

JANUARY-MARCH 2021

# ARMY SUSTAINMENT

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# TALENT MANAGEMENT

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**"Our Army is composed of individual Soldiers and civilians with a variety of talents and strengths. Aligning the force into cohesive teams is what makes our Army the best in the world."**

Maj. Gen. Rodney Fogg

*Lt. Col. Shaalim David, branch chief for casualty and mortuary affairs at U.S. Army Human Resources Command, relocates a plank on the double culvert obstacle to help his team overcome a challenge of the Leader Reaction Course during the Battalion Commander Assessment Program Jan. 23, 2020, at Fort Knox, Ky. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Schroeder, Army Talent Management Task Force)*



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# The War for Talent



■ By Gen. Ed Daly

The Army is at war. It is a war for our greatest strength and most important weapon system, and the outcome will determine our ability to win all future wars. It is a war for talent.

The Chief of Staff of the Army highlighted this war's importance by announcing that "People" are our #1 priority. We are now transforming from an industrial age personnel management process to an information age talent management approach, where the goal is to expand the skills and experiences of our people and fully capitalize on their remarkable capabilities. Studies show that by empowering a workforce and fostering a culture of diversity – including diversity of

thought, experience, race, ethnicity and gender – organizations can perform exponentially better. As the Army's Senior Sustainer, I can say that we continue to progress within the sustainment community, nested under the Army.

A fundamental aspect of this change is the new Army Talent Alignment Process (ATAP). This new method is a collaborative, transparent, data-driven online market-style approach where officers and warrant officers detail their Knowledge, Skills, Behaviors and Preferences (KSB-Ps), and commanders match KSB-Ps to positions within their organizations.

This approach helps assign the right person to the right unit where their unique KSB-Ps can best be utilized. However, we will need to expand the scope of our professional horizons and be driven by a purpose greater than ourselves, with organizations and leaders letting some of their officers "go to grow" for the betterment of the individual and the Army.

Within the Logistics Corps, the Logistics Board of Directors (LG-BOD) is a diverse group of six general officers who oversee a year-long process that utilizes ATAP, along with other data, feedback,

and discussions with leaders across the Army, to more effectively assign colonels transparently. We are also examining ways to integrate and expand the LG-BOD's role in identifying and developing talent through the entire pipeline of officers from majors to colonels, synchronized with the U.S. Army Human Resources Command and the Colonels Officer Management Office. More than ever, this will require leaders in the field to be involved in mentoring, coaching and training to identify that talent.

Identifying the next generation of brigade and battalion commanders is a critical decision. In conjunction with ATAP, the Army has begun five-day, in-person Colonel and Battalion Command Assessment Programs (CCAP/BCAP) with written, verbal, and physical assessments, including a double-blind board to reduce unconscious bias. When compared to a legacy system's selection list, officers chosen by CCAP/BCAP demonstrated they are more physically fit, more cognitively capable, and communicate more effectively.

Talent management for the backbone of our Army – noncommissioned officers (NCOs) – is also changing. The enlisted version of command assessments,

the Sergeants Major Assessment Program, was held late last year. The new Assignment Satisfaction Key-Enlisted Module gives ranked assignment choices to staff sergeants through master sergeants. These programs enhance interaction between NCOs and talent managers while allowing Soldiers more input into their assignments.

As the commander of a workforce that is mostly civilian, I know we cannot achieve our mission without dedicated and talented Department of the Army Civilians. The Army People Strategy (APS) has identified critical priorities from transforming workforce planning and management to building world-class supervisors. This must be accomplished through opportunities

for training and development with individual development plans tailored to requirements. Furthermore, hiring and selection panels must be fair, transparent, and unbiased to ensure the viability and sustainability of the APS.

We are supporting these changes by leveraging new technologies and refining advanced analytics. Information gathered by these systems and processes will help us continually assess and adjust to develop and manage talent appropriately. Meanwhile, the Integrated Personnel and Pay System - Army will soon begin to integrate many of these changes into its online platform and will better enable talent management across the Total Force.

Our CSA, Gen. James McConville, has repeatedly said, "We're in a war for talent." With these changes and your dedication, we have the opportunity to better develop the next generation of talented leaders. Because in the end, it is talent that will win this war. And winning matters.

*Gen. Ed Daly serves as the commanding general of the U.S. Army Materiel Command. He served three years as the deputy commanding general of AMC in his previous assignment. He managed the day-to-day operations of the Army's logistics enterprise, and also served as the senior commander of Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. He served as the commanding general of Army Sustainment Command at Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois, and as AMC's deputy chief of staff, overseeing the roles and functions of the headquarters staff.*



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# TALENT MANAGEMENT

## Enabling Total Army Readiness



■ *By Lt. Gen. Duane A. Gamble*

I have vivid memories of the United States Total Army Personnel Command's 1980s "one size fits all" approach to ordnance officer assignments: vivid, but not good. The prescriptive process, called the Operational Personnel Management System (OPMS), was grounded in a post-World War II (Officer Personnel Act of 1947) industrial-age understanding of labor force management for large organizations. OPMS encouraged equivalence and uniformity, and we recruited and developed Soldiers as interchangeable cogs in the larger machine of the Army.

This sameness may have made sense in the industrial age, but today we are competing for talent in the information age. To overcome the challenges and adversaries of tomorrow, the Army must attract and retain a diverse talent pool that can operate across multiple domains and win against near-peer threats. Attracting,

developing, and retaining the best possible candidates and making the best use of their varied talents is decisive – not only to winning, but also to maintaining our all-volunteer force.

We are on a good path. A few years ago, the Army Talent Management Task Force (ATMTF) set out to shift away from the industrial-age precept of personnel management, which focuses on filling empty billets with available personnel, to talent management, which considers the knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSBs) of an individual who is part of a more strategic workforce. Talent management is about having the right person, in the right job (with the right KSBs) at the right time. The "right-ness" endeavors to maximize individual and organizational capabilities.

Talent management is fundamental to the sustainment of our people; it helps build human endurance and resilience. And, talent management, like good sustainment and logistics practices, demands full visibility, a means to align supply with demand, and a predictive capability to forecast future need.

The web-based Assignment Interactive Module 2.0 (AIM 2.0), which will eventually be superseded by Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army (IPPS-A), enables an online talent marketplace, the Army Talent Alignment Process (ATAP). In the last year, more than 14,000 active duty officers built comprehensive resumes in AIM 2.0 that

detailed their unique knowledge, skills, and experience. Likewise, commanders and human resource managers described the unique requirements of available jobs within their units.

Within ATAP, officers can see all available assignments for which they are qualified; units see all available qualified personnel; and – through preference ranking – the units and officers find each other. It is the matching of supply (Soldier) to demand (jobs). However, the ATAP marketplace deviates somewhat from typical supply-and-demand conventions, since it is supply-driven. A Soldier's preferences are considered above the requesting units'.

With ATAP and AIM, the Army also has modern methods and tools to collect data across myriad variables. The data – both qualitative and quantitative – can be analyzed to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses at the individual, cohort, or enterprise level. For example, data collected during a Command assessment program (CAP) allows the Army to identify the leaders who have the appropriate aptitude and character and place them in a command that will benefit from their experience and specific skill set. Whereas, the legacy system relied on a single subjective data point (evaluations from superiors), the new CAP evaluations and assessments add greater perspective and objectivity and offer a clearer picture of a candidate's readiness – and willingness – for advancement.

The data from CAP evaluations and assessments, as well as data from multiple matching cycles, can be used to identify trends over time. There is a reciprocal mutual benefit to this future-focused predictive capability. Soldiers can better manage their careers according to their specific skills and preferences, and the Army can better manage its workforce and respond to future force readiness issues with a better supply pipeline that correlates with actual talent requirements.

Continued collection of talent-related information through the programs and systems implemented by ATMTF will allow the Army to develop the diversity of talent we need to fight and win well into the future. Diversity of talent will enable the agility required to protect against competition with near peer adversaries and achieve the technological leaps required for continued modernization.

As logistics leaders, we have an important role in managing the talent of those under our command. We know the skills and knowledge we need to keep the Army operating. We also have experience back-filling critical knowledge gaps. Our goal is to be forward-looking and develop a cadre of trained logistics specialists who can adjust as the sustainment landscape changes. To get there, we must mentor and coach with a long view.

We have ceded some control in guiding career development to the Soldier or officer. That is a positive, to be sure; but the onus remains with leaders at all levels to guide individuals to specific development opportunities, including training, education, and assignments that will support both the individual and the field of Army logistics.

The ATAP marketplace is new to all of us. The rules have changed and we no longer hold the position of subject matter expert in career progression for those we command. Leaders are in the position of having to take their hand off the wheel to a certain degree. I encourage you to become familiar with the new way of operating so that you, and those you lead, can make the most of the system. I challenge leaders to ensure position descriptions are clear, accurate, and up to date. I've checked, and many are blank or weak.

A responsive and ready Army – of today and certainly tomorrow – depends on having the right people, in the right job, at the right time in their careers, and with the right skills and knowledge. In 1973, our Army transitioned to an all-volunteer force. Maintaining this in the 21st century requires full transparency of the jobs, skills, requirements, preferences, and trends over time.

The new talent management systems of AIM 2.0, ATAP, and, ultimately, IPSS-A provide the transparency and understanding that we logisticians have garnered for other weapon systems critical to the fight. The talent management framework developed by ATMTF will guide the strategy, management, measurement, and improvement of personnel. If implemented well, the Army will achieve the diversity and multiplicity of talents we need to attain Total Army readiness.

*Lt. Gen. Duane A. Gamble, Deputy Chief of Staff, Headquarters, Department of the Army, G-4, oversees policies and procedures used by U.S. Army Logisticians. He has masters of science degrees from Florida Institute of Technology, and Industrial College of the Armed Forces.*

**Talent management is fundamental to the sustainment of our people; it helps build human endurance and resilience.**



# Managing Talent Within Our Sustainment Force



■ *By Maj. Gen. Rodney Fogg and Lt. Col. John Mitchel*

In war, winning matters. Factors such as economy or technology, which have been crucial in securing our position as the world's superpower, are eroding. The Army of the future must be ready to deploy, fight, and win decisively, against any adversary, in a joint, multi-domain, and high-intensity conflict. Meeting the challenges of the future requires a full investment in the Army's most valued asset: our people. We must continue to recruit and retain talented people to maintain our competitive advantage over the nation's adversaries. The Army accomplishes this through a disciplined talent management process. The Army People Strategy outlines how we as a total force must change our thinking in terms of managing our Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians to

harness their talents to achieve maximum readiness across the total force.

As the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. James McConville's number one priority is the Army's people. He put it best when he said, "We win through our people, and people will drive success in our readiness, modernization, and reform priorities." Changes brought about by McConville's vision for the Army's future will have long-lasting impacts across the total force.

Our Army is composed of individual Soldiers and civilians with a variety of talents and strengths. Aligning the force into cohesive teams is what makes our Army the best in the world. Building cohesive teams is done by fostering positive relationships with our teammates through inclusion, trust, and empathy toward one another. Cohesive teams are the catalyst for synergy.

In 2018, the Army created the Talent Management Task Force to operationalize the talent process across the Army. The Talent Management Task Force used authorities within the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act to develop innovative ways to acquire, assess, and position Soldiers to ensure that the Army retains the right talent and utilizes them in critical areas. These initiatives will grow better leaders, strengthen our fighting organizations, and allow the Army to operate a more efficient and effective team on the battlefields of tomorrow.

## Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviors

The Army's new talent management approach starts with the main components of talent including an individual's knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSB). When leaders leverage the right talent against the right job, it is a force multiplier.

**Knowledge** – a topically organized set of facts and information acquired by a person through experience, education, or training, which supports work related performance.

**Skill** – a person's proficiency and ability to perform a job-related activity that contributes to effective performance or learning.

**Behavior** – a person's values, attitudes, and temperament as evidenced through their actions.

Soldiers develop KSBs in three ways. First, we impart knowledge and behaviors to Soldiers attending institutional training. This starts with a Soldier's initial entry level training (basic training and advanced individual training) for enlisted troops and ROTC, military academies, and basic officer leadership courses (BOLC) for officers, and it continues throughout a Soldier's career as they attend professional military education (PME) and promote through the ranks. In its role as the Sustainment Center of Excellence, CASCOM is the lead for the Army's institutional training

for sustainment Soldiers and provides foundational doctrine that Soldiers use to build their knowledge base. Our schoolhouses impart knowledge to Soldiers and continually evolve to remain relevant to the Army's current operational challenges and remain battle focused.

The second critical part of Soldier development is the operational force, which provides hands-on, individual, and collective training to develop Soldier skills and reinforce professional behaviors. The operational training that a Soldier receives starts with the professional NCO corps and progresses through field training, rotations at our world-class combat training centers, and contingency deployments.

The third and final component is self-development. Soldiers have a duty to continue extending their knowledge, skills, and behaviors beyond what they learn from the institutional and operational force. Leaders are equally responsible for ensuring that their Soldiers receive the time, resources, and support necessary for individual growth. Through the institutional, operational, and self-development approach, our Army operates with continuous professional growth and maintains a force of talented leaders.

Sustainment leaders identify which talents are required to perform critical jobs at each grade. In the past, we often charted career pathways for Soldiers to follow based on what positions were deemed most essential to expand a Soldier's experience. The Army did this without formally assessing each Soldier's knowledge, skills, and behaviors and potentially placed individuals into roles

that did not align with their talents or strengths. We must overcome this shortfall and manage sustainment personnel by combining the advances of the 21st century with over two hundred years of experience in supporting and defending our nation.

The six Sustainment Branch Proponent offices are diligently examining their respective populations to determine the talents that key positions at each grade must possess to be successful. A question we need to ask ourselves is how do we prioritize and categorize these characteristics to develop the talents we need? It's evident that each person possesses numerous KSBs. For instance, a logistics major serving as a support operations officer within a brigade support battalion is likely to have diverse talents. However, it is critical that this major is able to: anticipate sustainment requirements based on schemes of maneuver, develop brigade level concepts of support, and lead outside of organizational boundaries to achieve collective success on the battlefield.

Each grade of sustainment officer requires a progressive set of crucial KSBs that grow from experiences throughout a career. These KSBs are not all encompassing but reflect the most important to be successful in the sustainment community.

## Assessments

Talent assessments are a set of instruments that provide a standardized common lens and are valid and reliable for the purpose of providing accurate and granular talent data on an individual. To best manage the Army's personnel, leaders need to be able to assess each

Soldier's knowledge, skills, and behaviors effectively. The Combined Arms Center (CAC) has developed Project Athena as the model to assess officers participating in PME courses starting with BOLC, Captains Career Course (C3), and Command and General Staff Officer Course.

In Fiscal Year 2021, Sustainment lieutenants will complete eight assessments during their respective BOLCs. Lieutenants on the way to their first assignments use the results of their assessments to build an individual development plan (IDP). This IDP should be shared with their new organizational leadership on how they will develop themselves for future positions in the Army. Captains at Logistics C3 complete five assessments under the Project Athena construct, the Career Courses' Cognitive Assessment Battery and take the Graduate Record Examination.

