

armynews

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pulse of the army



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OCS

Excellence Always

Army Leadership Charts the Way Forward



COA (left) enjoying a light hearted moment with Head TSG (COL Koh Lin Kee) and Chief Signals Officer (COL Low Jin Phang)

The Army Leadership comprising senior Officers, WOSPECs and NSmen gathered at the SAFRA Mount Faber for the Army Planning Seminar in October. Amidst the serious reflection and conversation was a friendly game of bowling that was held at the same location. Led by Chief of Army MG Neo Kian Hong, the participants had their fair share of strikes, misses and laughter, as they cheered their respective teams on in a friendly competition. This was a good chance for the leaders of the Army to interact and strengthen bonds that would be vital for the operational readiness of the Army.

The Army Planning Seminar itself focused heavily on the way forward for the Army. They had a fruitful discussion on topics including developing and engaging our people, and integration across Services and Formations. Reflecting on the seminar, COL Nelson Yau, Head National Services Affairs Department (NSAD) said, “APS 07 provides deep insights on the Army’s chartered path in the 3rd Generation SAF transformation journey and the one SAF vision. There is also emphasis and conversation on important heart-ware issues such as commitment to defence, value-added NS and work-life balance.”

“Recruits, You’ve Got Mail!”

On the fifth day of their Basic Military Training field camp in September, recruits from the 3rd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (3 SIR) Bravo Company had something special awaiting them. To their surprise and delight, letters of encouragement from their families and friends were distributed to them after a tough Urban Operations training session.

REC Raymond Soon recounted the touching moment, “It was the first time I had been away from my family for such a long time. Upon seeing my mother’s handwritten message, I could not stop the tears from swelling up in my eyes.” He added that the message renewed his resolve to carry on training, “The letter was a piece of home and holding it was a huge comfort after spending five days on an island. It gave me the motivation to complete the challenging field camp.”

Section Commander 3SG Syed Hafiz empathised with the

The seminar culminated with a dinner on the final night and COL Yau firmly believes that the seminar has ensured that “with a shared understanding and greater ownership, the active and NS senior leadership is energised by a common purpose to drive the Army forward.”



COL Yau (left) in discussion at the APS

recruits’ feelings. He said, “I know how heavy the heart feels when one is away from his family, and it must have been comforting for them to receive heartfelt messages from their loved ones. I’m sure they appreciate every moment of it.”



The letters served to remind the recruits of their role as protectors of our country and loved ones

The distribution of letters from home was certainly a major ‘booster’ for the field camp. It served to remind the recruits that the main purpose of National Service was to protect their country, family and friends. This was certainly a creative National Education moment for our young recruits from 3 SIR!

Contributed by 3 SIR

3 SIB Participates In OSIM Singapore Corporate Triathlon



3 SIB participants at the completion of the triathlon

On 3 November, 24 members from the 3rd Singapore Infantry Brigade (3 SIB) family took part in the OSIM Singapore Corporate Triathlon 2007. Participants had to complete a 750-metre swim and cycle for 20 kilometres before ending the race with a 5-kilometre run. This event tested the participants’ physical performance on land and in open waters.

Fourteen members, including Commander 3 SIB, COL Lawrence Teh, and Commanding Officer 5th Battalion Singapore Infantry Regiment, LTC Andrew Lim, took part in the individual sprint category while four teams participated in the team relay category. While some of the participants were seasoned tri-athletes, many others were first timers. Nonetheless, every participant was highly motivated and inspired to go beyond their limits to complete their race.

Ops Officer 3 SIB, LTA Satoshi Hayashi, a first-timer said, “I felt an immense sense of satisfaction with my team, all first-timers, completed the triathlon. It was a great team effort. I am already looking forward to greater challenge next year by participating in the individual category.”

Int Sgt 3 SIB, 1SG Chua Eng Kwee said, “The triathlon was useful in helping me gauge my performance peaks and through the encouragement of my fellow participants, I was able to improve my timing. The regular physical training conducted in camp had definitely contributed to my improvement.”

3 SIB’s participation in the OSIM Corporate Triathlon has served to encourage its servicemen to maintain their physical fitness by adopting a healthy outdoor exercise lifestyle. Their participation reflects the Army’s spirit of “L.I.V.E” (Leadership and Learning, Image and Identity, Values and positive Experience), in raising engagement and commitment amongst our people.



