



Óglaigh
na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



INFANTRY ETHOS

AN LÁMH COMHRAC - THE COMBAT ARM

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STRENGTHEN
THE NATION



INFANTRY CORPS

AN LÁMH COMHRAC - THE COMBAT ARM

Foreword

The Infantry Corps has since the foundation of the State occupied a unique position within Óglaigh na hÉireann and continues this proud tradition to this day. As the combat arm of the Army, the Infantry are distinct in that they alone are the soldiers who may be tasked to close with the enemy, or to hold ground and defend against enemy attack. Furthermore, the Infantry are often the only forces that can operate in complex environments characterised by difficult or close terrain, requiring that they must be flexible, deployable, sustainable, interoperable, and adaptable. As the largest Corps within Óglaigh na hÉireann, the Infantry must deliver across all combat functions. Accordingly, the Infantry must maintain a diverse set of skills in conventional tactics, techniques, and procedures, whilst also ensuring they are prepared to deploy on high intensity multinational peace support or crisis management operations overseas, or in Aid to the Civil Power at home. The Infantry has and continues to be both the backbone and mass of the Army's contribution to overseas operations and Aid to the Civil Power domestically.

The Infantry Ethos frames the role of the Infantry as the beating heart of Óglaigh na hÉireann. This booklet captures the essence of the Infantry and their unique role and characteristics. The Infantry Soldier Principles outlined in this document serve to inculcate professional pride and a sense of belonging amongst the members of our Infantry. The four principles emphasise the conceptual, moral, and physical components of fighting power and what is required of all infantry soldiers in their behaviours and performances both in training and on operations. These principles must be championed by commanders and embraced by all ranks.

The consistent excellent delivery on operations, home and overseas, by the Infantry Corps is something which we cannot presume or take for granted. Such excellence is delivered in an apparently seamless manner which however, belies the leadership and training standards required to maintain this level of interoperability across the Corps and through our Brigades.

The standards of excellence displayed by Infantry units on operations, at home and overseas, is the most fitting testament and monument to the Corps. Words may sometimes struggle to capture this accurately. However, the Infantry Ethos is an ideal means to both focus on and reaffirm the unique role of the Infantry within Óglaigh na hÉireann in the context of past and indeed future challenges.

Anthony McKenna
Major General
Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations)

Introduction

The Infantry Corps is the largest Corps of the Irish Army. It has a long and proud tradition of service, at home and overseas, stretching back to the foundation of the State. Since its development along conventional lines, the Corps has been centrally involved in many signal events in the country's history, including the Emergency, high intensity Peace Support operations, internal security operations and support to a wide range of national agencies during times of crisis, including the Covid-19 pandemic.

In carrying out its functions, the Infantry Corps has developed a broad range of capabilities in support of both national defence and foreign policy objectives. Today, Corps units comprise the seven Infantry Battalions, in addition to the Mechanised Infantry Company, supported by the Infantry School. Each unit brings its own unique culture, tradition and ethos to bear on Corps identity which has its roots in our volunteer ethos and Ireland's rich tradition of soldiering.

Our personnel are the most important element of our capability, and represent the 'tip of the spear' of the Army's combat power. To operate effectively, Corps members must strive to live the Defence Forces values of Physical Courage, Moral Courage, Respect, Integrity, Loyalty and Selflessness. We must also strive to demonstrate the Character ('Be'), Competence ('Know') and Behaviour ('Do') expected of Infantry personnel, and reach for excellence in everything we do.

This booklet defines the unique ethos of the Infantry Corps of Óglaigh na hÉireann - An Cór Coisithe. It traces the roots and heritage of Infantry soldiering in an Irish context, and describes the four key principles which underpin the operational effectiveness of every member of the Corps, in that infantry soldiers: are Robust and Resilient; Seize the Initiative; Demand Excellence and Fight as a Team.