During BOLC and C3, Officers will use the Army Career Tracker (found at <https://actnow.army.mil/>) to create their specific IDP. The IDP module within Army Career Tracker allows the officer to choose a leader to help them along the development path, set both short-long-term goals, and track the progress in completing those goals. These goals can include achieving preferred positions within their units, completing advanced civilian education and certification, and achieving personal goals like starting a family or finishing an endurance challenge.

Under the purview of the Army Talent Management Task Force, lieutenant colonels and colonels undergo

assessments at the Battalion Commander Assessment Program (BCAP) and the Colonels Command Assessment Program. These two programs holistically assess prospective battalion and brigade commanders to ensure the Army selects the very best leaders to command at these critical echelons. The NCO cohorts are developing initiatives including the First Sergeant Talent Alignment Assessment and the Sergeant Major Assessment program which works in conjunction with BCAP.

In the near future, the CAC will expand assessments into the warrant officer and NCO cohorts. The assessment of the total force will empower the Army with the ability to align the best people against mission requirements. The implementation for these leader cohorts is in the initial planning and development stage.

## Talent Management

Several of the Talent Management Task Force's initiatives are fully developed and utilized throughout the Army. Many of these initiatives begin as pilots within the officer corps but will extend into both the warrant officer and noncommissioned officer corps. One such initiative is the Army Talent Alignment Process, which uses an interactive platform to assign officers to new positions. The Assignment Interactive Module Version 2 interactive marketplace gives officers, who are in their movement cycle, visibility of all available positions and details about these positions to facilitate the ranking and decision making process. Concurrently, organizations with open positions can view prospective candidates and identify the critical knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for each of their

positions. The end result assigns the right people to the right job by providing mutual collaboration. This was a game changer in the assignment process. With the success of the pilot on the officer corps, the Army is implementing this alignment process to warrant officers, and a pilot for senior noncommissioned officers is forthcoming.

Career predictability is a common area of concern with Soldiers, particularly with junior officers. As a means to identify superb talent and help retain the best of our junior officers, the Talent Management Task Force developed the Talent Based Career Alignment program. This is a volunteer program implemented during Logistics C3, assigns post command captains to nominative positions based on their preferences and assesses knowledge, skills and behaviors. Selected captains will follow a career pathway that begins at the conclusion of the C3 and ends with attendance at the CGSC as a Major. A recent Logistics C3 class participated in the first pilot of this program. The initial pilot included approximately 250 students across four captains career courses. The Army plans to expand the program in the near future.

## Resources

There are many resources available to assist Soldiers, NCOs, and officers learn more about Talent Management. The Army Talent Management Task Force home page, located at <https://talent.army.mil>, contains a repository of each talent management program they oversee for the Army.

The Army People Strategy, located at [\*Army-People-Strategy-Final.pdf\*, lays out how the Army must change its mindset and procedures in the managing the Soldiers, families, and Army Civilians to maximize the talents within the Army.](https://people.army.mil/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/The-2020-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

The branch proponency offices will codify the elements of talent management within the Army's personnel policies to ensure it becomes ingrained within our sustainment culture. The branch specific chapters for officers (DA Pam 600-3) and NCOs (DA Pam 600-25) will be published in January 2021 on MilSuite. Those chapters can be found at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/smartbook-da-pam-600-3> and <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/smartbook-da-pam-600-25>.

## Conclusion

It is every leader's responsibility to manage the talent within their organization. The Army is inherently a "people business," and we must continue to invest in our people in order to win on the future battlefield. Right now there is a war for talent and if we don't manage it, we will lose it.

*Maj. Gen. Rodney Fogg, commanding general of Combined Arms Support Command, is a graduate of Quartermaster Basic and Advanced Officer Leadership Courses, Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College. He has a master's degree in logistics management from Florida Institute of Technology and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.*

*Lt. Col. John Mitchel is the Logistics Branch Proponency chief at CASCOM. He recently commanded the Army Field Support Battalion - Drum. His previous assignments include duty with the 4th Infantry Division, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, and the 10th Mountain Division. Mitchel has earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Davis and a master's degree from the University of Texas, El Paso. He also completed the U.S. Army High Performance Leader Development Program at the Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, NC.*

# Owning Our Expertise

## Influencing, Networking Essential to Warrant Officer Success

■ By Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mark W. Hickman

Prior to assuming responsibilities as the 8th Chief Warrant Officer (WO) of the Adjutant General (AG) Corps, I experienced senior leader sentiments regarding warrant officers' need to "regain their expertise," to which I took umbrage. It is my belief the warrant officer cohort is stronger than ever; never before has so much been asked of the warrant officer, and we continue to deliver. From an AG perspective, while officer and enlisted requirements dropped 14% and 18% respectively, warrant officer requirements increased by 20%. In my previous role as a proponent, warrant officers were the most often requested solution to organizational gaps. Furthermore, my experience in the operational Army repeatedly revealed warrant officers as one of every commander's critical priority of fill on unit status reports.

My thoughts on "owning our expertise" are my thoughts alone. They are ever evolving and are shaped by over 28 years of Army service; 16 of those years serving as a warrant officer in numerous positions ranging from Personnel Services Branch to Corps, and multiple assignments at the AG School influencing the full range of doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy. In most cases, my thoughts do not refer to specific technical knowledge or any one system or function, but rather the capacities of warrant officers across the spectrum who own their expertise through the focused action of individuals, influencers, and the entire network of warrant officer professionals.

## Individuals

**Experience.** The experiences we

gain throughout a breadth and depth of positions are the building blocks upon which we develop our future capabilities. As such, it is critical that WOs are assigned to varying positions of increased responsibilities within the operational Army, as well as positions in the generating force, driving enterprise deployment and policy development of sustainment competencies. Few warrant officers will have the opportunity or time to serve in each area at every level. However, individual warrant officers and assignment influencers, to include senior warrant officers, assignment managers, talent managers, mentors, and personal champions, must strive to ensure WOs achieve a breadth of experience serving in positions in both the operational and generating forces. DA Pamphlet 600-3 is a great resource that depicts the professional development model





Warrant Officer Marcus Corum, Task Force 11, 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary), and Sgt. Pilar Gonzalez, Task Force 11, 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) navigate U.S. Army Vessel Chickahominy, Landing Craft Utility 2011, during a Joint Readiness exercise Sept. 14, 2019. This JRE allows the Army to train transportation units, which are essential for deploying U.S. combat power around the world. (Photo by Pfc. Joshua Cowden)

specific to each warrant officer specialty. Achieving great depth in one without the perspective of the other inhibits the ability to maximize total Army awareness and develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities required at mid-grade and senior-warrant officer levels.

**Education.** Professional military education and civilian education strengthen and provide depth of knowledge and empower individuals to create new skills and abilities

through study of common and best practices in a learning environment.

**Leadership.** Through self-development and experience, warrant officers continue to hone their own leadership skills and develop skills in their subordinates and peers. Expertise in leadership is just as important as expertise in one's technical field; both can be achieved through observation, education, practice, challenging assignments, and focused mentorship.

**Intelligence.** It is important that leaders develop practical knowledge based on the fundamentals of the Army profession. Leaders achieve this by reading professional books (by military, business leaders, thought provokers, and politicians), studying and understanding operational and strategic frameworks and interrelationships, practice, and taking weighted risks. Some questions to consider include: How do others think? Why do we make the decisions

we make? What are other ways to look at problems? What were keys to success for others? Taking the time to intelligently think and look at issues, concerns, problems, and solutions exercises the mind to generate the best outcomes. Understanding one's (and others) preferred method of learning will enable efficient approaches to problems. We don't always get it right, but reflection and correction are key parts to increasing one's intelligence and self-awareness. Emotional intelligence is a key trait that every warrant officer should work to improve, and there is always room for improvement. The ability to engage in different environments is critical to ensuring maximum capacity to serve in a multitude of positions and environments.

**Initiative.** The level to which one gains experience, education, and intelligence is largely an output of their initiative. Inherent responsibilities, and all the little "extras," are driven by one's initiative and desire to improve one's self, their organizations, and others in expanding areas of influence. Initiative is fluid; there are those who lack it, those who show it at intervals during their career, and those who continuously integrate it into every aspect of their life. Warrant officers get it done; if they don't know something, they figure it out and find the answer or solution to the problem; this takes initiative.

**Talents.** One's talents are derived from the previously discussed competencies in experience, edu-

cation, intelligence, and initiative. This is reinforced with the passion to develop special skillsets which includes, but is not limited to, systems, databases, leadership, policy, and operations. Initiative drives us to gain the experience and education to pursue individual passions, such as technology, science, and organizational leadership, to further shape our individual and organizational capabilities.

### Influencers

**Mentorship.** Providing and receiving mentorship is an honor and a privilege that requires and demonstrates trust and respect between the mentor and the mentee. Mentorship extends well beyond a senior-subordinate relationship; it's a relationship that exists from above, below, and parallel to one's grade and position, and should be mobile as careers progress and locations change.

**Development.** Development can be defined and approached in many different ways. It can take the form of direct "Oak Tree Counseling" about job performance and career management, desk side training, or casual conversations exploring the why and how of the sustainment or Army profession. In any capacity, influencers can have a huge impact towards the development of others.

**Opportunities.** Influencers should be champions of the talents and stewards of the professional development of those they influence. Steering warrant officers toward opportunities to utilize,

align, and develop their talents in accordance with the professional development model is crucial to ensuring that warrant officers receive proper development. This process also ensures that the right organizations are supported by the right warrant officer at the right time by sharing awareness of the individual's unique knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSBs) to other influencers (help the warrant officer become "known"). There are many avenues that influencers and warrant officers can utilize to accelerate a warrant officer's unique talents resulting in actionable results to their organizations. Some examples include: skill building courses in advanced data analytics, business intelligence, and training with industry, with an expectation of actionable results as an output of the training. Providing the right opportunity is not about playing favorites with the assignment process; it's about ensuring the assignment makes sense while supporting the individual warrant officer, other warrant officers, and the Army.

**Talent Management.** Talent management is a balance of identifying and using an individual's unique talents while developing additional talents required to progress professionally. In today's environment of providing officers and commands greater input to assignments, the need to develop talent through a variety of positions and experiences must be constantly reinforced. My fear is that warrant officers and commands will silo



their experience and talents vice broadening them. This will inevitably lessen the ability of the Army, via career managers, to place fully qualified warrant officers in positions of increasing responsibility and scope. It is imperative that career and talent managers, mentors, champions, and others are cognizant of the effects of siloed experience, and they take action to educate warrant officers and commands on the components of the professional development model. This model is not merely a list of assignments, but rather a path that ensures warrant officers meet the experiential and educational requirements through a series of progressive assignments.

**Serving as a Senior.** To me, being the senior in an organization or location that has other like-MOS warrant officers *means something*. Being a senior is an important privilege that comes with distinct responsibilities. I expect seniors to be the senior, and I expect their subordinates to understand and support the role of that senior. Seniors do not have the right to be reclusive. They must be involved in the mentorship, development, championing, and maintenance of their warrant officers. Seniors need to be aware of what is going on within their footprint; if not directly, they should achieve awareness via their subordinate seniors. As such, juniors should be strongly encouraged to not reach out directly to HRC or other influencers (i.e., division to command bypassing a corps) without providing their

senior with a courtesy copy of their intent. Conversely, HRC or other influencers should, within their ethical, legal, and moral boundaries, ensure seniors are aware of correspondence either directly or as a copy to a response. In a collaborative and communicative environment, this should not be an issue.

### **The Warrant Officer Network (All of Us)**

**Further Develop and Sustain the WO Network of Professionals.** The warrant officer network is the envy of the officer and enlisted cohorts, but it is not a network that exists without the constant reinforcement of our actions and the inherent responsibilities to grow and maintain the network. Proactive networking, as opposed to reactive networking, takes work, time, and constant maintenance of personal and professional relationships. Proactive networks gather, reinforce, and champion best practices, TTPs, and solutions, and often include a slate of warrant officers in key supporting positions who understand (i.e., Combined Arms Support Command, Human Resources Command, Forces Command, Army National Guard, Army Reserves). The best representations of proactive networks I've seen are those that over communicate in circles of relevant commonality. These circles encompass groups of warrant officers at a location, within same-type organizations (all CABs), within a grade band or an MOS, or even across the Total Army.

No single individual does all of the contributing, and all do not contribute every time, but everyone responds and receives as needed, often realizing gains that would otherwise have been unachievable on their own. A reactive network, in which warrants only provide assistance when requested, holds value as well, but is generally not as productive as proactive networks.

**Create a community of collaboration and communication with a sense of purpose towards common goals.** WOs should strive to contribute to each other's success and should openly collaborate and communicate to achieve both individual and community success. This sense of community does not preclude individuals from striving to be the best of the best; it reinforces the idea that such aspirations can be achieved without doing harm to others (for example, harboring products, lessons learned, tactics, techniques and procedures, etc.). All warrant officers should seek to consistently share and collaborate to build the community's success by over communicating in local and greater networks. We are stronger because we are a team of talented individuals who are focused on a common goal of getting the job done, day in and day out. We also take extra efforts to contribute on a higher level beneficial towards our branch, our warfighting function, and the warrant officer cohort.

We have a voice, and we are agents for change. Our experience and position enables, empowers,



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tivon London, 406th Army Field Support Brigade regional food program manager, checks the production schedule with Sgt. Lavasia Johnson, a culinary specialist assigned to 287th Quartermaster Field Feeding Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade, during the Phillip A. Connelly competition Nov. 10, 2020, at the Hunter Army Airfield Consolidated Dining Facility, Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia. (Photo by Sgt. Laurissa Hodges)

and demands that we provide accurate and blunt assessments of our warfighting functions and our technical requirements. We are the linchpins between enlisted and officers, and we execute with standards and discipline, while holding each other responsible and accountable for our performance. We must be selfless in our approach to our contributions and

management of our careers, we must be aware of what is expected of us, and we must be connected and supportive of each other's successes. Most importantly, we must own our expertise through not only our individual efforts, but those who we mentor and coach, and as a community of mutually supportive warrant officers.

**Chief Warrant Officers 5 Mark W. Hickman is a Human Resources technician currently serving as the Chief Warrant Officer of the Adjutant General's Corps. CW5 Hickman's Adjutant General career started in 1992 as a traditional guardsman in the Montana Army National Guard, and he entered active duty in 1993. Hickman has served as Human Resources Technician in multiple operational and generating force assignments; his previous assignment was as America's First Corps G1 Senior Human Resources Technician at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. He has deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq.**





# People First

Insights from the Army's Chief of Staff

■ *By Gen. James C. McConville*

*Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. James C. McConville attends the 2019 Army Navy Game in Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 14, 2019. (Photo by Sgt. Dana Clarke)*



The events of 2020 put a spotlight on how essential Army sustainment is to our nation's defense, more than at any other time in our history. From tension with Iran in January to February's dynamic force employment of troops to Defender Europe to the outbreak of COVID in March to civil unrest beginning in May and natural disasters over the summer and into the fall, the great talent of our sustainment professionals was on full display year-round to our fellow Americans, our partners and allies, and our strategic competitors. People are the United States Army's greatest strength and most important weapon system, and it is because of our people – our Soldiers, Families, Army Civilians, veteran Soldiers for Life, and retirees – that we were ready to respond to each of these crises. The idea that investing in people is an investment in all priorities, especially readiness, is why former Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy announced last October that "people" would officially become the Army's new number one priority. The Secretary and I constantly promote a philosophy of "People First," and we published the first Army People Strategy in October 2019. So what exactly does it mean now for people to be our first priority?

