

# IADS

## Day 2 - Reading #1

Joint Staff  
**Developing Enlisted Leaders**



# DEVELOPING ENLISTED LEADERS FOR TOMORROW'S WARS



OUR SHARED VISION FOR ENLISTED PROFESSIONAL MILITARY  
EDUCATION & TALENT MANAGEMENT





## Foreword

The 21st Century security environment is distinguished by a rapidly changing character of war and conflict. This dynamic paradigm demands a transformative shift in our strategies towards joint enlisted leader development. We must reform the way we identify, develop, and utilize future leaders to advance our competitive advantage and successfully deter, fight, and win against any adversary.

Our shared objective is the development and sustainment of flexible, versatile, and adaptable joint warfighters—deliberately trained, educated, and empowered leaders. Armed with the distinct core values of our diverse Services, we aim to capitalize on the development of enlisted professionals who can think critically and employ joint leadership knowledge, skills, and attributes in support of National Strategy and globally integrated military operations. We must create leaders that act decisively in the absence of orders.

This document provides the collective vision of the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (SEAC) and the Service Senior Enlisted Advisors towards a 21st Century Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME) strategy. This vision is intended to guide the advancement of joint enlisted leader development and talent management policies that will produce the future leaders required by our Nation.



RAMÓN COLÓN-LÓPEZ  
Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CJCS

MICHAEL A. GRINSTON  
Sergeant Major of the Army



TROY E. BLACK  
Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps

RUSSELL L. SMITH  
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy



JOANNE S. BASS  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

ROGER A. TOWBERMAN  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force



TONY L. WHITEHEAD  
Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CNGB

JASON M. VANDERHADEN  
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard



## Table of Contents

Developing Enlisted Leaders For Tomorrow's Wars.....	1
Leader Attributes & Desired PME Outcomes .....	2
Leader Attributes .....	2
Desired EPME Outcomes .....	4
Joint Enlisted Talent Management.....	5
Integrated Talent Management Strategy .....	5
The Way Forward .....	6

# Developing Enlisted Leaders For Tomorrow's Wars

Our Shared Vision for Enlisted Professional Military Education & Talent Management

---

*“In order to retain our competitive advantage into the 2030s and beyond, we are refining Professional Military Education (PME) and talent management to develop Joint Leaders with the skills, values, and intellectual agility to fight and win the wars of tomorrow.” - GEN Mark Milley, CJCS*

---

The emerging operating environment demands that joint enlisted leaders be far better educated and more knowledgeable in the employment and integration of the instruments of National Power. To date, our respective Service and Joint EPME enterprises have consistently yielded the most distinguished and capable military force in the world. Nevertheless, our near-peer adversaries continue to close the gap between our military capabilities and we must respond with a robust strategy to advance our greatest and most valued competitive advantage by investing in the development of our human capital.

A necessary transition from countering violent extremist organizations towards the return of great power competition adds further complexity to the global security environment, which accelerates the need for agile, flexible, and adaptable warfighters who are capable of leading in lock-step with the chain of command to pivot our military strategy towards a high-end fight—a type of conflict and warfare that requires joint interoperability at every level.

Under the guidance and authority of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and in concert with the *Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Vision and Guidance for Professional Military Education and Talent Management*, EPME will shift towards an Outcomes-Based Military Education (OBME) approach that maximizes both Service and Joint leader development. Joint enlisted leader development will complement and thus bolster the Service cultures and core values possessed by our Joint Enlisted Professionals by delivering focused attributes and outcomes necessary for mission accomplishment across the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace domains.

---

*“The great aim of  
education is not  
knowledge but action.”  
—Herbert Spencer  
(1820-1903)*

---

This vision will expedite the necessary changes in our Enlisted Professional Military Education Policy (EPME Policy). It will simultaneously align with the NDS, National Military Strategy, and JCS objectives, while leveraging the unmatched traditions in which our distinct Services develop their respective enlisted forces to elevate the lethality of the Joint Force.

