

# The Combined Arms Support Chaplain Capabilities



# Command Activities Developer

■ By Maj. Stanton Trotter

*Then-Capt. Stanton Trotter, an Army chaplain, prays with key leaders of the 709th Military Police Battalion right after they cross into Iraq for the initial invasion in 2003.*

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The Army Chaplain Corps touches every level of Army operations, from tactical to strategic, in order to nurture the living, care for the wounded, and honor the fallen. Since Gen. George Washington established the Chaplain Corps on July 29, 1775, approximately 25,000 chaplains have served in over 270 major wars and combat engagements. History is replete with examples of the remarkable contributions chaplains have made to Soldiers in combat. Nearly 300 chaplains have laid down their lives, and eight have been awarded the Medal of Honor.

As the Army prepares for the operations of 2020 and beyond, the Chaplain Corps, a key component of the sustainment warfighting function, is actively engaged in assessing its capabilities for the future. One way they are doing this is through the integrated efforts of one chaplain assigned to the Combined Arms

Support Command (CASCOM). This article addresses the benefit and overall impact on the Army of assigning a chaplain to CASCOM.

### The Chaplain Capabilities Developer

CASCOM is the Army's sustainment "think tank," where sustainment capabilities are developed and assessed. The Army Chaplain Center and School has a Capabilities Development Integration Directorate responsible for actively engaging in the capabilities development process of the Chaplain Corps.

In order to link the capabilities development and integration efforts of CASCOM and the Chaplain Center and School, the Chaplain Corps assigns a chaplain to CASCOM as a chaplain capabilities developer within the Sustainment Battle Lab. Placing a chaplain in the Sustainment Battle Lab ensures that Chaplain Corps capabilities and requirements

are considered and integrated into overall sustainment capabilities and requirements for the future Army.

The current chaplain capabilities developer is a major and a graduate of Intermediate Level Education (ILE) at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The resident ILE studies, along with the Capabilities Development Course, exposed him to the strategic-level Army planning needed for effectively assessing Chaplain Corps capabilities and requirements in the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS).

### JCIDS

JCIDS is the formal Department of Defense process for determining future acquisition requirements. It assesses current capabilities and future defense programs in order to recommend resourcing priorities to mitigate capability shortfalls. JCIDS



*Capt. Seung-Il Suh, an Army chaplain with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Tigershark, prays during a Sunday service at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, July 17, 2011. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Ben K. Navratil)*

provides an analytical assessment that provides the services with the means to balance and prioritize resourcing equities.

Within this process, capability developers study the likely future operational environment and then assess what is needed to ensure success in future missions.

### **IRDS CONOPS Assessment**

A good example of JCIDS analysis is the chaplain capabilities developer's assessment of the Interim Remains Decontamination System (IRDS) concept of operations (CONOPS).

The ability to safely recover, identify, and return contaminated human remains to the United States is a well-documented requirement that can be achieved by implementing the IRDS. Once the CONOPS was written, outlining how the IRDS would be fielded and used, the chaplain capabilities developer helped to conduct a comprehensive analysis across each of the doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) domains. This resulted in an official DOTMLPF-P assessment that accompanied the IRDS CONOPS.

The chaplain capabilities developer was an integral member of the IRDS concept development and DOTMLPF-P assessment team. He used his firsthand expertise with casualties on the battlefield and his interaction with mortuary affairs personnel to produce a comprehensive DOTMLPF-P assessment that validated the overall IRDS concept in preparation for the system's use throughout the Department of Defense. In this instance, having the chaplain as part of the IRDS team gave the Chaplain Corps a proactive preview of the future battlefield and how chaplains can prepare now.

### **Downsizing Capabilities**

Another example of the CASCOM chaplain's capabilities assessment duties is the restructuring of the force during the Army's present

downsizing. The CASCOM chaplain proactively engages senior planners and decision-makers to ensure the Chaplain Corps is kept aware of force restructuring and its associated implications for religious support.

This awareness ensures the Chaplain Corps appropriately assigns the correct number of chaplains

lains) can tie into already established logistic nodes and infrastructure.

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throughout the Army. Assessing capabilities allows the Chaplain Corps to seamlessly continue providing the best religious support possible while the Army is changing and evolving.

### **Globally Responsive Sustainment**

The CASCOM chaplain capabilities developer is also involved in the Globally Responsive Sustainment (GRS) initiative. GRS is the strategy to evolve the Army's current sustainment footprint into a leaner and smarter sustainment force capable of meeting the needs of tomorrow's Army.

As the Army transitions to an Army of preparation, the sustainment think tank is proactively analyzing how the Army can better sustain itself globally. The focus of GRS is to weigh current capabilities against future requirements, identify unnecessary redundancies, and provide solutions to support and train Soldiers and leaders for the next fight.

The CASCOM chaplain capabilities developer plays a critical role in determining and integrating religious support within the GRS framework. Key implications for the Chaplain Corps are how and where on the battlefield unit ministry teams will be located and where low density chaplains (for example, Catholic chap-

sustainment functions, must be considered early on in order to provide effective GRS support.

The CASCOM chaplain capabilities developer is exactly where the Army needs him—right in the middle of the Army sustainment think tank, helping prepare the Army for the future. He does this through critical planning and interaction with CASCOM and Chaplain Corps key leaders. The religious support provided to Soldiers on the future battlefield will be directly connected to the work that the CASCOM chaplain capabilities developer does today.

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