

## Armor Branch

### 1. Unique features of Armor Branch

a. *Unique purpose of Armor branch.* Armor branch is the premier mounted maneuver force comprised of the best trained, best led, best equipped, and most lethal Tankers and Scouts in the world. Soldiers first, we are experts in the art of maneuver warfare; mounted and dismounted reconnaissance and security operations; and the employment of combined arms and joint capabilities on the battlefield. Armor and Cavalry Troopers thrive in conditions of ambiguity, uncertainty, and complexity; comfortable away from the main body – out from or on the flanks – and decisive when leading it. We operate with a mission command mentality always seeking opportunities to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative; creating and preserving freedom of action for our force while denying the enemy options. Armor and Cavalry leaders combine the superior capabilities of our equipment with the ingenuity of our Troopers to find, fix, close with and destroy the enemies of our nation through combinations of mobility; precise, lethal, and overwhelming firepower; and devastating shock effect. Armor branch is a team of teams ready to fight and win anytime, anywhere, under any conditions of battle.

b. *The Way Ahead.* The Army continues to evolve in order to operate based on the changing operational environment, limited resources, and lessons learned from more than a decade of war. These factors impact how the Armor branch trains, develops, and assigns officers. The Armor branch develops agile and adaptive experts in branch competencies. Therefore, they are multi-skilled leaders that readily operate in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) environment. Armor officers are assigned based on the needs of the Army IAW the HQDA manning guidance, the professional development needs of the officer, and the officer's preference. While the Human Resources Command makes every effort to synchronize the three priorities, the needs of the Army and the professional development needs of the officer take precedence over individual preference.

c. *Unique functions performed by Armor branch.* Armor officers initially focus on development of the core technical and tactical tasks associated with being a tank or scout platoon leader. Additionally, as an Armor officer progresses through their career they must continually deepen their core skills. Simultaneously, an Armor officer develops broader skills in combined arms maneuver and wide area security in support of unified land operations. Armor officers complete their mission through: the application of mission command; synchronization and integration of warfighting functions; providing expertise on the employment of combined arms forces at all command levels; and developing doctrine, organizations, training, materiel and leaders necessary to support the mission.

d. *Unique features of work in Armor branch.* The Armor branch currently has one area of concentration and eight skill identifiers. Detailed descriptions of the AOC and skill identifiers listed below can be found in DA PAM 611-21.

(1) Armor Officer (19A). These officers will receive technical and tactical institutional training at the Armor School and Maneuver Center of Excellence. Training is focused on the core competencies associated with the art of maneuver warfare; mounted and dismounted reconnaissance and security operations; and the employment of combined arms and joint capabilities on the battlefield.

(2) Skill identifiers associated with Armor AOCs (in alphabetical order):

- (a) Air Assault (2B)
- (b) Airborne (5P)
- (c) Army Reconnaissance Course (R7)
- (d) Bradley Leader Course (3X)
- (e) Cavalry Leader Course (C6)
- (f) Infantry Mortar Leader Course (3Z)
- (g) Pathfinder (5Q)
- (h) Ranger / Ranger-Parachutist (5R / 5S)
- (i) Stryker Leader Course (R4)

e. *Branch Detail.* Armor branch participates in the branch detailing of officers into Armor at the grade of Lieutenant. Officers detailed Armor will lose their Armor designation once they become promotable as determined by their CPT Promotion Selection Board.

f. *Voluntary Transfer Incentive Program (VTIP).* This program allows officers to transfer into another branch or functional area from their 4th year of active federal service through their 15th year. This program also allows officers who are branch detailed from another branch to request to remain in Armor. The VTIP panel meets quarterly. Submission of a VTIP packet does not guarantee branch transfer.

g. *Branch eligibility.* Officers of other branches who desire a branch transfer to Armor require a minimum of 12 months service as an Armor platoon leader to be eligible and should submit a request in accordance with AR 614-100, chapter 4, DA PAM 611-21 and VTIP MILPER messages.

## **2. Officer characteristics required**

a. *Competencies.* Armor officers are valued for their initiative and ability to operate under ambiguous circumstance as well as their skills as leaders, tacticians, trainers, and planners. Skills are acquired and perfected through realistic training, professional military education, self-study, and experience in the most demanding positions. Armor officers are physically fit leaders that possess competence, confidence, social and cultural awareness, and effective oral and written communications skills. This allows the officer to cultivate trust, teamwork, and commitment, all of which are oriented towards mission accomplishment. The objective of the branch is to provide each officer with a series of leadership, staff and functional assignments, institutional training, broadening and self-development opportunities. The end state of the branch's objective is to develop combined arms leaders with well-rounded backgrounds and the ability to successfully operate under any condition of battle. Armor branch values assignments in both the operational and generating force.

b. *Unique skills.* Armor officers are experts in combined arms maneuver and reconnaissance & security missions. Armor officers will synchronize joint fires and integrate a wide array of enablers to achieve lethal and non-lethal effects in order to accomplish the mission. Armor officers lead, train, motivate, and care for Soldiers. Armor officers demonstrate resiliency to lead and operate across a myriad of organizations in all operational environments.