Achieving our leader development objectives requires a new path for EPME that must harness the advantage of all available and emerging talent management systems across the Joint Force. Our vision endeavors toward a fully aligned PME and talent management construct that identifies, develops, and utilizes strategically-minded, critically-thinking, and innovative joint leaders skilled in the art of practical and ethical application of joint warfighting capabilities.

## LEADER ATTRIBUTES & DESIRED PME OUTCOMES

The future of enlisted leader development will focus on cultivating leader attributes and delivering desired outcomes. Our joint enlisted professionals must be deliberately educated and trained to be capable strategic advisors, versed in emerging technology, and knowledgeable in globally integrated operations across an all-domain command and control concept.

Anchored by our Joint Enlisted Leader Attributes, our vision is to reform Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education (EJPME) to ensure that we produce leaders who embody the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to succeed in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous battlespace.

### LEADER ATTRIBUTES

Throughout the continuum of enlisted leader development, our EPME and EJPME enterprise shall rigorously observe, evaluate, and assess members for character, competence, and commitment to the mission while exhibiting the following leader attributes:

- **Intellect.** Both cognitive and emotional—the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. Cognitively, to think critically and thoroughly in order to provide sound and candid advice. Emotionally, having keen self-awareness with the ability to connect, empathize, and understand people and cultures.
- **Credibility.** Forged by test and trial of one's skills and validated by actions and reputation. To be a leader that is trusted, believed in, and respected.
- **Accountability.** To have an obligation and willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions. To abide by ethical behavior and actions, and expect the same from all. To be fiscally and physically accountable for resources.
- **Agility.** To be responsive, flexible, resilient, and adaptable to uncertain situations and complex problems. This encompasses both physical and mental agility.
- **Discipline.** To possess an orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior. To be steadfast in execution of duties, treatment of others, obedience to rules and policy, and to the oath of office.

Joint Enlisted Professionals will embody and foster these enduring qualities as the foundation of joint leader development. Combined with an OBME approach to deliver a specifically curated set of outcomes, our vision for a 21st Century EJPME shall deliver the leadership qualities needed for the next generation of enlisted leaders.





## DESIRED EPME OUTCOMES

In following with an OBME approach, joint policy and guidance must be revised and established to ensure immediate implementation of systems and procedures to identify, select, and develop the best candidates for joint leader development. Policies must also address a leader development model that employs *deliberateness* and *consistency* as enduring principles in providing timely, targeted, and meaningful PME throughout a joint warfighter's career.

EPME curricula shall be holistically designed and reshaped as necessary to guarantee the delivery of the learning outcomes below, bearing in mind the ultimate goal is for the enlisted member to be a sensor, synchronizer, and integrator for the organization.

**PME Outcomes.** Service PME and EJPME programs must provide graduates the initial knowledge, skills, and attributes to prepare them for service as joint warfighting leaders who are able to:

---

*“In order to set our people up for success, we must educate them on the desired outcome of their actions and the attributes necessary for mission accomplishment.”*

---

–Ramón “CZ” Colón-López, SEAC#4

---

- Operate and lead in the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) environment.
- Understand the effects and relationships between all instruments of national power: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME).
- Possess the ability to look “up and out” while simultaneously remaining focused “down and in,” and communicating effectively through all levels of the chain of command.
- Anticipate and adapt to surprise and uncertainty, recognize change and assist in transitions, and fully exemplify the attributes of mission command (understanding, intent, and trust).

**Gateway.** A primary line of effort toward this vision will be the introduction of *Gateway*, a JCS-sponsored, in-residence EJPME course designed for select E-6/7s. This course is intended to bridge the gap in learning and application between the Intermediate and Senior levels of joint leader development. It will provide the necessary education experience to build upon the enlisted member's knowledge of Joint Operations gained via previous joint assignments and/or Intermediate Senior Enlisted JPME courses (SEJPME I or equivalent). *Gateway* will facilitate practical demonstration of existing skills and attributes, while providing depth and substance in knowledge towards molding leaders who understand:

- The **U.S. Government Construct**: how each branch of the government and their various components affect the DoD's decision/policy-making process.
- The roles, responsibilities, and core functions of the **Joint Staff** (J1-J8) and the Combatant Commands.
- Operations within the **JIIM** arena, including Joint Force Leadership, Joint Operations Module, and the Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control concept.