The U.S. Army's official priorities are a signal to both external audiences and Army leaders. They communicate how the Army intends to drive transformation and how Army institutional planning will nest within national, DoD, and joint strategic guidance. By prioritizing people first, the Army is signaling that investing resources in our people initiatives is the most effective way to accomplish our constant mission – to deploy, fight, and win our nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the Joint Force.

We are implementing a 21st century Talent Management System in order to better assess, assign, and promote talent within our Army. This year we launched Project Inclusion, our effort to ensure we are an organization that is truly inclusive and everyone feels like a valued member of the team. We will also continue to aggressively resource improvements in five quality of life areas that get after taking care of our people.

In addition to resourcing these programs, we are engaging with leaders across the force to change the way they think about

taking care of people. Army senior leaders are emphasizing building cohesive teams and the Golden Triangle, which is our effort to reinforce how leaders take care of Soldiers by building a connection with the families and buddies of those they lead. Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston is leading "This is My Squad," to get everyone engaged in thinking about their team, no matter what rank or position they are in. The bottom line is, we have to get leaders thinking about the connections they are building with their Soldiers, families and buddies in order to build a climate of trust and respect, where we all take care of each other.

### Readiness

People are central to how we will look at our readiness. We understand that the readiness focus has put significant demands and stress on our units, leaders, Soldiers and families. Therefore, we are going to start the implementation of the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model (ReARMM) to balance the operations tempo of our forces.

ReARMM includes reviewing our requirements, working with combatant commands to right size those requirements in both force size and duration, as well as reducing or eliminating the demanding training gates that lead up to CTC rotations or rotational deployments. This means the focus for training will be on the foundation: the individual, team, squad, and platoon levels. I have found that those units that have spent more time focused on their foundation, have had great success at CTC rotations because they have built strong cohesive teams of highly trained, disciplined, and fit Soldiers.

We have a high level of readiness, but if we want to maintain it over the long run, we must focus on our people.

### Modernization

People are also central to how we transform the Army. Modernization is not just about new equipment. Modernization means changing doctrine, organizations, how we train, new equipment, and most of all, how we manage the talented people in our Army. We made sure the right Soldiers were involved in our new cross-functional teams under the Army Futures Command. This ensures our designs are Soldier centric, and we are getting critical feedback early in the design and procurement process for new systems.

### Talent Management

We are doing a lot to move from an industrial age personnel management system to a 21st century talent management system. We are in a war for talent and we have to compete for talent in the future. We need the best and brightest to come into the Army who represent the diversity of the nation.

We also need the most senior level positions in the Army to include the talented officers across all branches.

Talent management means capturing the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and even preferences (KSB-Ps) of individuals during their career. Using more information about individuals will enable us to align them to positions where they will feel valued and contribute more productively. That is what the programs that we are putting in place are going to do.

### Assessments

We established several assessment programs that have completely changed the selection process for some of our most consequential command and acquisition leader positions. Since 2019, we conducted two battalion commander assessment programs. This year we ran our first colonels assessment for brigade commanders, an acquisition leader assessment program, and we are working on the first sergeant's and sergeant's major programs.

Selection for battalion and brigade level commands is one of the most important personnel decisions that the Army makes. These programs expand our understanding of each officer's talents and assess their potential and fitness for command. To me, these are the most consequential leaders in

our Army. It is within the battalion that most of our Soldiers are influenced and inspired to continue their service.

### Assignments Process

The Army Talent Alignment Process (ATAP) is a decentralized, regulated, market-style hiring system that aligns officers with jobs based on preferences. By October 2019, the majority of active duty officers and units participated in the ATAP for their summer 2020 assignments. Officers use AIM 2.0 to access the ATAP until it becomes available in the Integrated Personnel and Pay System – Army (IPPS-A).

This process uses more detailed information about officers and units than the traditional distribution system. Rather than just being assigned to a specific assignment without really having much input, now with ATAP individuals can see what assignments are available and compete for them.

ATAP gives officers the opportunity to choose from a wider variety of assignments which best suit their KSB-Ps. The organizations have access to a greater number of available officers to preference the right people for their teams. We believe this collaborative and

transparent process will ultimately enhance job satisfaction, improve readiness and help us retain a larger portion of the talent that is critical to our Army in the years ahead.

### Promotions

The way we promote is changing. We established merit-based promotions to recognize top performers. We started it this year for majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels. We also established the brevet promotion program, which selects officers for temporary promotion to serve at the next higher

*Every Soldier has a story, and we need to listen to that story. The strength of our Army comes from the diversity of our people. That is why we need to focus on people and make sure everyone feels that they are a valued member of the team.*



rank for critical positions. This program allows us to lessen critical shortages of officers to better leverage the talents of junior officers, and to incentivize retention of those officer's with specialized education and experience.

## Project Inclusion

The strength of the Army comes from its diversity. Diversity and inclusion are extremely important if we want to keep the talent we have. When you look at the force, about 20% of the Army is African-American, about 14% is Hispanic and 8% Asian-American, and about 17% of the force is women. Diversity is a statistic we need to continue to improve, but

the focus is on our culture of inclusion. Inclusion means that everyone feels like valued members of the team and that they have the opportunity to rise to the highest levels.

Developing and maintaining qualified and demographically diverse leadership is critical for mission effectiveness and is essential to national security. The Army must foster a culture of trust where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, where everyone takes care of each other. All Army leaders must foster an equitable and inclusive environment that builds diverse, adaptive, and cohesive teams that enable the Army to build and sustain readiness.



Army Chief of Staff, Gen. James C. McConville, addresses a rifle squad from 2-506th Infantry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team Rakkasans, 101st Airborne Division, at Bell Flight's Arlington, TX facility on October 28, 2020. The soldiers provided invaluable feedback on the V-280 Valor cabin configuration that will inform Future Long-Range Assault Aircraft requirements from the user perspective. (Photo by Mr. Luke J. Allen)

Project Inclusion is our initiative to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion across the force. This effort will capture from our Soldiers, families, and civilians processes or practices that inadvertently discriminate. It also focuses on our policies, procedures, and resources that will enable us to grow into a more diverse and inclusive team. We are looking at ways to improve how we recruit, retain, develop, and employ the diverse talents of our people. This ensures the Army is an organization that is truly inclusive where everyone has a path to success.

## Quality of Life

We also have an obligation to provide our people with the quality of life benefits commensurate with their quality of service. Last year we committed to five quality of life priorities. Quality housing both for families and our Soldiers in the barracks, world-class healthcare, quality childcare and youth services, meaningful employment for spouses, and fixing the PCS moving challenges. Not only have we applied resources and updated policies, but we are getting leaders engaged in oversight across these areas.

## Cohesive Teams

There are three areas that I am most concerned about that are breaking trust with the American people and hurting our Soldiers: sexual misconduct, suicides, and racism. These are what building cohesive teams and the Sergeant Major of the Army's 'This is My Squad' initiatives get after. The squad is a representation of any team or section a person belongs to. It focuses leaders to the individual level and how they are developing cohesive teams where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and everyone takes care of each other.

I believe when we have all leaders focused on those two things, who take care of each other and treat each other with dignity and respect, that will break the cycle on the corrosive issues that break trust and harm Soldiers. Issues like sexual harassment or sexual assault, racism, or extremism, and even suicide.

Leaders will start to recognize when someone's going through a hard time, and can be there to help them through tough transitions or get them the appropriate help. We cannot rely on online training to get after these issues. We need to rely on every leader to develop the emotional intelligence to get after how they take care of our people.

It's about building cohesive teams. It's about having tough conversations to make sure that leaders understand everyone's perspective. More importantly, it's about getting to know each other's story and have a deep understanding and appreciation for each other. It's amazing to meet so many Soldiers and hear stories about where they come from, how they overcame diversity, and why they chose to serve this nation.

Every Soldier has a story, and we need to listen to that story. The strength of our Army comes from the diversity of our people. That is why we need to focus on people and make sure everyone feels that they are a valued member of the team.

## Work-Life Balance

There are many different philosophies and debates on work-life balance. One thing I can say for sure, is that everyone in the Army should have a life. I made this chart when I was a squadron commander with my spouse and we've been using it ever since. It started off as our agreement to each other how to prioritize the events in our life along with the events of Army life. I want our people to have work-life balance. I teach this whenever I have a chance to talk to leaders. There are events in the Army and in life that we must help our Soldiers prioritize. Sometimes given the right circumstances, that means telling your Soldiers to go – be with your family or friend, they will never forget that you were there for them. We will forget tomorrow that you missed a day at work. We want people to be committed to our organization, and we need our leaders committed to taking care of our people.

## Conclusion

We win through our people. People want to be on winning teams. People want to have purpose in their life. That's why people must be a priority. Through the Army People Strategy and Talent Management we can improve how we acquire, develop, employ, and retain talent in our Army. Our emphasis on diversity and inclusion will ensure everyone feels like a valued member of the team. And our focus on leaders to build cohesive teams with This is My Squad, will help us be an Army team we are all proud of.

**Gen. James C. McConville serves as the Army Chief of Staff. He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. He holds a Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology and was a National Security Fellow at Harvard University in 2002.**





# Developing Logistics Leaders for the Multi-Domain Environment

■ By Col. Eric A. McCoy

Maj. Kimberly Bishop and 1st Lt. Lashaundra Dishmon, 184th Sustainment Command, look over ongoing operations at the 1st Theater Sustainment Command's Syrian Logistics Cell in Erbil, Iraq, April 24, 2019. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Veronica McNabb)



When the technologies of future fiction became a reality so did a fear of their capabilities. Whether it is fighting against intelligent machines or through an endemic apocalypse, movie studios respond to the fears of a curious audience. Despite the range of science fiction interests, one constant remains clear: the future consists of people. Human capital is key to the successful conduct of multi-domain operations (MDO) in 2035. Army logistics leaders who provide purpose, direction, and motivation to our sustainment formations must understand the complexity of their environment, balance competing requirements from various constituencies, and make timely decisions to move their organizations forward. As the future changes, the Army sustainment enterprise must adapt doctrine to develop the logistics leader competencies and attributes that will ensure mission accomplishment during MDO.

From a national security perspective, war remains fundamentally political, people-centric, and complex. These three aspects, along with violence and coercion, have been essential aspects of conflict since the dawn of recorded history. This nature of warfare will not change. Even with technological advances the role of leaders in the organizing and motivating human capital will remain the same. Conversely, modern security practitioners categorize environmental changes typically associated with technological and societal advances as features of the character of war. The MDO environment will be different in new ways, requiring our logistics leaders to have new sets of knowledge and skills to succeed and win.

Leading organizations that can dominate in MDO, understand domain integration, and acknowledge the impact of revolutionary technologies, such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and robotics and autonomous systems, will create new challenges that leaders in the past have not previously addressed. Based on a better understanding of a more globalized, urban operational environment vulnerable to environmental change, the Army sustainment enterprise must build and sustain MDO logistics formations for the future through the selection, training, and education of the human capital that comprises these organizations. MDO will require new skills, competences and attributes that facilitate strategic leadership across a range of hypercompetitive and collaborative environments.

Current Army doctrine states that an ideal Army leader has strong intellect, physical presence, professional competence, and moral character while serving as a role model. While position, rank, or authority does not always designate leaders, when in charge, leaders must be able and willing to act decisively, within the intent and purpose of superior leaders and in the best interest of the organization. Current doctrine states Army leaders recognize that organizations, built on mutual trust and confidence, successfully accomplish missions. Identification of competencies and attributes needed for success in globally connected, urbanized, and environmentally vulnerable environments will be key to the success of MDO formations in 2035 and beyond.

While no longer formally defined in doctrine, attributes are a characteristic or fundamental property of an individual. Attributes are “what leaders are” whereas competencies are “what leaders do.” In the debate on whether leaders are born versus made, tests to facilitate attribute identification can better predict what Soldiers are better suited for early entry into logistics leadership development pipelines at the operational or strategic level. Additionally, competency identification allows for the association of certain skills with positive organizational outcomes within MDO formations. As the Army continues the design of multi-domain task forces, there is value in U.S. Army Combined Arms Support and Training and Doctrine commands formally defining the desired competencies and attributes of strategic leaders so that doctrine authors can adjust the requisite experiences within the institutional, operational, and self-developmental domains of the Army’s Leader Development Strategy to facilitate the growth of the logistics leader bench for MDO.

New technologies and novel applications of existing technologies will have potential to disrupt labor markets and change organizational systems. Multiple technological developments, to include biotechnology and communications sectors, will likely outpace regulation. This may result in international norms that are contrary to U.S. interests and increase the likelihood of hypercompetition. Emerging technology and new applications of existing technology will also allow U.S. adversaries to more readily develop weapon systems that can strike farther, faster, and harder and challenge the U.S. across

multiple domains. In MDO, strategic leaders will operate across a range of hypercompetitive to collaborative situations resulting in organizations that have smaller positional power roles and diffused structures. Power will shift to stakeholders, reducing the formal authority of organizational leaders. Based on an increase in population size and globalization trends, leadership within organizations must become stronger versus looking to centralized management and organization.

Hypercompetitive and hypercollaborative environments will force a shift in the context of how managers employ from an egocentric viewpoint. MDO requires an allocentric leadership approach that emphasizes the diffusion of power within groups or teams. Additionally, ongoing changes in the relationship between technology and people will affect the human dimension of leadership as select operational environments become more dehumanized. There are common leadership and team competencies across these environments that should be promoted within the Army’s institutional, operational, and self-developmental domains.

From an egocentric leader, dehumanized operating environmental perspective, we can anticipate increased reliance on technology to enhance human performance. As the world population continues to increase, seismic changes in demographics, geography, and technology create pressure on organizations to produce results. In this environment, one could envision a world where organizations will outfit workers with suits of armor like Iron Man that augment their ability to

conduct manual labor, work in harsh environments, or wage war. In this future environment, technological advance minimizes the separation between humans and machines. Rather than the technology being adapted to the needs of humankind, human behavior will likely shift to adapt to the needs of technology. Competencies for logistics leaders in this future environment include aptitudes for coordination, control, organization, synthesizing, and monitoring. Competencies for logistics formations in this future environment will focus on increasing performance, teaming with technology, promoting efficiency, individualistic consideration, and role specialization.