TSG Chua battling the 20-km cycling segment of the challenge

Contributed by 3 SIB

Senior Civil Servants Appreciate Homeland Security Capabilities



Guests viewing a demonstration of a program which can project the effects of a bomb blast in an urban setting

Fifty years ago, the place now known as Jurong Island was merely a small collection of secluded islands. Today, it is a bustling industrial hub and the cornerstone of Singapore’s petrochemical industry. In the light of today’s unstable security climate, such a key component of our economy needs to be safeguarded. Thus, our Army expanded its spectrum of operations a few years ago to include the protection of Key Installations (KINs) like the refineries on Jurong Island. On 8 October, director-level members of the civil service viewed our defence capabilities on Jurong Island as part of a six-week Senior Management Programme.

During the visit, the guests were briefed on the role of the Island Defence Headquarters (IDHQ), which is manned by the 2nd People’s Defence Force. The IDHQ coordinates the defence of KINs including Sembawang Wharves, Changi Airport and Jurong Island. The guests also learnt about the layers of deterrence in place at Jurong Island, which include the Army and Coast Guard, and the private security engaged by individual companies. At Jurong Island’s Emergency Control Centre, the guests viewed a demonstration of some of the specialised weapons and equipment used in the protection of KINs.

One important and useful equipment shown was the portable scanner, which is used to detect the presence of explosives. A special variant of the scanner is also used to check the undercarriage of vehicles entering Jurong Island. Other displays included the Taser, which can render a hostile person unconscious, and a computer program which can calculate the blast radius of a bomb and thus aid commanders in evacuating civilians to a safe position.

Mr G Kannan, a deputy director at the Ministry of Manpower said, “We’re usually so busy with day to day work that it’s difficult to find out the full details of what the SAF is doing at the KINs. Thus, this visit has helped us to learn about our island’s

security measures. If the capabilities showcased at Jurong Island are representative of the other KINs, Singapore is definitely in safe hands.” Mr Kannan also emphasised the simple but important role employers can play in supporting National Service, “It’s a question of priorities. We know the important role played by our NSmen, so we reallocate resources to allow NSmen to go for their In-Camp Training.”



Mr Kannan (back row, centre) and other guests watching the retractable road blades in action

Another visitor, Mr Sng Chern Wei, was impressed with the way our Army has adapted to new security challenges, “The capabilities we saw show that the SAF has been keeping updated with technological changes. Some of the weapons and equipment like the SAR 21 rifle have been locally developed, allowing us to fully customise them to our specific needs.” As a school principal, Mr Sng plays an important role in promoting the national defence message to his students. He said, “National education is crucial to help youths learn about Singapore’s vulnerabilities and unique geopolitical situation. They will then understand the need to keep the SAF one step ahead to maintain its edge.”



Mr Sng (left) was impressed by advanced technology like the Intelligent Portable Surveillance System (right), a mobile motion detector with object recognition abilities

9th Division/Infantry Takes on Tekong Challenge



Competitors attempting to start a fire at the fire-making checkpoint

On 5 October, 12 teams from 9th Singapore Division/Infantry (9 Div/Inf) took part in the ‘Adventure Race’ as part of the Tekong Challenge. They ran, cycled and kayaked around Pulau Tekong, engaging in activities like fire-making, live-shooting and log-climbing along the way. As teams had to locate checkpoints around the island, close teamwork was an important success factor.



Kayaking in open sea off Pulau Tekong

For the 2000-odd non-competitors who did not participate in the ‘Adventure Race’, there was the Tekong Nature Run. They later tried their hand at paintball, archery and sniping at carnival-type booths. “The idea was to get everyone – regardless of age, gender or fitness level – to be actively involved,” explained SWO John Selva, Chairman of the organising committee. “We wanted the challenge to be different this year, with everyone involved and having fun”, he added.



Non-competitive runners enjoying their Nature Run

The team from Army Fitness Centre came in first in the Adventure Race, followed closely by the team from Basic Military Training Centre (BMTC) School 1. Proving that age is no barrier, the Sergeant Major team led by 9 Div/Inf Sergeant Major, SWO Joseph Koa, came in 5th, ahead of many younger teams!

Contributed by BMTC School 1

OCS

Excellence Always

COL Chiang believes that training for cadets is founded on strong foundations, smart and sensible use of technology and tapping on the collective experience of the entire chain of command

“OCS is not just a place of excellence; we are excellence and therefore we have a place.” A bold claim by Commander Officer Cadet School (OCS), COL Chiang Hock Woon, but certainly not far from the truth. From the instructors and cadets, to the training methods and teaching techniques used, it is their excellence that earns them a place in OCS. OCS is one of the oldest Training Institutes in the SAF, where the first batch of Officer Cadets commissioned in 1967. With the reduction of National Service and the OCS term from 42 to 38 weeks in 2004, OCS continues to excel in its mission of ‘developing young men and women to be professional military officers of the SAF.’