## JOINT ENLISTED TALENT MANAGEMENT

Education and training must be efficiently and appropriately aligned with talent management to maximize leader development. Despite our past success in molding Senior Enlisted Leaders and Advisors across all levels of the Joint Force, the future security environment will require that we improve the way we synchronize our selection, development, and subsequent assignments of Joint Enlisted Professionals. Identifying high-potential leaders and developing them deliberately throughout the EJPME continuum is critical to the iterative process of our PME enterprises. Talent management will lead us to a stronger bench for joint assignment selection and future nominative slates.

### INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

At present, there is an abundance of Service-dependent development programs and personnel system innovations that are in alignment with this vision. However, longstanding paradigms towards joint force development and employment have hindered our ability to fully exploit best-practices as a joint organization. In order to sustain and advance our competitive advantage in human capital, we need to harness the collaborative spirit to maximize effect.

Talent management enterprises across the Joint Force must collaborate to adapt innovative ways to tap into the talent of the force, develop high-potential leaders, and select the best candidates for nominative joint education, experience, and/or assignments.

**Capitalizing JIIM Partnerships.** Programs such as Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multi-National Fellowships/Internships serve an important role in leader development, especially as it relates to our desired EJPME outcomes. While these programs are managed primarily via respective Services, we can do better at holistically managing the input of talent into these programs to ensure a deliberate output is immediately and successively employed for maximum return on investment.

**Regard Joint Experience as a Force-Multiplying Concept.** An integrated talent management posture allows not only for effective and efficient joint leader development, it also maximizes return on investment, enabling the Joint Force to deliberately cultivate enlisted members by building upon Service-specific development efforts and leveraging an optimized EJPME and talent management construct. Coupled with appropriate and deliberate pathways, joint experience provides the Services with uniquely experienced leaders and force-multipliers who are adept in operating and leading across multi-domain environments.

**Innovate for *Jointness* in Our Personnel Systems.** The concept of a *Joint Experience Identifier* via Service Personnel Systems can have a profound impact on streamlining the identification, development, and utilization of enlisted members with joint experience. The potential of such initiatives, if adapted throughout the Joint Force, will dramatically improve the alignment of education and employment of the next generation of joint enlisted leaders. Combined with our concerted effort to classify and organize nominative joint billets, our vision for a talent management and PME reform will pave the way towards building a more lethal Joint Force.

## THE WAY FORWARD

Pursuant to the objectives of the National Defense Strategy, we are charged with developing a more lethal force to meet the demands of future conflict under conditions of disruptive change. The return of great power competition adds further complexity to the current security environment that accelerates the need for agile, flexible, and adaptable warfighters who are capable of guiding our military strategy towards a high-end fight.

This transition from countering violent extremist organizations along with our military activities across the continuum of conflict will not be swift nor linear—it will require credible, critically thinking, and creative leaders with the precise blend of education, training, and experience, deliberately cultivated throughout a military career. In order to yield this outcome, we must not be content with the status quo while our adversaries continue to close the gap in military capabilities. We must also advance and champion our imperative to achieve the NDS mandate to *build a more lethal Joint Force* in concert with the JCS vision on PME and talent management.

A revised EPME Policy will outline the way forward in delivering the requisite knowledge, skills, and attributes as well as the necessary talent management initiatives to support the outcomes herein and serve as the bedrock of joint enlisted leader development. The revised EPME Policy will drive a more robust leader development approach delivered earlier in the EJPME Continuum, while reforming all existing PME as necessary to deliver the newly defined outcomes. Our commitment to produce adaptive and capable enlisted leaders will yield a force-multiplying effect unmatched by any adversary.

The forthcoming policy reform shall pave the way for Service and Joint PME institutions to aggressively implement fundamental changes where appropriate, in order to align their respective joint warfighting curricula to those of the EPME Policy. This collective vision and the ensuing unity of effort from all stakeholders shall serve as the symbol of our steadfast commitment to develop the future leaders required by our Nation.

