

Secretary of the Army approves new advanced manufacturing policy

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WASHINGTON -- Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy has approved a new policy on advanced manufacturing that will help the Army secure a competitive edge against near-peer adversaries.

Advanced manufacturing refers to new ways of making existing products and the production of new products using advances in technology. It includes robotics, artificial intelligence, composite materials and additive manufacturing, often referred to as 3D printing.

"Advanced manufacturing will fundamentally change the way the Army designs, delivers, produces and sustains materiel capabilities," McCarthy wrote in the policy memorandum.

The new policy aims to deliver on two of the Army's top priorities: Readiness and Modernization. Advanced manufacturing decreases design limitations imposed by traditional manufacturing methods, allowing for the production of complex parts. These optimized designs, coupled with lighter and stronger advanced materials, can result in improved system performance. Advanced manufacturing will also allow the Army to innovate with unparalleled speed. It enables the rapid production of prototypes and transition to production, leading to shorter development times. Advanced manufacturing can also be used to address the readiness challenges posed by parts obsolescence, diminishing sources of supply and sustained operations in austere environments.

"Advanced manufacturing enhances the supply chain and sustainment efforts, both forward in the field and in our maintenance depots, enabling Soldiers to quickly manufacture critical parts and supplies at the point of need," said Gen. Gus Perna, commanding general of U.S. Army Materiel Command.

The new policy requires incorporating advanced manufacturing into both new and fielded systems. In doing so, it drives the entire acquisition system toward advanced methods and materials that will result in modernized weapons systems and enhanced readiness.

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