

Army Capability Manager-Foundation: Modernization of Capabilities



by Mr. Donald Beattie Jr.

Rapid Transformation

The Distributed Common Ground System-Army (DCGS-A) is a multi-echelon intelligence system that includes hardware and software to support the intelligence warfighting function. The U.S. Army fielded DCGS-A in 2005 and now, 15 years later, the system's technology is rapidly aging. It provides tools for intelligence preparation of the battlefield and access to more than 800 data sources, which enable commanders to execute mission command; synchronize fires; and task intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance sensors. DCGS-A is fielded to 1,608 unit headquarters across military intelligence brigades-theater, corps, divisions, brigades, and battalions.

DCGS-A updated its acquisition strategy and restructured in 2017 in response to independent study recommendations and language in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017. DCGS-A restructured to a "capability drop" approach to fix and modify certain components to overcome the known limitations of DCGS-A using commercially available solutions.

Capability Drop 1. In July 2017, in an effort to conduct rapid modernization, the Army Requirements Oversight Council approved the Capability Drop 1 (CD1) requirements that focused on a simplified and expeditious all-source intelligence solution for the battalion echelon. CD1 began fielding and training in May 2019 to all 402 brigade combat team battalions. CD1 is scheduled to complete fielding and to up-

date 15 percent of the total DCGS-A footprint by mid-2020. It will provide the force with a multi-domain capability supporting the tactical "close area" fight.

Capability Drop 2. In a move to modernize the strategic level, the Army approved Capability Drop 2 (CD2) requirements in June 2019. By 2021, CD2 will provide a cloud-enabled and tailored solution to process large volumes of disparate data and assess enemy courses of action via "big data analytics," enabling commanders at all echelons to outpace the threat in a fast-paced joint all-domain environment. CD2 will enable independent maneuver, mission command, cross-domain fires, and cross-domain synergy in tactical, operational, and strategic areas of the battlefield.

DCGS-A is planning to complete fielding of CD1 and CD2 while sustaining only minimum existing capabilities (end of life 2026). It will begin restructuring into two new "next-generation" programs in 2022 to enable the Army's modernization priorities, to support the National Defense Strategy, and to optimize for joint all-domain operations.

Adapting to the Future

The Tactical Intelligence Targeting Access Node (TITAN) and Intel Apps programs will automate and accelerate intelligence processes and will learn and adapt to evolving threats, conditions, and missions through the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning, while delivering critical intelligence to operational commanders from future intelligence sensors.

TITAN. TITAN will bring an expeditionary, mobile, transportable, modular, and scalable intelligence ground station to support deep-sensing gaps and provide intelligence support to targeting for long-range precision fires. TITAN will consolidate capabilities from existing legacy ground stations and leverage space and high altitude, aerial, and terrestrial layer sensors to provide targetable data directly to fires networks, and situational awareness/situational understanding in support of mission command.

Intel Apps. Intel Apps is planned to deliver 10 crosscutting applications to the Command Post Computing Environment from 2022 to 2026. This will occur while updating the geospatial foundation and integrating a new data layer to enable seamless collaboration across warfighting functions (operations/intelligence convergence) and implementation of advanced analytics and artificial intelligence/machine learning. This will enable the Army intelligence community and maneuver commanders to outpace the threat. ✨

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