Everyone who wears the crossed rifles of the Corps is a custodian of the Infantry Ethos. We all have a responsibility to foster Corps identity, embed Corps traditions, develop Corps capability and drive Corps standards. This will, in turn, contribute to the vision of Óglaigh na hÉireann, which is to strengthen the nation by inspiring pride and leading excellence.

Neil Nolan
Colonel
Director of Infantry





CONTENTS

Foreword	i
Introduction	iii
A short history of the Infantry in Ireland	1
Infantry – our role	16
Infantry – who we are	18
Infantry – where we are based	22
Infantry Soldier Principles	24

A short history of the Infantry in Ireland

Earliest origins

The history of the Irish infantry soldier is as old as the history of conflict in Ireland. Our modern concept of an Infantry Corps derives from the development of professional armies in 18th century Europe, infantry soldiers being those specifically tasked with meeting the enemy in battle on foot. With the relatively late arrival of horse and cannon, especially in Ireland, infantry or foot soldiers have always dominated the battlefield here. It is difficult to trace the history of Irish infantry forces before written records, but fragments of



our rich martial culture are all around us, in both legend and surviving artefacts. The deeply rooted mythology around Fionn Mac Cumhaill and the Fianna, who were the prototype Irish Army based at the sacred Hill of Allen in Kildare has been commemorated in the statue of Fionn and his hounds at the entrance to the Curragh Camp. The Ruraíocht cycle, including the famous Táin Bó Cúailnge (Cattle Raid of Cooley) story, places huge emphasis on the physical prowess of individual warriors. Heroes such as Cúchulainn and Ferdia, displayed legendary fitness, resilience and weapons handling, not only in their ability to use swords and spears in battle but in playing sports also.



The oldest surviving Irish spearhead from the Iron Age, the Lackan Spear, dated at c. 700 BC, illustrates not just our long military tradition but the ingenuity and craftsmanship of Irish smiths even before the arrival of Celtic iron-age weapons. The National Museum's collections of weapons point to an indigenous culture of warfare and weapon-making in which the infantry soldier was central. Much later, the development of Irish warfare and tactics was undoubtedly influenced by contact with and integration of the Vikings (c. 900

AD), whose technology was absorbed among native Irish forces in the use of axes and chainmail well into the mediaeval period. The great sword or *claideamh mór* (claymore) typically carried by Gaelic mercenary warriors known as *Gael Óglaigh* (Gallowgalss) would develop into a distinctive Irish sword with an open ring pommel, represented today in the Port Glenone sword on our senior Army officer rank markings.



Perhaps the pinnacle of military achievement for Gaelic forces in Ireland came during the devastating period of the colonial plantations (late 1500s), when professional and militia forces under the Gaelic nobility were able to take on much larger and better equipped British forces in the field - and win.

The Battle of Yellowford, 1598. *This was a landmark battle in the Irish Nine Years' War, between British forces and an Irish alliance of the O'Neill, O'Donnell and Maguire clans. The Irish army was composed overwhelmingly of 'kern' or light infantry: pikemen, musketeers and swordsmen, with some having experience from service in European wars. O'Neill had managed to train his soldiers to a relatively high standard, including through the use of foreign advisors and mercenaries. Through a mix of audacity, surprise and intelligent use of terrain, O'Neill's forces defeated a comparatively better equipped and better trained army, which included cannon and cavalry, destroying a force of almost 4,000 men and causing a major set-back for the British.*

The overwhelming power of Tudor Britain however, with its industrial base, access to early cannon and firearms and larger population meant that the days of professional soldiering for Gaelic nobility and their clans were numbered. While that martial tradition lived on through the disastrous wars of the 1640s and 1650s until the arrival of Cromwell, the story of the Irish infantry soldier had taken on a new turn from the early 17th century onwards. Increasingly despotic British colonial rule, prohibition on the raising and training of military forces by the remaining Gaelic chieftains and the later advent of the penal laws led to the concept of Irish "Wild Geese" - that is Irishmen fighting as professional soldiers in the armies of Catholic European nation states such as France and Spain. Irish infantry soldiers served in conflicts across Europe in the 17th, 18th and 19th

centuries, sometimes directly influencing remarkable outcomes, such as at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745.

