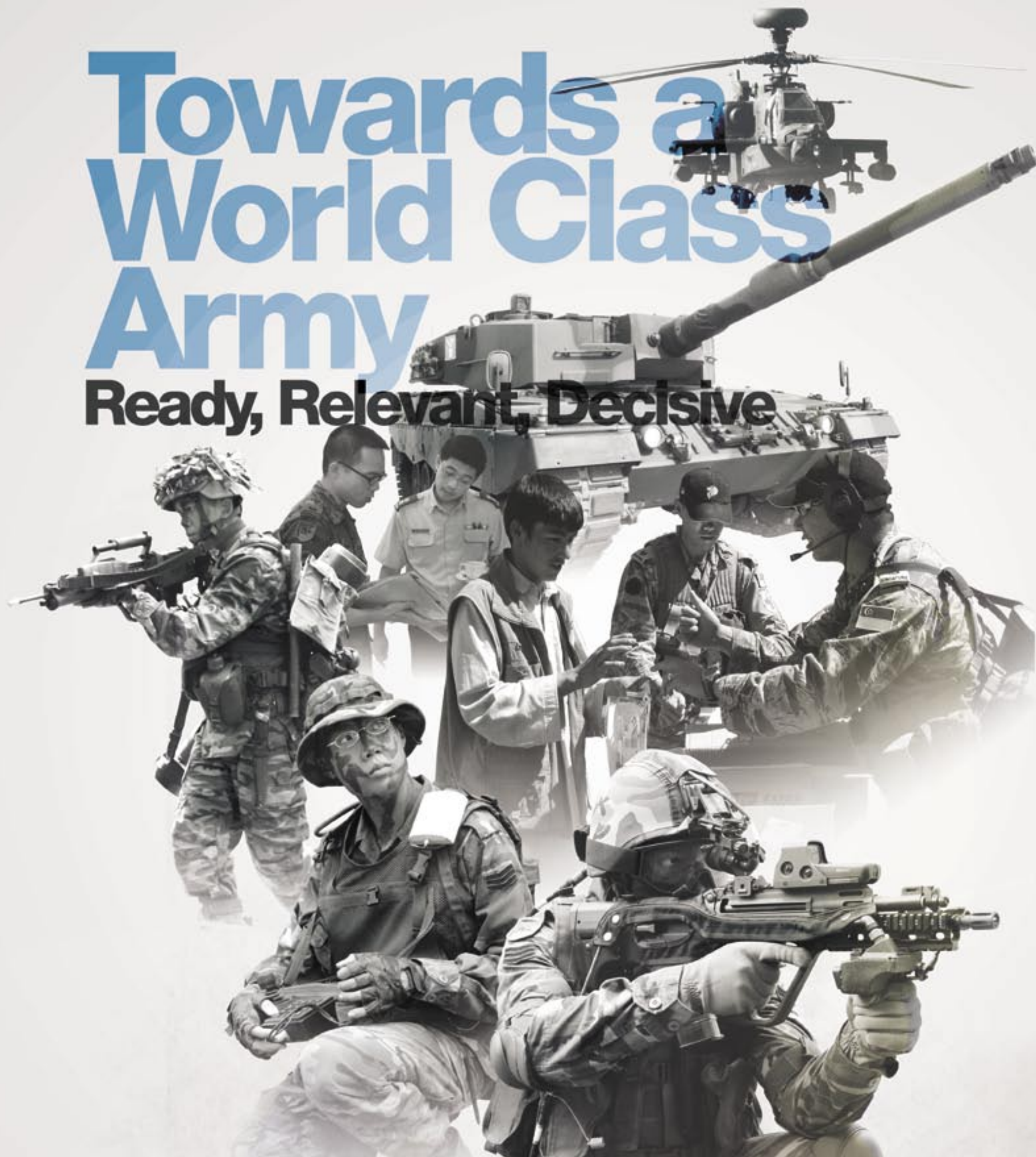


Towards a World Class Army

Ready, Relevant, Decisive



United in Quest for Peace 2



Ammo Storage Goes Underground



Thumbs Up For Positive NS Experience 8

Join Our Army!



The Marina Square Atrium was a bustling hotspot for young and old alike as hundreds came to view the Armed Forces Career Exhibition. Held from 29 February to 2 March, the Tri-Service recruitment event featured many engaging activities for the public such as weapons displays, medical dummies and even state-of-the-art flight simulators. Presenters from all three Services were on hand to provide in-depth information about the career opportunities for those keen on joining the SAF.

The exhibition proved to be a well run and informative platform for those thinking of signing on. As Davesh Gurbani aged 18 said, “The exhibition has been excellently organised. I’ve been thinking of signing on for a long time. In my Polytechnic, my participation with the National Cadet Corps has allowed me to travel to the USA for an exchange programme and that has fuelled my interest in the Army.” To help visitors such as Gurbani, detailed information on various courses and career opportunities were readily available through the brochures and displays. Helpful presenters such as 2WO Mohammed Hanaki from the

Demonstrating the Strength of our 3rd Generation Army

On 8 March, HQ Armour played host to potential officer cadets and students of the Singapore Command and Staff College (SCSC). Both groups toured an interactive exhibition at Sungei Gedong Camp, which displayed an impressive array of armour vehicles. Other exhibits that demonstrated our Army’s 3rd Generation Transformation included modern urban operations equipment such as the Advanced Combat Man System (ACMS) and the Round Corner Firing (RCF) system.

