

One Team—Focused!

By Major General Sam Kem (Retired)

Let's stay grounded and focused. That is tough to do these days, with bursting technology, exponentially expanding demands for information, and missions that seemingly change daily. New enthusiasms "dictate" new priorities that press against already strained resources. There are many distractions—aggressively worked by energetic people—that vie to dissipate the Engineer Regiment's focus and the focus of those who care so deeply for our regiment's future.

The value of *One Corps, One Regiment, One Fight* is that it must be a clarion call for all: To be one team, focused to—

- Ensure that we best serve our nation and our Army.
- Provide the engineer soldier and civilian the tools he/she must have to do the job.
- Grow and nurture our leadership to contribute effectively in our changing Army.
- Develop our soldiers and civilians to be all they can be.

In short, that means we must ensure that our Army engineer organization (One Corps, One Regiment) remains relevant to the Army's mission; responsive to both battlefield and national needs; and organized, equipped, and trained for the fight.

Success sometimes is measured by battlefield victory, a project constructed, or a major economic/physical disaster avoided or mitigated. Unseen and unnoticed in such dramatic times are those who fight the other battles—budgets, force structure, doctrine, national priorities, reorganization, material fielding, and personnel training and development—that allowed the big victory to happen.

The joint effort initiated by USACE and the Engineer School under the *One Corps, One Regiment, One Fight* banner can be an exercise in words—or it can provide the focus on what is important. Determining what is important—what is *vital*—is an essential task in today's rapidly changing environment. That and marshaling the resources to bring a solution is the task of our leaders.

It is right that we be *One Corps, One Regiment, One Team*. There is work to be done. Let's do it!

Major General Sam Kem (R) is the Honorary Colonel of the Engineer Regiment. He served as commandant of the Engineer School from 1984 to 1987.

clearing operations and support to civilian demining operations. To resolve this issue, we must clearly delineate the roles and missions based on the type and scope of operations. The GOSC recommended that Colonel Steve Hawkins, Commander of the 1st Armored Division Engineer Brigade, examine the issue from his Bosnian perspective. As part of this issue, the GOSC was briefed on the Engineer School's initiative to establish a resourced national Humanitarian Demining Operations Training Center. They discussed the problems USACE faced in cleaning up formerly used defense sites and the likelihood of some technology and procedural exchanges. The GOSC requested additional information on this initiative.

Engineer Doctrine Improvement

The GOSC concluded that our Engineer Regiment does as well as other proponents in creating doctrine. The problem is the current slow "industrial-age" process of writing, reviewing, editing, and publishing doctrine. They noted that engineers habitually use U.S. Army captains, allied officers, and Department of Army civilians to write doctrine. We now can electronically enlist the help of the broader engineer community, including many outside the Engineer School with a depth of appropriate experience. The Engineer School has noted that conventional doctrine development suffers from a whip-saw effect from changing priorities and resource levels. The GOSC recommended that the Engineer School develop a strategy to use our "distinguished alumni" to expand the base of doctrine expertise.

Inspire the Regiment

An observation from many who have served on the Army Staff is that engineers typically do not promote their interests or "stand together" within the key decision nodes in the national capital area. There is also a perceived sense of "distance from the proponent" expressed by our students at senior service colleges. The school's *Engineer* magazine is a well-established way to get guidance out and discourse started. The Engineer Regiment has about 200 retired general officers; we must ensure that they receive *Engineer* magazine. The same holds true for our retired Senior Executive Service retirees. Other means of distributing information include:

- U.S. Total Army Personnel Command's *Engineer Officer Bulletin*
- Army Engineer Association's *The Army Engineer* magazine
- Engineer School "Staff Notes to the Field"
- USACE Program Analysis and Evaluation "Questions and Answers" sheets