The Battle of Fontenoy, 1745. *One of the largest battles ever to take place in Europe before the First World War took place near Fontenoy in modern-day Belgium. Irish infantry soldiers serving as 'Wild Geese' in the Irish Brigade of the French Army were instrumental in turning the tide against a combined British and Dutch force of some 50,000 soldiers. The Irish, who were divided into regiments named after leaders such as Dillon, Buckeley and Lally, were about 4,000 strong and proved to be highly resilient in battle, displaying great courage. They were heard to cry *Cuimigh ar Luimneach!* ('Remember Limerick!') as they charged against a column at least double their strength and turned the tide of the entire battle.*

The modern Irish Revolutionary period

By the 19th century, the recruitment of Irish infantrymen in the rapidly expanding British Army had become crucial. While effectively debarred from service in the cavalry and in most commissioned ranks, Irishmen from poorer Catholic backgrounds, attracted by relatively good pay and the chance of adventure, were often the backbone of British infantry regiments. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Irishmen emigrating to the USA would see service in the infantry during the US Civil War (1861-1865), mostly on the Union side.

It is estimated that by 1830, almost 40% of the British Army was composed of Irishmen and the proportion remained as high as 12% up to 1900, despite increasing nationalism and the Gaelic revival. The Cardwell and Childers reforms resulted in the amalgamation of older infantry units to create famous Irish regiments such as the Royal Dublin Fusiliers; the Connaught Rangers, the Royal Munster Fusiliers and the Leinster regiment.

At least 200,000 Irishmen from these regiments and many others in the British Army fought in the defining conflict for Irish infantry soldiers of the 20th century - the First World War (1914-1918). As many as 35,000 Irishmen and women (serving in medical roles) died in the conflict, the vast majority of them from infantry units. These Irish regiments were finally disbanded after the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty and the creation of the Irish Free State.



During the same period, political unrest and an awakening of nationalism in Ireland led to the creation of the Irish Volunteers in November 1913. The modern Irish Army traces its origin back to the Irish Volunteers, where our Óglaigh na hÉireann emblem, 'IV' buttons and green service dress were created for the first time and endure to this day in the Army



The emblem of Óglaigh na hÉireann. The Óglaigh na hÉireann symbol, which is the joint emblem for land, sea and air components of the Defence Forces, links the modern organisation back to its origins in the Irish Volunteers founded in November 1913. Commissioned Officers blackened their capbadges in mourning at General Michael Collins death in action in August 1922 and this tradition has been preserved ever since in the Army.



The 'IV button'. The Army has preserved the tradition of the 'IV' brass buttons on its Service Dress No. 1. Originally designed for use on Irish Volunteer uniforms by early 1914, the design of the 'IV' initials flanking the Irish harp (a traditional symbol on Irish flags, later to become the State Seal) featured on the first uniforms of the National Army in January 1922 and has continued ever since.



A split in the Irish Volunteers occurred in 1914, with the vast majority (known later as 'National Volunteers') opting to serve in the British Army. A minority of some 10,000 Volunteers were politically opposed to this and many of them went on to fight in the 1916 Easter Rising.

It is important to point out that Irishmen and women from nationalist organisations such as the Irish Volunteers and Cummann na mBan as well as those who served in the British Army during the First World War would go on form the Irish Republican Army during the War of Independence (1919-1921).

Martin Doyle VC, MM. Company Sergeant Major Martin Doyle is the most famous Irish infantryman to have fought in three armies – with the British Army in the First World War, with the IRA in the War of Independence and with the National Army after independence. Doyle, a native of County Wexford, fought with the Munster Fusiliers and showed outstanding courage, resilience and determination. He won both the Military Medal and the Victoria Cross, the British Army's highest award for bravery in battle. The VC was awarded for outstanding bravery in single-handedly rescuing a stranded British tank crew, killing four enemy soldiers with his rifle and bayonet in the process. Doyle's unusual career illustrates the complexities of Irish history. He went on to join the IRA as an intelligence officer in East Clare during the war of Independence in late 1920 and later as a soldier in the National Army he was wounded fighting against Ant-Treaty Forces during the Civil War.

