Army Service Component Command, Headquarters Army, Army Command, Direct Reporting Unit	De-Mining Operations
Transferring Knowledge (Advise, Mentor, Adult Learning)	Security Cooperation Engagement Planning	Reciprocal Visits (School of Other Nations, Military Personnel Exchange Program)
Information Operations	Plan & Manage Security Assistance: Initial Military Training, Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Financing (Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Training)	Medical Civil Action Program
Cultural Awareness	Security Cooperation Resourcing (Fiscal & Forces)	Interoperability (American, British, Canadian, and Australian (ABCA), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Military Intelligence Program (MIP))
History and Trends of Conflict	Operate DoD Security Cooperation Toolkit	Disaster Preparedness Mitigation Assessment Program
Understanding the Operational Environment	Foreign Area Officer (Language, Culture, Region)	U.S. Military Schools Provide International Military Education and Training
Spoilers/Drivers of Conflict	Advising a Foreign Force	Moble Training Team and International Military Education and Training
Threat Vulnerability Assessment	Education Exchange Programs	
Actors, Dynamics, Issues	Prepare to Deploy to Conduct Security Cooperation - Engagement	
Interagency Partners & Security Cooperation	Regional Expertise	

## Army Security Cooperation Training and Education

### Summary

Force Forward concept reinforces “Strategic Landpower” as the capstone justification for adequately sizing and properly resourcing the Army as the premier force obligated to defend this Nation on land, support its security and military strategies around the world, and respond to crises in an operational environment defined by a digital world where decision-making must be made at the speed of information. “Strategic Landpower” contemplates that an American military ground presence (a Force Forward Regionally Aligned unit) within the several approved

regions can provide the host nation beneficiaries with the assurance that the U.S. will not abandon long held formal and informal security commitments. If a decision is made to use military force within or about the host nation, a deployed Force Forward unit is uniquely positioned to support a U.S. military response from more robust regionally aligned forces (brigades) garrisoned at their US home stations, dependent upon the gravity and the size/capability of the threat.

Because the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have essentially ended from our own perspective, the current public debate is about how and how deeply the military – the Army - can be downsized. Instead, the appropriate subject of the debate should be about tailoring the Army to the force we need, and where, when, and how military force will be employed, next year, in five years and thirty years from now. Force Forward attempts to build on current strategic discussions about how at least cost in exchange for maximum output, the Army can remain regionally engaged and globally responsive. Force Forward is a model for implementing small unit engagement and posturing to be global responsive that leverages existing capabilities, exercises, and overseas engagements, integrates these engagements under one training concept, and incorporates not only Active Army formations, but National Guard, the Army Reserve, and our joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners. In consonance with the Army's Regional Aligned Forces strategy, Force Forward strikes a balance between the cost of employment and deployment of Army units overseas against the overarching strategic value of reassuring our friends and allies in peace through security cooperation and training, resolving crises, both natural and manmade before they lead to chaos, failed institutions and violence, and help ending war, if it happens.

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