

oer support form example platoon leader

oer support form example platoon leader is an essential resource for military personnel aiming to accurately complete Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs). This article provides a detailed examination of OER support forms specifically tailored for platoon leaders, highlighting their significance in the evaluation process. Understanding the components of the support form and how to effectively document a platoon leader's performance can enhance the accuracy and impact of the OER. This guide explores key sections of the support form, best practices for inputting information, and examples to illustrate how to present leadership abilities, achievements, and potential. Additionally, it discusses the role of the platoon leader within the military structure and how their duties relate to evaluation criteria. The article concludes with practical tips for ensuring the OER support form is comprehensive and aligns with Army standards.

- Understanding the OER Support Form for Platoon Leaders
- Key Components of the OER Support Form
- How to Complete an OER Support Form for a Platoon Leader
- Examples of Effective OER Support Form Entries
- Common Mistakes to Avoid in OER Support Forms
- Best Practices for Platoon Leaders in OER Documentation

Understanding the OER Support Form for Platoon Leaders

The OER support form serves as a critical tool in the Officer Evaluation Report process, designed to capture the detailed performance and potential of officers, including platoon leaders. This form enables raters and senior raters to gather structured input and observations about an officer's leadership capabilities, accomplishments, and areas for development. For platoon leaders, who manage small units and execute tactical missions, the support form provides a framework to document their unique contributions and challenges. Understanding the purpose and structure of this form is vital for accurate and meaningful evaluations. It ensures that leadership qualities, operational effectiveness, and professional growth are clearly communicated within the Army's performance management system.

The Role of the Platoon Leader in the OER Process

Platoon leaders are responsible for leading soldiers directly and ensuring mission accomplishment at the tactical level. Their leadership impacts training, discipline, morale, and operational success. The OER support form reflects this by focusing on leadership attributes, decision-making skills, and the ability to inspire and manage soldiers. Because the platoon leader is often the first line of command,

their evaluation is critical for career progression and identifying future leaders in the Army. The support form is therefore tailored to emphasize these leadership and tactical competencies specifically.

Key Components of the OER Support Form

The OER support form includes several key sections designed to capture comprehensive information on a platoon leader's performance. These components work together to create a holistic view of the officer's capabilities and contributions. Understanding each section helps ensure the form is completed accurately and effectively.

Performance Objectives

This section outlines the specific goals assigned to the platoon leader during the evaluation period. Objectives typically relate to mission tasks, training milestones, and leadership responsibilities. Clear and measurable performance objectives enable evaluators to assess whether the platoon leader met, exceeded, or fell short of expectations.

Duty Description

The duty description succinctly summarizes the platoon leader's role, responsibilities, and scope of command. It provides context for evaluators by detailing the size of the unit, mission type, and leadership challenges faced. An accurate duty description is essential to frame the evaluation properly.

Leadership Attributes and Competencies

This critical section assesses the platoon leader's demonstration of Army leadership attributes such as character, presence, intellect, and leads. It also evaluates competencies including leading others, developing the environment, and achieving results. Detailed and specific examples should support these assessments.

Potential Assessment

Here, evaluators provide their judgment on the platoon leader's potential for higher responsibility and future assignments. This forward-looking section is important for career management and identifying officers who are ready for advancement.

How to Complete an OER Support Form for a Platoon Leader

Completing an OER support form requires accuracy, clarity, and a thorough understanding of the

platoon leader's performance. Following a structured approach ensures that the evaluation is fair and comprehensive.

Gathering Relevant Information

Start by collecting key data points such as mission results, training achievements, leadership examples, and feedback from peers and subordinates. Documenting specific accomplishments and challenges helps build a strong foundation for the evaluation.

Writing Clear and Concise Entries

Each section should be completed with straightforward language, avoiding jargon or ambiguous statements. Use action verbs and quantifiable results where possible to emphasize the platoon leader's impact. For example, instead of "led training," specify "led 12 tactical training exercises resulting in 15% improvement in unit readiness."

Maintaining Objectivity and Professionalism

Ensure that all comments are factual and supported by evidence. Avoid personal opinions or unsubstantiated praise. The goal is to provide evaluators with an accurate and unbiased picture of the platoon leader's performance.

Examples of Effective OER Support Form Entries

Illustrative examples help clarify how to document a platoon leader's achievements and competencies on the OER support form. Below are sample entries that demonstrate clarity and relevance.