Later, the National Army and Defence Forces would rely heavily on the expertise of volunteers who had served with the IRA and those who had technical and tactical experience from the British Army. While most volunteers who fought in the War of Independence (1919 to 1921) were not professional soldiers, there were thousands of ex-servicemen in Ireland, many of whom either joined or provided expertise to the fledging IRA. Above all, widespread popular support; the implementation of guerrilla tactics, an 'indirect approach' to operations and a determination to

dominate the intelligence space allowed Irish forces to achieve some spectacular successes against a much larger army.

The Battle of Crossbarry, 1921. This battle was one of the largest single engagements of the Irish War of Independence, where a tiny guerrilla force of some 100 IRA volunteers of the 3rd Cork Brigade under Tom Barry escaped from a vastly superior force of over 1,000 professional British soldiers and auxiliary police. The Irish were inexperienced fighters and had only 40 rounds per rifle, but were highly motivated, had popular support and knew the terrain intimately. Barry, a veteran of the First World War, used audacity and surprise to seize the initiative, successfully setting a snap ambush against a column of heavily armed Auxiliaries and punching a hole through the cordon of British troops attempting to encircle his forces.

An Irish Infantry for Ireland

The outbreak of Civil War in Ireland in May 1922 saw the creation of the National Army, the direct precursor to the Defence Forces, Óglaigh na hÉireann. Although the National Army had access to ex-British equipment such as 18pdr field guns; armoured Rolls Royce cars and even Bristol fighter planes, it was overwhelmingly composed of infantry soldiers. The Army was hastily put together in the wake of the Dáil's democratic acceptance of the Treaty. The first troops appearing in public were led by General Richard Mulcahy in their new green uniforms on 31st January 1921 to take the handover of Beggars Bush barracks from British Forces, the first of scores of barracks to be formally handed over after Independence.



By January 1923, the Army, led by First World War and War of Independence veterans such as Generals Emmet Dalton and John .T. Prout, had grown to some 32,000 soldiers, organised into 65 infantry battalions, which were battle-grouped to allow for organic fire support, mobility and combat service support. The oldest unit in the Irish Army, 3 Infantry Battalion, still remains from that reorganisation.

The Civil War was a tragic and bitterly fought conflict, with lasting implications for modern Ireland. Atrocities were committed on both sides. The new State's very survival as a democratic political entity was contingent on the success of the National Army in defeating Anti-Treaty forces. From a military point of view, it was a baptism of fire for the new National Army, who suffered up to 1,000 fatalities and many more wounded. Infantry operations, including relatively complex sea landings at Cork and Kerry, resulted in overwhelming gains for the National Army. The commonplace use of what we now call 'combined arms operations' became a hallmark of the National Army's effectiveness as it became ever more professional, deliberately tapping into the vast pool of expertise from ex-British Army service personnel in Ireland.

The Interwar period

After the Civil War, the State rationalised its armed forces and gave legal status and function to Óglaigh na hÉireann through the August 1923 Temporary provisions Act. Crucially, the Act also reinforced the primacy of civil control over the state's armed forces. In July of 1923, two months after the war had officially ended, Defence Forces Organisation order no. 3 saw a reduction in the infantry Corps to 27 battalions of approximately 400 personnel all ranks. At the same time, the Army had worked hard to become a more professional and disciplined organisation, with early



courses of instruction for infantry officers and NCOs up and running in the Curragh by the Spring of 1923. Still relatively well equipped at this time, the infantry's capabilities rested on Civil War stocks of the Lee Enfield blot action .303 rifle, the Lewis light machinegun and the Vickers medium machinegun. The professional training of the infantry, including the adoption of foreign tactics and procedures was a feature of the Irish Army from the earliest period. Courses of instruction and schools which would later develop into a dedicated Infantry School began with the opening of the Army School of Instruction in 1924 and were well in position in the

Military College by the late 1920s. Nevertheless, the steady decline of the Defence Forces in general terms continued as a result of dramatic cuts to defence spending.