## **3. Key officer life cycle initiatives for Armor**

a. *Structure.* The primary operational assignments for Armor officers are Combined Arms Battalions (CAB) in Armored Brigade Combat Teams (ABCT) and cavalry squadrons in all three types of Brigade Combat Teams. Armor officers may also serve in critical developmental assignments in generating force organizations.

b. *Acquire.* Armor officers are accessed through USMA, ROTC, and OCS. Officers are accessed into Armor based on the needs of the Army, assessment of their talents, and their branch preference. Armor is a recipient branch under the current system of branch detailing. Armor receives detail officers from the combat support and service support arms to fill Lieutenant authorizations.

c. *Distribute.* The goal of Armor branch is to provide every Armor officer a variety of leadership, staff, functional, and broadening assignments at each grade in order to develop their skills as combined arms leaders and provide value to the Army. The priority is on developing a depth of experience in Armor and Cavalry operations with specific focus on joint combined arms maneuver and wide area security operations. Officers may also have the opportunity to serve in key generating force assignments to develop their knowledge of how the Army operates and JIIM assignments where they will learn about the interagency process and how our sister services and allies/partners operate. Officers may also rotate between CONUS and OCONUS assignments. Armor officer assignments are managed with a goal to develop the full range of skills necessary to perform as senior leaders.

*d. Deploy.* Armor branch officers are warfighters who remain personally and professionally prepared to deploy worldwide at all times. Whether assigned to operational force units generating force organizations, all Armor officers remain deployable to accomplish missions across the full spectrum of conflict. Armor officers may deploy with units at any time to deter potential adversaries and to protect national interests, or as individuals to support joint and multinational operations. Armor officers prepare themselves and their families for this challenging and rewarding expeditionary mindset.

*e. Sustain.* Armor combat skills develop through institutional training, experience in assignments, self-development, and personal and professional commitment to resilience (physical, social, family, spiritual, and emotional).

(1) Promotion. Armor branch promotions to first Lieutenant are based on time in service. Armor branch promotions to Captain and Major are board recommended based on past performance and future potential. Armor branch field grade officers designated to remain in Armor and the Operations Division functional category will compete for promotion only within their functional category. If an Armor officer is designated to one of the two other functional categories, the officer no longer competes with Armor officers for promotion.

(2) Officer evaluation report. The OER requires the rater and senior rater to recommend three successive assignments for all Army competitive category Captains through Lieutenant Colonels. When recommending successive assignments for rated officers, rating officials will consider the whole person with factors such as: demonstrated potential, demonstrated performance, educational background, technical or unique expertise, military experience or training, difficulty of assignment to include deployment overseas, and the personal preference of the officer. Successive assignment recommendations of raters and senior raters on the OER will be an important factor taken into consideration during the functional category designation process.

*f. Develop.* Armor officers are developed through a progression of operational and generating force assignments, broadening assignments, institutional training, and self-development. The focus of Armor officer professional development is on the growth and utilization of warfighting skills. Armor officer development seeks to prepare officers for ever-increasing command and staff responsibilities at higher levels to successfully lead organizations for mission success. These skills support the critical Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leader Development, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) solutions for branch force management.

*g. Separate.* Armor branch has no unique separation processes. All current and former Armor force Soldiers are strongly encouraged to remain involved with the development of the branch. This involvement increases participation in professional associations and through editorial contributions to Army official journals and online forums. Current online sources include: the Armor School website (<https://www.benning.army.mil/armor>), the Maneuver Net Forum (<https://forums.army.mil>), and the Office of the Chief of Armor (<https://www.benning.army.mil/armor/ocoa>).

#### **4. Officer developmental assignments**

*a. Lieutenant.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is to develop the requisite baseline Armor branch skills, knowledge, and attributes. The focus of the Armor Lieutenant is on the development of Armor and Cavalry tactical and technical warfighting skills and the utilization of these skills in operational assignments such as a tank, Mobile Gun System (MGS), scout, or specialty platoon leader, company level executive officer, and assistant staff officer.

(1) Education. Armor Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) provides Armor Lieutenants the baseline skills necessary to function as a tank and scout platoon leader. Armor Lieutenants receive Assignment Oriented Training (AOT) following BOLC to prepare them for their specific assignments as tank, MGS, or scout platoon leaders. These courses include, but are not limited to: the Army Reconnaissance Course, Airborne, Air Assault, Ranger, Pathfinder, Bradley Leader Course, and Stryker Leader Course. The Army Reconnaissance Course is required for all Armor Lieutenants. AOT will be synchronized to minimize the delay between courses and get the Lieutenant to the unit of assignment in the shortest time possible. The requisite AOT for the Armor Lieutenant based on the officer's initial assignment is:

(a) *Armored brigade combat team.* The officer is required to attend the Army Reconnaissance Course and is strongly encouraged to attend Ranger Course and Maneuver Leader Course. The officer may attend other functional training based on availability and the needs of the unit (Bradley Commander Course, Airborne Course, Pathfinder Course, and Infantry Mortar Leader Course). If the dates for Army Reconnaissance Course and any other functional training conflict, Army Reconnaissance Course is the priority.

(b) *Stryker brigade combat team.* The officer is required to attend the Army Reconnaissance Course, Ranger Course, and the Stryker Commander's Course. The officer is strongly encouraged to attend the Maneuver Leader Maintenance Course. The officer may also attend other functional training courses based upon availability and the needs of the unit. If the dates for Army Reconnaissance Course and any other functional training conflict, Army Reconnaissance Course is the priority.

(c) *Infantry brigade combat team.* The officer is required to attend the Army Reconnaissance Course, Ranger Course and Airborne Course if being assigned to an Airborne IBCT.. The officer may also attend other functional training courses based upon availability and the needs of the unit. If the dates for Army Reconnaissance Course and any other functional training conflict, Army Reconnaissance Course is the priority.

(2) *Assignments.* The key developmental assignment during this phase is serving in an operational force as a tank, MGS, or scout platoon leader for a minimum of 12 months.