The importance of exposing these soldiers to our advanced technology was highlighted by a presenter CPT Justus Ong who said, “These recruits don’t have many opportunities to interact with our cutting edge equipment. It is thus our role to show that our Army has upgraded itself and they will hopefully be excited to use such technology.” The visitors certainly agreed as exemplified by REC Alastair Su who said, “The visit is great for us because as recruits, we usually see the Army from a very myopic point of view. Today we got a glimpse of the big picture and I am glad to know that our commanders are so passionate about their work. The visit will definitely help us make better informed decisions regarding our careers.”



SAF Medical Training Institute (SMTI) were on hand to answer queries. He said, “I am proud to be able to share this part of my life with prospective soldiers. The response has been very positive, and sharing with them the highs, lows and realities of Army life will hopefully give them a better understanding of the job.”

Besides prospective soldiers, many visiting families were also delighted by the displays. Parents whose children were interested in a military career took the opportunity to gather more information at the exhibition, often asking questions on career schemes, routes of advancement and educational opportunities. They were also pleased to know that the Army promotes a “study first approach” as evident in the various study awards available. Mr Lim Hock Thiam, who visited the exhibition with his wife and children said, “Today’s exhibition has brought back old memories. We were just around the area and decided to take a look since my boys are fascinated with weapons. In the future, I have no issues if they have the interest and want to sign on with the SAF.”



The recruits then observed an exciting integrated strike display which showcased the Longbow Apache Attack Helicopter and live-firing by the Bionix II. After observing the mighty firepower of our Armour, REC Jonathan Jacob said, “The live-firing was tremendously impressive. However what was more impressive was knowing that the Army would take the effort to showcase its transformational journey to recruits. I feel very fortunate and this visit has certainly expanded my understanding of the Army.”

Although there was no live-firing display for the afternoon’s visit by SCSC, which included officers from the SAF and foreign armed forces, the visitors were no less impressed. LTC Wolf Illner of the German Army shared, “The SAF’s capabilities are very impressive, especially that of the Armour. It is interesting to see the SAF’s view on issues that concern my country as well. We may operate differently but our intentions and end points are mostly common.” One of the event organisers, Commanding Officer, 2nd Signals Battalion, LTC Andy Ong explained, “Today’s interaction with our Army’s equipment aims to bring learning out of the classroom for the officers. Giving them a hands-on display of our 3rd Generation Fighting Force and interacting with the presenters will give them a better idea of the concerns that our soldiers have on the ground.”

Singapore Biathlon: Mind over Matter

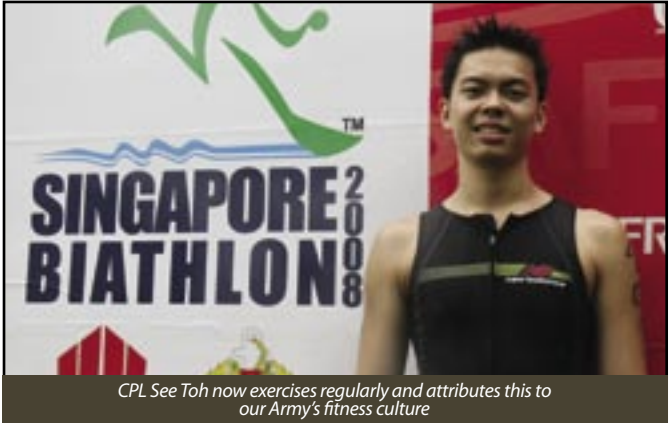
The SAF places a large premium on fitness, and every Service holds a signature event each year. For the Navy, it is the Singapore Biathlon, held on 1 March at the East Coast Park. Organised in conjunction with the SAFRA National Service Association, the highlight of the event was the Navy Sprint Challenge, which saw various Navy Commands compete against each other.



The Guest-of-Honour was Minister of State for Defence, Associate Professor Koo Tsai Kee, who flagged off the Men’s Open Category. He commented, “This year we had overwhelming response for the biathlon, and we were already full before closing date. The event not only shows that the Navy has great mobilisation and organisational capabilities, but also that we place a huge emphasis on fitness. It’s not just physical fitness — the whole biathlon is about the spirit of mind over matter. If you’re just fit, you won’t be able to complete it in good time. It’s a combination of physical fitness and mental power.”



This spirit of mental and physical endurance was exemplified by members of our Army, including the Chief of Army (COA), MG Neo Kian Hong. Among the many other Army participants was CPL Brian See Toh from G1 Army, who finished in a respectable time of under one hour and thirty minutes. He said, “I’m very happy with my time considering this is my first biathlon. Even though I am in a non-combat vocation, I still have a duty to keep fit and healthy. I set this as a personal challenge, and managed to accomplish it with the encouragement of my superiors, who trained with me twice to thrice a week. The fitness culture of the Army has motivated me to exercise regularly, and transformed me from a relatively unfit student in school to the health conscious individual of today.”