By the interwar period of the 1930s, the Infantry Corps was the largest component in an Army that had fallen to approximately 5,000 soldiers. The period from 1930 right up to the 1990s was characterised by a variety of reorganisations which affected the coherence of the Corps and saw routine disbandment and merging of battalions. Initiatives to mix permanent and reserve forces were developed, including the formation of a 'Regiment of Rifles' in the 1930s with unit designations which sought to re-establish links back to old Gaelic and Anglo-Norman territories such as Oriel and Ossory. A Volunteer Force was formed in 1934, largely as an attempt to encourage men from a Fianna Fáil background to join the Army.

As the threat of war in Europe grew, the Army's strength in September 1939 stood at just 12,000 men.



The Infantry during the Emergency (1939-1946)



Even if the Defence Forces' strength by 1939 was inadequate to uphold the State's position of neutrality, the Army's major achievement was the expansion and organisation of a relatively effective fighting force, with light, motorised and cyclist infantry at its core.

The Blackwater manoeuvres of Summer 1942 were the largest exercises ever conducted by the Defence Forces, exercising the Army's two wartime divisions in countering an invasion on Ireland's southern coast. At its height, the Army reached some 140,000 personnel including its reserves, a gigantic achievement in terms of the training, organisation and logistical effort. Despite Ireland's official neutral status, the state still relied heavily on the supply of arms and equipment from the UK and a number of infantry officers were sent on specialist commando courses in the north. Life for most infantry soldiers was nonetheless bleak - once the real threat of invasion had receded the Army spent most of its time in barrack and guard routine, or on civil operations such as turf cutting to support Ireland's energy security.



New beginnings at home and overseas

Decline in investment followed again after the Second World War period, with the 31-battalion organisation effectively stagnating. However, service with the United Nation as peacekeeping forces in the decades afterwards provided a new focus for the infantry, starting with the first unit – the 32 Infantry Battalion – deploying to the Congo in 1960.

The Battle of Jadotville, 1961. The defence of A Coy, 35 Infantry Battalion at the siege of Jadotville (1961) was a lesson in how Irish infantry soldiers could overcome the most ferocious odds to provide an enduring example for the Army. Under the leadership of Comdt Pat Quinlan and CS Jack Prendergast, A Coy seized the initiative in preparing defences ahead of any attack and proved their skill, resilience and robustness beyond all doubt. The 60mm mortar detachment for example, neutralised the enemy indirect fire assets almost immediately, providing a crucial advantage. The prospect of infantry battalion and battalion groups deploying overseas throughout the 1960s reinvigorated the Corps, especially since the Congo proved to be a baptism of fire where Irish personnel were involved not only in peace support actions, but effectively in conventional attack and defensive operations right up to battalion level. Battle at places such as Jadotville (Likasi) and Elisabethville (Lubumbashi) were a proving ground for Irish infantry battalions, sometimes with tragic circumstances.



The practice of Infantry Battalion and Infantry Group deployments has continued ever since, through diverse and challenging missions in places such as Cyprus, Lebanon, Liberia, Kosovo, Chad and the Golan Heights.



The resilience and robustness of infantry soldiers has been proven in other theatres too, such as in the jungles of East Timor, where infantry units were chosen to succeed the elite Army Ranger Wing in some of the most hostile operating conditions on earth.



Closer to home the Infantry Corps has been pivotal to the State's response to the Northern Ireland troubles from 1969. Several new infantry units were formed during that period, of which the 27th and 28th infantry battalions still remain. All infantry units deployed during the period at some level to support border and internal security operations which were vital to secure the State's democracy.

