# US Army - 1st Tactical Course on Robotic and Autonomous Systems

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FORT BENNING (Georgia) – The Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) of the United States Army has launched the first pilot cycle of the **Robotic Autonomous Systems Leader Tactics Course (RASLT)**, an intensive program designed to prepare commanders and staff for the increasing centrality of **robotic and autonomous systems** in future conflicts. The course, launched on **February 10** as part of the Army-wide initiatives of **Transforming in Contact**, lasts **three weeks** and aims to transform emerging technologies into operational skills applicable in the field.

According to the Army, **three pilot iterations in Fiscal Year 2026** are planned, each structured over **five days a week**. The responsibility for the initiative falls on the **3rd Squadron, 16th Cavalry Regiment**, which oversees the design and conduct of the program.

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## A training “milestone” in leaders' careers

For **Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hastings**, commander of the unit managing the RASLT, the goal is to offer a structured touchpoint in the professional training of officers and NCOs, at a time when operational units are beginning to receive new “formations” and capabilities based on robotics and autonomy.

“What we hope RASLT can provide is a touchpoint in the professional military education of an officer or NCO, where they are exposed to these contents and develop a foundation to build competence in tactical operations planning and combined arms employment with these new capabilities,” Hastings explained.

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## Who the RASLT is for

The course is aimed at:

- **Officers** from the rank of **first lieutenant** to **major**
- **Enlisted personnel** with the rank of **sergeant first class** and above

**Captain Alison Darby**, the course director, specified that for enlisted personnel, it is preferable to have completed the **Scout Leader Course** or the **Battle Staff NCO Course**, while for officers, completion of the **Maneuver Captain's Career Course** is expected.

The idea is to train leaders destined to return to the operational force, where the likelihood of finding **integrated robotic and autonomous assets** at the **company, battalion, or brigade** level is increasingly concrete.

## Three weeks, three levels of integration: from UGV to ethics

The curriculum follows a structured progression, alternating theory, capability study, and **tactical decision exercises** (TDE) with dynamic scenarios.

**Week 1: overview and unmanned ground vehicles (UGV)**
The first phase introduces the principles of autonomous systems and focuses on **types of unmanned ground vehicles**, with their capabilities and limitations. The week concludes with a "cognitive" exercise where students plan and execute an operation as a company commander in a **mobile brigade combat team**, with aggregated RAS assets. The "injects" and opposition are managed by the instructor in the role of adaptive enemy.

**Week 2: small drones, environment, and electromagnetic spectrum management**
The second week is dedicated to **small unmanned aircraft systems**, addressing employment, constraints, and operational considerations. Specific attention is given to **electromagnetic spectrum management** and the effects of **terrain and weather**. The module ends with a defensive TDE: students operate as an armored company commander, integrating robotic systems in a combined arms formation.

**Week 3: leadership, ethics, and “expanded” operational employment**

The final week broadens the perspective: beyond tactics, the dimension of **leadership, responsibility, and ethics** related to the use of autonomous and robotic platforms comes into play. The final exercise requires incorporating these systems in support of an **offensive maneuver**, with evaluation of integration effectiveness and decision-making quality.

According to Darby, graduates should leave the course with a solid understanding of the “capabilities and limitations” of platforms already in distribution or proposed, and with the ability to **plan and employ** these tools to enhance maneuver formations, regardless of the destination unit.

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## Towards a “normalized” robotics doctrine in units

The RASLT pilot marks an important transition: it is not just about experimenting with technology, but about **institutionalizing skills**. With the increasing entry of robotic and autonomous platforms at tactical levels – company, battalion, brigade – the Army aims to converge **doctrine, training, and innovation** under the umbrella of **Transforming in Contact**.

In other words, Fort Benning is not just hosting a new course: it is testing a training model designed to make robotics a “routine” element of modern maneuver, transforming experimental assets into integrated, planned, and commanded tools with the same familiarity as traditional capabilities.

**News link:**

https://www.army.mil/article/290457/fort_benning_trains_army_leaders_to_integrate_robotic_and_autonomous_systems_in_combat