United in Quest for Peace

With different conflicts occurring in various parts of the globe and the ever present threat of terrorism, world peace may appear to be an elusive goal. Still, that has not deterred many countries from working towards it. On 5 March, Singapore and New Zealand co-hosted the ASEAN Regional Forum’s (ARF) 2nd Peacekeeping Expert’s Meeting at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel in Singapore. The theme was ‘Planning for Peace



GSI Shares Best Practices with Bahrain Visitors



Army Team to Afghanistan Recognised for Their Contributions



As part of our Army’s expanded spectrum of operations, a 5-man engineering team led by LTC Ong Chia Choong was in Afghanistan’s Bamiyan Province from July to October 2007. The team worked closely with local authorities to plan and supervise the construction of two bridges and a water supply project at Bamiyan University.

On 11 March, the team was among 225 servicemen from the three Services who were presented with the SAF Overseas Medal for their contributions in various overseas missions. Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean who graced the event said, “All

Operations – Achieving Mission Success in Diverse Environments’.

During the 2-day meeting, expert speakers of diverse backgrounds shared their insights and answered questions on peace operations in different environments. To enhance participation and learning, there were also highly focused syndicate discussions on specific elements of peace operations. Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Kolonel Mohd Tawih bin Abdullah, Special Duty Officer, Commander Royal Brunei Armed Forces Secretariat shared, “The meeting is a good avenue for exchange of ideas and views on peacekeeping operations. One interesting point raised was the setting up of multi-agency and multinational missions – I hope to see how the inherent challenges are overcome.” He added, “I had good conversations with many people from different countries and met many old friends. The organisation of the event was good – I’ve been here before and have a high expectation of Singapore service.”

The joint organisation of the event also reflected growing defence ties between Singapore and New Zealand. Group Captain Stephen Goodman, New Zealand’s Defence Adviser to Singa-

pore commented, “In recent years, we’ve worked together in East Timor and Afghanistan. The provincial reconstruction in Bamiyan is proving very successful. Co-hosting this meeting is just a logical extension of how we work closely together.” He added, “In my two months here, Singapore has been fantastic. My family loves it and the people are very friendly.”



Salman commented, “The Singapore Army’s ideas are advanced and open. There are a lot of points that would help us. In particular, we learnt that GSI does not merely aim to discover the problems, but strives to correct them as well. There is a very open attitude of learning.” Looking towards the future, BG Salman said “I hope that Bahrain and Singapore can continue to work closer and develop a strong relationship, especially in the area of learning about equipment. I hope that we will be very close countries.”

The Bahrain Defence Force team also visited the Air Force and Navy Inspectorates to learn more about safety practices in the other Services.

the children’s faces as they knew that we were contributing to their society.”

Team leader LTC Ong Chia Choong felt that the Army had sufficiently prepared the team and this gave them the confidence to execute the mission. Nonetheless, they also exercised great caution as he explained, “We were definitely operating in a different environment and we had to be alert to potential threats. However, the trainings on how to deal with Improvised Explosive Devices, medical emergencies and traffic accidents equipped us with the necessary skills to deal with such potential incidents.” His greatest takeaway from the trip was however the exposure to a different aspect of our Army’s operations. He said, “This trip shows our ability to work in an expanded section of operations. Learning how to engage and negotiate with people of different cultural backgrounds was a very fruitful experience for me.”



Towards a World Class Army

Ready, Relevant, Decisive



A major factor for the economic success of Singapore is the rock solid defence provided by a strong SAF, which includes a strong Army. The mission of our Army is to deter aggression, and should deterrence fail, to secure a swift and decisive victory. Our Army

is to be ready and capable of conducting a spectrum of operations to protect our interests and the well-being of our citizens. In his Army Workplan seminar speech 2008, Chief of Army (COA), MG Neo Kian Hong commended the Army for having

achieved greater clarity and steady progress in its 3rd Generation transformation. Going forward, COA extolled our vision of a World Class Army to enervise our people and provide focus for our efforts.

“World class communicates our desire to have an Army able to deliver the mission and a brand that is associated with trust, confidence and deterrence.”

MG Neo Kian Hong,
Chief Of Army

A **World Class Army** is one that is “**Ready, Relevant and Decisive in service to our nation.**” The following attributes further define our vision:

As Part of an Integrated SAF, capable of a full spectrum of operations. We harness the full potential of the SAF through networking capabilities to achieve mission success in a full spectrum of operations.

A Learning Army with Thinking Soldiers. We promote continual learning and creative thinking to meet the complexity of the modern battlefield. In the midst of change and complexity, our leaders and soldiers remain steadfast, professional and guided by core military values.

Our People are Our Edge. Everyone is valued – Regulars, DXOs, NSF’s, and NSmen. We engage our people to imbue conviction and commitment, and develop them for peak performance and mission success.