(a) Armor Lieutenants should be assigned as platoon leaders or staff officers in a Cavalry squadron or CAB upon completion of Armor BOLC and requisite functional training. It is the branch's intent to assign Lieutenants to the operational force as an initial assignment.

(b) A limited number of Armor Lieutenants will serve as TRADOC training company executive officers or staff officers for up to 12 months followed by assignment to the operational force. Likewise, Armor Lieutenants that have completed a minimum of 24 months in an operational force unit may be assigned as a training company executive officer or staff officer. This serves to broaden the officer's experiences and to best meet the needs of the army.

(c) Other typical assignments for Lieutenants are battalion /squadron specialty platoon leader (scout or mortar), company or troop executive officer. An Armor officer may also serve in a staff position after promotion to Captain, prior to attendance at the Captain's Career Course (CCC). Once a lieutenant becomes promotable, the officer should expect to come down on orders for the Maneuver Captain's Career Course or suitable course in a different branch or service.

(3) *Desired experience.* Each Armor Lieutenant must successfully serve in an operational force tank, MGS, or scout platoon leader assignment. Ideally, the officer's technical and tactical abilities will be augmented through assignment to a specialty platoon, company / troop executive officer or battalion / squadron staff officer position. The goal is to serve a minimum of 12 months in a platoon leader position to develop Lieutenants with expertise in mounted and dismounted maneuver.

(4) *Self-development.* Self-development during this phase focuses on tactical fundamentals, technical proficiency, troop leading procedures, leadership skills, gunnery, organizational maintenance, resupply operations, basic administrative operations, and resiliency. It is the Armor Lieutenant's responsibility to take the initiative to gain knowledge and experience to prepare themselves to be a Captain. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

*b. Captain.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is to develop officers as company / troop commanders and staff officers.

(1) *Education.* Completion of Maneuver CCC or a branch CCC is mandatory during this period. Some Armor officers could attend other branch CCCs or the Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School. If this is the case, then the officer should expect to go TDY to Fort Benning to complete his/her functional and platform unique training.

(2) *Assignments.* The key developmental assignment during this phase is company / troop command in either the operational or generating Army. Service as a primary or assistant staff officer is also desirable. Armor officers may serve on operational or generating force unit staffs at the brigade / regiment and battalion / squadron level prior to and / or following command. The requisite AOT for the Armor Captain based on the officer's assignment following Maneuver CCC is:

(a) Armored Brigade Combat Team. Officers will attend the Armored Brigade Combat Team training phase of Maneuver CCC. Upon completion of Maneuver CCC, the officer is required to attend the Cavalry Leader Course, Maneuver Leader Maintenance Course, and the Stryker Commander Course. They are strongly encouraged to attend the Ranger Course, Tank Commander Course, and the Bradley Commander Course. Officers may also attend other functional training based on availability and the needs of the unit (Airborne Course, and the Pathfinder Course). If the dates for the Cavalry Leader Course and any other functional training conflict, the Cavalry Leader Course is the priority.

(b) Stryker Brigade Combat Team. The officer is required to attend the Cavalry Leader Course, Ranger Course, Maneuver Leader Maintenance Course, and the Stryker Commander Course. The officer is strongly encouraged to attend the Ranger Course. The officer may attend other functional training courses based upon availability and the needs of the unit (Airborne Course, and the Pathfinder Course). If the dates for the Cavalry Leader Course and any other functional training conflict, the Cavalry Leader Course is the priority.

(c) Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The officer is required to attend the Cavalry Leader Course, Ranger Course, and Airborne Course if being assigned to an Airborne IBCT. The officer is strongly encouraged to attend the Jumpmaster Course at the earliest opportunity if being assigned to an Airborne IBCT. The Pathfinder Course is also strongly encouraged. The officer may attend other functional training courses based upon availability and the needs of the unit (Maneuver Leader Maintenance Course). If the dates for the Cavalry Leader Course and any other functional training conflict, the Cavalry Leader Course is the priority.

(3) Select Armor Captains will serve their company command and staff assignments initially in a generating force organization, with a follow-on assignment to an operational force unit to compete for company command. Conversely, Armor branch assigns a limited number of Armor Captains to a generating force command following an operational force assignment to further their development.

(4) Upon completion of company command and Maneuver CCC or an equivalent, multiple broadening assignments are possible. The purpose of these assignments are to meet critical Army requirements, further develop the officer's knowledge base, and provide the officer a more well-rounded professional experience.

(5) *Desired experience.* The key developmental (KD) assignment for an Armor Captain is successful service as a company / troop commander either in the operational force or in the generating force while in a 19A, or 02B coded position. However, there is no substitute for operational company / troop command for developing an Armor officer's leadership and tactical skills, and preparing the officer for future leadership assignments at successively higher levels of responsibility. To be KD complete, Armor Captains must serve 18 months (+ / - six months) company command time; ultimately, the priority for command is the quality of the officer's performance over time. Armor Captains may expand their tactical and technical capabilities through assignment as a brigade / regiment or battalion / squadron staff officer prior to assuming command.

(6) The Armor branch goal is to grow an inventory of officers who are tactically and technically proficient and have expanded their professional skills. Examples of assignments (not all inclusive) are in alphabetical order:

- (a) Aide-de-camp and nominative positions
- (b) Army sponsored broadening opportunities fellowships and scholarships (see AR 627-1)
- (c) Battalion / brigade staff
- (d) CTC Observer Coach/ Trainer
- (e) Cross-component training support brigade trainer and staff
- (f) Doctrine or Training developer
- (g) Maneuver Center of Excellence or other CoE Small Group Instructor (SGI)
- (h) Project Warrior (CTC Observer Coach / Trainer followed by COE SGI)
- (i) Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Assistant Professor of Military Science
- (j) Security Force Assistance Brigade Staff Officer and/or Advisor
- (k) U.S. Army recruiting company command and staff
- (l) USMA service school faculty and staff
- (m) Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) commander
- (n) Other combat arms or branch generalist positions.