Conversely, egocentric leadership in an environment more dependent on human interaction than empowering technology will encounter different challenges. In this environment, futurists anticipate the society will use technology humanely for improving quality of life. Based on evolutionary leaps in knowledge acquisition, organizations will look to network structures as a mechanism for problem solving. Network structures will balance the poles of specialization and generalization through the building of teams or partnerships to develop overarching competencies that extend beyond an organization’s sole capacities. Organizations will have subordinate departments equipped with plug and play capacities that enable it to achieve results in multiple domains. The larger network of organizations and technology connect each unit to larger networks which allow for operation in concert with external partners to achieve results through bending technology to the will of society. Logistics leader competencies for this

**At the strategic level, logistics leaders must be creative in addressing the resource constraints of a hypercompetitive operational environment.**



future environment include aptitudes for innovation, entrepreneurship, synthesis, and promoting specialization. Logistics formation competencies for this future environment will focus coupling innovators with altruistic goals, human development, organizational transformation, and multidisciplinary collaboration.

In an allocentric environment that emphasizes the human dimension, global complexity will likely match evolving organizational norms to shift as needed to support the performance of complex, multidisciplinary tasks. In this environment, organizations are temporary and can come together on request – akin to gig economies and cloud-based technologies. In addition to temporary work agreements, organizations will disperse teams across domains and some team members will not be human as robotics and artificial intelligence continue to evolve. Like observing flocks of birds in migration patterns that shift forms but remain visible as a single entity, leaders in this environment blend several unique and complex parts into an overarching whole. Competencies for logistics leaders in this future environment include innovation, entrepreneurship, creative vision, provision of mentorship, and team-building. Competencies for logistics formations in this future environment will focus on empowerment, self-leadership, and transparency.

Shifting to potential environments where organizations use allocentric leadership to address challenges of dehumanized organizations, leaders will shape human capital to the structure of automation instead of modeling

automation from human characteristics. A perfect storm of decreasing full-time labor forces and economic collapse will accelerate the embrace of technology into aspects of daily life like work, commerce, and recreation. Most notably, organizations will integrate humans into the digital commons with technology having the capability for sensing and responding to human thoughts and movements. In this environment, leaders will leverage technology to have direct control over employees and create hive-like organizations that act and think in a collective manner. Rather than society defining organizations by the size of their workforce or geographic space, it will define organizations by the size of their networks and operational efficiency. Logistics leader competencies in this future environment include taking the initiative, understanding competition, emphasizing production, and a tendency for micromanagement. Logistics formation competencies for this future environment will focus on responding to competition, hierarchical bureaucracy, and groupthink.

At the strategic level, logistics leaders must be creative in addressing the resource constraints of a hypercompetitive operational environment. Being creative involves strategic leaders immersing themselves into the problem, looking broadly for connections – whether in the past, laterally among peer organizations, or brainstorming, letting ideas incubate, and having the courage to select one or more to pilot. Promoting creativity requires leaders to overcome upbringing, schooling, and the narrowness of their career fields and/or functional logistics branch experiences.

Within their respective organizations, logistics leaders should look to remove constraints, use creative thinking strategies such as carving out dedicated time and thinking out loud, practice picking out anomalies, look for distant parallels, apply standard problem-solving skills, and promote diversity in order to expand the range of experience within leaders. This requires an egocentric leadership approach oriented towards self-management. Some experiences to seek within the organization to improve this competency include: managing dissatisfied external or internal customers; taking on tough or undoable projects; launching a new product, service or process; relaunching an existing product or service; or helping someone external to the immediate organization solve a business problem.

Moving away from the egocentric leader models of the early 20th century, modern theorists emphasize the importance of interconnectedness, broadening spheres of concerns, building systemic capacity, and leaders seeing their communities and organizations in which they function as living, dynamic systems. While these themes have informed the work of scholars in leadership development for several decades, their influence in shaping the approaches for leader education, development, and preparation for future operating environments continues to evolve.

In conclusion, the range of possible leadership challenges during the conduct of MDO has three implications for logistics leaders. First, future logistics leaders must be flexible to deal with multiple environments. This will involve expansion of their skill sets to be successful in an operational environment



*Spc. Annie Smith, a Fremont, California native and automated logistical specialist with the 526th Quartermaster Composite Supply Company out of Fort Riley, Kansas, soarts packages for the Support Supply Activity in Powidz, Poland, Nov. 26, 2018. (Photo by Spc. Christina Westover)*

with an increasingly joint character. Second, an increasing emphasis on joint operations requires coordination with all services and an understanding of occupational specialties from diverse perspectives. Company grade officers and non-commissioned officers may need earlier exposure to joint concepts to acquire the necessary experience and exposure to fully function in the joint environment. Finally, research efforts can explore alternative models for developing senior leaders, recognizing there may be value in a staffing model which provides short-term, highly experienced company

or field grade officers without the commitment of a long-term career in either the active or reserve component. As environmental trends influence the future of leader selection, education, and training, leader development will reach across multiple domains to incorporate a mix of physical, virtual, and hybrid methods for experience, knowledge acquisition, and reflection. Personnel charged with the education of logistics leaders for MDO must teach future orientation as to where organizations will need leadership, when key stakeholders

will call on the competencies and attributes of these leaders, and in what situations logistics leaders will align organizational vision, culture, and resources to win in an increasingly complex and more connected world.

*Editor's Note: This article was based on a submission by the author during an Army War College course.*

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# Leadership Goals

## Cultivating a Culture of Assessments

■ By Maj. Gen. J.P. McGee and Michael Arnold

The Army's modernization of "how we fight, what we fight with, and who we are" is rapidly propelling the Army into the future, armed with new mindsets, processes, approaches, and ideas to build toward a 21st century talent management personnel system. One of the key elements of this modernization is how the Army manages our people. Simply stated, we are moving from a data poor, industrial-aged approach to a data rich, information-aged approach. Industries that thrive in today's Information Age all recognize one central fact: information has become the critical commodity for the future. Similarly, as the Army accelerates into the Information Age, the information about our people is foundational to determining how we acquire, develop, employ, and retain all members of the U.S. Army.

A critical component of Army talent management is the use of assessments

to provide additional, relevant and objective information about our people. These assessments measure an individual's knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSBs). Each individual's talent consists of unique, measurable clusters of interrelated KSBs. Properly aligning these KSBs against a specific assignment drives more effective job performance. As we move forward toward a more data-driven approach, access to granular data will guide more informed promotion, selection, and assignment decisions to maximize the development and employment of our people. Assessments are already providing Army leaders a more holistic view of the personnel in our ranks. Assessments help the Army identify those Soldiers who possess the "war winning talents" needed to win in future conflicts. While assessments help us see people as individuals and differentiate KSBs, they also help standardize how to view individuals of the same rank objectively. Finally, assessments provide

us critical data to help us achieve the Army Chief of Staff's vision of being the premier human development organization in the world.

First, it is necessary to understand the difference between an assessment and evaluation because these two terms are often used interchangeably. An evaluation is the subjective insight that a rater or senior rater provides about a Soldier. This insight is critical and will always be at the center of how we manage our people – nothing can replace the years of experience that raters provide. However, these subjective evaluations have some limitations. Frequently, raters don't have the opportunity to evaluate critical talents due to the nature of the work that is observed. We rely on evaluations to gain insight about the individual and to evaluate his or her ability to operate within certain environments and in discrete positions. For example, an evaluation about a company commander may provide

Maj. Gen. J.P. McGee, the director of the Army Talent Management Task Force, leads a talent management professional development session and engages with junior officers assigned to 1st Armored Division and other local units at Fort Bliss, Texas, Dec. 16, 2019. McGee educated the officers on initiatives being developed to further assess leaders on their skills and abilities, changes to future promotion and command positions, and the importance of applicable skills and education throughout the Army. (Photo by Pvt. Matthew Marcellus)



great insight on an officer's ability to serve as a battalion commander. It is less likely that this evaluation will assist in determining whether that officer would be a good fit as an instructor at the Sustainment Center of Excellence or a speechwriter for an Army senior leader. The primacy of the evaluation is not the issue; evaluations will continue to be the centerpiece of any future system to manage our people. Where the Army's legacy personnel system falls short, however, is that evaluations have served as the single source of input into determining the future of Army leaders. A future system that employs both evaluations and assessments allows the Army to gain a much better understanding of its Soldiers.

Within the CSA's vision for a future system is the idea of a framework of assessments that are linked together across an officer's or NCO's career. For the officer corps, assessments begin at the commissioning sources (military academies, ROTC, and officer candidate school) where the information derived from a Talent Assessment Battery is used to assist cadets in determining the most optimal branch which aligns with their KSBs. Once that officer enters the Army, these assessments are initially used to assist in his or her professional development. Take, for instance, a newly commissioned second lieutenant who enters the officer basic course and is informed that his written communication skills are at a level far lower than his peers. This information is then coupled with opportunities to work on these identified weaknesses. A short time later, this officer would receive similar assessments and feedback on his progress at the Captains Career Course

(CCC)—again, providing information to assist in his career and self-development. Additional information gathered about the officer might inform him of untapped strengths to leverage, perhaps a strong level of cross-cultural fluency or mental flexibility. As the officer advances in rank, knowing this data can assist in not simply the individual's career development, but also where he feels might be the best fit within the Army—leading him to volunteer for service as an advisor in a security force assistance brigade. In this vision, when an officer reaches a certain rank, assessments will be used to steer the officer toward jobs for which he or she is best suited. The enlisted and NCO assessment structure is still conceptual but is similar to that of officers. The Army will begin providing assessments to new recruits at the military entrance processing stations and will continue through all levels of institutional PME up through the Sergeant Major Academy for senior NCOs.

When an assessment is used to assist the Soldier, it is referred to as a developmental assessment. Taken one step further, the data from most developmental assessments can be combined together to assist the Army in seeing trends pertaining to group strengths and weaknesses. For the new second lieutenant who was identified as a weak writer, this weakness might be shared by a number of his peers. This in turn, could cause the branch proponent to suggest curriculum or training changes to the classes offered at the basic officer leadership course or captain's career course. When this information is aggregated together and used to drive decisions by leaders

about the management of the group, it is referred to as a diagnostic assessment.

The final type of assessments are those used to determine how the Army will manage a particular officer and will have a direct impact on the management of the officer. This is known as a predictive assessment. The most relevant example of the Army's implementation of assessments is in the commander assessment program (CAP) in which specific assessments are used to determine who should be a commander. The non-cognitive assessments used at CAP measure foundational elements of what the Army needs in its officers' who are selected and trusted with command. CAP assessments are used to measure the candidate's physical fitness through the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), writing ability through the Written Communication Competency and an essay test, verbal communications, and finally cognitive and non-cognitive abilities. These assessments do not replace the insight and wisdom brought forth by a leader's raters and senior raters, but rather complement evaluations by ensuring that a more holistic view of the officer is considered. By combining the insight of raters with assessments, the Army is able to determine the officers with the right mix of performance and potential. It helps identify those officers who can excel in command and also learn throughout their experience and be able to contribute at the next level.

To better illustrate how the information gleaned from individual assessments feeds into a more holistic view of a Soldier, one can use the analogy of land navigation. Army Soldiers are trained that in order to pinpoint the

exact location of an object on a map, one must consider the location from multiple vectors. A single vector is not accurate; while two vectors can refine the area more narrowly, it isn't until you can triangulate an object using three vectors—like a compass, topographical map, and geographic landmarks—that you can positively confirm you have the right location. All three data inputs collectively feed into determining the object location. In the Information Age, many more vectors are available with precision accuracy. If you are trying to find your missing cell phone, multiple data points feed into determining the exact location. This might include cell tower triangulation which leverages three nearby cell towers to track roaming signals from your phone, or four orbital satellites using trilateration to Global Positioning Systems (GPS) receivers. All of which work together to provide you a single output: the location of your missing cell phone. As with assessments, granular data from assessments provided at career institutional milestones present a more comprehensive look at an individual.

One critical aspect we need to keep in mind is that assessments drive behaviors. Take for example the APFT. Every Soldier knows that twice a year they are required to take a three-event APFT that includes two minutes of push-ups, two minutes of sit-ups, and a two-mile run. Soldiers know that this test would be administered and graded in a consistent and fair manner. Due to this, Soldiers have conditioned their bodies to excel in these three events. When you compare a 30-year-old Soldier to the average 30-year-old American, it is guaranteed there are at least three areas

the Soldier is significantly different—his or her ability to do push-ups for two minutes, sit ups for two minutes and run two miles. We are all experiencing the change in our training as we move to the Army Combat Fitness Test—which requires us to develop different physical attributes.

We are applying this same mindset in the use of assessments to the realm of non-physical talents. Officers now know that to command at the battalion and brigade level their ability to communicate in the written and verbal form will be measured and used to determine which officers to place in command. This will cause them to develop their skills in communication, which will create a collective rise in the quality of all communication within the Army. This critical aspect, the use of assessments to drive behaviors offers powerful opportunities for us to improve the level of talent within our Army.

By adding assessments to the realm of non-physical talents, the Army is sending a clear message to its workforce: you are expected to self-develop your KSBs as you continue to progress through your career in the Army. Being a Soldier is not just a job—it's a profession that requires continuous self-development—assessments help incentivize officers to invest in their self-development.

The information gathered from these career-long assessments is imperative in a 21st century talent management system. The Army is moving rapidly to implement and institutionalize assessments into its policies and processes. We are rapidly moving away from a one-size-fits-all Army to one that maximizes the potential

and contributions of every individual. Assessments help us do this. They are giving the institution, organizations, and individuals more flexibility—for assignment matching, for differentiating strengths of team members for unit missions, and for informing different career options. Increased self-awareness of key attributes from various vectors of information like non-cognitive and cognitive assessments may help a junior officer better see herself and determine where she can best contribute to the Army.

As we move into the future, the U.S. Army must once again adapt—as it always has—to uphold the lasting comparative advantage to win future wars. We are doing this by maximizing the potential of every Soldier across the Total Force—officer, non-commissioned officer, enlisted, and our civilian employees. If we are going to remain the best military fighting force in the world, we must safely and smartly manage the war-winning talents of the men and women in our ranks. Talent Wins!

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Soldiers from the 658th Regional Support Group, a Army Reserve unit stationed at U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, in Seoul, conduct training on fields of fire and how to make a sector of fire sketches during an exercise in May 2017. (Contributed Photo)

# Predictive Readiness

Examining Army Total Force Policy in the Pacific

■ By Col. John Stibbard and Maj. Brendan Balestrieri

Since 2012, the Army Total Force Policy has invigorated consistent increased integration between all components as a total force. This is especially true at the tactical and operational level (division and below) in the Asia-Pacific area of operations where the total

force has embraced the countless real-world challenges of natural disaster, regional security threats, and today, the COVID-19 pandemic.

The integration of the Reserve Component (RC) into these missions is past the pivotal point that makes

these units vital to complete success. In particular, on the Korean Peninsula, the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) and the 658th Regional Support Group (RSG) have embraced and continue to demonstrate this position on a daily basis. One of the driving factors of success is the U.S.