Entire Chain of Experience

Speaking to Army News, COL Chiang commented. “Some things have not changed: the emphasis on excellence, the standards of discipline and regimentation. What I do notice has evolved over these years is the way we conduct training for the cadets. It is certainly more superior than before, because not only are we emphasising on the basics, we are now in the position to harness and leverage on our collective experience to improve the system as a whole.” To make this happen, all the senior commanders in OCS, including Commander OCS, Deputy Commanders and Wing Commanders, have been holding regular discussions to refine training. This ensures that that experience flows all the way from the top to every cadet on the ground.



OCS also taps on the experience of visiting senior Army commanders to impart their personal experiences and insights. For example, Commander 9th Singapore Division shared his views on operational discipline, Commander 6th Singapore Division spoke to the cadets regarding roles and expectations of being a commander, and the Chief of Army (COA) himself, MG Neo Kian Hong, visited an outfield training session in May this year. Expressing his confidence in the quality of the officer cadets, COA commented, “I have faith in our cadets’ ability—I believe that if today we go into operations, they will all know what to do.” He also urged them to take an active role in their learning, “NS is one of the ways we defend what belongs to us, and because you are part of that contribution, you must have a voice. You are all clever people; surely you have a view on what is going on. Use your common sense to question what is a better way of doing things.”



Senior commanders such as COA (right) visit OCS training to impart their knowledge and experience

Learning More, Training Hard

With a four-week reduction in the OCS term, the challenge was to offset the loss of training time with even more quality training so that the outcomes would be the same or better. OCS’s Chief Instructor, LTC Chandrasekaran recounted, “We were initially skeptical, but after we sat down to review the processes to achieve the learning outcomes, we were pleasantly surprised to note an improvement over the 42-week programme.” In the review, modules were designed to complement each other and build a foundation for the next stage. This allowed for a systematic learning process which gave the cadets sufficient time to assimilate the knowledge. Furthermore, the combination of different training components has resulted in greater efficiency and savings in time and manpower. For example, in the previous system, two separate outfield slots would be scheduled for attack and defence training. Now, this has been merged into a single outfield slot with a series of attack and defence exercises. This field training also incorporates platoon-level force-on-force exercises, and the use of the Tactical Engagement System, both of which provide the cadets with more realistic training.

One of the most important initiatives introduced following the revamp was Think and Act Like A Commander (TALAC). This programme allows cadets to be trained in decision-making, which is essential for all commanders. This is because regardless of whether they are in training, administrative or operational settings, commanders are expected to make decisions based on the facts and the current situation. LTC Chandrasekaran elaborated, “The previous training system doesn’t allow this to take place effectively. We might have been training good soldiers, but they may not be good commanders as decision-making skills were not emphasised. Now with TALAC, we make sure that everyone is in the framework to make decisions. This is used in con-

junction with the Tactical Decision Games, where everyone has to come up with the solutions to operational problems. The exercise appointment holders list is not announced until just before the exercise, so everyone is treated as a commander and expected to discuss the rationale and viability of the operational tactics.”



TALAC is about training cadets on decision-making under difficult tactical conditions

Run Faster, Endure Longer

In the area of physical training, OCS has also improved on its training methods through the incorporation of sports science. All physical trainers and instructors are sent for accredited courses to learn sports science principles such as progression and adaptation, which will be passed on to the cadets so that they can apply it to both themselves and the men under them in the future. Moving away from one size fits all training, training is now customised to fit the individual needs of the cadets. Upon entering OCS, cadets go through a categorisation test to pinpoint weaknesses that instructors can work on. For example, if a cadet needs further improvement in the 2.4-km run, the instructors will employ interval training on the running track to train him up. OCS’ Fitness Specialist Second-in-Command, 2WO Sebastian Ng, commented, “Command emphasis is very important for sports science to work. On the ground, instructors and cadets have to believe in it and work together in training. With the proper training and loading, they can minimise the risk of injury and peak at the right time.” Ever since the introduction of sports science, the percentage of Individual Physical Proficiency Test (IPPT) Golds has increased from more than 60% to more than 80%, with some training wings surpassing 90%!



Command emphasis, customised training and use of sports science has allowed the cadets to excel in physical fitness

Physical training and field training are now designed to complement each other to ensure that cadets are well-prepared to face the many challenging phases of training. One of these challenges is the Jungle Confidence Course (JCC), a 9-day overseas course which pits the wits of Infantry Officer Cadets against the unforgiving jungles. One of the female graduands of the course, OCT Jessica Teng, recounted, “We had to survive nine days in the jungle with three days worth of rations, no shelter, and carry a heavy combat load while navigating long distances. We had to draw upon our physical and mental endurance to see us through. Thankfully, our wing gave us lots of training to prepare for JCC. We had many route marches and even outfield training that traversed the Pasir Laba Training Area and the jungles of Tekong. The course itself was even worse because of the steep terrain and navigation through thick foliage.”