As an Institution that the Nation is proud of. We play a role in nation-building, bringing together people from all walks of life to help build a common sense of identity and purpose. Through the NS experience, we forge the fighting spirit of our nation.



Our Army is capable of conducting a full spectrum of operations ranging from overseas reconstruction and humanitarian efforts to conventional operations



Realising the Vision

To realise its vision, our Army will focus on the three key areas of organisation, people and processes.

Organising for the Future

Good organisation enables us to reap the full potential of our people collectively. Our Army is organised in four ways.

1. **Operational structure** that allows us to operate from peace to war.

2. **Formations** — Raise, Train and Sustain specialised vocational knowledge.

In the early days, the Formations were developed to ensure that our soldiers had basic vocational skills. As our Army expands its spectrum of operations and undertakes more complex operations, these competencies continue to evolve.

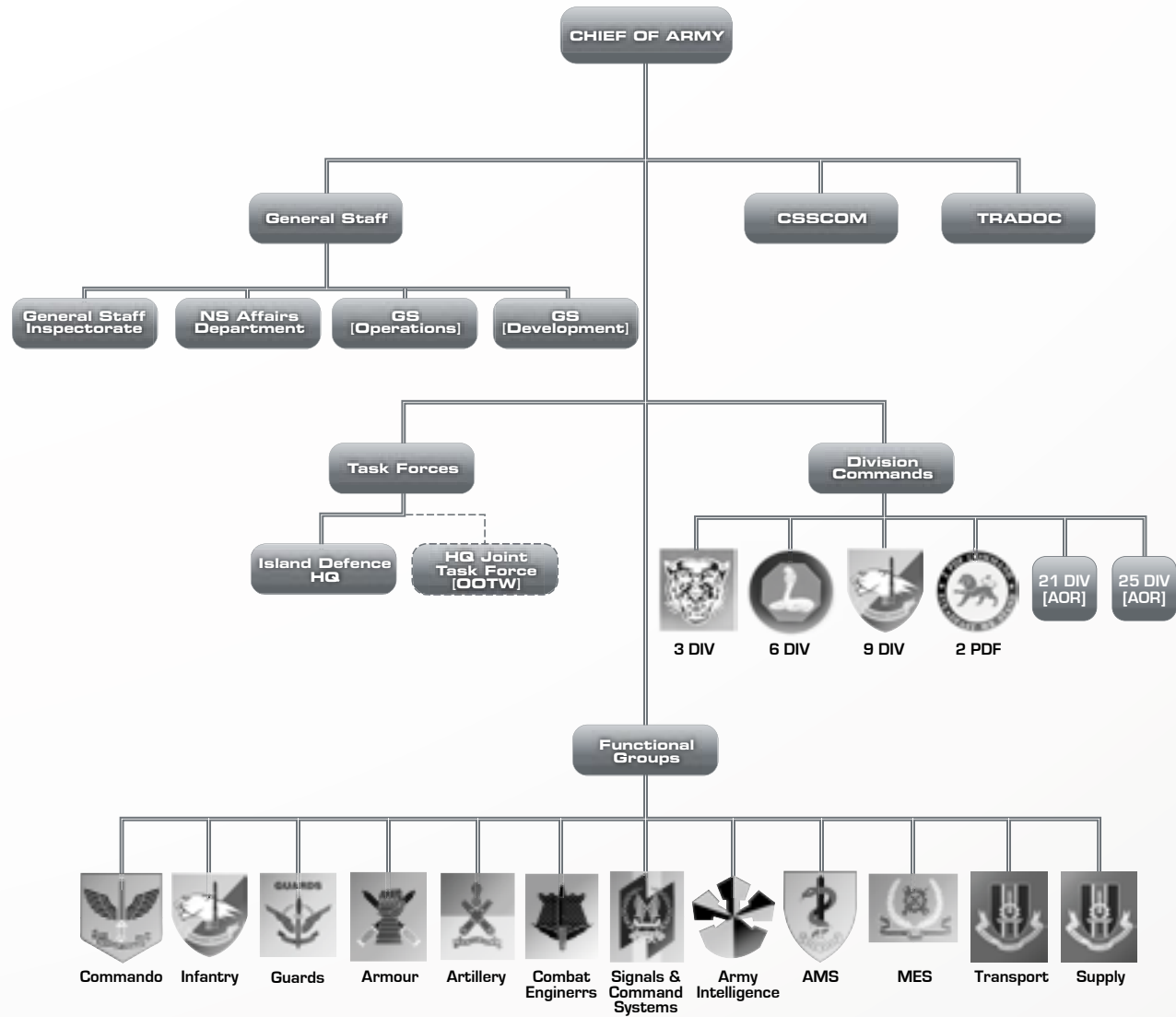
3. **Divisions** — Raise, Train and Sustain operational task-force knowledge.

In the 2nd Generation Army, Combined Arms Divisions were created to raise task knowledge. They will continue to raise more task competencies, for examples, Guards will be responsible for Joint Task Force (Operations Other Than Wars) and 9th Division/ Infantry for urban fighting.