Army Reserve's (USAR) Ready Force X (RFX) framework which provides Active Component (AC) senior commanders with a predictive readiness model for RC formations in the theater. As directed by the former Chief of the Army Reserve and Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command,

Lt. Gen. Charles Luckey, RFX units need to be ready to "Fight Fast" and be prepared to deploy on short notice to respond to contingencies when needed. Both entities recognize the role of the partnership in meeting the number one priority, readiness, thus, a mutual respect and unity of effort has formed. Together

through a shared understanding of the environment in Korea, as well as the need to "Fight Tonight," Team-19 collective operates under the same lines of effort and training strategy. This year alone, the RSG executed real-world missions such as the oversight to the Korea Rotation Forces in June 2019,



participation in a warfighter exercise, chaplain support with 2nd Infantry Division and mobilizing a subordinate command, the 302nd Quartermaster Company in Guam to provide support to find Task Force Utu in 2018. Most recently, the 658th RSG provided support to Task Force West in support of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Pacific. In addition, the 658th RSG is integrated into the 19th ESC planning.

### **Predictive Readiness by the Army Reserve**

Over the past two years, the USAR and U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) have embraced the tenants of predictive logistics and predictive readiness. Maj. Gen. Charles R. Hamilton and Lt. Col. Edward Woo addressed the model of predictive logistics in a recent logistics article titled “The Road to Predictive Logistics,” where they state: “Under a future complex battlefield in a large-scale combat operation (LSCO), questions arise to optimize readiness. What can we do now to prepare the LSCO battlefield for tomorrow? How do we accomplish this with the strategic support area on the other side of the world in the Indo-Pacific (INDOPACOM)?” The above question has been answered by USARPAC forces across the Pacific, as well as the integrated Team-19 in Korea. However, there is much work to be done. The planning, mission analysis, and combined training exercises have been laying the foundation in order to help answer the question of how to prepare for LSCO on the battlefields of tomorrow and across the vast distances presented in the Indo-Pacific. Keeping in mind, this is achieved, in part, by the sheer desire and commitment of

Reserve Component Soldiers, families, and U.S. Army Reserve committed resources.

### **Ready at a Moment's Notice**

Since 2013, the 658th RSG has worked closely with the 196th Infantry Brigade and USARPAC Mobilization Office to streamline its mobilization timeline. These efforts have resulted in the 658th RSG being a more responsive and ready unit on the Korean Peninsula in support of the Total Force. Throughout the year, 196th Infantry Brigade personnel conduct mobilization training at 658th RSG battle assemblies and hosts a bi-annual mobilization exercise in order to ensure 658th RSG personnel are “validated.” Although the 658th RSG trains as it fights, and is a valued member of Team 19, a great deal still needs to be done to ensure the continued growth of the Total Force on the Korean Peninsula. In the November 2016 Army Sustainment Magazine article titled “Total Force Integration Requires Integrated Training, Lt. Gen. Darrell K. Williams wrote, “Future successful unified land operations will depend directly on the Army's ability to leverage readiness potential from all components. To maximize these collective capabilities, training integration must significantly improve.” Today, Army Reserve RSG's are supporting the Total Army and the Joint Force globally in order to ensure success on the battlefield during the earliest phases of conflict. As a deployable headquarters that manage base camps or base clusters, the RSG relieves the burden of base camp management and operations from the combatant commander, enabling commanders to focus on their primary

mission. Both scalable and tailorable based on mission conditions, the RSG is commanded by a colonel and consists of an organic administrative and support headquarters with subordinate elements augmenting the RSG based on its specific mission. The 510th RSG's activation in Germany in support of United States Army Europe (USAEUR) earlier this year underscored the continued relevance and growing need for RSGs. Globally, RSGs are making a difference by providing base camp management expertise to combatant commanders, both in Europe, and on the Korean Peninsula.

### **658th RSG rounds out 19th ESC**

Activated in 2011 at U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan in Seoul, South Korea, the 658th RSG has evolved from exercise and augmentation support in its early years to working advanced wartime mission analysis with the Eighth United States Army tables of distribution and allowances and the 19th ESC. As the only Army unit configured specifically to manage large base camps, the 658th RSG and 8th Army worked to identify capability gaps that the 658th RSG could best address on the Korean Peninsula in support of 8th Army. From 2013-2014, mission analysis stakeholders expanded to include 8th Army, 19th ESC, Installation Management Command-Pacific Forward, the 75th Training Command (USAR), 196th Infantry Brigade, USARPAC Mobilization Office and base camp experts from the Mission Command Center of Excellence. Headquartered in Daegu, South Korea, the 19th ESC is the only theater-committed, forward-deployed

ESC in the United States Army. Since 2014, the 658th RSG and the 19th ESC have steadily worked to improve interoperability, both for daily operations, and in support of theater exercises. This is reflected in the 658th RSG's weekly briefing requirement during the 19th ESC's Commanders Update Brief and regular participation in 19th ESC G35 Operational Planning Group initiatives and site visits. Above all else, the 658th RSG trains as a unit against its designated wartime mission during major theater exercises. While the 658th RSG has been a part of the Ulchi Freedom Guardian and Key Resolve exercises in the past, it wasn't until this year that the 658th RSG had the opportunity to participate in integrated real-world mission. The unit proudly exclaimed Team-19 in 19!" as was the command's motto for the year. It also integrated for the first time, 19th ESC Warfighter Exercise. And, during the Korea Warfighter 19-2 Exercise, the 658th RSG exercised scenarios as a major subordinate command of the 19th ESC.

### **Further Integration into the Combined Fight**

One of the most important training elements during WFX 20-1 was the opportunity to improve upon our interoperability with Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) counterparts at the 2nd Operational Command (2OC). The 2OC has operational command over all South Korean Army Reserve units, the Homeland Reserve Force, logistics, and training bases located in the six southernmost provinces, and also serves as the combined rear area coordinator. The 19th ESC works in lockstep with its Korean counterparts to execute

sustainment operations in support of U.S. Forces Korea and the Eighth Army. The 658th RSG has pivoted off this pre-existing relationship between the 19th ESC and 2OC to foster its own relationships with mission relevant Korean Alliance Partners. In addition, unique to the 658th RSG among USAR units is its allocation of Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA) Soldiers. KATUSA is a branch of the Republic of Korea Army that consists of Korean drafted personnel who are assigned to 8th Army units in accordance with their military occupational specialty. Yearly, the RSG is assigned KATUSA Soldiers and currently has three KATUSA Soldiers working full time at its headquarters at USAG Humphreys, South Korea. This augmentation provided by the Korean military has not only served as a force multiplier for the 658th RSG's limited full time staff of AGRs but enhanced the ability of the 658th RSG to communicate with our ROKA counterparts at 2OC, both during major theater training events and for daily coordination. The personnel makeup of the 658th RSG also makes it uniquely suited to be of added value to the combined fight on the Korean Peninsula. Throughout the ranks of the 658th RSG are over two dozen US Army Reservist officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) who are not only proficient in speaking Korean but have over a decade of experience working and living in the country they may one day be called upon to defend.

### **Conclusion**

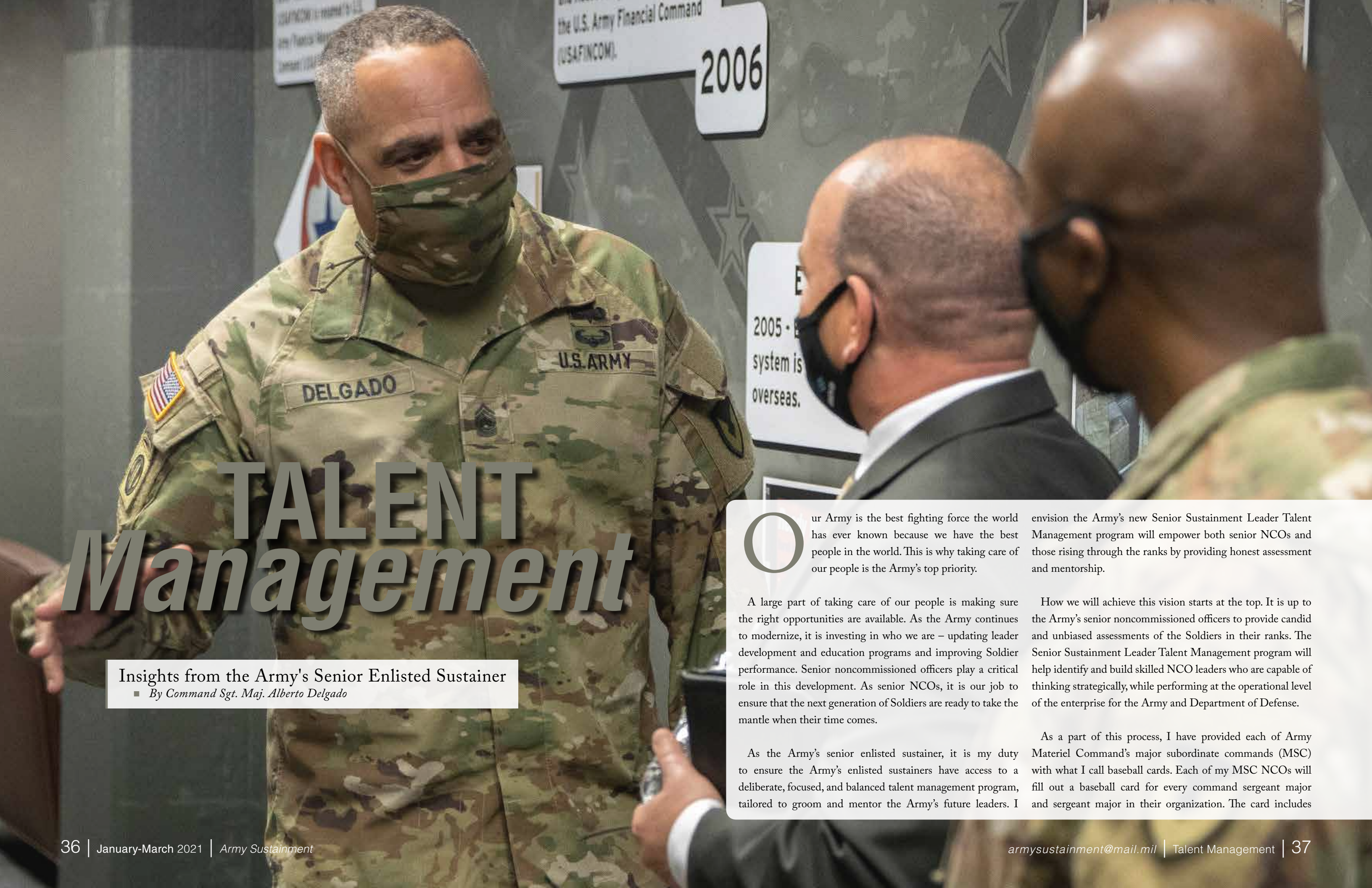
Reserve Component units such as the 658th RSG strive to integrate into the Total Force. This case study supports

both effort and intent that integration is happening and can be predictive for both readiness and training strategies. Yet take heed to the truth that it is a well-vested accomplishment that requires highly engaged leadership, appropriated resources, and a focused unity of effort by both parties. In turn, this allows for enhanced moments of truly integrated combined arms doctrine training and understandings. By doing this we have closed the gap on preparedness for contingencies and realizing LSCO readiness goals. In turn, this sets the conditions for theater commanders to grow in confidence on a total force combined in effort to meet the full spectrum of threats – from low-scale natural disasters to worldwide pandemics and large-scale combat operations. The 19th ESC and the 658th RSG stand together as a total force, ready in the speed of trust to execute responsive logistical efforts for the theater commander in Korea.

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# TALENT *Management*

## Insights from the Army's Senior Enlisted Sustainer

■ *By Command Sgt. Maj. Alberto Delgado*

**O**ur Army is the best fighting force the world has ever known because we have the best people in the world. This is why taking care of our people is the Army's top priority.

A large part of taking care of our people is making sure the right opportunities are available. As the Army continues to modernize, it is investing in who we are – updating leader development and education programs and improving Soldier performance. Senior noncommissioned officers play a critical role in this development. As senior NCOs, it is our job to ensure that the next generation of Soldiers are ready to take the mantle when their time comes.

As the Army's senior enlisted sustainer, it is my duty to ensure the Army's enlisted sustainers have access to a deliberate, focused, and balanced talent management program, tailored to groom and mentor the Army's future leaders. I

envision the Army's new Senior Sustainment Leader Talent Management program will empower both senior NCOs and those rising through the ranks by providing honest assessment and mentorship.

How we will achieve this vision starts at the top. It is up to the Army's senior noncommissioned officers to provide candid and unbiased assessments of the Soldiers in their ranks. The Senior Sustainment Leader Talent Management program will help identify and build skilled NCO leaders who are capable of thinking strategically, while performing at the operational level of the enterprise for the Army and Department of Defense.

As a part of this process, I have provided each of Army Materiel Command's major subordinate commands (MSC) with what I call baseball cards. Each of my MSC NCOs will fill out a baseball card for every command sergeant major and sergeant major in their organization. The card includes



a Soldier's and commander's evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, along with the positions they believe they can best serve the Army in. This is not a check-the-box activity, it is all about getting to know your people and providing them with honest feedback. If someone is not carrying their weight, it is our job as Army leaders to let them know and then provide them with the mentorship needed to grow personally and professionally.

We have an obligation to provide feedback and have those hard conversations that will help our Soldiers become better leaders. These baseball cards will provide senior enlisted leaders a snapshot of Soldiers, so leaders can put a face to a name when opportunities present themselves – like the Army Sustainment Conference. Leaders can then have more meaningful conversations and offer the right advice. Making these essential connections will help our Soldiers looking for opportunities to advance and help improve the Army as a whole by preparing the right leader for the right position. Looking three to five years down the road, these Soldiers have the potential to fill key roles across the military. It is our responsibility to prepare them to make sure they are ready when that day comes.

Another critical part of this process is mentorship. I always ask people “who do you mentor” or “who is your mentor?” I am seeing less and less people who can answer those questions. Mentorship is becoming a lost art, but I believe that you can't be successful if you only talk to people at your same level. I am encouraging my MSC command sergeants major to look two levels down and get to know those people and their families.

At echelon, our enlisted sustainers are the most experienced NCOs within their formations. Their operational exposure has afforded them the opportunity to develop and grow through each mission. Many Soldiers do not have the luxury to sit in some of the meetings I get to, so it is our responsibility as senior NCOs to share our knowledge. Some people look at mentorship as a sign of weakness, but the Army is a team sport, and we need to rely on each other to make sure we are recognizing and mentoring talent.

Together, our collective experience will drive this program to meet its intent. Our end state is to have the right sergeants major in the right positions, at the right time in support of Army and DOD requirements. At the same time, we will build

the bench of experienced leaders who are prepared to assume duties and responsibilities at the next level on day one. For this program to be successful, I am counting on my sustainment leaders to keep me updated and help identify those rising stars.