(7) *Self-development.* During this phase, Armor officers will advance their leadership, tactical and technical skills, develop a mastery of training management, resiliency, and concentrate on those critical tasks required to accomplish their wartime mission. The officer will develop a more thorough understanding

of combined arms operations in a joint environment. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

c. *Majors.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is to expand the officer's tactical and technical expertise and continue his/her development as a leader with a focus on building mastery in planning and executing combined arms warfare in a joint and expeditionary environment. Through a series of operational and generating force assignments, the Armor Major increases his/her contributions to the larger Army while simultaneously gaining a greater understanding of how the Army operates.

(1) *Education.* Military education required during this phase is completion of Intermediate Level Education (ILE) through completion of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), sister service equivalent, or through distance learning. ILE is divided into two phases. Phase 1 is a 14-week common core training block of instruction. Phase 2 is the Advanced Operations Course which is the field grade credentialing course that is required for all Armor officers. In addition to Army and sister service ILE programs, officers can also compete for foreign and interagency fellowship positions, which also meet the Military Education Level 4 requirement. Officers may also compete for selection to the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) following the Advanced Operations Course. SAMS officers will serve a utilization tour as a corps or division plans / assistant G3 staff officer. Armor Majors are required to attend the Cavalry elective at ILE. If the officer does not attend the Fort Leavenworth resident CGSC, branch will work with the officer and their gaining command to bring the officer TDY to Fort Benning to attend any required functional and/or platform courses.

(2) *Assignments.* Key developmental assignments during this phase are:

- (a) Operational force battalion / squadron operations officer (S3) / executive officer (XO)
- (b) Operational force brigade / regiment S3 / XO
- (c) Generating force battalion / squadron S3 / XO
- (d) Generating force brigade S3
- (e) Division chief of plans (SAMS Utilization). The division chief of plans position is considered a

key developmental experience for the SAMS graduate Armor officer when served in conjunction with at least 12 months service in a brigade / regimental or battalion / squadron S3 position.

(f) There is no substitute for KD time in preparing an Armor officer for future command and for building maneuver and combined arms skills. Experience at the brigade / regimental level and below remain absolutely essential to the professional growth of the Armor officer and necessary for success at future levels of command. The Armor Major may further expand tactical and technical skills by serving in staff assignments at division level and higher.

(3) *Desired Experience.* At this stage of the officer's career, the Armor Major hones skills in the planning and execution of combined arms / joint warfare and develops expertise in the JIIM operational environment. While the goal is to provide every Armor Major a minimum of 18 months combined time in KD positions, the quality of performance and difficulty of the assignment, rather than time spent in the assignment, is the critical factor. The objective is to keep the officer assigned to a Corps/Division for approximately 36 months in order to build the necessary skills and experience to be a successful senior leader.

(4) *Broadening Assignments.* Armor Majors will also meet the Army's mission requirements and build on their institutional skills through various generating force and / or JIIM assignments. Examples (not all inclusive) of Armor Major assignments beyond key developmental positions are provided below in alphabetical order:

- (a) Advanced civil schooling
- (b) Advisor positions for foreign schools
- (c) Army sponsored broadening opportunities fellowships and scholarships;(AR 627-1 complete listing)
- (d) Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG) Operational Advisor
- (e) Brigade, division, or corps staff
- (f) Combat, training, or doctrine developer
- (g) Cross-component S3 / XO
- (h) CTC Observer Coach / Trainer
- (i) HQDA and Army command (ACOM) staff officer
- (j) Joint staff officer
- (k) Mission Command Training Program (MCTP) Observer Coach / Trainer

- (l) Multinational and coalition trainer and staff officer
- (m) Nominative positions
- (n) ROTC Assistant Professor of Military Science (APMS)
- (o) Service school instructor, staff and faculty
- (p) Security Force Assistance Brigade staff assignment (additional S3 / XO time) or Advisor
- (q) United States Military Academy (USMA) faculty and staff
- (r) Foreign School Exchange Officer

(5) *Self-development.* Armor Majors are expected to continue self-development efforts to include off-duty schooling. Majors continue to build intellectual capacity, strategic perspective, develop operational skills, and improve resiliency conditioning. Armor Majors will develop and use a diverse set of skills as they move between combined arms leadership positions in the operational force and generating force organizations as well as, functional Armor, branch immaterial, and JIIM assignments. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

(6) *Additional Factors.*

(a) The goal of the branch is to develop field grade officers who embody a collective knowledge of JIIM experience. While not every officer will receive an assignment in a qualifying joint assignment or serve in a fellowship in a JIIM agency, the goal is to provide the maximum opportunity for Armor Majors to receive this opportunity or, at a minimum, apply for joint qualifying credit based on their experiences.

Armor Majors may be credited for joint service either through assignment to a qualifying joint duty assignment list (JDAL) position or through the point system based on qualifying joint service via the joint qualification system (JQS). The objective of the JQS is to ensure a systematic, progressive, career-long development of officers in joint matters and to ensure that officers have the requisite experience and education to be highly proficient in joint matters, as directed in Title 10, USC, Chapter 38. JQS allows officers to apply for joint credit based on experience in positions in the Contemporary Operating Environment. Officers will apply for joint credit based upon their operational experiences within one year of return. For more information go to the following Joint Qualification System website: <https://pki.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/jqs/init.do>.

d. *Lieutenant Colonel.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is demonstrated excellence in tactical skills; technical proficiency; and the ability to lead, train, motivate, and care for Soldiers in both the command and staff environments. A secondary objective is to create strategic leaders for the Army. An Armor officer's opportunity to serve in the operational force will decrease as the officer increases in rank and the percentage of generating force positions increases. The officer's previous assignments, institutional training, and self-development prepare the officer for roles in generating force positions of increasing responsibility.