As part of OCS’s rigorous training programme, officer cadets are sent overseas for training

Leading by Example
Tough and demanding training is not limited to the cadets alone, and all OCS instructors have to go through a 7-week Instructors Development Programme to prepare them for the heavy responsibility of training future leaders. Training does not stop there, as they also attend courses in other areas such as personal coaching, Method of Instruction and safety management. LTA Muhammad Norkhairi from Delta Wing commented, “I see myself in two roles – as a teacher to teach them basic infantry skills, and at the same time a role model in terms of how an officer should behave. I hope that when they leave OCS, they will serve with pride, and make decisions based on the the value systems and ethics of officership.”



Instructors are both teachers and role models to the future leaders of our Army

Developing the 3rd Generation Officer

Besides tactical brilliance and leadership abilities, the hallmark of a great military commander is the sense of purpose that drives him or her forward. At her commissioning parade in June, 2LT Penelope Chia from the 2nd Signal Battalion said, “The mission of the SAF to defend the country is a sacred duty, and it is an honour to be in a position to take up this responsibility. Furthermore, the Army provides a very challenging career, as you will be in charge of the many servicemen under you. These men will be handling live rounds, and doing training that requires a high degree of caution and planning. And in taking responsibility for their safety and wellbeing, you actually grow and mature very quickly.”



All officers should live by the values of officership in whatever they do

Furthermore, these officers will have to be adaptive and open-minded to adjust to the rapid changes that are part and parcel of the SAF’s transformation journey. COL Chiang summed it up best, “We are no longer just training officers cadets to train men, but also to be able to learn on the move, integrate other capabilities and respond well to unanticipated tasks. By themselves, they will be force multipliers for the platoon.”

COA wishes all a Happy New Year



“As we usher in the new year, we must not take for granted the peace we enjoy. This peace is achieved through the vigilance and readiness of the men & women who have dedicated their time and efforts to ensure the peace and our way of life.

We must also not forget the support and encouragement of our loved ones and the employers of our National Servicemen. It is you who have allowed us to go about our duties with a peace of mind and a sense of purpose.

Season's Greeting and Happy New Year!”

MG Neo Kian Hong

The SAF Hand Salute

In 1976, the SAF adopted a new hand salute in place of the British version. The SAF hand salute is executed with the palm facing downwards such that it shades the right eye from the sun, and with the fingers together.

Origin of the Salute

There are many plausible origins of the salute, but a common thread that runs through the different theories is the salute evolved from gestures of trust and respect. Knights raised their visors with the right hand to identify themselves to another party, while in the Middle Ages, men typically concealed their swords with a cape, and greeted each other with their right arm to show that they had no harmful intentions. Among the more widely accepted explanations of the salute's origins is that it is a modification of the practice of raising one's hat to one's superior. As it was cumbersome for soldiers to repeatedly raise their heavy helmets, a more convenient action of clapping their hands to their helmets was devised.