Serving in the Army for 33 years, I have realized there is nothing else I would rather be doing than taking care of Soldiers. I see them as an investment. Watching them succeed and become a command sergeant major is what success looks like to me. When I talk about leaving a legacy, that is what I am talking about – it is not what positions I have held but the people I have brought up with me.

For me like many others, working in the Army started as a job and somewhere around 10 years it became a career, but when it really clicked was when it became a passion. While having that passion is important, it is the mentors I have learned from throughout my career who have helped me get to where I am today.

When I was a first sergeant at the Defense Logistics Agency, I served in a new position under Command Sgt. Maj. David Roman. He was like a big brother to me, showing me what good leadership looks like. He ran with the backbone flag that said, “Lead, follow or get the hell out.” He passed it along to me, and to this day, it still hangs in my office. I also had the opportunity to learn from then-Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Saunders, the Army War College and Carlisle Barracks command sergeant major. He was such a people-person and a charismatic leader. It seemed as if everyone's lives he touched became successful.

I continued building relationships with mentors as my career progressed, including my relationships with retired Command Sgt. Maj. James Sims and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Rodger Mansker, the last two people to hold the position of AMC's senior enlisted adviser before me.

Four years ago, when I served as AMC's Operations and Logistics (G3/4) sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Sims prepared me for the position I am in today. He developed me, made sure I understood the mission, the major subordinate commands and fully realized the importance of what we do at AMC. Command Sgt. Maj. Mansker, who served as the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command's senior enlisted leader and shared the same building as AMC, took time to explain

to me his organization's role and how it fit within the materiel enterprise, adding to the foundation of knowledge I would come to use as AMC's senior enlisted leader.

Serving as the AMC G3/4 sergeant major is one of the best things that ever happened to me. As senior enlisted leaders, we have the opportunity to pay it forward and invest in the next generation of leaders. Whether you are the mentor or the mentee, it is important to keep in mind what I call the three Rs: respect, reputation, and relationships.

When I say respect, it is not about a position, it goes both ways. You need to respect everyone around you from the highest to the lowest ranking person. If you don't treat people with dignity and respect, those people will take it home. We need that family buy-in, because without it, the Army loses good Soldiers and civilians. For me, my family has supported me 100%, from my days as a young NCO through my 13 years serving as a command sergeant major. This support has made all the difference.

Reputation and relationships are all about trust and doing what you say you are doing to do.

Your reputation is a combination of what people know, think, and believe about your qualities and abilities. When it comes to reputation, the onus is on you to prioritize self-development and seek honest and open feedback to help mold how others see you. As leaders, we have to encourage these habits in our young Soldiers.

Relationships are all about establishing, maintaining, and fostering connections inside and outside of work. Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston talks about the importance of our squad, how it is not just his initiative, but something the Army as a whole should own and implement. We need to embrace the Army's concept of “This is My Squad” and take care of the people around us. My squad is the sixth floor of AMC. It is made up of Soldiers and civilians. Every squad is different, but it is all about ownership and being proud of the team you work for.

Relationship building extends to the Army family as well. It is more than knowing your Soldiers. I often ask people “when was the last time you met a Soldier's parents?” When a

Soldier knows you call their parents or send them notes about big accomplishments, it makes a huge difference. That is true leadership, talking to families, and, at times, reassuring them. It shows our Soldiers we care about more than just the mission.

Keep getting to know your people and don't be afraid to look outside of your squad. Take the time to get out from behind your desk and get into the motor pool. If it wasn't for the Soldiers in the motor pools, I would not be in this position. Look outside the box and learn more about those around you.

The Army is working to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion across the force and build cohesive teams. It is a proven fact that organizations with more diversity perform better. I come from a long line of proud Puerto Ricans, my parents were both the first in their families to move away from the island, but we maintained the importance of our culture and our roots as I grew up. I know for me, growing up in a diverse and multicultural area shaped who I am today. Learn more about those around you. Their background has shaped who they are and offers something different that makes the Army stronger.

We are all busy, but we can't use that as an excuse. Make the time to reach out to Soldiers you have worked with in the past. Invest in people. When I see Soldiers I have helped along the way now wearing the same rank as I am, I feel proud. When I get emails from Soldiers I mentored, that means more to me than any award of rank on my chest. There will be a day where we hang up our boots, and the Army will keep rolling along. When that time comes, let your legacy be that you set those following you up for success.

**Command Sgt. Maj. Alberto Delgado serves as the command sergeant major of U.S. Army Materiel Command. His military schools and education include Airborne School, Air Assault School, U.S. Army Special Operations Command Jumpmaster Course, Joint Personnel Recovery Agency Course, and all phases of the Noncommissioned Officer Education System. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Management from National-Louis University and is currently pursuing his master's degree in Business Administration from Columbia Southern University.**

**Featured Photo**  
**Command Sgt. Maj. Alberto Delgado, U.S. Army Materiel Command senior enlisted advisor, talks with Barry Hoffman, U.S. Army Financial Management Command deputy to the commanding general, and Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth F. Law, USAFMCOM senior enlisted advisor, at the Maj. Gen. Emmett J. Bean Federal Center in Indianapolis Nov. 20, 2020. Delgado joined Gen. Edward Daly, AMC commanding general, on their first visit to USAFMCOM. (Photo by Mark R. W. Orders-Woempner)**



# Forward Support Company Trends in Decisive Action

■ By Capt. David Peplinski and Master Sgt. Jaime Mastache

Sustainment operations determine the endurance, tempo, and operational reach for a maneuver force. A maneuver battalion forward support company's (FSC) ability to forecast and match sustainment requirements to capabilities is critical to a unit's tactical success. The Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC), provides a realistic near-peer threat to a brigade combat team (BCT). This near-peer threat presents a myriad of challenges for FSCs that are hard to train at home station. This article provides a description of those challenges and trends observed of FSCs during decisive action rotations at JMRC and recommendations for sustainment leaders to consider or implement.

## Logistics Planning

It is challenging for FSC commanders to balance command responsibilities while simultaneously assisting the battalion S4 with logistics planning. Field Manual (FM) 3-96, Brigade Combat Teams, outlines one of the responsibilities of a FSC commander is to assist the battalion S4 in logistics planning throughout the military decision-making process. FSC commanders feel it is their sole responsibility to do this planning, since the S4 is typically not a logistics officer. When doing so, FSC commanders risk neglecting their company's troop leading procedures in the process.

Throughout five rotations to include infantry, Stryker, and armored BCTs, all five FSCs' commanders failed to produce a Logistics Synchronization Matrix (LOG SYNCMATRIX) as well as violated or did not produce a company operations order (OPORD) in three of the five cases. An observed best practice is to bring the key subject matter experts within the company to assist in the development of logistics (LOG) estimates. By dividing this responsibility amongst several different stakeholders, the commander gets critical time back for the development of the

company OPORD. The ultimate goal of this effort is to produce a LOG SYNCMATRIX that is nested with the scheme of maneuver and published in the battalion OPORD. However, most FSCs struggle with the timely production of the LOG SYNCMATRIX.

In all five rotations, this product was published last minute to the battalion crossing the line of departure. The LOG SYNCMATRIX must be validated at the battalion combined arms rehearsal and sustainment rehearsal to ensure it is nested with the maneuver plan. Additionally, the LOG SYNCMATRIX is the fighting product for the FSC. It provides predictability to the FSC platoons and allows the company to de-conflict requirements for personnel and equipment. Often, FSCs create a LOG SYNCMATRIX and only utilize it for the first 72 hours of an operation. Throughout the course of five rotations, not one FSC updated their LOGSYNCH MATRIX after the first 72 hours. This resulted in the battalion and the company forecasting requirements 12 hours versus 72 hours out. FSCs need to continually update the product through daily sync meetings internally to the company. Without this meeting, the company cannot capture accurate consumption rates, which in turn leads to internal problems. One example of such an internal problem is the inability of the distribution platoon to forecast convoy operations which inhibits their work rest cycle. This in turn also hinders the company first sergeant from de-conflicting the defense of the company with the personnel to run logistics packages (LOGPACs). This lack of predictability hinders the company's ability to conduct mission planning and preparations. Additionally, without capturing accurate consumption rates or attempting to forecast, the FSC cannot provide the necessary inputs with battalion battle rhythm events such as the operations synchronization, logistics synchronization (LOGSYNCH), and maintenance meetings.

## Logistics Synchronization

FSCs also struggle with the makeup of the field trains command post (FTCP) and their combat trains command post (CTCP). FM 4-0 Sustainment states that the CTCP must be lean and displaced often. Typically, FSCs place too much capability forward with a small liaison officer team within the brigade support area (BSA) to serve as the FTCP. This heavy forward concept causes the CTCP to become a bigger target and further complicates displacement of the CTCP. Throughout five rotations, an average displacement time of eight hours and fifteen minutes was observed, due to this heavy footprint. As an alternative, FSCs should look to place more capability in the FTCP.

By distributing assets, the FSC can now have a lighter footprint as well as facilitate the repair of equipment through multiple echelons (field maintenance team, CTCP, FTCP). Divesting assets across the battlefield the FSC can displace quicker without violating single mobility lift or have a backlog of non-mission capable (NMC) pieces at the CTCP. Another cascading challenge with logistics synchronization stems from the interaction and synchronization between the FTCP, CTCP, BSA, and company trains. Since there is no established battle rhythm between the FTCP and CTCP, the FSC executive officers (XOs) go into the brigade LOGSYNCH with outdated or irrelevant information. Due to the FSC XO's inability to articulate the needs of their battalion, critical assets or commodities either go to another battalion or are taken away from a battalion who has more of a need for those items. The FSC XO and commander must actively engage in synchronization efforts prior to the XO going into the brigade LOGSYNCH to discuss on hand commodities and anticipated requirements. This meeting can be done through Joint Battle Command-Platform or over Voice Over Internet Protocol phone utilizing the FTCP Combat Service Support Automated Information System Interface and CTCP Very Small Aperture

A U.S. Soldier of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Combat Division moves across his area of operation during Combined Resolve XI at the U.S. Army's Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, Dec. 5, 2018. (Photo by Spc. Zachery Perkins)







A Soldier with the 1st Battalion 9th Field Artillery Regiment removes a dunnage from Paladin M109A7 weapons system and transfers it to Field Artillery Ammunition Supply (FAASV) vehicle at forward operating site Turon, Poland, July 22, 2020. The FAASV supplies Paladin crews with ammunition, so they can stay on target and not leave the battlefield. (Photo by Sgt. Heidi Kroll)

# Fusion Cell Utilization:

Lessons in Logistics from DEFENDER20

Proper Establishment, Utilization of Fusion Cells in Support of Multinational Exercises

■ By 2nd Lt. Dylan W. Nigh

Boots shuffle and markers fly as a small group of officers and NCOs work quickly to gain a better understanding of the month they have ahead. This scene could describe any number of groups anticipating an exercise as ambitious in scope as DEFENDER20+ (DEF20), but this particular group has a name: Task Force (TF) LOG Fusion Cell.

In the Army's ongoing struggle to adapt to the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the initial DEF20 exercise had been reshuffled into a follow-on exercise, broken into multiple phases, the second of which was handled logistically by a variety of units from the surrounding area of operation (AO). TF LOG was assembled with active duty Army and National Guard logistics units from within the European theater to track movements, conduct COVID-19 testing, provide resupply, and handle mayoral duties for the 2-12 Combat Aviation Battalion for the entirety of their multinational exercise within the Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area in Poland.

Units represented included the 484th Movement Control Battalion, 30th Medical Brigade, 757th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 405th Army Field Support Battalion, and 297th Regional Support Group; all of which provided a key piece of the logistics puzzle that was to make up the backbone of DEF20 Phase II. Such a disparate mix of units and capabilities called for a heightened level of integration, which was ultimately provided through the creation of a fusion cell. Fusion cells function similar

to coordination centers, and often work in tandem with them on exercises, but they differ in a few key ways. Coordination centers work to combine the efforts of U.S. and host nation forces on issues like range control and emergency management, while fusion cells function as a way to connect logistics units with each other and the units they collectively support during the duration of an exercise or operation.

The typical layout of a fusion cell consists of an officer in charge to run the cell and serve as a point of contact (POC) to higher units, an operations section to develop and manage the products used to present updates, and a unit liaison officer (LNO) from each of the logistics units present for the exercise or operation. According to the Commander and Staff Guide to Liaison Functions, distributed by the Center for Army Lessons Learned, a liaison officer is primarily tasked with the following: monitoring operations within the task force and their sending plans, advising the supported unit and task force on capabilities, and assisting with communication between units and utilization by the task force. This layout describes the makeup of the room as the TF LOG Fusion Cell began to assess the requirements and points of friction for the upcoming exercise. Each LNO served as the main POC for their unit, advised on their unit's capabilities, and coordinated with the other liaisons to provide multi-faceted logistics for the exercise.

The fast-paced tempo of the exercise ensured that new issues arose by the hour for the fusion cell to collectively address,

which in turn led to an abundance of lessons learned. Any fusion cell can perform well while working reactively if they maintain communication and stay adaptive, but future success can be achieved more fluidly through the deliberate application of the lessons learned from TF LOG Fusion Cell's experiences during DEF20. These lessons include, but are not limited to the following: Proactivity mitigates a lack of resources or knowledge, units must not solely rely on centralized paths of communication, assumptions can lead to critical failures, realistic advice trumps jargon and sycophancy every time, and the chaos of the exercise ends in the fusion cell.

Within days of the creation of the new phase of the exercise, logistics units from across Europe had been tasked with providing assets and personnel, and some of the key players in what would soon be the fusion cell made their way to a central location. The first lesson appeared instantly as the few early arrivals worked to develop a battle rhythm and establish the products necessary to convey updates on the operation. In the absence of a functioning operations section, the present members made due by sharing products from their previous and current units, and mapping out what they anticipated would be needed for future reports. This ability to forecast and provide what will be needed before the team has settled into their roles showed that proactive members can more than compensate for the confusion and lack of personnel when a fusion cell is initially stood up.

Once the core members had all arrived and settled into the developed battle



rhythm, the temptation to become complacent within prescribed roles and to centralize communication became evident. With time, each LNO began to better understand their unit's role in the operation and the cell began to streamline its reporting and communication processes. While these events appear positive at face value, they can have negative consequences if members of the cell become too comfortable and cease efforts to improve on their success. Surely it is important for a unit representative

to grasp their piece of the larger puzzle and streamlining communication can cut down on wasted time, but efforts should not stop there.

Ultimately the goal of an LNO should be to understand the role of the adjacent units almost as well as they understand their own, and an effective fusion cell should seek to facilitate communication amongst unit representatives to solve complex problems. This quickly became evident with TF LOG, where the

medical unit performing COVID-19 tests needed head counts from mayor cell representatives who, in turn, needed to know the number of personnel flying in from the movement unit; Most problems that appeared within the fusion cell were interconnected, and waiting for the next morning's internal sync to discuss joint efforts quickly became unfeasible with the fast-paced tempo of the exercise. In a situation like this, all pertinent information still should be reported and recorded officially, but anything that

can be discussed openly should be, and the advantage of time should not be sacrificed for the sake of formality.