The resilience, teamwork and initiative of infantry soldiers from across all of these units resulted in tens of thousands of patrols, escorts, searches and guard duties, all of which contributed to the stability of the State during a very dangerous period in our history.



Aside from operations at home and abroad, training for conventional operations has been the mainstay of the Infantry Corps since its foundation during the Civil War. While equipment and capability have often been lacking, the essential character of the Irish infantry soldier has been defined as one of positivity even through dark humour. Discipline; courage; resilience; teamwork; the pursuit of excellence and an ability to thrive in adversity have remained as a key identifier of the Corps. Training opportunities in the Infantry now encompass everything from traditional battalion support weapons, to advanced anti-armour weaponry, to fully mechanised operations in state of the art APCs. The Infantry School serves as a centre of excellence for the dissemination of fundamental infantry training.



The Corps skillset is continuously updated through the commitment of its NCOs and Officers in undergoing some of the toughest courses in the world's most effective military forces, disseminating that hard-won learning through our professional military education system. The Infantry Platoon remains as the fundamental vehicle through which all Cadets and Recruits are trained, consistently generating soldiers who are robust; team players and exacting in their standards.

Crossed Rifles: The Emblem of the Infantry Corps

The use of crossed rifles to denote infantry is a feature in many armies worldwide, notably in the US Army, where the tradition developed from the 1870s onwards. The crossed rifles symbol featured on the Hibernian Rifles uniform in the 1916 Rising, while a crossed rifle and pike design was used on Cumann na mBan badges from 1917. It is likely that the National Army adopted the US usage, especially given the prominence of senior officers who had served with US forces, such as Col J.J. O'Connell and General John T. Prout.

The original Infantry Corps collar badges (1924-1931 pattern) were introduced in post Civil War reforms, and featured two crossed rifles based on the Lee Enfield .303 rifle then in service. The word 'ceithearnach' featured in the scroll beneath, harking back to the light infantry 'kern' in Gaelic Irish armies of the 16th and 17th centuries. The infantry collar badge also featured a numeral for the battalion's designation, since battalion shoulder flashes were not introduced until 1941.

The infantry emblem went through a number of slight changes throughout the succeeding decades, including a late 1950s version where a target design featured behind the crossed rifles. The Infantry Emblem on the current issue collar badges, which are replicated on Unit Colours and sub-unit Pennants today, were issued from 1967 and are essentially a replica of the original 1924 pattern, with the updated word 'coisithe' to denote 'infantry'.

Purple: The Colour of the Infantry Corps

The colour purple has a long association in Europe with royalty and reverence. Irish soldiers who have served in Lebanon may know that the city of Tyr grew enormously wealthy through the Phoenician era due to its effective monopoly on the production of a purple dye, which was one of the most expensive commodities in the Mediterranean until the modern period.

Whatever the origins in Ireland, the colour has been used to denote Infantry units since mid-1922, when infantry officers' caps at battalion level featured a purple cloth diamond behind the Óglaigh ba hÉireann capbadge. Cloth mounted epaulette rank markings were coloured purple from 1924-42, while purple was used as the background in the 'divided shield' emblem adopted by most Infantry units in their new shoulder flashes from 1941 onwards.



Infantry: **OUR ROLE**

The role of the Infantry is to destroy the enemy and to hold ground by night or day on any terrain.



A group of five infantry soldiers in full combat gear, including helmets, vests, and rifles, are marching away from the camera on a dirt path. The scene is set in a hazy, outdoor environment. The soldiers are in a single file line, moving towards the right side of the frame.

