

to enemy fire. By maintaining squad integrity, the GCV supports trust and understanding that are central to combat success. The GCV also eases the physical aspects of shared burden and helps distribute the load of equipment across the formation.

The GCV supports the Army's future operating concepts. Platoons are dispersed across the company area of operations, deploying squads as integral units and deploying their entire combat power with organic vehicles. The company commander and his headquarters can deploy to the optimal location to command operations without having to deliver individual Soldiers to dispersed platoons. This small unit freedom of action enables rapid deployment, redeployment and task-organization of combat power across a distributed, ever-changing battlefield, enabling improved versatility with no increase in the density of platoon vehicles.

In the current Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV) platoon, squad members are distributed across four platoon vehicles, with medics, Forward Observers, and RTOs in company headquarters vehicles. Company headquarters vehicles must also deploy platoon combat power. Soldiers are deployed from separate vehicles and form the squad on the ground, risking greater enemy exposure and loss of tactical surprise and initiative. This violates squad and platoon integrity and inhibits the execution of decentralized operations fundamental to combined arms maneuver and wide area security. The freedom of action provided by the GCV enhances the commander's ability to seize and retain the initiative and shape operations at the lowest tactical level. This is an essential for mission command and success against adaptive, hybrid threat and operating in complex environments among the people.



## Summary

The Infantry squad will continue to be fundamental to combined arms maneuver and wide area security in future operational environments marked by uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. Nothing can replace the resourcefulness and capability of a well-led rifle squad to close with and destroy a hybrid threat, in complex terrain, while minimizing collateral damage and protecting the populace.

The Ground Combat Vehicle is designed around the squad and developed to support the conduct of future operational concepts. The GCV provides protection, lethal and non-lethal effects, network connectivity, and support that empowers the squad to operate among the people, across the spectrum of conflict. Its capacity to move an integral squad and capacity for future adaptation and growth are key to conducting decentralized operations and addressing future uncertainty. The GCV enhances the intrinsic strengths and capabilities of the Squad – which remains the centerpiece of our Army.

- Squad is the fundamental organization
- Human dimension remains critical
- Combined arms maneuver, wide area security
- Control territory and security of populations
- GCV designed around the squad

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# The Squad and Its Ground Combat Vehicle

Adapting the Army for Cohesive Squad Performance in Future Operations



## The Infantry Squad

The Infantry mission is to close with and destroy the enemy by fire, maneuver and close combat. The infantry squad is the foundation of the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) as the lowest tactical unit capable of conducting fire and maneuver. Based on span of control, direct responsibility, and complexity of operations among the population, the squad leader is the Army's most demanding personal leadership position. Through visual, verbal and physical leadership, he executes mission command, using his initiative to translate commander's intent into decisive action.

The Army has several types of Infantry organizations (Infantry, Stryker and Heavy Brigade Combat Teams), but only one squad design. This single design enables standardized doctrine, organization, individual and collective training, equipment, and leader development – and achieves efficiencies in training, force manning, and task organizing for combat operations.

The nine-man design, with one Squad Leader and two four-soldier fire teams, was adopted in 1985. While various analytic efforts illustrate the effectiveness of larger squads, the nine-man squad design strikes the appropriate balance between benefits and costs. A seven-man squad becomes ineffective with the loss of just one Soldier, but the nine-man rifle squad can sustain operations and absorb losses while maintaining effectiveness.