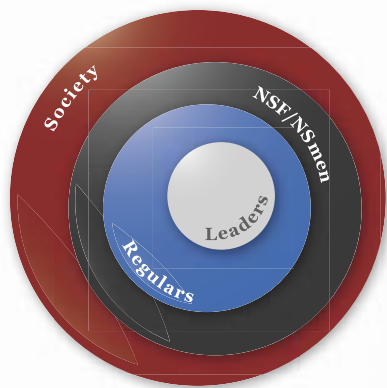
4. **Army Hubs and the General Staff** — organised for organisational knowledge.

The Army General Staff has been organised into five Hubs for more efficient management of our Army’s organisational knowledge. For example, the Operations Hub manages the high readiness core for peacetime contingencies and full force potential in war while the Training Hub, together with TRADOC and the training institutes, ensure efficient and effective combined arms and integrated training.

Structure Of Our Army



Nurturing our Software and ‘Heartware’



“Our people form the software and heartware of our organisation” These words by COA succinctly reflect the importance of our people.



It is important for senior leadership to communicate priorities to the ground

Leaders — It is key because the success and continuity of an organisation depends on it. He announced the introduction of a coaching program for our key appointment holders.

Regulars — Because they are our core, our Army will continue to invest in them. COA envisaged a situation where “our people can study any subjects that help them professionally at any time of their career, to whatever level that they can manage.”

Leveraging on Key Processes

Besides the Learning Organisation introduced initiative eight years ago, our Army has adopted three other important processes to help realise its vision.

1. **Balanced Score Card** — provides a common frame for our Army to converse with the ground on the common priorities. COA commented, “The word balance means that we manage all our responsibilities based on priorities but within the time and resource space that we have.”

2. **Enterprise Risk Management** — allows our Army to communicate the range of risks the organisation faces and their impact.

World Class Nation, World Class Army

Singapore is going through an exciting phase and emerging truly as a city of possibilities. COA said, “On top of the Flyer, we can see the city landscape transform. We can feel the pulse of change from the Biopolis to the Integrated Resorts, from the Esplanade to the sports hub, from the Garden by the Bay to the F1 races. Indeed we have become more cosmopolitan and world



As our core, our regulars will be developed to their fullest potential

National Servicemen — they form the bulk of our forces and it is imperative that we ensure that experiences and work are positive and meaningful.



It is imperative that our National Servicemen have a positive and meaningful Army experience

Society — It provides moral support for all and because National Service has become an integral part of our social fabric, it is important to let people know more about us and what we stand for.



The Total Defence Exhibition is one of many events that allows the public to know more about our Army

pact. COA said, “Demands for openness, the pervasive nature of the new media and transparent nature of our citizen army mean that we are under greater scrutiny than before. We should be happy and proud that we have become a brand-name, but now we have to learn how to manage our reputation and account for how we run our business. It is no longer just what we do but also how we do it.”

3. **Organisational Excellence (OE)** — OE enables our Army to have recorded and systematic procedures and provides a clear way of updating them. Our Army will institutionalise OE, starting with the training and CSS communities as a priority.



Understanding Precision Warfare

The latest handbook, “Building Our 3rd Generation Army” gives a useful overview of our transformation journey and highlights key feature of the first spiral of development. In particular, the chapter “The Way We Fight: Precision Warfare”, provides a good understanding on the three key components of Precision Manoeuvre, Precision Fires and Precision Information. Collectively, they enable our forces to be more aware and connected, manoeuvre in dispersed formations and concentrate at the key points, before delivering the knockout punch at the decisive moment.

Precision Manoeuvre

Manoeuvre warfare remains our core strategy to dislocate and demoralise the enemy, effecting a collapse in his will to fight. Better networking capabilities have enabled our forces to be at the right place at the decisive time. Our forces and weapon platforms also have enhanced mobility and agility, lethality and survivability, resulting in greater combat effectiveness. Armour will be receiving its first batch of the Leopard tanks and our Infantry forces will be motorised using M113s, subsequently, wheeled Armoured vehicles. The acquisition of the High Mobility Artillery Rockets (HIMARS) system will offer greater lethality with longer range and accuracy.



The HIMARS rocket system
Photograph courtesy of The Fort Sill Web Site

Precision Fires

Precision fires allow our Army to coordinate and deliver concentrated fires onto an intended target with accuracy, speed and at the crucial point during the battle. Through the networked fires grid, the entire suite of sensor and shooter assets from across the SAF can be synchronised. These include Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, PRIMUS Howitzers, Apache attack helicopters and F-16 fighter jets.

Precision Information

Information capabilities, structures and processes have increased connectivity between our forces, enabling them to make faster and better decisions in the context of the “big picture” of the overall battlefield.

The “Building Our 3rd Generation Army” handbook will be distributed to all Army personnel.

“And a world class nation deserves a world class Army, one that is ready, relevant and decisive in the service of the nation.”

MG Neo Kian Hong,
Chief Of Army

Ammo Storage Goes Underground

Singapore’s skyrocketing property prices are a good reflection of the land scarcity here, emphasising the need to use our land resources efficiently. This was a top priority when the SAF planned its new Underground Ammunition Facility (UAF), which was officially opened on 7 March at the disused Mandai Quarry.