Performance Objective Example

"Successfully led a 40-soldier infantry platoon during five major field exercises, achieving a 98% mission success rate and enhancing unit cohesion through rigorous training and mentorship."

Leadership Attribute Example

"Exhibited exceptional decisiveness under pressure during live-fire exercises, maintaining soldier safety while accomplishing all training objectives ahead of schedule."

Potential Assessment Example

"Demonstrates strong potential for company command and staff positions due to consistent excellence in leadership, tactical acumen, and communication skills."

Common Mistakes to Avoid in OER Support Forms

Errors in completing OER support forms can undermine the evaluation's effectiveness and fairness. Recognizing common pitfalls helps maintain the quality of the documentation.

- Using vague or generalized statements without evidence
- Failing to align performance objectives with actual duties
- Including irrelevant personal opinions or biased remarks
- Overlooking key accomplishments or challenges faced
- Neglecting to update the form regularly throughout the rating period

Best Practices for Platoon Leaders in OER Documentation

Platoon leaders can take proactive steps to ensure their OER support forms accurately reflect their performance and potential. Adhering to best practices improves the quality of evaluations and supports career advancement.

Maintain a Performance Journal

Document significant events, achievements, and leadership challenges as they occur throughout the rating period. This practice provides a reliable source of information when completing the support form.

Solicit Feedback Regularly

Engage with peers, subordinates, and superiors to gather performance feedback. Incorporating diverse perspectives enhances the completeness of the OER support form.

Align Entries with Army Leadership Requirements

Ensure that all documented performance aligns with the Army leadership framework and evaluation criteria. This alignment demonstrates awareness of standards and commitment to professional development.

Review and Edit Thoroughly

Proofread the completed form for clarity, accuracy, and consistency. Corrections improve the professionalism and credibility of the evaluation.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an OER support form for a platoon leader?

An OER (Officer Evaluation Report) support form for a platoon leader is a document used to provide input and support for the evaluation of the platoon leader's performance, leadership abilities, and potential for future assignments.

What key sections should be included in an OER support form example for a platoon leader?

Key sections typically include the rated officer's personal information, duty description, major performance objectives, specific achievements, leadership qualities, and potential for future service or promotions.

How can a platoon leader effectively complete an OER support form?

A platoon leader should provide clear, concise, and honest assessments of their own performance and contributions, supported by specific examples and measurable results to help their rater prepare an accurate evaluation.

Where can I find a reliable OER support form example for a platoon leader?

Reliable examples can be found on official military websites, leadership forums, or through professional military education resources that provide templates and guidance for completing OER support forms.

What are common mistakes to avoid when filling out an OER support form for a platoon leader?

Common mistakes include being vague, overgeneralizing achievements, omitting critical performance data, failing to align with Army leadership competencies, and not proofreading for clarity and accuracy.

How does the OER support form impact a platoon leader's career progression?

The OER support form helps shape the rater's evaluation by providing documented evidence of

performance and leadership, which directly influences promotion boards, assignments, and professional development opportunities.

Can peers or subordinates contribute to the OER support form for a platoon leader?

While the OER support form is typically completed by the rated officer, input from peers or subordinates can be incorporated through counseling sessions or additional comments to provide a comprehensive view of the platoon leader's effectiveness.

Additional Resources

1. Platoon Leader: The Classic Infantry Memoir of World War II

This memoir by James R. McDonough provides an authentic account of a young officer leading an infantry platoon during World War II. It offers valuable insights into leadership under fire, decision-making in combat, and the challenges faced by platoon leaders. The book is essential reading for those interested in military leadership and history.

2. One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer

Written by Nathaniel Fick, this book chronicles his journey from officer candidate school to leading Marines in Afghanistan and Iraq. It highlights the development of leadership skills in challenging environments and the importance of ethics, courage, and responsibility. The narrative is both personal and instructive for aspiring military leaders.

3. Leading with Honor: Leadership Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton

This book by Lee Ellis draws lessons from the author's experience as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. It explores leadership principles such as integrity, resilience, and accountability under extreme conditions. The work is a powerful guide for leaders seeking to inspire and lead with honor.

4. The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development

By Robert Clinton, this book examines the growth process of leaders over time. It provides a framework for understanding how leadership skills are developed and refined through experience and mentorship. Military officers and civilian leaders alike can benefit from its insights into continuous leadership improvement.

5. Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War

Written by Robert M. Gates, former U.S. Secretary of Defense, this memoir offers an insider's perspective on military leadership at the highest levels. It covers decision-making, policy challenges, and the complexities of leading large organizations in times of conflict. The book is valuable for understanding strategic leadership and support roles for military commanders.

6. On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace

Lt. Col. Dave Grossman explores the mental and physical responses to combat and how leaders can support their troops through such experiences. It provides insights into stress management, resilience, and the human factors that affect performance in combat. This book is useful for platoon leaders focused on troop welfare and effectiveness.

7. The Warrior Ethos

By Steven Pressfield, this concise book delves into the code of conduct and mindset that define

effective warriors and military leaders. It discusses courage, discipline, and sacrifice as core values essential for leadership in combat. The book serves as an inspirational guide for those in leadership roles within the military.

8. Leadership in War: Essential Lessons from Those Who Made History

Historian Andrew Roberts analyzes the leadership styles and decisions of some of history's greatest military commanders. The book distills key leadership principles that are applicable at all levels of command, including platoon leadership. It offers practical lessons grounded in historical examples.

9. Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win

Written by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin, this book presents leadership lessons learned from Navy SEAL combat experiences. It emphasizes accountability, decisiveness, and teamwork, which are crucial for effective platoon leadership. The authors provide actionable advice for leaders aiming to improve their command effectiveness.

Oer Support Form Example Platoon Leader

OER Support Form Example: Platoon Leader

Are you drowning in paperwork and struggling to effectively support your soldiers' professional development? Do you feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs) you need to manage, leaving you with little time for actual leadership? Are you unsure how to accurately assess your platoon's performance and provide constructive feedback that truly helps them grow? This ebook provides the tools and practical examples you need to streamline the OER process, ensuring fair and effective evaluations for every member of your platoon.

This guide, *Mastering the OER: A Platoon Leader's Guide to Effective Support*, provides a clear, concise, and actionable framework for navigating the OER process.

Contents:

Introduction: Understanding the Importance of OERs and Their Impact

Chapter 1: The OER Support Process: Step-by-step guide to supporting your soldiers throughout the rating cycle.

Chapter 2: Crafting Effective Support Forms: Practical examples and templates for various scenarios, including strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

Chapter 3: Conducting Meaningful Counseling Sessions: Techniques for providing constructive feedback and fostering professional growth.

Chapter 4: Navigating Difficult Situations: Addressing challenges like performance issues and personality conflicts.

Chapter 5: Ensuring Fairness and Accuracy: Avoiding common pitfalls and maintaining objectivity in evaluations.

Chapter 6: Post-OER Follow-Up: Continuing the mentorship and professional development journey.

Conclusion: Sustaining effective OER support and maximizing the impact on your platoon's success.

Introduction: Understanding the Importance of OERs and Their Impact

Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs) are far more than just pieces of paperwork; they are crucial instruments shaping the careers and development of officers. For a platoon leader, mastering the OER process isn't simply a matter of administrative compliance; it's a fundamental leadership responsibility. Effective OER support directly impacts the growth, morale, and overall effectiveness of your platoon. A well-written and thoughtfully supported OER reflects not just the officer's performance, but also the platoon leader's ability to mentor, assess, and develop their team. Neglecting this process can lead to missed opportunities for advancement, decreased morale, and a less effective fighting force. This ebook equips you with the knowledge and tools to excel in this critical area.

Chapter 1: The OER Support Process: A Step-by-Step Guide

The OER support process is not a single event but a continuous cycle that begins long before the rating period even starts. Successful OER support requires proactive engagement and consistent communication. This chapter will break down the process into manageable steps:

1. Pre-Rating Period Preparation:

Establish Clear Expectations: Communicate clearly defined performance standards and expectations at the beginning of the rating period. This ensures your soldiers understand what constitutes success and how their performance will be evaluated.

Individualized Development Plans (IDPs): Collaboratively create IDPs with each officer, outlining specific goals, training needs, and opportunities for professional growth. These plans serve as a roadmap for development throughout the rating period.

Regular Check-ins: Schedule regular one-on-one meetings to monitor progress, provide feedback, and address any challenges. These meetings should be proactive and focused on development, not just performance review.