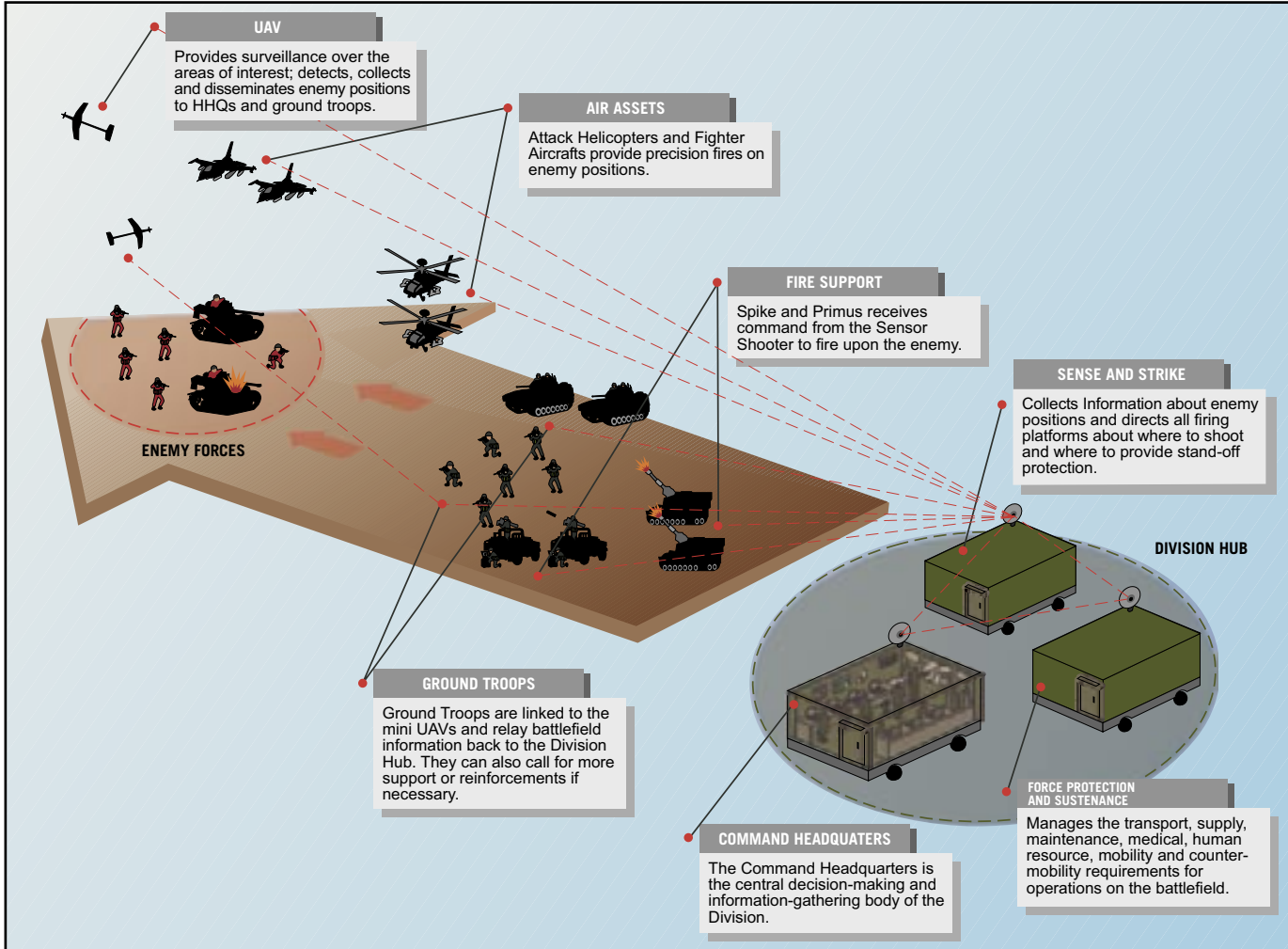


The salute should be executed smartly and returned promptly.

Interestingly, salutes executed with the palm downwards may have their roots in British naval history. Naval personnel often dirtied their hands and because it was considered disrespectful to present an unclean palm to a superior, they opted to turn their palms downwards instead of using the open-palm salute.

The salute used in modern armies may not always resemble the actions it originated from, but as a sign of mutual trust and

Towards a Networked Division



On 9 October, the 3rd Singapore Division, the first networked Division in the Army, showcased the capabilities of the Integrated Knowledge-based Command and Control (IKC2) system. The exercise demonstrated how the IKC2 system has brought about improved information sharing between ground troops, battle platforms and the Division Command Post. This would enable the Division to direct fire more precisely as its Command Post can relay information to everyone on the battlefield and vice-versa.

Greater Information Sharing

Before the implementation of IKC2, a brigade essentially operates with just its own assets. The ground troops only understand the battleground situation based on what they can physically see. If more information is required, they must depend on the higher HQ to provide it.

In its early stages from 1992 to 1998, the Division's command post consisted of 14 working cells that were not tightly linked to each other. The linkages between the cells were limited by the older means of communication such as 'Tele-J lines'. Information was also managed using means such as map boards and staff aids like sketches and terrain models. All these hampered our ability to fully understand and respond rapidly to ground situation in the battlefield. Furthermore, the 14 cells located in close proximity had made them an easy target for the enemy because they could be easily spotted from the air.

respect, it remains highly relevant to military culture.

Whom to Salute

Servicemen are to salute officers who are senior in rank. In the course of official duties, National Cadet Corps Officers should also be saluted. Police Officers and military officers from foreign armies are to be accorded the same compliments paid to SAF Officers. The salute can be executed while in any military attire, with or without headdress.