Mr Teo commissioning the UAF, which freed up land equivalent to 400 football fields

Our Uniforms Headgear, Gorgets, and Epaulettes



The colour of the Guards beret is khaki

In our final installment on uniforms, we explain the origins and use of various uniform accessories.

Until 1971, soldiers’ headgear consisted of the helmet and jungle cap. In May that year, the beret was introduced in place of the jungle cap. The three services of the SAF (Army, Navy, Air Force) and the Commandos wore berets of different colours.

In August 1976, new beret colours were introduced; green for Infantry and dark blue for the Support Arms. The Commandos retained their red beret, the universal symbol of elite airborne forces, and Armour the black beret, a headdress widely used by armour formations worldwide. The jockey cap also made its first

mations at the quarry, complemented by safety features such as blast doors, debris traps and expansion chambers, can contain the risks of ammunition storage without the need for a large buffer zone. The insulated environment also enables energy savings of 50% while mechanised processes allow manpower to be reduced by 20%.

In his speech, Mr Teo attributed the success of the project to strong teamwork between the SAF, the Defence Science and Technology Agency and SembCorp Design and Construction. This tripartite relationship was particularly important because the UAF is the first of its kind in the world, requiring many pioneering solutions. Not surprisingly, the team has set new international standards in the design and construction of underground storage facilities. Mr Teo added, “Because our team dared to dream, think deep and break new ground, we have created more space for our defence, while freeing up more precious land for Singapore.”

Besides its efficient use of land, energy and manpower, the UAF also boasts enhanced operational readiness. In the past, ammunition pallets were manually strapped onto vehicles and taken to the field, where they had to be reconfigured to suit specific missions. Today, ammunition supply is much faster. SSG Tan Chee Sern, a Storage Cluster 2IC from SAF Ammunition Command explained, “Instead of using pallets to move a few boxes of ammunition, we can now use the Electric Side Loader



The Electric Side Loader (right) is custom-made to suit the operating conditions in the UAF and can be driven in all four directions without turning

to place an entire container on a trailer. The containers are prepared according to mission requirements, so the ammunition can be distributed immediately when it arrives in the field.” SSG Tan added with a smile, “Working here is challenging, but we’re proud to be in the pioneer batch of staff.”

officers holding the rank of Colonel and above. The patch for each rank is red, with a small gold button at the tip. For Colonels there is one gold braid down the centre; two gold braids for Brigadier-Generals; and a gold oak leaf for Major-Generals and above.

Epaulettes were used in the French army to signify rank, and eventually became a means to distinguish officers from soldiers. By the early eighteenth century, officers in other armies were petitioning for their military to adopt this practice. During the American Revolutionary War, epaulettes worn by British and French officers were elaborate affairs with heavy fringes of gold or silver wire. Gold and silver were even used to make or plate the epaulettes. Epaulettes for sergeants and other soldiers were made with cheaper metals or cloth.



In the SAF, the ranks of officer cadets, officers, and warrant officers are inserted into epaulettes. Many would have observed that the rank of officer cadets is denoted in white stripes. This practice has its origins in Roman tradition. Candida, from which the word ‘candidate’ is derived, was used to describe the dazzling white of the attire (the ‘toga candida’) that those seeking public office wore. Similarly, the white stripes are representative of the higher motives and responsibilities that officer cadets aspire to.

appearance at the same time; it is worn in the field when a helmet is not required.

Gorgets The gorget was originally a steel collar worn to protect the throat. Since the 18th century, however, the gorget has been used purely as an accessory for military uniforms. Today, the gorget is described as a “coloured collar patch with a button and either gold lace oak leaf motif or silk cord.”

In the SAF, gorgets are worn with the No. 1 dress by army

Tracing the History of AHM



Dr Tony Tan flagging off the 30,000 strong Sheares Bridge Run in 1995

The SAFRA Sheares Bridge Run was inaugurated in 1992 as part of SAFRA’s 20th Anniversary Celebrations. Three years later, another mass run called the Army Half Marathon (AHM) emerged, marking the first Army-wide event which would bring together active and NS Servicemen from all Divisions and Formations in the spirit of friendly competition. From these humble beginnings, the two events were merged in 1998 to achieve greater synergy as they shared many common objectives, attracting 60,000 participants to the flagging off at Marina Bay. Over the years, this mega event which is now known as the SAFRA Singapore Bay Run (SSBR) and Army Half Marathon 2008 has evolved to become the largest mass run in Singapore.

The coming together of such a large number of servicemen is also a wonderful opportunity for charity fund-raising, which was initiated with the first AHM in 1995. Charities which have benefited from this include the Community Chest, President’s Challenge and the SAF Benevolent Fund. When the two runs merged in 1998, a total of \$434,000 was raised, reflecting the generous spirit of our servicemen and donors. This year’s charity drive will be held from May to July, so do look out for it and donate generously!

Preparing Your Mind for the AHM

With the Singapore Bay Run and Army Half Marathon (AHM) just four months away, it is essential to develop the physical and mental strength necessary to complete the grueling run. Following the Army Half Marathon Personal Guide, Army News will be featuring monthly quick tips to help you prepare for the AHM.