(1) *Education.* Lieutenant Colonels selected for command will complete a pre-command course (PCC), phases I, II, and III prior to command. Lieutenant Colonels may be selected for Senior Service College (SSC). Lieutenant Colonels not selected for resident attendance must complete SSC by correspondence to achieve Military Education Level (MEL) 1.

(2) *Assignments.* Armor Lieutenant Colonels seek assignments of greater responsibility in branch and branch immaterial positions. This important phase of an Armor officer's career provides assignments that further develop joint combined arms skill sets and improved warfighting skills. The most critical assignment for Armor Lieutenant Colonels in the Operations Division functional category is battalion / squadron level command. Armor Lieutenant Colonels selected for command will normally serve 18-24 months in command at battalion level. Armor officers are selected for Centralized Selection List (CSL) commands in four major command categories: operations, strategic support, recruiting and training, and installation. All battalion level commands are opt-in boards, and officers will compete for all command categories. The goal is to try to slate officers selected for command to the type commands where their skills and experiences best match benefitting the unit and officer.

(3) Note that assignment opportunities for some Armor Lieutenant Colonel positions are limited to former Battalion Commanders. Examples of non-command duty assignments for Lieutenant Colonels are listed below in alphabetical order:

- (a) Authorized Brigade DCO
- (b) Corps/Division/Garrison staff including Division G3
- (c) Cross-Component CDR/OC/staff

- (d) CTC Observer Coach / Trainer
- (e) HQDA or joint staff, NATO staff, Combatant Command staff, Army Service Component Staff
- (f) Instructor at ILE
- (g) Maneuver Center of Excellence staff (doctrine, capabilities developers)
- (h) Nominative positions (aide, Commander's XO, Commander's Initiatives Group, etc)
- (i) ROTC PMS
- (j) Security Force Assistance Brigade staff assignment or Advisor
- (k) Service branch school staff or instructor

(4) *Desired Experience.* The goal of Armor officer development is to prepare every officer for command of a CAB, cavalry squadron, generating force training battalion, or other institutional command at the Lieutenant Colonel level. While not every officer will command, Armor Lieutenant Colonels provide exceptional contributions to the Army outside of command. The focus remains the development of officers imbued with technical and tactical knowledge of the joint combined arms maneuver warfare.

(5) *Self-development.* During this phase of an Armor officer's career, self-development takes the form of self-assessment, off-duty civil schooling, perfecting mentoring and managerial skills, and sustaining resiliency. The officer continues to hone combined arms warfighting skills and the understanding of the joint operational environment. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

(6) *Additional Factors.*

(a) The goal of the branch is to develop officers who embody a collective knowledge of JIIM experience. While not every officer will receive an assignment in a qualifying joint assignment or serve in a fellowship in a JIIM agency, the goal is to provide the maximum opportunity for Armor Lieutenant Colonels to receive this opportunity or, at a minimum, apply for joint qualifying credit based on their experiences.

(b) Armor Lieutenant Colonels may be credited for joint service either through assignment to a qualifying joint duty assignment list (JDAL) position or through the point system based on qualifying joint service via the joint qualification system (JQS). The objective of the JQS is to ensure a systematic, progressive, career-long development of officers in joint matters and to ensure that officers have the requisite experience and education to be highly proficient in joint matters, as directed in Title 10, USC, Chapter 38. JQS allows officers to apply for joint credit based on experience in positions in the Contemporary Operating Environment. Officers will apply for joint credit based upon their operational experiences within one year of the completion of the potentially qualifying assignment. For more information go to the following Joint Qualification System website: <https://pki.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/jqs/init.do>.

e. *Colonel.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is improvement of warfighting, training and staff skills, along with leadership, managerial, and executive talents. Colonels are expected to be multi-skilled leaders: strategic and innovative thinkers; builders of leaders and teams; competent warfighters; skilled in governance, statesmanship, and diplomacy; and able to understand and operate within a cultural context.

(1) *Education.* Historically, the majority of officers selected for promotion to Colonel are selected to attend SSC. Colonels not selected for resident attendance must complete SSC by correspondence to achieve MEL 1.

(2) *Assignments.* Armor Colonels contribute to the Army by serving in crucial assignments in both branch and branch immaterial positions. The critical task during this phase is to fully develop the broad skills and competencies required of a multi-skilled leader, while maintaining and improving branch / maneuver competency (warfighting skills). Armor Colonels will make full use of their broad maneuver, fires and effects, and JIIM experiences, as well as, managerial skills and executive talents to meet the needs of the Army. A critical assignment for an Armor Colonel is selection for command. Armor officers selected for brigade level command will serve in the same four command CSL categories. The goal is to try to slate officers selected for command to the type commands where their skills and experiences best match benefitting the unit and officer.

(3) *Desired Experience.* The primary goal at this stage is to exploit the significant breadth and depth of experiences and knowledge gained in a position where the officer can best provide a significant contribution to the operational and generating force. The critical assignment for an Armor Colonel is brigade level command. No other position provides the Armor officer with the opportunity to fully use depth of experience in joint and combined arms warfare and to capitalize on functional generating force assignments in service to the Army. However, only a limited number of Armor officers will have the opportunity to command. Those

officers not selected for command will continue to provide exceptional service in Army and JIIM assignments of increasing responsibility. These officers also provide the critical bridge between the operational and generating force, and serve commanders in key staff elements.