When to Salute

When a salute is required, it should be made when the officer receiving is approximately six paces away and held in position until returned. The officer receiving the salute is obliged to return the salute promptly. The salute is rendered only once if the senior remains in the immediate vicinity and no conversation takes place. If conversation takes place, the junior salutes again when either leaves. A salute is not to be made indoors unless reporting to an officer. When reporting to an officer, salutes are exchanged both when reporting and leaving. If a junior serviceman is reporting indoors, he first removes his headdress, knocks on the door, and steps in only upon instruction. After entering

To improve information sharing, the different cells were consolidated into four centres. This process, which started in the late 1980s saw the proliferation of hi-tech digital communication in our Army by 2005. Such changes have enabled faster decision-making and shorter response times. Further integration took place in 2005 with the creation of the Division Hub. The Division Hub is the central decision-making and information gathering body, and is supported by two 'backrooms', one which manages the sensor-shooter loop so as to direct precision fire onto the enemy, and the other which oversees Force Projection and Combat Service Support.

With the Soldier Battlefield Management System's hand-held computer, our soldiers on the ground are able to keep track of battlefield developments and relay information back to the command posts

A Networked Division

Today, the Command and Control Information System (CCIS) and the Blue Force tracking system allow the commanders at all levels to keep track of their men's location on the battlefield. This enables them to analyse the battlefield situation based on real-time inputs rather than those provided through delayed updates from the ground units. With these new systems and a centralised Division Hub in place, the commanders can now effectively command their forces more decisively and plan for further operations.

the room, he should halt at least two paces away from the officer before saluting and stating the purpose of his reporting. At the end, a salute is executed by the junior before he leaves.

A salute is not required as when engaged in physical training (a greeting should be rendered instead) or driving as it will interfere with safe driving practices. It is not executed when riding in a public conveyance or inside places of worship or public assemblage, or theatres

Saluting in Groups

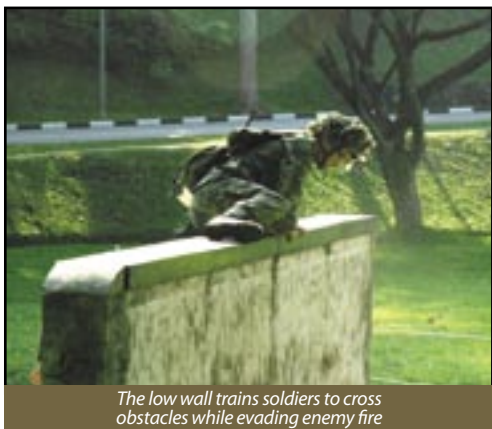
Unless given the command "Present Arms", soldiers in formation do not salute or return a salute. The individual in charge salutes for the entire formation. On the approach of an officer senior in rank, a group not in formation is called to attention by the first to see him. All come smartly to attention and salute.

Other Situations when Saluting is Appropriate

There are many other situations when saluting is required, such as when Colours are being cased or uncased. More interesting information on saluting can be found in the book "Our Army: Customs and Traditions".

Army Fitness: SOC Essentials

The Standard Obstacle Course (SOC) is a fitness test which combat-fit servicemen have to undergo during Basic Military Training and later in their operational units. It consists of a series of 11 obstacles which they have to navigate while in their Skeletal Battle Order. While each obstacle is different, all of them focus on a few basic abilities – strength, agility, coordination and confidence at high elevations. This Army Fitness feature explains how the various SOC components measure physical skills critical for combat effectiveness.



The low wall trains soldiers to cross obstacles while evading enemy fire

The Low Wall prepares soldiers to effectively climb over obstacles. It tests their upper limb strength and endurance, as well as their climbing technique. The soldiers must be able to clear the wall quickly while maintaining a low profile to avoid enemy fire.



The swinging trainer tests the soldier's strength and coordination

The Parallel Bars test the soldiers' ability to move swiftly and horizontally over trenches. Like the low wall, they utilise upper limb strength and endurance.

The Stepping Board requires the soldiers to stand on a board and jump over a barbed wire obstacle. It tests their leg strength and jumping skills. While similar in some ways to the Standing Broad Jump component of the Individual Physical Proficiency Test (featured in Army News issue 146, September/October 2007), the Stepping Board obstacle boosts the soldier's confidence in moving with his combat gear.

The Swinging Trainer is an elevated metal framework, much like 'monkey bars' but with variations in the arrangement of the bars. It requires soldiers to use their arm power to get from one end to the other, and is also a test of their grip strength and upper limb coordination.