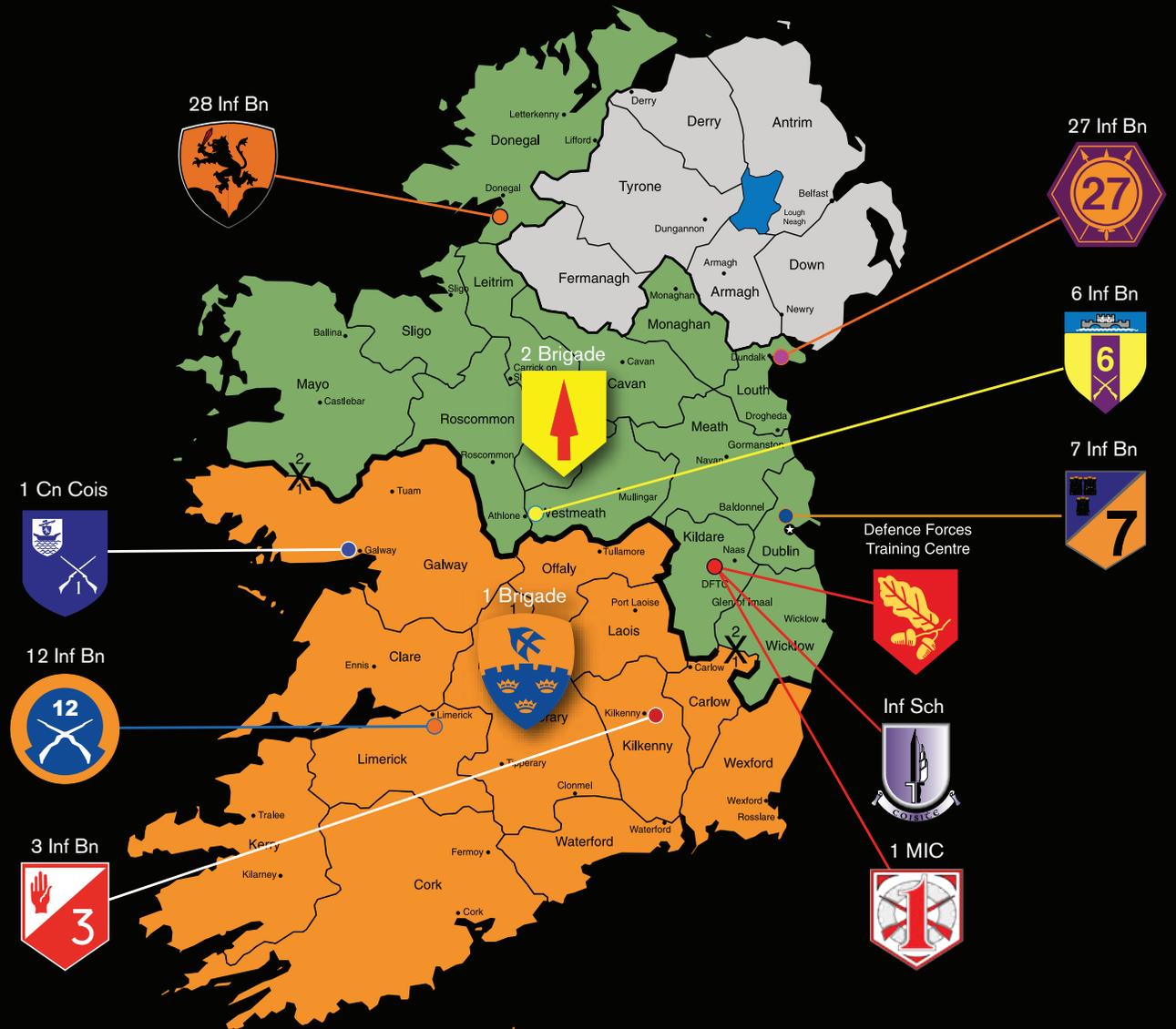
Infantry Soldiers: WHO WE ARE

The Infantry are the combat soldiers of the Irish Army. We manoeuvre mounted and dismounted throughout the battlespace. The Infantry can deploy across the full spectrum of operations in support of strategic objectives. The Infantry's conventional role is what makes us unique in that we can be tasked to close with and destroy the enemy, seize objectives and hold ground by day or night on any terrain, in all weather conditions. Therefore, the Infantry must maintain these conventional capabilities, as well as the agility to operate in more complex environments such as peace support or crisis management operations. Each Infantry battalion possesses an organic reconnaissance and sniper platoon, indirect fire support platoon (81mm Mortars), anti-armour platoon (Javelin), and direct fire support platoon (12.7mm HMG). Infantry do not operate in isolation; we collaborate with and rely upon combat support and combat service support corps to achieve our assigned mission and tasks. However, notwithstanding the critical enabling roles provided by other corps in support, the last 100m belongs to the Infantry.

