The Unified Quest Army Future Warfare Study is a year-long series of experiments, studies, and major wargaming events designed to help US Army leaders identify future challenges, threats, and possible solutions as the service prepares for complex missions in the decades ahead.

Begun 12 years ago to help the Army anticipate post-Cold War threats, Unified Quest is now conducted jointly by the Army, US Joint Forces Command (JFC), and US Special Operations Command (SOCOM). Military leaders rely on the annual Warfare Study to fashion a strategic roadmap for building forces, concepts, and doctrines to counter new and emerging threats.

Seeing the Future Clearly

Envisioning potential challenges and capabilities that lie decades ahead requires wargaming activities that spark creativity and insight—and that also facilitate objectivity, candor, and a collaborative spirit. Devising these activities requires an in-depth knowledge of military doctrine, culture, and requirements, an understanding of wargaming practice and theory, plus design and execution know-how.

Advanced War Games that Capture Complex Realities

The US Army called upon Booz Allen Hamilton in 1996 to create a series of wargaming activities, then known as “Army Afternext,” to help visualize future warfare. Booz Allen reached across the corporation to bring in experts in modeling, simulation, wargaming, and analysis. The firm also drew upon teams of consultants, including former military and civilian government leaders, who offered a deep understanding of politics, diplomacy, international finance, global economics, and other issues that would shape next-generation threats and mission requirements.

Working with Army leaders, Booz Allen built the Integrated Gaming System, an automated system that presents information and scenarios to participants. The system incorporates advanced modeling and simulation technologies to create complex and realistic scenarios, enabling participants to visualize the consequences of their hypothetical decisions and actions.

Over the years, Unified Quest has helped the Army anticipate and prepare for many of the challenges it now faces. For example, early wargames examined...
such issues as joint theater logistics, multinational and joint interagency coordination, and the conduct of stability operations in wartime theaters. These studies also foresaw the rising demand for intelligence and information operations in modern warfare’s complex environments.

As a result of these exercises, Army leaders could see that current planning processes did not include stability policing capabilities during stability operations, nor did they address how these capabilities could be provided. The exercises also revealed that irregular warfare in the future will require close engagement with key allies and coalition partners, including improved information and intelligence sharing, which will require the development of new operational concepts and a capacity for building partnerships.

Unified Quest participants also saw a growing need to develop regional expertise, cultural awareness, and language skills in an era of “persistent conflict.”

**Helping the US Army Be Ready for What’s Next**

Army leaders are constantly seeking to anticipate threats and strengthen mission capabilities by gathering information and insights from both hard-won experience and scholarly study. Unified Quest effectively combines experience and scholarly study into realistic exercises that allow Army leaders to test new theories, understand the gaps in capabilities and requirements, and explore ideas in collaborative debate with military and civilian experts.

The Army’s evolving mission and requirements, such as expanded joint operations, counter-terrorism, irregular warfare, and stability operations, are incorporated into new Unified Quest exercises. Today, the year-long series of events culminates in a week-long wargame that includes 300+ leaders from all the services, numerous civilian agencies, and US allies. Although sophisticated in conception and its use of wargaming technologies, Unified Quest provides military leaders with straightforward, accessible exercises and games that continue to foster powerful insight into future warfare.

**Ready to Help You**

Our work with the Army on the Unified Quest program is just one example of how Booz Allen’s global strategy and technology consultants can help military leaders anticipate future threats and achieve mission goals. Our consulting teams draw from the firm’s wide range of capabilities in modeling and simulation and information technology, as well as our in-depth knowledge of military operations and requirements. We bring both battlefield and boardroom experience to every engagement. To learn more about the know-how behind this project’s success and how it can help your team be ready for what’s next, visit www.boozallen.com/defense.