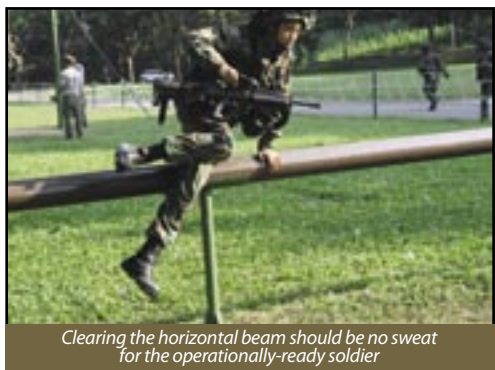
Passing On The Baton		
APPOINTMENT	INCOMING	OUTGOING
COMD SIG INST	LTC FOO KHEE LOON	COL TEW SEE MONG
CO 3 SIG	LTC RAJAGOPALACHARIYAR	LTC GOH BENG NGAN PERCIVAL
CO 8 SIG	MAJ TAN YONG KIM, GENE	LTC LYE KING SIONG
CO 2 SIR	MAJ CHAN I-HARN, ALVIN	MAJ ONG KWANG WEE
BDE SM 3 DIV ARTY	MWO CHOONG KENG ON	MWO YEO GIM SIAH

The Low Rope is the most challenging SOC obstacle. Soldiers have to ascend a rope with a combination of upper limb strength and correct climbing technique. Proper technique allows the soldier to use more leg strength instead of arm strength, and also complete the task faster.



Grip the rope firmly between your boots to ascend the low rope!

The Horizontal Beam is the simplest obstacle, assessing the soldiers' ability to clear low fences or other obstructions with a single leap.



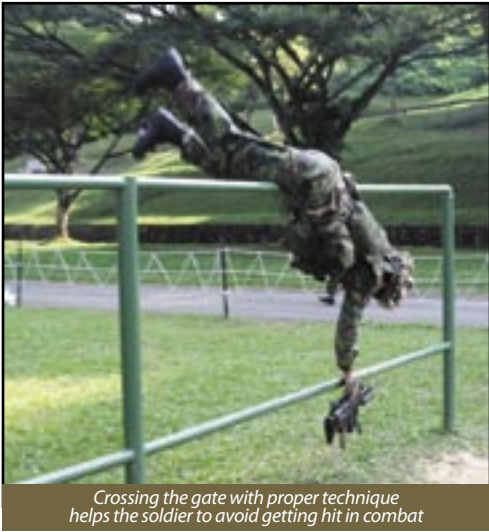
Clearing the horizontal beam should be no sweat for the operationally-ready soldier

The Swinging Bridge is a wooden plank 0.4 metres above the ground, suspended such that it shakes as the soldiers walk across. It trains their reflexes and body coordination.



Take care to keep your balance on the swinging bridge

The Balancing Log obstacle is a series of elevated planks in a zig-zag arrangement. The soldiers have to walk up a wooden ramp, negotiate the planks, before jumping off. This improves their balance and coordination to overcome fear of heights.



Crossing the gate with proper technique helps the soldier to avoid getting hit in combat

The Gate is a test of body coordination and sharpen the soldiers' ability to quickly cross low height obstacles such as railings and fences. The correct crossing technique will enable the soldier to keep his body low to minimise exposure to enemy fire.



On the Jacob's ladder soldiers have to demonstrate how sure-footed they are

The Jacob's Ladder is a structure of ascending and descending logs. It trains soldiers on balance and coordination, and their ability to overcome fear of height.

The Ramp requires soldiers to run upslope and make a leap off before landing firmly on the ground. It tests lower limb strength and the ability to land properly while maintaining balance.

A Comprehensive Diagnostic Tool

Each SOC obstacle requires different fitness components and muscle groups, and is designed to identify each soldier's weaker areas. Thus, commanders should not only focus on getting their men to pass the overall test. They can also use the SOC as a diagnostic tool to highlight the areas where the soldier needs follow-up training. This will help to develop all-rounded operational mobility in every soldier. For recruits, training should be progressively built-up to help them pass the test.

Quiz Of The Month - OCT / NOV

Send us the correct answer and win a pair of Golden Village movie tickets. There will be 5 winners!

Q: What recently-introduced OCS initiative trains officer cadets in decision-making?

Closing Date : 20 January 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. Winners will be notified by Email. Prizes are not exchangeable for cash.
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.

SEP / OCT Quiz

Q: How many galleries are there in the Army Museum?

A: Six

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The Ranger Course

Training Elite Warriors

Often referred to as the toughest training programme in our Army, the Ranger Course requires participants to undertake a gruelling nine weeks of missions and exercises. During the course, trainees are expected to master small unit tactics such as heliborne fast-roping insertions and night-time ambushes. They also have to push themselves to their limits to overcome the course's physical demands and mental challenges. Army News looks at the importance of the Rangers as small-unit leaders in our Army, and the realistic training which prepares them to overcome the most difficult challenges.