# **IADS**

## **Day 2 - Reading #2**

USAFRICOM - VT Guard  
**Enlisted Development Strategy**





---

NEWS | Jan. 28, 2020

---

# U.S. Africa Command continues to develop Senegal's Enlisted Development Strategy

By Army Staff Sgt. Flor Gonzalez

U.S. Africa Command

DAKAR, Senegal – U.S. Navy Command Master Chief Ryan P. Burton, U.S. Africa Command acting command senior enlisted leader, met with the Senegal Chief of Defense Lt. Gen. Birame Diop, his staff, and Senegalese command senior enlisted leaders Jan. 22-23, in Dakar City, Senegal.

During the visit, Burton discussed the empowerment of non-commissioned officers (NCO) and the professional development of enlisted forces.

"Due to the unique global security situations in Senegal's region, a professional enlisted force is imperative to the accomplishment of any mission," Burton said. "Senegal has displayed a desire to professionalize their enlisted forces further. The Senegalese have actioned an effective professionalization campaign in which other African partners are modeling their programs after."

According to Senegal's Chief of Defense Staff, Lt. Gen. Birame Diop, one of the most critical areas is for U.S.-Senegalese defense cooperation moving forward is to focus on the Senegalese Armed Forces NCO Corps.

Senegal has been identified as one of AFRICOM's Africa Enlisted Development Strategy (AEDS) focus countries for this year. The strategy is designed to create targeted low to no-cost initiatives for inter-African professional military education training. This approach seeks to standardize existing African professional military education institutions that can train, not only their own nation's forces but also those of neighboring countries, to create regional centers of excellence.

One of the focuses of AEDS is to use the "train-the-trainer" approach, which looks to develop sustainable training programs that can teach African enlisted forces in large numbers. As part of the strategy, AFRICOM will utilize several programs, such as mobile training teams, and the Department of Defense State Partnership Program, to help enhance African professional military institutions, ultimately creating regional centers of excellence.

In its first iteration last year, AEDS focus countries included Botswana, Ghana, Liberia, and Malawi. Along with Senegal, Kenya, Morocco, and Mozambique are focus countries for the strategy this year.

The U.S. has already been working with Senegalese Armed Forces to help refine their NCO development instructor cadre. In July, the Senegalese Air Force sent five NCOs to McGhee-Tyson Air Force Base, Tenn., to observe a U.S. NCO professional development course and identify best practices that can be implemented in their programs. The Vermont National Guard, which is partnered with Senegal as part of the Department of Defense's State Partnership Program, has also been working to enhance the Senegalese enlisted professional development program.

As part of the visit, Burton and his team also participated in Senegal's 45th Navy Day anniversary parade, an Africa Maritime Security Conference, and an exhibition tour. More than 15 Chiefs of Navy from across the African continent and senior naval leaders from Europe and South America also gathered to discuss and address collaborative approaches to today's maritime challenges.

The events provided a significant opportunity for the U.S. to showcase regional engagement, generate more substantial exposure to companies, and strengthen U.S. partnerships with Senegal and other regional navies.

General Diop concluded the meetings by reaffirming Senegal's commitment to the bilateral defense and security cooperation, and his country's willingness to continue working hard to take that long-standing partnership to the next level.

# IADS

## Day 2 - Reading #3

Pacific Air Forces Public Affairs  
**SEL International Summit**





[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#)

## Indo-Pacific Allies and partners solidify relations, ready for future during Senior Enlisted Leader International Summit



Published Aug. 12, 2022

By Master Sgt. Gena Armstrong

Pacific Air Forces Public Affairs

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii – Representatives from eight Indo-Pacific Ally and partner nations attended the largest international Department of the Air Force engagement, Senior Enlisted Leader International Summit (SELIS), in Arlington, Virginia, Aug. 1 – 5.

Hosted by Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass, SELIS focused on people, readiness and culture through connections between Allies and partners. In all, the summit attracted more than 80 senior enlisted leaders representing 62 nations and NATO Allied Air Command.

U.S. Pacific Air Forces Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. David R. Wolfe explained “integrated deterrence needs partners with highly functional interoperability. That must happen within the enlisted force. Gatherings like this help form mutually understood standards to develop our Airmen and ensure all of the Indo-Pacific Allies and partners are ready and relevant in the face of increasing threats.”