(4) Note that assignment opportunities for some Armor Colonel positions are limited to former Brigade Commanders. Examples of non-command duty assignments for Colonels are listed below in alphabetical order:

- (a) CTC Operations Group (COG) commander
- (b) Combat trainer / leader developer
- (c) Department director, Maneuver Center of Excellence
- (d) Division/Corps Chief of Staff
- (e) Corps/Division staff officer including G-3
- (f) Nominative Assignment (XO to an Army Senior Leader, Commander's Initiative Group OIC, etc.)
- (g) HQDA, Joint Staff, Combatant Command, or Army Major Command staff
- (h) TRADOC Capabilities Manager (TCM)

(5) *Self-development.* Armor Colonels maintain their branch skills and keep current on all changes that affect the Soldiers they command and / or manage. JIIM assignments are important during this phase. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

f. *JIIM Assignments.* The development of Armor officers will also focus on the development of agile, adaptive, and multi-skilled leaders who collectively embody knowledge of JIIM organizations. Armor officers will be considered for a billet on the JDAL based on the needs of the Army, professional development needs of the officer, and availability of a joint assignment. JIIM experience, developed through sequential assignments, provides the broad perspective necessary to be successful now and in the future. Armor Colonels may also be credited for joint service through the point system based on qualifying joint service via the joint qualification system (JQS). The objective of the JQS is to ensure a systematic, progressive, career-long development of officers in joint matters and to ensure that officers have the requisite experience and education to be highly proficient in joint matters, as directed in Title 10, USC, Chapter 38. JQS allows officers to apply for joint credit based on experience in positions in the Contemporary Operating Environment. Officers will apply for joint credit based upon their operational experiences within one year of completion of the potentially qualifying assignment. For more information go to the following Joint Qualification System website: <https://pki.dmdc.osd.mil/appi/jqs/init.do>.

## **5. Assignment preferences and precedence.**

The professional development goal of Armor branch is to produce and sustain highly qualified officers who are tactically and operationally oriented to lead Soldiers, command units in combat, and perform other assigned missions. Assignments in combined arms organizations develop the officer's overall ability to achieve that goal. The officer's assignments are based on the needs of the Army, the officer's professional development needs, and the officer's preference.

## **6. Duration of officer life cycle assignments**

a. *Key Developmental Armor branch positions.* The Armor branch officer will serve in several key developmental positions as they progress through their career in order to develop a joint and expeditionary mindset, tactical and technical expertise in combined arms warfare, a firm grounding in Armor and Cavalry operations, and knowledge of JIIM organizations. There is no substitute in the Armor branch for service with Soldiers in key leadership positions. The goal of the Armor officer professional development model is to provide the Armor officer a series of operational staff and leadership positions, supplemented by opportunities to augment their knowledge in key generating force positions, in order to achieve success in positions of leadership at successively higher levels. The primary positions that develop this level of expertise, in sequence, are platoon leader, company / troop commander, S3 / XO. The goal is to ensure that every Armor officer is given the opportunity to serve in each of these key leadership assignments. Operational realities and the limited number of positions will prevent the branch from providing every officer the opportunity to command at the battalion and brigade level. However, the goal remains to prepare every Armor officer for command. Those officers who do not command at the battalion level will continue to

provide critical support to the Army in key positions. Their role will remain to ensure generating force organizations continue to maintain focus on their critical role in supporting the warfight. Armor officers, experts in combined arms maneuver and wide area security, serve as the critical link between the operational and generating force.