People Are Our Core

At the Ranger Course Graduation Ceremony in October, Chief of Army (COA), MG Neo Kian Hong emphasised the importance of people development in the 3rd Generation Army. He said, "Our people are our edge, and the utmost emphasis is placed on the training and development of our commanders and soldiers. The Ranger Course is the epitome of tactical leadership training and develops strong and capable small-unit leaders. The success of a brilliant plan still depends on its tactical execution, and well-trained small-unit leaders will be a force-multiplier in the battlefield, ensuring mission success."



COA (right) sharing with the Ranger graduands at the ceremony

As part of our Army's increased focus on quality training for our people, the Ranger Course has been designed to maximise the learning experience. After-Action Reviews have been included in key activities to help the trainees reflect on what they have learnt. Another new initiative is a series of preparatory lessons before the course to familiarise trainees with some of the components, giving them a longer period of time to absorb the information.



CPT Chew is confident that an increased focus on effective learning will help trainees to absorb more

Course Commander for the Ranger Course, CPT Chew Ern Pau feels that the changes to the course have had a motivational effect on the trainees. He said, "Today's trainees are more engaged and more willing to learn. The pre-course lessons have also helped to improve their information takeaway."



All trainees will get to serve in various appointments during the course, to hone their leadership skills and widen their exposure and expertise

Leaders, Thinkers, Warriors

As the toughest fighting course in our Army, trainees in the Ranger Course are expected to think on their feet and react speedily to unfamiliar situations. To hone their decision-making qualities, all Ranger trainees have a chance to be the Patrol Leader in charge of a detachment. This is the time when they learn the most as they have to put their leadership skills into practice. Throughout the course, they will also rotate among other appointments such as Medic and Assistant Patrol Leader, further building their expertise in a wide variety of combat skills.

CPT Muhammad Rashik, a Platoon Commander in the 1st Battalion Singapore Infantry Regiment, felt that the course was a tough and challenging experience. He said, "The course really brings out your leadership qualities under stress. Serving as the Patrol Leader was particularly eye-opening."



The course, especially the Patrol Leader stint, helped CPT Rashik to build his leadership qualities,

Rangers Lead The Way

The SAF Ranger epitomises Leadership By Example, as well as unrivalled fitness and combat ability. COA, a Ranger himself, spelt out the following Ranger qualities in his speech at the recent graduation, "Training under pressure and working under

Today, more servicemen are taking up the challenge of the Ranger Course, testing their limits so that they can serve the SAF better by being stronger individually.

I would like to see the Ranger Course promulgated through the Army as well as the SAF. Junior commanders should step up to this challenge, and unit commanders should encourage their subordinates to do so.

Chief of Army, MG Neo Kian Hong

a stressful simulated combat environment builds the Ranger's confidence and competence, it also moulds his character. He develops will power to withstand harsh conditions, courage to overcome adversity, discipline to complete the mission, and leadership to lead his team through."

Distinguished Honour Graduate of the Ranger Course, CPT Justin Teo elaborated on the Ranger's role as a leader, especially in difficult conditions. He said, "As a ranger, no matter how tired you are, you still have to push on. There's a job that still needs to be done and your soldiers are relying on you."



The Ranger needs endurance and discipline to complete difficult missions

While the term 'Ranger' usually conjures up a 'Rambo' image, trainees are expected to possess more than sheer brawn. Brain power is also important. Take CPT Lim Han Yong from the 40th Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment - he is a SAF Merit Scholarship Award holder and holds a Masters Degree in Chemical Engineering. CPT Lim outlined his motivations for training to be a Ranger, "To me, Rangers represent a breed of soldiers who possess a high level of mental resilience, physical endurance and self-discipline. They are people who can be depended on for mission success under adverse conditions."

Train Real, Train Safe

To ensure the safety of the rigorous training and operations that our Rangers go through, comprehensive measures are taken. For example before a combat swim, a warm-up swim is conducted to identify less powerful swimmers. They are then given a different coloured swim cap so trainers and safety officers can keep an eye out for them. During an improvised floatation activity, these swimmers will also be paired up with stronger swimmers.

Stringent safety checks are also mandatory for all equipment used. These checks are done at three levels. Trainers check the equipment before issue, and trainees conduct a serviceability check. Just before training commences, trainers carry out a final inspection. For operations involving rappelling, each rope has a log book to monitor its usage, so that the equipment can be replaced when necessary. In addition to the three levels of checks, the Safety Officer or Conducting Officer conducts a load test and a visual check for fraying.