## Lessons from Today's Battlefield

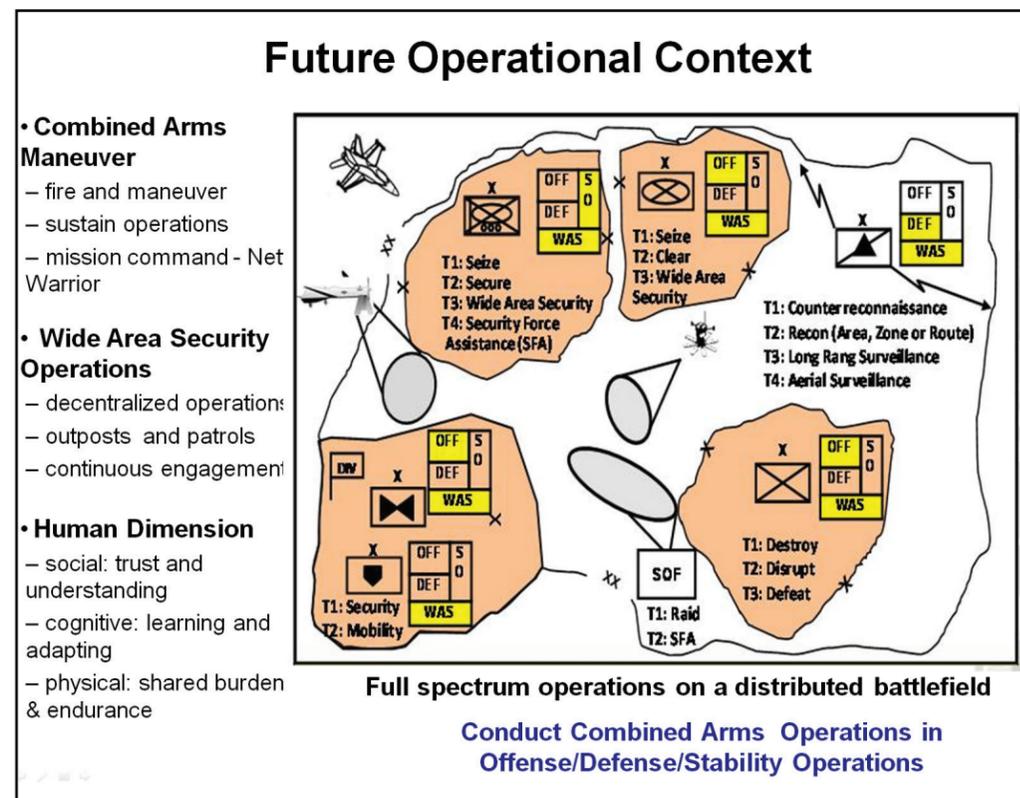
During combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan rifle squads have proven decisive to mission success. Their ability to conduct fire and maneuver was critical in close-quarters fighting in complex urban terrain, such as Fallujah and Sadr City, Iraq. Their effectiveness and resiliency was demonstrated on widely distributed battlefields at small outposts such as COP Keating, COP Kahler (Wanat) and COP Restrepo in eastern Afghanistan.

Well trained and well led squads, imbued with the Warrior Ethos, are essential for successful execution of security force assistance, providing security to allied forces, civilian agencies and combat service support forces. Conducting patrols, manning check points and operating on the ground among host nation populations are vital to establishing conditions required for effective governance.

## Future Operational Context

The Army Concept Framework broadly describes the capabilities required to succeed on tomorrow's battlefields. Concepts define how Army forces conduct operations as part of the joint force to deter conflict, prevail in war, and succeed in a wide range of contingencies. They also focus force development efforts.

- The Army Capstone Concept describes the conduct of full spectrum operations in an environment of uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity.
- The Army Operating Concept describes combined arms maneuver and wide area security operations as central themes for the conduct of decentralized operations.
  - **Combined arms maneuver** is the application of all the elements of combat power in a complementary and reinforcing manner to defeat the enemy, achieve physical, temporal, or psychological advantage, preserve freedom of action, and exploit success.
  - **Wide Area Security** is the application of the elements of combat power, in coordination with other military and civilian capabilities, to deny the enemy positions of advantage protect forces, populations, infrastructure, and activities; consolidate tactical and operational gains; and set conditions for achieving strategic and policy goals.
- The Movement and Maneuver Warfighting Functional Concept describes how Brigade Combat Teams, Combat Aviation Brigades and Battlefield Surveillance Brigades conduct combined arms maneuver and wide area security operations under the mission command of Divisions and Corps.
  - **Mission command** is the exercise of authority and direction by commanders, supported by their staffs, using the art of command and the science of control to integrate warfighting functions in the conduct of full spectrum operations. Mission command uses mission orders to ensure the use of disciplined initiative within the commander's intent, enabling agile and adaptive commanders, leaders and organizations.



From humanitarian assistance to major combat operations, and from disaster relief to security force assistance in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational context, the infantry squad provides the versatility and adaptability required for full spectrum operations.