As TF LOG began to complete the majority of COVID-19 tests and troop movements required before the U.S. and Polish forces could take to the ranges, the third lesson became evident; Assumptions can be deadly when coordinating critical mission details. With the movement unit focused on landing the remaining troops at the testing area, and the medical unit trying to test them as soon as possible, accurate headcounts were not initially going to the mayor cell and field feeding was not being properly conducted at both sites. With each unit assuming the others would handle their piece of the puzzle independently, the way to mitigate the problem became obvious. The LNOs quickly adjusted course and started asking themselves how their solution to a given problem might affect the other units present. With this simple fix, the cell was able to begin problem solving proactively, adjusting field feeding while completing all COVID-19 tests and issuing all Army prepositioned stock (APS).

The next phase of the exercise entailed conducting daily resupplies and tracking all movements external to the training area, both of which were tasks that highlighted the next major lesson for the cell; The use of mitigated speech and sycophancy may make for content higher units, but respectful yet realistic advice is what will ultimately lead to mission success. Maneuver units may make requests of supporting units that exceed their capabilities or that cause second and third order effects,

but it is up to the LNOs to serve as subject matter experts for their units and ensure that problems are solved in the most effective manner. TF LOG members sometimes found themselves in uncomfortable positions when raising concerns about requests being made or the proposed manner of solving specific problems, but the end result was always a less problematic solution and a better shared understanding of the function of each unit. Just as the vertical hierarchy of the military can sometimes hinder open communication between units, it can also limit the effectiveness of communication across ranks and positions. Tasking authority will inevitably lie in the hands of a few key leaders and this must be respected for the operation to succeed, but equally integral to overall success of the fusion cell is the willingness of each member to offer and accept outside criticism and advice.

Over the course of the exercise, the TF LOG fusion cell weathered personnel changes, shifts in movement schedules, updates to civilian and host nation contracts, and a battery of other logistics issues. While each issue was unique in its own right and often required novel solutions, there arose a common theme amongst the way they were handled; the chaos of the exercise stopped at the doors of the fusion cell. Redeployment of APS and last minute movement requests can certainly cause an initial amount of confusion, but the fusion cell functioned at its best when each representative was able to present their unit's comments and concerns in a productive way and the team was able to create a unified solution to send back to those in the field. Refusing to allow the disorder and discontent that naturally

develop in such a dynamic environment to proliferate in the fusion cell allowed for collaborative thinking, and ensured that all units maintained the shared goal of mission success.

While the outbreak of COVID-19 caused a major shift in the initial plans for the Defender 2020 exercise, the development of DEF20 allowed for a more realistic training environment for the rapid mobilization of forces. The team created to handle the logistics of this training, TF LOG, not only provided the support necessary to reaffirm the Army's ability to respond rapidly to a peer-to-peer threat in the European theater, but also gained valuable insight into the role and functionality of a fusion cell in support of a major exercise. Members of this cell learned the importance of proactivity in the face of uncertainty, the integral role of lateral communication, the detrimental effect of assumptions in a dynamic battlespace, the need for candid speech amongst units and ranks, and above all, the role that the fusion cell plays in mitigating disorder and bringing clarity and efficiency to the exercise. These lessons and more will be carried on and implemented during the planning and execution of the upcoming DEF21 Exercise, and will hopefully be applied wherever fusion cells are established.

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Outgoing Fusion Cell Officer in Charge (OIC), Lt. Col. Jason Knapp, passes out challenge coins to cell members on Jul. 28, 2020. (Contributed Photo)



# Sustainment throughout COVID

## Supporting RSOI During a Pandemic

■ By 1st Lt. Lauren Toner and Warrant Officer 1 Erik Hodge

COVID-19 has changed how the Sustainment enterprise operates both in garrison and in deployed environments. Keeping the force safe while accomplishing the mission meant that Army sustainment leadership had to exercise operational flexibility with decreased personnel. Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team (2BCT), 82nd Airborne Division, were preparing to deploy to U.S. Central Command in support of Combined Joint Task Force – Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (CJTF-OIR) in late 2019 not knowing that a global pandemic was about to surface and change the way we operate for the foreseeable future. CJTF-OIR's Combined Joint Operational Area (CJOA) is spread throughout the Middle East. Movement in support of CJTF-OIR was not immune to the second and third order effects of COVID-19. Without having previously deployed under these conditions, the Falcon Brigade Mobility Team learned lessons worth sharing. The situations presented, and courses of action taken, can be applied to operations in and out of the sustainment realm as these concepts center around adaptability and flexibility.

Deployment preparations began in January 2020. Tasks included Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP), issuing rapid fielding initiative (RFI) equipment, unit deployment list (UDL) completion, and movement requirements validation at the joint level. SRP and RFI took place in January. With the UDL established, leaders began coordination with the brigade mobility section, the Installation Transportation Office (ITO) and their unit movement

officers to schedule inspections for the equipment load out. Unit Loading Area Control Center (ULACC) operations followed in February with battalions inspecting rolling stock and containers for transportation worthiness on each piece of equipment for every company. Once equipment passed the brigade-level ULACC, the Falcon Brigade Mobility Team organized an ITO-level Combined Load Area Control Center (CLACC). All rolling stock and sealift containers passed inspections and stayed at the Installation Transportation and Deployment Support Activities ) and Marshalling and Staging Area until the ready load date for strategic surface lift at the Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group for Strategic Airlift.

In March 2020, 2BCT participated in 'FALCON STORM II', a brigade-level exercise that served as the brigade's culminating training exercise ) that validated our readiness to assume the deployed mission set. Sustainment exercises in FALCON STORM II included low cost low altitude bundle drops, field maintenance, field feeding, and distribution operations supporting over 2,000 paratroopers. During FALCON STORM II, surface cargo equipment was going through CLACC inspections and paratroopers had to execute missions during the exercise without those items. This equipment included field feeding equipment, general mechanics tool kits, forward repair systems, standard automotive tool set, contact trucks, and palletized load system among other end items that any forward support company would require in a field exercise. The field feeding section prepared over 2,000 paratroopers two hot meals a day with

three containerized kitchens. Without knowing it at the time, this exercise prepared the brigade for upcoming resource challenges.

While away from cell phones during Falcon Storm II, 2BCT returned from the field to hear about the coronavirus' impact on the world and how serious it was becoming. In the following days, while recovery operations were executed, news was released of global movement being paused in response to this new virus. Orders for torch and advanced party flights for CJTF-OIR from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, were set for late March and early April. Two weeks out, the brigade was informed that a global stop movement for 60 days had been issued. The impact to our Force Tracking Number was waived and our Secretary of Defense Latest Arrival Date for equipment was shifted 42 days to the right. That was only the start of the COVID-19 operational impacts on the Falcon Brigade deployment in support of CJTF-OIR.

What began as a deployment order for the Falcon Brigade Mobility Team to move equipment into theater transformed into four deliberate operations: deployment, redeployment, staging, and deployment phase II. Sealift equipment had already been transported in February 2020 from Fort Bragg to the Port of Charleston, South Carolina, in preparation for its embarkation at the port. With the change in personnel movement into theater, the brigade now had to consider its more than 270 pieces of rolling stock and containers that were preparing to load onto a vessel at the Port of Charleston. The brigade's equipment had already been staged to be



**Accepting prudent risk is balancing the mission with the health and safety of a formation. This pandemic has been a lesson in adaptability, rapid thinking, and action.**

loaded in anticipation for embarkation when the STO was amended. The Falcon Brigade was directed to redeploy the equipment back to Fort Bragg and completed this re-position in less than four days. Accepting this equipment, however, presented new challenges that didn't exist when the equipment left Fort Bragg just one month prior. During this time, the division was reduced to minimum essential manning to mitigate the spread of the virus. The team of licensed drivers, multiple platform equipment handlers, and TCs that are required during mobility operations of accepting equipment had to conduct the same operations with decreased personnel.

Along with the shift in deployment came a change in deploying personnel and mission requirements that affected the UDL. This meant changes in the Joint Operations Planning and Execution System, Export Traffic Release Request, and transportation requests. Having to reduce our overall surface requirement meant that updated requirements were due to the strategic lift providers. At the same time, the Falcon Brigade Mobility Team also managed mitigations and adjustments for not only for 2BCT paratroopers, but also surface and airlift cargo. These changes also impacted the contracted truck drivers and installation personnel. New security protocols and requirements were implemented for truck drivers entering Fort Bragg to pick up the deploying equipment. COVID-19 added another layer to that process by requiring the available and capable civilian truck drivers to have their temperature taken along with a medical screening at Fort Bragg's access control points (ACP). While this may

sound like a routine procedure, this meant that 96 truck drivers had to be processed at an ACP. Truck drivers operate within confines of contracts as well as federal regulations that dictate their operational hours. The time spent waiting at the ACP for their screening took them over those hours as well as the ITO teams in place to process and assist those drivers. Falcon Brigade mobility team had to respond by generating multiple exceptions to policy memorandums describing the operational need for these drivers and civilian agents to continue working.

The Falcon Brigade adhered to the 14-day pre-deployment restriction of movement to enter theater. COVID-19 sustainment mitigations followed the Falcon Brigade into combat as over 2,200 paratroopers assumed missions across the CJOA. The brigade took a logical and a phased approach to the quarantine, placing those who needed to be in theater into quarantine first, while the remainder of the Brigade and rear detachment executed the deployment of strategic airlift cargo and personnel movements. The regulations and steps that the Brigade took to mitigate the spread of the virus was seen at the arrival/ departure airfield control group and passenger terminal. In an unprecedented manner, our sister brigades (having just redeployed) and the division transportation office stepped up and helped the deploying force by assisting in personnel movement of four main body flights and cargo movement on commercial and strategic flights.

Minimal manning challenged the versatility of sustainment operations and personnel in theater. The main theater

intermediate staging base was the starting point for reception and resupply activities. Being a part of CJTF-OIR meant that 2BCT would work with local partners and coordinate with Coalition Forces conducting missions throughout the CJOA. Despite the efforts of 2BCT and Coalition Partners, who put in place strict measures to prevent the virus from reaching personnel on post, individuals began to contract the virus. With the virus affecting paratroopers on various logistical support areas, teams had to go on 'lockdown' or enforce firewall orders. Having already adapted to sustainment coordination across different logistical nodes throughout the CJOA, this presented a more localized challenge. For example, civilian contractors were operating on minimal manning, but their workload did not decrease with their personnel. Requesting and receiving material handling equipment was backlogged. A Transportation movement request (TMR) that could be executed in less than 24 hours was changed to a 48-hour wait for submission and then an additional wait for a confirmed time that a TMR could be actioned. As all classes of supply were brought to specific logistics nodes throughout the CJOA, lacking the conventional ability to relocate them from the terminal to their respective locations created additional logistics challenges. As class IX repair parts were delivered, mechanics had to compensate for those in isolation leading to longer working days. While the operational tempo remained high, available personnel not in isolation decreased. Just as Falcon Brigade paratroopers had to conduct sustainment operations during Falcon Storm II using minimal equipment, they continued Sustainment

operations throughout the CJOA on minimal manning. Overcoming this obstacle confirmed that the Army's greatest resource truly is the individual Soldier.

The Falcon Brigade Sustainment Team turned an unpredictable situation into a series of valuable lessons learned. The entire world now functions under the restrictions of COVID-19. People call this a 'new normal'. The way to operate in this new normal is not to push against it, but move and adapt with it. COVID-19 reminded the Falcon Brigade that missions can fluctuate. The most important concept that was exercised in every pre deployment and deployment operation was flexibility. Accepting variables and fluidity throughout the mission made finding creative solutions manageable. Not having equipment for Operation FALCON STORM II meant that maintainers and culinary specialists had to coordinate efforts across battalions to accomplish the mission. Learning to operate on minimal manning meant that paratroopers had to quickly learn to do jobs that weren't theirs and operate with maximum efficiency. Remaining flexible with the civilian force is essential as civilians played an ever present role in the Falcon Brigade mission. The Army also has an obligation to ensure the health and safety of Soldiers who are fighting the nation's wars. In addition to being flexible and adaptable, paratroopers had to be disciplined, as always. Leaders at all levels had to refine the manner in which they approach problem sets. When an order was disseminated to move equipment ready for load out at the Port of Charleston back to Fort Bragg, leaders at the brigade mobility

level had to act quickly, think creatively, and mobilize paratroopers. Amid uncertainty, the sustainment leader gains a situational understanding of the operational environment in order to adjust to a changing environment. Accepting prudent risk is balancing the mission with the health and safety of a formation. This pandemic has been a lesson in adaptability, rapid thinking, and action.

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*Featured Photo  
Sp4c. Tashara Williams pushes a bundle of Class I with Low Cost Low Altitude parachutes over All-American Drop Zone March 14, 2020, at Fort Bragg, N.C. (Contributed Photo)*



# CASH is KING

Units Must Incorporate Cash and Finance Operations

■ By Col. Greg Worley



Electronic payments are not a birthright. Nation-state peer competition has re-emerged and made this fact more evident. Cyber assaults on Estonia in 2007 (dubbed Cyber War I), Georgia in 2008, and Ukraine in 2015 and 2017 revealed that banking infrastructure, electrical grids, media outlets, and government agencies are cyber-targets. This lesson could be particularly harsh during power projection, or any critical multi-domain operation (MDO) in a contested or competitive operational environment. Large-scale combat operations (LSCO) will be especially complex, and history indicates that the Army will encounter critical moments when cash is king. Focus on counter insurgency operations (COIN), heavy reliance on electronic payments, as well as operational planning and training gaps, have degraded the commander's ability to use cash as a weapon. The Army must consider using physical currencies during combat training center (CTC) rotations, modifying the classes of supply to account for physical currencies, establishing a warranting and certification program, and establishing an operational currency with the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury).

The Army has employed cash to enhance, augment, and facilitate sustainment operations during every conflict since its inception. For example, during WWII the Army Finance Department disbursed \$176 billion, in more than 20 different currencies, to support operations in the European and Pacific Theaters. That roughly equates to \$2.54 trillion in today's dollars. Finance units disbursed cash payments

to contractors, vendors, host nation laborers, as well as for micro-purchases at the tactical level. To be sure, cash will not fund an entire conflict, but it will provide flexibility and depth to support sustainment across strategic, operational, and tactical lines of communication.

The LSCO scenario presents sustainment challenges in which the Finance and Comptroller Branch may play a significant role. As the Army pivoted toward LSCO from COIN, it identified 17 major gaps in the force and three are sustainment related: shortage of Class III at the line of departure, lack of tactical sustainment mobility, and the absence of division-level materiel management. As operational reach extends and formations disperse across the battlefield, sustainment challenges will increase. Cash will be a critical capability to mitigate the strain and reduce the time and distance required to procure goods, commodities, and services. Cash will also serve as a force multiplier that enables flexible procurement forward of the operational support area.