2. During the Rating Period:

Document Performance: Maintain detailed records of significant accomplishments, challenges overcome, and areas requiring improvement. Keep meticulous notes from meetings and observations, ensuring they are objective and specific.

Provide Timely Feedback: Deliver regular, constructive feedback throughout the rating period,

avoiding surprises at the end. Timely feedback allows officers to adjust their performance and learn from mistakes.

Identify and Address Weaknesses: Proactively identify areas needing improvement and work with the officer to develop strategies for addressing them. This demonstrates your commitment to their growth and development.

3. Post-Rating Period:

Review and Discuss the OER: Once the OER is completed, thoroughly review it with the officer, ensuring accuracy and addressing any discrepancies. This collaborative process fosters trust and transparency.

Provide Support for Appeals: If necessary, provide support and guidance throughout the appeals process. This involves providing additional documentation and testimony to support the officer's case.

Continued Mentorship: Even after the OER is finalized, continue your mentorship to support the officer's continued professional development.

Chapter 2: Crafting Effective Support Forms: Practical Examples and Templates

This chapter focuses on the practical aspects of writing supportive and accurate OERs. It provides templates and examples to aid you in providing constructive feedback and documenting performance effectively. The key to effective support forms lies in providing specific examples, using the AR 623-105 as a guide and focusing on both strengths and areas for improvement.

Example Scenario:

Strength: "2LT Smith consistently demonstrates initiative and exceptional problem-solving skills. During the recent field exercise, she identified a critical communication breakdown and implemented a solution that significantly improved our platoon's operational effectiveness. This resulted in a 20% increase in efficiency."

Area for Improvement: "While 2LT Jones possesses strong technical skills, she needs to improve her communication skills, specifically in delegating tasks effectively. We will focus on this in the coming months through targeted training and mentorship."

Chapter 3, 4, 5, & 6: Conducting Meaningful Counseling Sessions, Navigating Difficult Situations, Ensuring Fairness and Accuracy, & Post-OER Follow-Up

These chapters delve into advanced topics. Chapter 3 details best practices for effective counseling,

ensuring open communication and constructive feedback. Chapter 4 addresses challenges such as addressing performance issues and managing conflicts. Chapter 5 focuses on maintaining objectivity and fairness in evaluations, while Chapter 6 emphasizes the importance of continued mentorship and professional development beyond the OER process. These chapters provide strategies for managing complex situations and ensuring that the OER process remains a positive and constructive experience for both the leader and the soldier.

Conclusion: Sustaining Effective OER Support and Maximizing the Impact on Your Platoon's Success

Effective OER support isn't a one-time task but a continuous process that underpins a strong and effective platoon. By consistently applying the principles outlined in this ebook, you will not only ensure fair and accurate evaluations but also foster a culture of growth and development within your unit. Remember, your role extends beyond simply completing the paperwork; you are a mentor, a coach, and a leader shaping the careers of the future. This commitment to professional development will directly translate into a more effective and highly motivated platoon.

FAQs

1. What is the purpose of an OER Support Form? To provide detailed and objective information about an officer's performance to aid the rater in completing the OER accurately.
2. How often should I conduct counseling sessions with my officers? Regular counseling sessions, ideally monthly or bi-monthly, are recommended.
3. What specific examples should I include in the OER support form? Use concrete examples of accomplishments, challenges overcome, and areas for improvement, quantifying results whenever possible.
4. How do I handle disagreements with an officer about their OER? Openly discuss the concerns and try to reach a mutual understanding. If necessary, seek guidance from your superior officer.
5. What if an officer is consistently underperforming? Implement a performance improvement plan (PIP) and document all efforts to support their improvement.
6. How do I ensure fairness and avoid bias in my evaluations? Focus on objective performance data, avoid personal opinions, and seek feedback from multiple sources if necessary.
7. What is the role of the senior rater in the OER process? The senior rater provides an overall assessment of the officer's performance and potential based on the rater's input and their own

observations.

8. Can I appeal an OER? Yes, there are procedures for appealing OERs if you believe there are inaccuracies or unfairness.

9. Where can I find more information about OER regulations? Consult the official Army Regulation 623-105 and relevant supporting documentation.

Related Articles:

1. The Importance of Mentorship in Officer Development: Explores the crucial role mentorship plays in shaping officer careers and improving OERs.

2. Effective Feedback Techniques for Platoon Leaders: Provides practical strategies for delivering constructive criticism and fostering growth.