[Skip to main content \(Press Enter\).](#)



[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#)

assessment picture.”

For Pacific Air Forces, developments throughout the region solidify the resolve of Indo-Pacific Allies and partners to prepare their enlisted forces for a dynamically changing security environment.

“This was a great introduction for new partnerships,” said Warrant Officer of the Royal New Zealand Air Force Kerry Williams. “It allows us to see how we all work, so that no matter how far we are from the fight, we know how each partner can contribute.”

Republic of Singapore Air Force Command Chief, Military Expert 6 See Lye Ng, explained, “We all bring our own perspectives and challenges that are good references to integrate into each other’s systems to better work together.”



[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#)

end fight,” Bass said.

Cara Abercrombie from the National Security Council further emphasized the necessity of strong partnerships.

“In the face of our growing security challenges, we need to think about how we cooperate,” Abercrombie said. “Knowing who to call in a crisis or for an opportunity with sharing the threat



[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#)

The representatives from Indo-Pacific nations in attendance characterized long-standing relationships with Allies and more recent partnerships expanding each participant’s network of contacts on a global scale.

“This summit was a great opportunity to create a pipeline between so many people,” reflected Japan Air Self Defense Force Warrant Officer Kai Osamu, Senior Enlisted Advisor. “It is mutually beneficial to strengthen our partnerships and build relationships.”

The Royal Australian Air Force’s Warrant Officer of the Air Force Fiona Grasby appreciated the strategic nature of focusing the summit on the education and training of the enlisted force.

“We need to consider the current climate and focus our energy to be more ready and prepared,” explained Grasby. “We will use the lessons learned to ensure we look at opportunities to increase the interoperability of our most junior-level aviators with our Allies and partners.”

For some nations’ representatives, SELIS presentations and the lessons learned through networking demonstrated improvements they could take back to improve their armed forces.

Sgt. Maj. Namjildorj Battumur of the Air Force Command. "It is very effective for building partnerships and we no doubt need to increase our partnership programs."

While all participants emphasized the partnership building aspect, others were also excited to showcase what they, personally, had to offer.

"Next year I hope more [females from my country] come [to SELIS]," said Royal Thai Air Force Flight Sgt. 1st Class Khanittha Thongkham, the first female from her service to attend SELIS. "Through events like this, I want to improve our service and demonstrate women can be leaders — that females and males can serve equally in all positions."



[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#)



[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#)

In addition to SELIS and other engagements, PACAF Airmen participate in up to 40 major exercises a year alongside nations throughout the region, and there is a robust [subject matter expert exchange program](#) in place to strengthen interoperability across the theater.

"Our relationships are solid, regardless of how long we've been working together," Wolfe stressed. "We are committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific and aggressively plan, train, and practice alongside our Allies and partners in a variety of venues."

The networking and collaboration between the 62 nations and NATO Allied Air Command at SELIS and through routine engagements better postured everyone for the global security environment.

"Teamwork is number one," explained Philippine Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Roy Sabado. "We need to see the challenges others go through and learn from their spirit of resiliency and agility because changes will always come. When it happens to your friend, it can happen to you."



# IADS

## Day 2 - Reading #4

Dialogo Americas  
**SOUTHCOM's ELPD**  
Program

# Empowering the Enlisted Forces of Partner Nations: SOUTHCOM's ELPD Program



U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Benjamin Jones, SOUTHCOM Command Sergeant Major, speaks during a visit at WHINSEC for the 15th iteration of the Senior NCO Integral Program (PISAJ, in Spanish), a geostrategic engagement between the military forces of Colombia, the United States, and other partner nations in the region, in June 2021. (Photo: WHINSEC)

*BY NATHALIE GOUILLOU/DIÁLOGO*  
**JANUARY 18, 2022**

They are the doers of the armed forces, the eyes and ears of their commanders, who guide and inspire the troops to get the job done. Often referred to as the backbone of the military, noncommissioned officers (NCO) have long been

recognized within the U.S. service branches as critical to maintaining a competitive advantage.