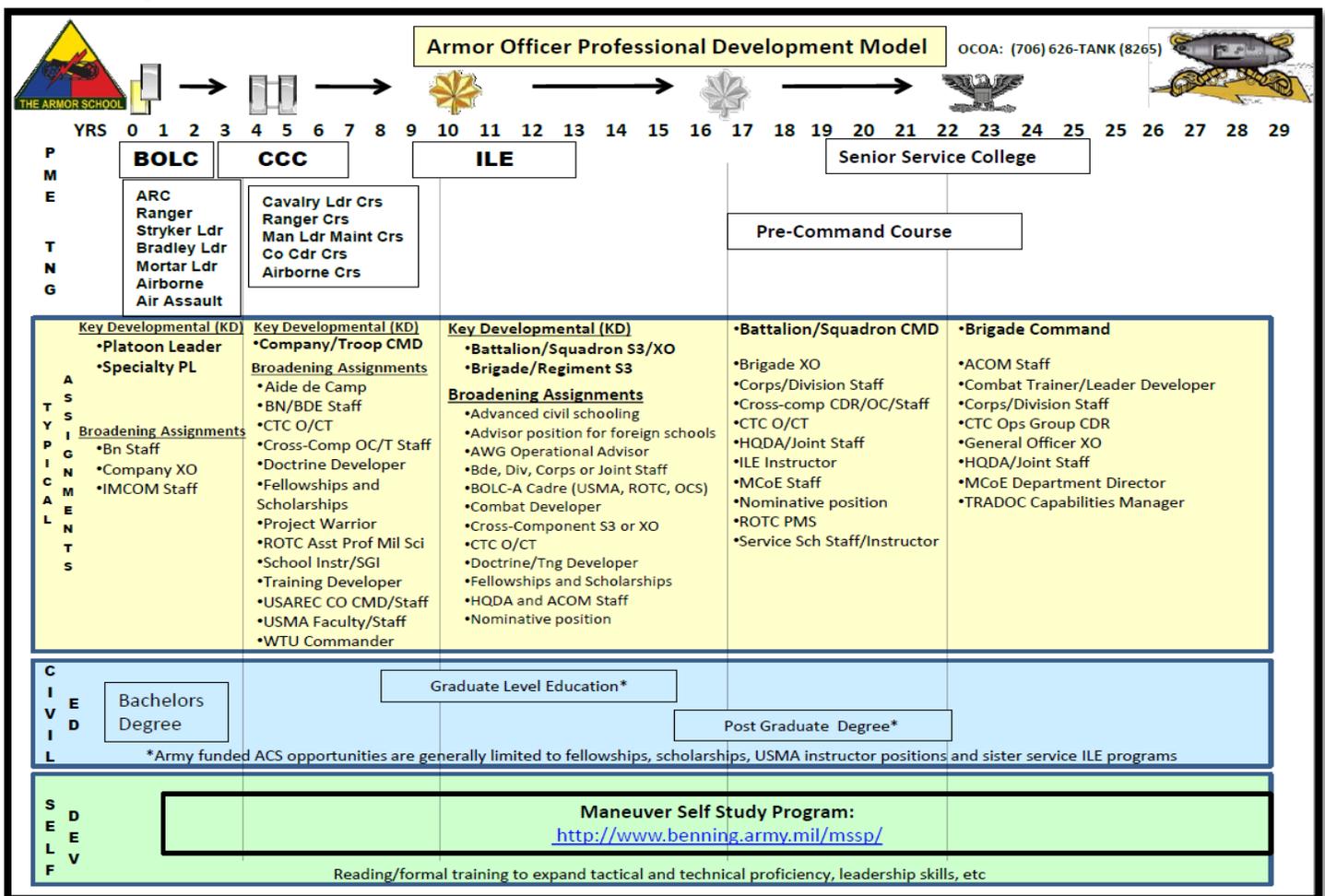
b. *Armor branch life cycle.* The Armor branch developmental goals directly support the goal of the Army with joint and expeditionary capabilities. Figure 1 shows how Armor branch timelines, military and additional training, key developmental assignments, and self-development fit together to support the Armor branch goal of growing future combined arms warriors.

### 7. Requirements, authorizations and inventory

a. *Goal.* The goal is to maintain a healthy, viable career path for all Armor branch officers. To do this the Armor officer assessment will be optimized to meet branch authorizations, to provide sufficient flexibility to support branch / functional area generalist positions.

b. *OPMS implementation.* The number of authorized Armor billets, by grade, will vary as force structure decisions are made, and actions to implement them are taken. Officers who desire more information on Armor branch authorizations or inventory, by grade, are encouraged to contact their HRC assignment officer.

8. Figure 1. Armor Developmental Model



## 9. Armor Army National Guard (ARNG) officers

a. *Career development.* ARNG Armor officer development objectives and qualifications parallel those of their active component (AC) counterparts. The two primary exceptions are: ARNG officers tend to spend more time in key leadership positions, and ARNG officers have increased windows to complete primary military educational requirements. A balance of realistic training, professional military education, self-development, and operational experience are necessary to develop those skills required for commanding, training, and managing ARNG organizations for peacetime and deployment operations. The ARNG officer must realize that a portion of the officer's education and training will be accomplished during personal time. Refer to Part One of DA PAM 600-3 for a detailed description of ARNG officer career management and development.

b. *Lieutenant.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is to develop the requisite baseline Armor branch skills, knowledge, and attributes. The focus of the Armor Lieutenant is on the development of Armor and Cavalry tactical and technical warfighting skills and the utilization of these skills in an operational assignment as a tank, MGS, or scout platoon leader.

(1) *Education.* Professional military education during this phase is completion of the resident Armor Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC), which should be completed within 12 months (NTE 18 months) of commissioning and is a prerequisite for promotion to First Lieutenant. BOLC provides the Armor Lieutenant the baseline skills necessary to function as a tank and scout platoon leader. Prior to assignment to a Cavalry platoon, the Armor Lieutenant is strongly encouraged to attend the Army Reconnaissance Course (ARC). In addition, the Armor Lieutenant may attend the Ranger Course, Infantry Mortar Leader Course, Bradley Leader Course, Stryker Leader Course, Maneuver Leader Maintenance Course, Airborne, Air Assault, or Pathfinder courses. Additional training following BOLC is dependent on agreement by the Lieutenant's unit. Officers must obtain a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university prior to consideration for promotion to Captain.

(2) *Assignments.* Key development during this critical phase of the officer's career is assignment as a tank or scout platoon leader. Every attempt should be made to assign junior officers as platoon leaders. This duty provides the officer an understanding of operations and leadership that will build a solid foundation for future service and duties of increased responsibility. After completing a platoon leader assignment, Armor officers should seek a variety of broadening assignments, which will enhance their future performance and prepare them for company command. Broadening assignments for Lieutenants include battalion or squadron specialty platoon leader (scout or mortar), company / troop executive officer, and battalion / squadron staff.

(3) *Self-development.* Self-development during this phase focuses on tactical fundamentals, technical proficiency, troop leading procedures, leadership skills, gunnery, organizational maintenance, resupply operations, basic administrative operations, and resiliency. It is the Armor Lieutenant's responsibility to take the initiative to gain knowledge and experience to prepare themselves to be a Captain. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

c. *Captain.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is to develop officers as a company / troop commander and staff officer

(1) *Education.* Professional military education during this phase is completion of the Maneuver CCC, which prepares the Captain for company command and battalion and brigade staff assignments. Maneuver CCC can be completed through attendance at the six-month resident course or the Reserve Component (RC) course. The Maneuver CCC-RC consists of three distributed learning phases and two, two-week resident phases. Prior to assignment to a Cavalry troop, Captains are strongly encouraged to attend the Cavalry Leader Course.