Having the right frame of mind is crucial for both the actual 21-km run and the months of preparation leading up to it. It is easy to get discouraged even in the preparation phase as training can be arduous, long drawn and mundane. Learning to set goals effectively in one’s training programme enhances feelings of self-competency, ownership and raises motivation. Effective goal-setting can follow the “S.M.A.R.T.” principles.

S- Specific It is important to set specific targets to reach. Avoid general goals such as “I want to do my best in the 4.8-km run.” Instead, replace it with “I want to cut 30 seconds off my 4.8-km run.”

M-Measurable Monitor the progress of your training periodically and chart it. This can take place weekly and allows you to track the highs and lows of your performance. This will allow you to make necessary changes to increase the effectiveness of your training.

A- Adjustable Have the flexibility to adjust your goals that takes into account dynamic changes such as weather and injuries.

changes – the opportunity for all participants to enjoy the thrill of running across the Benjamin Sheares Bridge. Whether a first-time runner, or a seasoned competitor, participants can be assured that the SSBR and AHM will live up to their claim of being the “Run of a Lifetime.”



The city skyline was a perfect backdrop for the newly merged SSBR and AHM in 1998

R- Realistic Remember to set goals which are manageable and realistic. Consider your prior physical condition before embarking on an intense training regime. At the same time, maintain a degree of difficulty to avoid unnecessary discouragement or boredom during training.

T- Time Based Set a specific time frame to achieve each goal. This will build the necessary urgency to complete it.

“If you want to win something, run one hundred meters. If you want to experience something, run a marathon.”

Emil Zatopek, the first man to run 20 km under one hour

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Quiz Of The Month - MAR / APR

Send us the correct answer and win a pair of Golden Village movie tickets. There will be 5 winners!
Q: What are the three keywords that describe our vision of a World Class Army?
Closing Date : 26 May 2008

Answer: Rank / Name:
Unit: E-mail:
NRIC: Contact No:

- 1. This contest is open to all Army personnel except the executive staff of Army News Section.
- 2. Each person is allowed one entry.
- 3. Prizes are not exchangeable for cash. Winners can either collect their prizes from Army News or arrange for mail delivery.
- 4. The judges' decision is final. Please send us your entries via mail or email us at armynews@starnet.gov.sg.
- 5. Prizes not collected within a month of notification will be forfeited.

FEB / MAR Quiz		FEB / MAR Winners	
Q: What was NDP 2007 held on?		1) DYO VIOLET KOH	NRIC: S000x376G
A: The world's largest floating platform		2) MSG TAY SOCK LAN	NRIC: S000x825G
		3) PTETOH KAH WEI	NRIC: S000x627E
		4) CPT (NS) SAMUEL CHAN LING WEI	NRIC: S000x493D
		5) CPT (NS) YEE KHENG HOCK	NRIC: S000x424A

Winners are to contact Army News at 67682206 for collection of prizes.

Thumbs Up for Positive NS Experiences

Strengthening, sharpening and sustaining our NSmen's fighting skills are just some of the aims of the NS 10-year training cycle. While the operational training of NSmen is not as frequent as their full-time service, these NSmen nevertheless continue to

enjoy strong bonds of camaraderie as they serve their duties to the nation. Our Army places a high emphasis on ensuring that our NSmen have a positive and fruitful experience whenever

they are back for training. Army News tracked some of these experiences to highlight positive touch points in various phases of their training cycles.

602 SIR: A Decade of Positive NS Experience

1998 may seem like a long time ago for many. But for the men of 602nd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (602 SIR), the past decade has been a highly memorable one as they built a strong spirit of camaraderie and a firm commitment to defence. 1998 was also the start of many 'firsts' for 602 SIR. They became the first NS battalion in the SAF to have their ICT in the San Yong Kong camp in 2005, carry out Urban Operations Platoon Live-Firing in 2008, and organise an In-Camp Family Day at Tanjong Gul Camp.



Commander 76 SIB, COL Chiang Hock Woon (left) and MAJ (NS) Loh Khum Yean have kept the 602 SIR flag flying high

As such, it was a stirring occasion when 602 SIR held its Stand-Down Parade on 5 March, signifying the end of its NS journey. Its Commanding Officer, MAJ (NS) Loh Khum Yean paid tribute to the "unit's leadership, teamwork and fighting spirit" which had contributed to the success of its various initiatives. Even at an early stage in 602 SIR's NS cycle, the battalion had proven its mettle when they were awarded the Best NS unit in 2000.



The Stand-Down Parade marks the NSmen's transition to the MINDEF Reserve

From the achievements at unit level down to the individual soldiers, 602 SIR demonstrated a spirit of excellence and unity that could only be developed through years of hard work. LCP (NS) Goh Bock Poh, a Section Automatic Weapon Gunner delivered a personal and moving speech at the parade saying, "Even though we see each other once a year, we can hit it off straight away, as though we had never parted company." He also shared personal experiences in the unit saying, "For me, breaching drills were more challenging than GCE 'A' exams. My strategy to cope was simply to follow my buddy. When he signalled me to prone, I pruned, when he ask me to run left, I didn't go right. We helped each other dig our shell-scrapes and through it we developed strong bonds of friendship."