While not all nations have embraced NCO development, many, thanks to the support of U.S. combatant commands, have made great strides in empowering their NCOs. Indeed, in the six years since its inception, U.S. Southern Command's (SOUTHCOM) Enlisted Leader Professional Development (ELPD) program has been sharing experiences, best practices, and lessons learned with partner nations (PN) of Latin America (LATAM) and the Caribbean eager to professionalize their NCO corps. As of mid-2021, the ELPD program has been involved with up to 20 PNs in the hemisphere through NCO exchanges, hands-on training, exercises, and conferences with support from regional defense institutions.

"Our goal regarding ELPD is not to force our model on any country, but simply to share [...]. Hence, we stand ready to support all of our trusted partners with the professionalization of their enlisted forces, according to their current and future goals," said U.S. Army Master Sergeant Danny Gomes, former ELPD program manager for SOUTHCOM.

## KEY ROLE

Throughout the history of the U.S. military, whenever technology, military strategies, or the rules of war have evolved, the role of the NCO has followed suit. Faced with more decentralized and complex battlefields, enlisted leaders (EL) had to take on more leadership duties. Today, they play a critical role in the operational effectiveness and institutional advances of the armed forces. For SOUTHCOM, this meant investing in the NCOs of PNs to improve readiness and capabilities in support of regional security operations, with the creation of the ELPD program — previously known as the NCO Development Partnership program.



Ecuadorian Armed Forces students build a bridge during a team building exercise at an NCO professional development seminar in April 2021, in Ecuador. (Photo: U.S. Air Force)

Established in 2016, the ELPD program fell under the four military imperatives identified by then SOUTHCOM commander, U.S. Navy Admiral Kurt W. Tidd. In addition to the development of a professional NCO corps, Adm. Tidd considered respect for human rights, the institutionalization of a culture of enhanced jointness, and the pragmatic integration of gender perspectives into military operations as hallmark characteristics of capable, modern defense forces. "A strong NCO corps equals a strong military," said Adm. Tidd then.

## PART OF MISSION SUCCESS

In 2021, the ELPD program hit two military imperatives with the launch of a series of panels on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) for women senior NCOs of the Americas. The first two panels, held virtually in March and July, exceeded all expectations with the participation of thousands of female personnel from the region.

"For most defense forces, the enlisted corps is the pillar of the force [...]," said U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Duilia Turner, WPS program chief at SOUTHCOM, and moderator of the panels. "So from there, it's very important that we focus and that we professionalize the enlisted corps, but we cannot do that if we do not include women, because we know that the teams that are the most cohesive, that respond best, that are the best performers, are the teams that include different perspectives."

The WPS conferences for senior women NCOs of the Americas have highlighted the importance and increased representation of women serving in the enlisted forces of the region. As U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant Keyla M. Watt, Inter-American Air Forces Academy (IAAFA) first sergeant, put it: "One of the most notable breakthroughs is a general acceptance by LATAM/Caribbean that diversity and inclusion must be a cornerstone of their defense institutions."

According to Master Sgt. Watt, there's been a growing demand from PNs to add themes related to WPS into the curriculum of IAAFA, one of the institutions SOUTHCOM's has partnered with to support NCO development and education across the hemisphere. "Additionally, our academy continues to see an increase in the number of female



students attending our courses and the number of female guest instructors; these are significant long-term investments for our PNs.”

In October 2021, IAAFA launched the Inter-American Senior NCO Academy, its first senior NCO course, with a focus on culture, leadership, mission, and problem-solving that saw the participation of students from Colombia, Costa Rica, and El Salvador, as well as U.S. Air Force (USAF) senior NCOs. “Most recently LATAM PNs have come to understand the critical role USAF NCOs play in the execution of operations. In light of this IAAFA [...] developed a course that aims to grow PNs’ senior NCO capacity to lead at the highest levels of military hierarchy and to advise senior leaders,” said USAF Colonel José E. Jiménez Jr., IAAFA commandant. Hundreds of NCOs from the Americas have already graduated from IAAFA’s Inter-American NCO Academy, a course that prepares ELs for leadership and management responsibilities.

