

Battle Command Training Program -- New book chronicles creation, growth through 2003

by Scott Thompson, Staff Writer

The Battle Command Training Program is now history.

For the first time in its more than 20-year existence, a history of the BCTP will be published. "History of the U.S. Army Battle Command Training Program, 1986-2003" is being printed now.

The BCTP is considered the capstone training program in the Combat Training Center program. It uses battle simulation to train commanders and their staffs from the brigade level through levels above corps.

The book provides a description and organizational history of the BCTP at Fort Leavenworth.

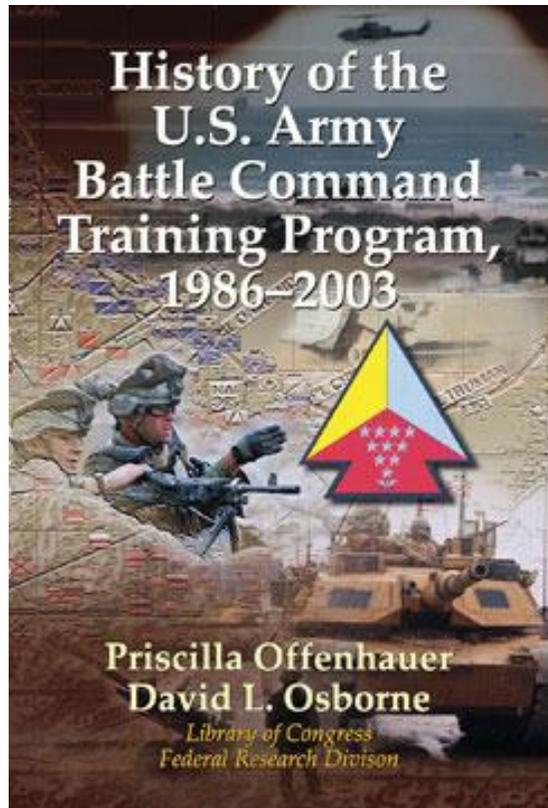
"We're probably the least known CTC program, which is one of the things that drove this," said Steve Mariano, logistics management officer for BCTP. He served as a point of contact for the authors.

The book, published by the U.S. Government Printing Office, is about 200 pages and was written by Priscilla Offenhauer and David L. Osborne of the Library of Congress Federal Research Division.

The program has been around since the mid-1980s and the task of recording its history was taken up sometime in 1999. At the onset, Fort Leavenworth staff and employees were asked to write the book, but a lack of personnel, time and resources stalled the effort.

After years of attempting to get the project off the ground, Offenhauer and Osborne took up the task. It took them about three years to research and write.

"The authors did a good job in that they went beyond just the history," Mariano said. "They



"History of the U.S. Army Battle Command Training Program, 1986-2003" is being published by the Library of Congress and distributed by the Government Printing Office. The book provides a description and organizational history of the BCTP at Fort Leavenworth. Courtesy Library of Congress.

ted it to how Army training was changing in the '80s."

It was at that time, Mariano said, that senior leadership of the Army recognized it had a void in training for senior leaders.

The book leads up to 2003, when the operational focus was still largely on the doctrinal legacy of the Cold War.

"What I think is unique about this book, we started changing our methodology in about 2003 in reaction to the counterinsurgency operations that are now going on," Mariano said. "So the program has changed, and that's kind of where the authors stopped. Their cut-off point was 2003, so this history really focuses on BCTP when it was involved with the heavy force-on-force fight and training the Army for that."

Mariano calls the book a good picture of where BCTP came from and the cloth from which it was cut.

While organizations like the National Training Center and National Simulation Center have established themselves as known entities throughout the world, the BCTP is a relative unknown, Mariano said. He hopes this book will help to change that.

"One of the aspects of this book was to highlight what we did, get it out to the American public and lock that history in place for future generations to see what we did," Mariano said.

The book is expected to release in the next month or two. To pre-order the BCTP history book, visit: <http://bookstore.gpo.gov/actions/GetPublication?stocknumber=008-020-01566-1>.