These bonds were also built between officers and their men, as LCP (NS) Goh said, "My Company greatly respected our Officer-in-Command (OC) who is an 'Angmo'. For the record, the reason why a bunch of 'Hokkien Peng' would trust and respect

him is not due to some post-colonial inferiority complex. He is a good communicator, and constantly gave us the big picture. He fought for our welfare and did the dirty work with us."



As 602 SIR stands down, the memories of a positive NS experience will always remain

602 SIR's commitment to defence has been admirable. Having gone through 10 years of ICTs, their service to the nation has paralleled developments in their personal lives. Many first joined the battalion as singles but are now married with families. In the true spirit of commitment to national defence, they look forward to passing this important responsibility to their young sons. CPT (NS) Albert Tjoeng illustrated this final point commenting "This ICT also marks the last time all of us will meet together annually. So the band of brothers will go our separate ways. It has been a fulfilling journey with these guys over the decade, from the time we were swinging bachelors, to becoming husbands, and now fathers. And the next time I step onto the parade square and eat cook house food will be when my sons Zach and Tim perform their National Service. So long, and till we meet again."

Touching Bases with NSmen



Visiting NSmen during their training exercises is a great way for COA to better understand their concerns and impart his knowledge

Maintaining operational readiness, providing feedback and bringing expertise from civilian jobs to NS training are just some of the responsibilities shouldered by today's NSmen. On 27 February, Chief of Army (COA), MG Neo Kian Hong visited a few exercises involving NSmen, during which he was able to listen to their concerns and impart his wealth of experience.

COA's call to NSmen to share and collaborate was echoed by 3SG (NS) Jason Chen of 9th Singapore Infantry Brigade (9 SIB) who said, "Part of the NSman's role is to provide feedback to our Commanders and to ensure that their processes are correct." COA visited several command posts, listening to updates and touching base with commanders and men alike. He emphasised to the NSmen the importance of going beyond one's scope of work saying, "Once you are willing to learn beyond your vocation and understand the big picture, you will be able to better organise accordingly."

2SG (NS) Sng Chern Wei from 76th Singapore Infantry Brigade (76 SIB) was glad that the ground soldiers had also benefited from COA's guidance. He explained, "It is inspiring to see many of our Brigade Commanders going out of their way to brief the brigade on the purpose, progress and bigger picture of each mission. It helps to keep us engaged in the exercise, preventing us from being overly focused on our narrow scope of work."

COA also encouraged NSmen to bring expertise from their civilian jobs into the Army. 2SG (NS) Sng reiterated this point saying "As our exercises become more realistic, it is important to bring in greater expertise and skills beyond the military context.

Those with experience in fields like education, law and counselling have brought in knowledge from their civilian jobs. Being involved in this way makes NSmen feel more engaged in the mission."

At the end of the day, the NSmen were appreciative of COA's visit, as exemplified by LTA (NS) Goh Yew Liang of 9 SIB who said "It is rare for us to meet COA, thus knowing that he is concerned and paying attention to what we do really raises our morale."



2SG (NS) Sng feels that COA's visit has enhanced the NSmen's training experience

Going the Extra Mile in Physical Training

Depending on one's level of physical fitness, the Individual Physical Proficiency Test (IPPT) often evokes either dread or anticipation amongst NSmen. After completing Full-time National Service, servicemen are still required to maintain a level of fitness that keeps him operationally ready. These standards vary with age and NSmen must attempt IPPT once within their IPPT year. Mandatory Remedial Training (RT) is conducted for NSmen who fail or default their IPPT by the end of their IPPT window.

To assist NSmen underdoing RT, the Fitness Conditioning Centres (FCCs) provide excellent coaching and professionalism. All Physical Training Instructors (PTI) are qualified with either the Fitness Instructor Certification or the with the National Coaching Accreditation Programme, thus benchmarking themselves against the top private trainers in Singapore.

Many NSmen who attended RT have been impressed by the

service provided by the fitness instructors at the various FCCs. One of the attendees, LCP (NS) Bobby Ng said in a letter of commendation, "My first impression of RT was that it would be a waste of my time. I was not sure how much I could gain from it. However, after the Physical Training Instructor's encouragement and dedication to train with us, I was motivated to come for every session and eventually improved my results. I really appreciate what is being done."

3SG (NS) Terrence Yiew commended the dedication of the trainers saying, "I've really enjoyed the RT sessions that have been planned and executed by the Fitness Specialists. I must say that they have been most professional and passionate in their jobs." Excelling in the IPPT is not just about being physically fit, but having the mental perseverance as well. CPL (NS) Daniel Chan said that the 20-minute talks given at the end of every training session was the part he enjoyed most. He commented that they were "very motivational, inspirational and highlighted

to me the purpose and importance of physical training."

NSmen can thus look forward to their physical training that is not only effective but enjoyable as well.



Our instructors aim to provide effective training and a positive experience for NSmen