The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), another partner institution of SOUTHCOM, has also greatly contributed to the success of the ELPD program. As a multinational interagency environment, WHINSEC brings a high level of knowledge and experience it shares with NCOs of the Americas through three courses taught in Spanish. The quality of the training at WHINSEC, said U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major José S. Lopez, WHINSEC command sergeant major, can best be illustrated with a quote from a PN Air Force commander, who during a recent visit remarked, “When I was in the process of selecting my senior enlisted advisor, there were three outstanding candidates. I decided to select a recent graduate of the Senior Enlisted Advisor Course taught at WHINSEC.”

Another case in point is Dominican Army Staff Sergeant Rosa Mancebo, a panelist in the July senior NCO WPS conference and a WHINSEC graduate, who stands out for being the first female promoted to staff sergeant, a rank the Dominican Republic signed into law in 2013. Today, Staff Sgt. Mancebo is one of nine female NCOs in the Dominican Armed Forces. A female trailblazer, Staff Sgt. Mancebo also gets to inspire future NCOs through her role as the administrator of the Staff Sergeant Course at the Dominican Army NCO infantry school.

“As a senior NCO, I have been able to be an agent multiplier of the knowledge and experiences that I have acquired throughout my military career,” said Staff Sgt. Mancebo, who joined in January 2012. “Being a pioneer as a female soldier, and at the same time being part of the first promotion of NCOs [...], has been very important for female soldiers because this represents another step forward and another door that opens for all of them.”



Chief Master Sergeant of the U.S. Air Force JoAnne S. Bass speaks at an IAAFA graduation banquet for Class 2021-B at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, August 11, 2021.  
(Photo: Annette Crawford)

### LEAPS AND BOUND

In addition to the senior NCO WPS seminars, other SOUTHCOM-sponsored conferences have been focusing on NCO professionalization, such as the South American Defense Conference (SOUTHDEC), which Senior Enlisted Leaders Seminar runs parallel to the meeting of armed forces’ commanders since 2017, or the Conference of American Armies (CAA), which, in its 2020 and 2021 forums, focused on strengthening the NCO corps of all the armies of the region.

Other examples of the success of the ELPD program include the current development of a curriculum for sergeant first class and first sergeant in the Dominican Armed Forces. Also, in mid-2021, at the request of the Colombian senior enlisted advisor to the chairman (SEAC) of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, SOUTHCOM’s ELPD team visited all of their military educational institutions and facilities to assess their current conditions and identify areas of potential improvement. The Jamaica Defence Force requested and received the same assistance with full assessment of their current ELPD and professional military education structure to prepare for the growth planned for its force in the next few years. As for Guatemala, it plans to train and develop hundreds of NCOs

and petty officers by 2022, assigning them greater responsibility as part of its ELs professionalization efforts.

Between 2016 and 2020, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, and El Salvador also implemented and filled the position of SEAC; Brazil and Peru implemented the position of sergeant major of the Army, while SOUTHCOM representatives

met with many LATAM and Caribbean NCOs to exchange ideas on how to support the role of ELs and develop breakthrough workshops to support greater professionalization of the NCOs.

As such, the ELPD program has made leaps and bound in LATAM and the Caribbean since its inception, from the creation of new ranks to assigning greater responsibility to men and women ELs to increased participation in international military education courses to the request for more training opportunities.

“The ELPD program is here to stay, in one way or another, for a very long time,” said U.S. Army Sergeant Major James “Jim” Campbell, who assumed the role of ELPD program manager for SOUTHCOM in July 2021. “EL development is not something that you can do once and then say that you’re all done. It’s a longterm commitment that constantly evolves, so that what it will look like in the future really depends on what our partners want. [...] Our goal is to continue to be a good partner in the region and work with our partners to help them achieve that.”

Perhaps, U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Benjamin Jones, SOUTHCOM command sergeant major, summed it best during his closing remarks at the first senior NCO WPS seminar held in March. “We have come a long way in the Western Hemisphere [...] but there’s still much work to be done. Find your definition of success and continue to look and work toward it. You may hit a few roadblocks along the way, but if you keep moving forward, you will definitely reach your destination — and that my friend is success.”