(2) *Assignments.* Assignments in a company, battalion or brigade organization should follow a progressive order whenever possible. The command of a company or troop is key leadership development at this stage of an officer's career. The goal is for each Captain to serve a minimum of 36 months company / troop command time (plus or minus 12 months); however, the quality of the officer's performance is more important than the length of time in command. An Armor officer may also command a mechanized infantry or rifle company, depending on various factors including availability, geographic proximity, and leadership preference. Captains may command a Table of Distribution Allowance (TDA) company, but the preference

is command of a Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) company which better develops the Captain's tactical and technical expertise.

(3) Upon completion of company command and the Maneuver CCC, multiple broadening assignments are possible. The purpose of these assignments are to meet critical Army requirements, further develop the officer's knowledge base, and provide the officer a more well-rounded professional experience. The objective of the branch is to grow an inventory of officers who are tactically and technically proficient and have expanded their professional skills. Armor officers may serve on MTOE or TDA unit staffs at the brigade / regiment and / or battalion / squadron level prior to or subsequent to company command.

(4) *Self-development.* During this phase, Armor officers will advance their leadership, tactical and technical skills, develop a mastery of training management, resiliency, and concentrate on those critical tasks required to accomplish their wartime mission. The officer will develop a more thorough understanding of combined arms operations in a joint environment. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

d. *Major.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is to expand the officer's maneuver tactical and technical experience and continue development as a leader with a mastery in executing combined arms warfare in a joint and expeditionary environment. Through a series of operational and generating force assignments, the Armor Major increases contributions to the larger Army and gains greater understanding of how the Army operates. Selection for Major is based on performance and potential for further service in positions of greater responsibility. These qualities are measured by the officer's assignment history, development within the Armor branch, and the relative standing of the officer to peers as indicated in OERs.

(1) *Education.* Completion of the Captains Career Course is required for promotion to Major. Officers complete the requirements for ILE through CGSC (resident or non-resident) or a sister service resident CGSC. Joint professional military education (JPME) courses offered through Joint Forces Staff College or Joint Continuing and Distance Education School are available primarily to those officers with a follow-on joint assignment.

(2) *Assignments.* Key development during this phase is assignment as a battalion / squadron S3, XO, or brigade/ regimental S3. Successful assignments in positions such as XO and S3 best prepare officers for the rigors of battalion / squadron command. Higher headquarters positions such as division staff and Joint Forces Headquarters (JFHQ) is also recommended. Duty in progressively challenging assignments is an essential ingredient in the career development of officers prior to promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

(3) *Self-development.* Armor Majors are expected to continue self-development efforts to include off-duty schooling. Majors continue to build intellectual capacity, strategic perspective, develop operational skills, and improve resiliency conditioning. Armor Majors will develop and use a diverse set of skills as they move between combined arms leadership positions in the operational force and generating force organizations as well as, functional Armor, branch immaterial, and JIIM assignments. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

e. *Lieutenant Colonel.* The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is demonstrated excellence in tactical skills; technical proficiency; and the ability to lead, train, motivate, and care for Soldiers in both the command and staff environments. A secondary objective is to create strategic leaders for the Army. Highly qualified officers in this phase may be selected to command a battalion or squadron. Other assignments include brigade / regimental XO, division primary staff, various JFHQ assignments, or other staff positions.

(1) *Education.* Completion of ILE common core is a requirement for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. The Advanced Operations Course phase of ILE is a requirement for selection for battalion command. Selectees for battalion command attend the Maneuver PCC. Qualified Armor Lieutenant Colonels may apply for the US Army War College or other SSC either resident or distributed learning. JPME courses offered through Joint Forces Staff College or Joint Continuing and Distance Education School are available primarily to those officers with a follow-on joint assignment.

(2) *Assignments.* Highly qualified Lieutenant Colonels may be selected to command a battalion, squadron, or Armor TASS battalion. Other typical assignments include: brigade or regimental XO, division primary staff, and various JFHQ, or other staff positions. Joint assignments are important during this phase and may be critical for promotion to Colonel.

(3) *Self-development*. During this phase of an Armor officer's career, self-development takes the form of self-assessment, off-duty civil schooling, perfecting mentoring and managerial skills, and sustaining resiliency. The officer continues to hone combined arms warfighting skills and the understanding of the joint operational environment. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

f. *Colonel*. The professional development objective for this phase of an officer's career is improvement of warfighting, training and staff skills, along with leadership, managerial, and executive talents. Colonels are expected to be multi-skilled leaders: strategic and innovative thinkers; builders of leaders and teams; competent warfighters; skilled in governance, statesmanship, and diplomacy; and able to understand and operate within cultural context.

(1) Education. Completion of ILE is a requirement for promotion to Colonel. Selectees for brigade command attend Maneuver PCC. Colonels are encouraged to complete SSC (resident or nonresident).

(2) Assignments. Highly qualified Colonels may be selected to command an Armored Brigade Combat Team, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, or Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Other typical assignments include AGR program participation and various senior duty positions at the division / JFHQ levels, and / or HQDA / joint staff assignments.

(3) Self-development. Armor Colonels maintain their branch skills and keep current on all changes that affect the Soldiers they command and / or manage. JIIM assignments are important during this phase. Additional information can be found in the Maneuver Self Study Program website at the following address: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.