



CHIEF OF ARMY SEMINAR 2018

By Colonel Duncan Roy

The future force and specifically what a relevant garrison Army for New Zealand should look like in 2025 was the focus of the Chief of Army's seminar (CASEM 18) in May.

The seminar, held in Waiouru, looked at what was needed to deliver output requirements, and how the Army could get there.

CASEM 18 consisted of briefs and presentations, active participation in future focused working groups, and culminated with back briefs to Chief of Army in a central forum, including discussion. There were 184 all ranks and civilian staff attendees, and through the working groups a number of questions relating to the Army's future force were considered.

Ten working groups considered various questions across capability areas such as combat and Health Services Support, through to people. Much of the 'what we need to do' was discussed. All participants consistently applied a pragmatic approach throughout the working groups which allowed for innovative and effective solutions that could be successfully resourced.

It also demonstrated the 'thinking' part of the Army is in good hands.

A number of themes came through at CASEM 18. Interoperability will be critical across the board and our involvement in the ABCANZ programme is a critical enabler for this. Army will need to remain pragmatic when operating in a constrained environment, which means there will always be risk to be managed, creating constant tension across funding, people, capability, and outputs.

The challenge now is to advance the actions required to progress toward NZDF 2025. The Chief of Army said he 'could see a number of quick wins, and other recommendations needed some further thought and consequences analyses'.

The next steps will involve Army General Staff and others working through a number of broad actions and developing the details to enact them. These actions will be approved by the Army Leadership Board and delivered through Chief of Army directives. The next Army Leadership Board will consider approving a number of immediate actions for inclusion in the Chief of Army Command Directive 18/19.

For those who would like to review the back brief presentations, these are available through the 'Back Brief Slide Pack' button on the CASEM 18 Intranet page. In due course a video file of all the back briefs will also be available.

Quick Wins

Reserve Force

A proposal to change the command and control of the Reserve Force Regiments from HQ TRADOC to HQ 1 Bde was mooted. As the Army intends to elevate the command and control of the Centre of Excellence for training, it is now timely to realign the command and control of the Reserve Force Regiments. HQ 1 Bde will be resourced to maximise the benefits of this change, which will better incorporate training opportunities through enhanced Reserve Force integration with Regular Force units.

Capability Integration

Another critical area identified at CASEM 18 was the need for a centralised (Army General Staff) capability integration function. With two transformational capability programmes underway (Network Enabled Army and Protected Mobility) along with multiple other major and minor projects to be delivered, Army must ensure we are ready to integrate these new capabilities into our training, units, and operations.

Further thought

Training

The Chief of Army thought the initiative around training Centres of Excellence was appealing in that it reinforced TRADOC by functionally realigning training efforts, enhancing force development and refining Army Training Review Board processes. Grouping some of the existing schools together would enable a concentration of effort to strengthen doctrinal, and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures force development work. This can then better inform the training development work already undertaken by NZDC.

Combat Units

The Chief of Army directed that an initiative based on two mirror combat units and a third manoeuvre HQ (Combat Centre of Excellence) in current unit locations be further explored. There are a number of consequences to think about further but reinforcing two units rather than having three hollow units is an idea worth exploring. We have time to think about this further.



Chief of Army's PT session, and above right.