MECHANISED INFANTRY

The Infantry's mechanised capability is based on the Mowag Pirhana III H DRWS Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC). The Mowag APC offers additional road and cross-country mobility, protection, communications, and target acquisition and observation by day and night. Mowag APCs also provide enhanced firepower via their 40mm Grenade Machine Gun or 12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun coaxially mounted with a 7.62mm GPMG on the vehicles' dual remote weapons stations. Whilst the Army's seven infantry battalions are categorised as 'light' infantry, 1 Mechanised Infantry Company (1 MIC) in the DFTC is a fully mechanised unit. The Irish Army predominantly deploys overseas as a mechanised infantry force; therefore most Infantry Corps soldiers are adept in mechanised infantry tactics, techniques, and procedures.

Where the Infantry are Based



Infantry Soldier **PRINCIPLES**

Infantry Soldiers:

**Are Robust and Resilient
Seize the Initiative
Demand Excellence
Fight as a Team**

Infantry Soldiers: Are Robust and Resilient

The Infantry have a unique role—to destroy the enemy and to hold ground by night or day on any terrain. This requires us to maintain exceptional levels of physical fitness and a positive mind-set focused on accomplishing assigned missions and tasks. The very nature of infantry operations means we must endure physical hardships imposed by load, terrain, climate, and time pressures. All Infantry soldiers must be willing to overcome hardship, offsetting adversity with positivity. Infantry soldiers at all levels must be prepared to sustain themselves in the harshest of conditions, ready to deal with unexpected challenges. Through challenging and robust training, we can offset the impact of the unknown with physical robustness and mental resilience.

Infantry Soldiers: Seize the Initiative

Mission Command is a leadership and command philosophy that promotes decentralised authority, freedom of action and initiative while being responsive to superior direction. Infantry leaders must promote Mission Command by issuing clear commander's intent and guidance with an emphasis on the desired end state; telling subordinates what to do, but not how to do it. Infantry soldiers should constantly seek to seize the initiative and exploit opportunities in order to achieve mission success. With Mission Command, trust between junior leaders and soldiers is mutual: junior leaders and soldiers must master all aspects of their profession, demonstrating infantry tactics, techniques and procedures of the highest standard thus creating an environment of mutual trust. This ultimately facilitates empowerment, allowing greater freedom of action.

Infantry Soldiers: Demand Excellence

Infantry soldiers must strive for the highest professional standards through the relentless pursuit of excellence. Infantry leaders of all ranks should demand excellence from their superiors, subordinates, and peers alike. The challenging nature of infantry operations requires a high performance mind-set. Therefore, Infantry soldiers must strive to master all aspects of their role and perform to the highest standards. During training and on operations—both at home and overseas—commanders and subordinates must inculcate a culture of excellence across all ranks and recognise and reward high performance. Demanding excellence is a bottom-up and top-down activity—what you allow in your presence; those are your standards.

Infantry Soldiers: Fight as a Team



The Infantry is a team of teams. Infantry soldiers create strong teams by fostering cohesion. Each Infantry soldier is an integral and interdependent part of his or her section, platoon, company, and battalion. Each of these teams are integral parts of the Irish infantry. Each team is only as strong as its members and teams rely on each other to achieve mission success through mutual support and collaboration. This not only includes teams within an infantry battalion, but across the all arms brigade where combat support soldiers work hard to find, fix, and suppress the enemy; and combat service support soldiers arm, feed, fuel, and maintain our infantry battalions. This enables the infantry to fulfil our unique role—to destroy the enemy and to hold ground by night or day on any terrain.