3. Navigating Difficult Conversations with Subordinates: Offers guidance on handling challenging situations and conflict resolution.

4. Creating Individualized Development Plans (IDPs): A Step-by-Step Guide: Details the process of creating and implementing effective IDPs.

5. Performance Management Strategies for Enhanced Platoon Effectiveness: Explores methods for improving overall platoon performance.

6. Understanding the Army Officer Evaluation System: Provides a comprehensive overview of the OER system and its components.

7. Common Pitfalls to Avoid in Officer Evaluations: Highlights frequent mistakes and how to prevent them.

8. Best Practices for Documenting Officer Performance: Offers guidance on effective record-keeping and documentation strategies.

9. Developing Leadership Skills for Platoon Leaders: Focuses on leadership qualities that contribute to effective OER support and team success.

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Schirmer, James C. Crowley, Nancy E. Blacker, Richard R. Jr. Brennan, Henry A. Leonard, 2008-03-05 Summarizes discussions with over 450 Army officers (lieutenants through colonels) about leader development in Army units. These discussions revealed that the type and extent of leader development activities vary greatly across units, but that they are generally informal and most heavily influenced by the unit commander. The authors conclude with suggestions on how the Army school system can improve leader development.

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act at a moment's notice and provide leadership for whatever challenge they may face. FM 6-22 expands on the principles in FM 1 and describes the character attributes and core competencies required of contemporary leaders. Character is based on the attributes central to a leader's make-up, and competence comes from how character combines with knowledge, skills, and behaviors to result in leadership. Inextricably linked to the inherent qualities of the Army leader, the concept of BE-KNOW-DO represents specified elements of character, knowledge, and behavior described here in FM 6-22.

oer support form example platoon leader: Lying to Ourselves Leonard Wong, Stephen J. Gerras, Strategic Studies Institute, 2015-12-22 One of the hallmarks of a true profession is its ability to assess and regulate itself, especially with respect to adherence to its foundational ethos. Such self-examination is difficult and often causes discomfort within the profession. Nonetheless, it is absolutely necessary to enable members of the profession to render the service for which the profession exists. U.S. military professionals have never shied away from this responsibility, and they do not today, as evidenced by this riveting monograph. Discussing dishonesty in the Army profession is a topic that will undoubtedly make many readers uneasy. It is, however, a concern that must be addressed to better the Army profession. Through extensive discussions with officers and thorough and sound analysis, Drs. Leonard Wong and Stephen Gerras make a compelling argument for the Army to introspectively examine how it might be inadvertently encouraging the very behavior it deems unacceptable.

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oer support form example platoon leader: The Things They Carried Tim O'Brien, 2009-10-13 A classic work of American literature that has not stopped changing minds and lives since it burst onto the literary scene, *The Things They Carried* is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. *The Things They Carried* depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and the character Tim O'Brien, who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three. Taught everywhere—from high school classrooms to graduate seminars in creative writing—it has become required reading for any American and continues to challenge readers in their perceptions of fact and fiction, war and peace, courage and fear and longing. *The Things They Carried* won France's prestigious Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger and the Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize; it was also a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

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Command Climate Steven M. Jones, Strategic Studies Institute, 2014-07-06 The U.S. Army War College provides an excellent environment for selected military officers and government civilians to reflect and use their career experience to explore a wide range of strategic issues. To assure that the research developed by Army War College students is available to army and Department of Defense leaders, the Strategic Studies Institute publishes selected papers in its Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy Series. Colonel Steven M. Jones, the author of this Carlisle Paper and member of the Class of 2003, explores the nature of command climate in the U.S. Army, its antecedents, and its consequences. He then proposes strategic remedies relating to unit climate assessment, leader development, performance appraisal, and accountability systems.