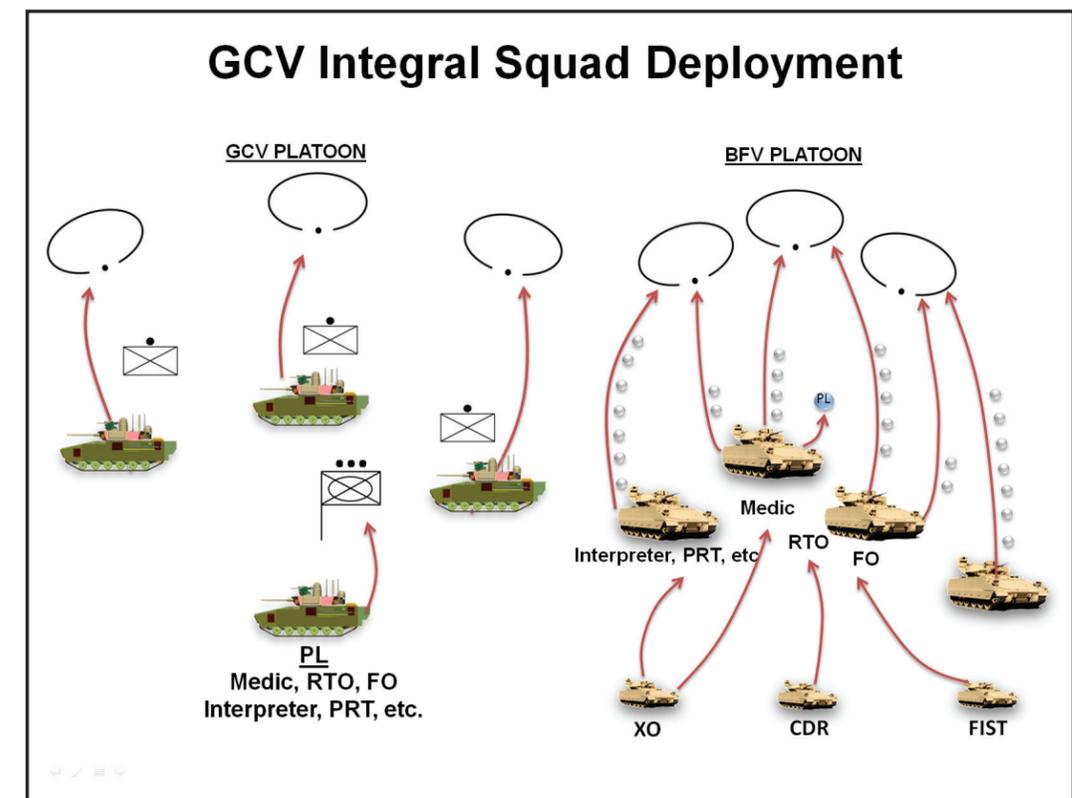
The squad is essential to effective wide area security operations, operating at the tactical edge of decentralized operations. Squads conduct patrols, establish checkpoints, and establish combat outposts to establish security for population and government agencies to create conditions for success.

Within this context, the human dimension remains paramount for the Squad. Squad cohesion and effectiveness hinge on mutual trust and understanding. Squads continuously learn and adapt in response to complexity, change and sudden surprises. They share physical burdens and exploit technology in innovative ways to accomplish their assigned missions.

## The Squad's Ground Combat Vehicle

Lessons learned from nine years of combat consistently emphasize protection, mobility and versatility as key attributes in a combat vehicle to support the infantry squad. The Army needs a Ground Combat Vehicle (GCV) that incorporates protection against improvised explosive devices, tactical mobility, and operational agility. The Army's development approach for the GCV emphasizes adaptability and the potential for expansion – enabling vehicles to be rapidly modified in accordance with changes in the operational environment and availability of new technology.

The GCV is a central component of the Army's combat vehicle modernization strategy. It is designed around the squad, providing mobility, protection, and firepower to deploy squads to the decisive point in future operations. The GCV is more than a fighting vehicle; in addition to mounting a mix of weapon systems, the GCV provides non-lethal capabilities, sensors, a communications network, life support, and a secure rally point for the squad. The GCV enables and empowers the squad to conduct combined arms maneuver and wide area security across the spectrum conflict.



The GCV supports the movement of an integral squad, which is key to the conduct of decentralized operations. The GCV has the capacity to deploy entire Squads on the battlefield – a significant advantage over Infantry carriers and tactical wheeled vehicles that deploy Soldiers at greater distances, with longer exposure