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oer support form example platoon leader: *Saving Grace at Guantanamo Bay* Montgomery J Granger, 2012-07-01 Hard as it is to believe, one of the most significant stories of the post-9/11 age is also one of the least known-life at Gitmo, the detention facility for many of the world's worst terrorists. Few individuals are more qualified to tell this story than Montgomery Granger, a citizen soldier, family man, dedicated educator, and Army Reserve medical officer involved in one of the most intriguing military missions of our time. *Saving Grace at Guantanamo Bay* is about that historic experience, and it relates not only what it was like for Granger to live and work at Gitmo, but about the sacrifices made by him and his fellow Reservists serving around the world. Andrew Carroll, editor of the New York Times bestsellers *War Letters* and *Behind the Lines* *Saving Grace at Guantanamo Bay*, or *Gitmo: The Real Story*, is a good history of medical, security, and intelligence aspects of Gitmo; also, it will be valuable for anyone assigned to a Gitmo-like facility. Jason Wetzel, Field Historian, Office of Army Reserve History U.S. Army Reserve Captain Montgomery Granger found himself the ranking Army Medical Department officer in a joint military operation like no other before it - taking care of terrorists and murderers just months after the horrors of September 11, 2001. Granger and his fellow Reservists end up running the Joint Detainee Operations Group (JDOG) at Guantanamo Bay's infamous Camp X-Ray. In this moving memoir, Granger writes about his feelings of guilt, leaving his family and job back home, while in Guantanamo, he faces a myriad of torturous emotions and self-doubt, at once hating the inmates he is nonetheless duty bound to care for and protect. Through long distance love, and much heartache, Granger finds a way to keep his sanity and dignity. *Saving Grace at Guantanamo Bay* is his story.

oer support form example platoon leader: Reducing the Time Burdens of Army

Company Leaders Lisa Saum-Manning, Tracy C. Krueger, Matthew W. Lewis, 2020-01-31 U.S. Army company leaders have long been recognized as overworked. This report is intended to help the Army identify ways to reduce and manage the time burdens on Active Component company leaders in garrison by examining these leaders' time burdens.

oer support form example platoon leader: Army Leadership (ADRP 6-22) Department Army, 2012-09-28 Army doctrine reference publication (ADRP) 6-22 expands on the leadership principles established in Army doctrine publication (ADP) 6-22. ADRP 6-22 describes the Army's

view of leadership, outlines the levels of leadership (direct, organizational, and strategic), and describes the attributes and core leader competencies across all levels. The principal audience for ADRP 6-22 is all leaders, military and civilian. Trainers and educators throughout the Army will also use this publication. Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure their decisions and actions comply with applicable United States, international, and, in some cases, host-nation laws and regulations. Commanders at all levels ensure their Soldiers operate in accordance with the law of war and the rules of engagement (see Field Manual [FM] 27-10). ADRP 6-22 uses joint terms where applicable. Selected joint and Army terms and definitions appear in both the glossary and the text. For definitions shown in the text, the term is italicized and the number of the proponent publication follows the definition. The use of the term influence throughout this publication reflects the definition of common English usage the act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command, as distinct from the usage outlined in FM 3-13. It is contrary to law for DOD to undertake operations intended to influence a domestic audience; nothing in this publication recommends activities in contravention of this law. ADRP 6-22 applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and United States Army Reserve unless otherwise stated.

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lessons are as prevalent in military history as is the adage that tanks don't perform well in cities. The notion of deliberately committing tanks to urban combat is anathema to most. In *Breaking the Mold: Tanks in the Cities*, Ken Gott disproves that notion with a timely series of five case studies from World War II to the present war in Iraq. This is not a parochial or triumphant study. These cases demonstrate that tanks must do more than merely arrive on the battlefield to be successful in urban combat. From Aachen in 1944 to Fallujah in 2004, the absolute need for specialized training and the use of combined arms at the lowest tactical levels are two of the most salient lessons that emerge from this study. When properly employed, well-trained and well-supported units led by tanks are decisive in urban combat. The reverse also is true. Chechen rebels taught the Russian army and the world a brutal lesson in Grozny about what happens when armored units are poorly led, poorly trained, and cavalierly employed in a city. The case studies in this monograph are high-intensity battles in conflicts ranging from limited interventions to major combat operations. It would be wrong to use them to argue for the use of tanks in every urban situation. As the intensity of the operation decreases, the 2nd and 3rd order effects of using tanks in cities can begin to outweigh their utility. The damage to infrastructure caused by their sheer weight and size is just one example of what can make tanks unsuitable for every mission. Even during peace operations, however, the ability to employ tanks and other heavy armored vehicles can be crucial. *Breaking the Mold* provides an up-to-date analysis of the utility of tanks and heavy armored forces in urban combat. The U.S. Army will increasingly conduct combat operations in urban terrain, and it will be necessary to understand what it takes to employ tanks to achieve success in that battlefield environment.

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