During all phases of the operation, operational contract support (OCS) will leverage regional resources and support the commander's requirements. To be effective, there must be an adaptable fiscal-triad partnership between contracting, comptrollers, and finance. Contracting officers source goods and services, comptrollers commit funding toward valid requirements, and finance units disburse payments for the goods and services. Electronic payments are preferred; however, when that is not feasible, cash must be available to pay vendors.

Commercial support during theater opening is inevitable and will be cash intensive. As previously mentioned, one gap is the shortage of Class III at the line of departure. Without electronic payments, this may drive a cash requirement to support force projection. This single gap would require six skids of \$100 bills to procure the required fuel over the course of 30 days. That is \$335.3 million, or \$11.2 million a day. Although it is disingenuous to claim the Army will need \$335 million in cash at a single moment, for a single bulk fuel purchase, it is certain multiple aerial ports of debarkation (APODs) and seaports of debarkation (SPODs) will require physical cash during theater opening to close or mitigate known gaps.

Physical currency, whether in the form of U.S. dollars, foreign currency, or an operational currency, will greatly enhance mission success across all levels of warfare. Two significant conditions that the Army typically operates in rely heavily on cash. The first are those austere locations geographically separated from population centers, such as those used in staging or contingency operations. The second are host nations with fragile banking industries, such as those with a major conflict inside its borders or nearby. These conditions highlight that physical currency is the preferred medium of exchange, and specifically those backed by the United States. This became evident as the U.S. dollar became the preferred currency during Operation Iraqi Freedom with the collapse of the Iraqi banking system. Cash's dependability will provide critical support to sustainment operations in complex and lethal environments even

in the absence of a reliable host nation banking system.

Cyber-contested, or even cyber-competitive, MDO environments may impact many systems that we have depended on for acquiring goods and services. The General Fund Enterprise Business System, the Deployable Disbursing System, and the Standard Procurement System are just three examples of finance and procurement systems that all reside on the Non-classified Internet Protocol Router Network (NIPRNet). These systems and their susceptibility are additive to our

electronic banking and electrical grid vulnerabilities, all which commanders must plan for. If an attack or disruption to our banking infrastructure is a critical point of failure, should we consider cash as mitigation? Put another way, if the fuel keys and credit cards don't work in a given Army division, can that division self-deploy from fort to port in a cyber-contested or cyber-competitive environment? A thorough mission analysis may highlight a requirement to maintain U.S. dollars, an operational currency, military payment certificates, or mix of "most likely" currencies in division-level vaults to self-deploy

from fort to port and facilitate onward movement.

Cash requirements will not go away with improved connectivity and a robust theater. In fact, the requirements may increase as we transition to consolidate gains. Regardless of the phase of the operation, units will require cash for local procurements and for programs such as the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP). Paying for local interpreters, funding projects, and building out survivable garrisons are all cash intensive operations that staff members must incorporate into



Soldiers from the 4th Financial Management Support Unit, in Afghanistan, conduct financial operations with cash. In areas of limited digital connectivity, Soldiers conduct a variety of financial operations manually. (Contributed Photo)



the planning process. These activities, funding authorities for programs such as CERP, and micro-threshold purchases serve as the foundation of fiscal diplomacy. Fiscal diplomacy creates a positive influence on the local population, and supports strategic economic diplomacy and America's foreign policy." Finance units are a key element to fiscal diplomacy by ensuring prompt payment for goods and services. As learned in WWII, "Under wartime conditions, the army experienced difficulties in securing needed items overseas, but these difficulties could be minimized or magnified, depending on how finance officers paid those who had contracted for goods or services."

## The Way Ahead

Based on cash requirements to support the range of military operations, the Army must address specific areas for improvement. Staffs must incorporate cash into operational planning and provide their commanders with courses of action to employ cash effectively. The cash requirement in future MDO/LSCO operations highlights the need for finance units to be technically proficient as agents of the Treasury. Simply put, we must incorporate finance units into all major training events, consider cash as a class of supply, develop and implement a warranting and certification program, and partner with the Treasury to establish an operational currency.

## Training for Cash

Since 2010, only one financial management support team has been a player unit at the Joint Readiness Training Center or National Training Center. The lack of participation by finance units in

CTC exercises is partially a consequence of our reliance upon electronic payments, the deactivation of finance battalions in 2008, and the absence of planning and tracking mechanisms. Commanders must include disbursing operations into major training events such as CTCs, Defender-series exercises, and command post exercises. This participation will have a ripple effect as units conduct individual and collective training, and participate in the "train up" for major events. Commanders at all levels will experience cash intensive periods during MDO/LSCO, and the finance units responsible for disbursing operations must be ready to support. Finance units must "train as we fight."

Developing running estimates, understanding command and support relationships, integrating reports into the logistics status report to better inform the logistics common operating picture (LOGCOP), publishing the finance concept of support, etc., do not come naturally and require reps and sets in training. As the Secretary of the Army has stated, CTCs are the "gold standard training" designed to mirror the intensity and realism of armed conflict. Is it time to incorporate host nation currency within the CTCs? Should units contract and procure some Class III, Class IV, and transportation with cash during initial entry into "the box"? Should commanders have the ability to use cash to influence and set favorable conditions in their area of operations? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, sustainment leaders may need to assess if their finance units are prepared to "fight tonight."

## A Class of Supply

The finance operations planner at

brigade, division, and corps level does not exist. When the Army deactivated the last finance battalions in 2008, gaps emerged in the planning for physical currency and finance units that manage and disburse the cash. As a means to integrate cash into operational planning, a broader way of thinking is required when considering the logistics of cash. Budgeting rests with the comptroller (S8/G8) who ensures the commander has the required funds and authorities to meet operational needs and mission requirements. On the other hand, finance units acquire, account for, safeguard, and disburse physical cash during all phases and in all areas. We must close the planning gap and simultaneously establish a methodology to plan, track, and estimate cash requirements on the battlefield. To close the gap, the Army should establish cash as a new class of supply, i.e. Class XI, or modify an existing one.

Sustainment planners must have a methodology to plan for cash, track its status through running estimates, incorporate it into the commander's LOGCOP, and recommend employment of finance units to disburse it. Understanding and anticipating cash requirements to ensure finance units have the authority and means to acquire and deploy cash immediately upon need is paramount. If planners can forecast cash requirements, commanders will be able to capitalize on the reliability of cash to close or mitigate key sustainment gaps. However, if cash is absent from sustainment forecasting and the predictive analytics used to support the commander, there is increased risk of being unable to sustain dispersed formations. Cash and the multiple

currencies required to support MDO/LSCO cannot be an afterthought in the planning process.

## Warranting and Certification

While training and planning begin to address readiness, serving as an agent of the Treasury requires an inordinate amount of technical expertise and oversight. Adherence to the Treasury Financial Manual and the Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation is not waivable. By extension of U.S. Code, disbursing officers (DO) and disbursing agents (DA) are agents of the Treasury, as they have direct access to Treasury accounts. To acquire, account for, safeguard, and disburse cash in accordance with the law and requisite regulations, DO and DA appointees must be on orders, and should be warranted and certified. Execution and management of warranting and certification programs should be part of the U.S. Army Financial Management Command's responsibility for functional oversight of technical readiness. Additionally, the Finance and Comptroller School should develop "Finance Firing Tables" to support the warranting and certification programs. These programs will give sustainment commanders the confidence that their assigned finance units are technically proficient and can perform their duties as agents of the Treasury.

## Operational Currency

The Treasury approved and printed numerous "invasion currencies" during World War II as negotiable mediums of exchange on local markets. One notable example was yellow seal U.S. dollars used to support the North African operation in 1942. Easily distinguished from

normal blue seal U.S. dollars, the thought was if an appreciable amount of this invasion currency fell into Axis hands, the Treasury could declare the entire series non-legal tender. Additionally, using yellow seal dollars as currency mitigated the risk that the French Provisional government, which was loyal to the Vichy, may not provide enough franc currency to support operations.

The necessity for cash in MDO must drive doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and policy solutions for finance units. In an effort to support division-level deployment operations in a MDO contested environment, the Army should take three actions. First, conduct a financial estimate on fort to port deployment operations. Second, coordinate with the Treasury to establish an operational currency, much like the past invasion currencies. Third, maintain the operational currencies in the vaults at the division level and above. Finance units should maintain and track by serial number an operational currency in garrison, which would only become legal tender upon executive order.

Can the Army's divisions self-deploy if there is a denial or disruption to the electrical grid, financial system, or banking system? Would maintaining an operational currency in every division's vault, that is activated upon executive order, help mitigate the effects? Would an operational currency serve as a deterrent for cyber and electromagnetic spectrum attacks? Should we use NIPRNet systems to fund all requirements necessary to project force and build combat power?

## Summary

A supply chain network is an

engineered flow of information, funding, or materiel from its suppliers to customers. In a contested or competitive environment, across a major ocean, on another continent, crossing multiple national boundaries, with numerous APODs, SPODs, and division-size elements that are in different phases of unified land operations simultaneously, it is not hard to imagine why cash will be required. Cash is a commodity necessary to ensure freedom of action and to extend operational reach. It's reliable, agile, responsive, and a key element in fiscal diplomacy. Cash is accepted and required from the strategic support area to the deep maneuver area and is worthy to be considered as a class of supply. Brigades, and echelons above, must plan for cash and the finance units that employ it. Finance units must train as part of their assigned commands with cash at home station, at CTCs, and during other major events. The Army must ensure finance units are ready to support the commander's ability to deter, fight, and win.

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**Featured Photo**  
*A Soldier in advanced individual training to become a finance management technician conducts simulated disbursing operations in support of large-scale combat operations during his course at the Finance and Comptroller School at Fort Jackson, S.C. The Soldiers are trained to conduct disbursing operations, pay agent operations, accounting, and commercial vendor services in degraded operations with little or no digital support. (Contributed Photo)*



# Civilian Logisticians

## Talent Management for Department of the Army Civilians

■ *By Jeff Garland and Kesha Johnson*

Department of Army civilian logisticians serve as an integral part of the Army team to support the defense of our nation. Selected for positions based on their specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities, civilians provide a broad range of services and capabilities while serving at all levels, from the tactical to the strategic.

As the Army's missions have evolved, so have the roles of the Army civilian logistician. The Army People Strategy describes how we will shift from simply "distributing personnel" to more deliberately managing the talents of our civilian workforce. This means creating a 21st century talent management system with policies, programs, and processes that recognize and capitalize on the unique knowledge and behaviors of all members of the Army team, allowing us to employ each individual to the maximum effect.

Highly successful businesses abandoned industrial-era labor management practices long ago. They moved to talent management, which leverages the unique productive capabilities of each person rather than treating them as interchangeable parts. The Army is doing the same with its

logisticians, ensuring the right talent is trained and ready to assume the next level of responsibility.

The Army People Strategy has four lines of effort: acquire, develop, employ, and retain talent. These LOEs enable the Army to grow and maintain a competitive workforce. This places a significant focus on the civilian workforce by providing a more integrated career management structure, broader opportunities for leadership and functional education and training, and funding for civilian professional development. In accordance with Army Regulation 690-950, Career Program Management, the Army has established 32 career programs for all Army civilians to ensure there is an adequate base of qualified and trained professional, technical, and administrative personnel to meet the Army's current and future needs through effective career program leadership, identified progressive levels, recruitment, central referral, and career development.

The Department of Army Civilian Logistics Career Management Office (CLCMO) assists the Army with its talent management strategy by hiring and developing logistics apprentices (formerly interns), managing a



*Gary Cathcart, a logistics management specialist with the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command Logistics Center, inventories new heavy-duty alternators before they are installed on Counter-Rocket Artillery Mortar (C-RAM) support vehicles in November 2019. (Photo By Miles Brown)*



credentialing program, and providing career management guidance, assistance, and central funding for developmental assignments, training, and academic degrees for careerists within Career Programs 13 – Supply Management, 17 – Material Maintenance Management, and 24 – Transportation and Distribution Management. CLCMO also assists the Army in developing policy that directly affects civilian logisticians.

The CLCMO has two talent management programs dedicated to the development of civilian logisticians, its Career Development Program and the Master Logistician Certificate Program.

The Department of Army Career Development Program is an 18-month developmental program designed to train, educate, coach, and mentor the next generation of career-minded DA logistics management professionals. The program ensures the availability of well-trained and experienced employees equipped with the right skills to support the Army civilian workforce of the future. The apprentice program includes a highly selective hiring process and trains the latest logistics

concepts and methods through formal classroom instruction and a series of rotational on-the-job training with Department of Defense agencies throughout the United States. Apprentices are hired at the GS-7 level, promoted to GS-9 after successfully completing the 12-month, and then sent to their permanent duty locations and promoted to GS-11 at 24 months.

The Master Logistician Certificate Program was created to build and deliver across the Army enterprise multi-functional logisticians capable of planning and executing mission requirements in key Master Logistician positions. The three-tier certificate program – Foundation (GS-7 to GS-11), Intermediate (GS-12 to GS-13), and Advanced (GS-13 to GS-15) – provides both training and a career path for Army civilian logisticians. The certificate program provides the Army with validated multi-functional logisticians who are well trained and have experience in at least two of the three logistics functional areas: supply management, materiel maintenance management, and transportation and distribution management.

The certificate program is accredited through the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), which verifies the

certificate program meets rigorous standards similar to any university certificate program and allows the Master Logistician (ML) designation to be added to a careerists' signature block. Careerists who earn a Master Logistician certificate at the Advanced level become a member of the Logistics Talent Pool and are eligible for Master Logistician-designated positions throughout the Army. Such positions are competitive, but competition is limited to other Master Logisticians.

A ML is an experienced professional who can operate successfully in dynamic conditions, is capable of integrating and synchronizing the sustainment functions to provide support and services, and leads with character, commitment, and competence. The Army draws on the Master Logistician Talent Pool when it requires experienced and trained employees prepared to assume technical and leadership roles.

Talent management finds the right people for the right jobs to achieve the strategic goals set forth by leadership. The Army is committed to recruiting, staffing, and succession planning for the highest-quality employees. Talent management is further refined through talent development, which focuses on how to develop employee skills and competencies. It provides learning opportunities and tools for them to advance their overall careers. The Competitive Professional Development Program and Civilian Education System (CES) further enhances the talent pool of high-quality employees by ensuring long-term success of the talent pipeline.

The Competitive Professional Development Program is a competency-based approach to provide technical, professional, managerial, and leadership training to Army civilians at appropriate times in their careers. By linking training to competencies, the Army creates a highly professional and agile civilian workforce capable of executing the current mission and continuously adapting to future demands that support the Army's strategic requirements. Professional development consists of short-term training (fewer than 120 days), long-term training (more than 120 days), and academic degree training, and it is centrally funded by the Army Civilian Training Education and Development System. These training and developmental opportunities are designed to close current competency gaps, provide depth and breadth of functional core competencies, and allow the careerist to learn new functional and leadership competencies as a part of professional development. Academic

degree training provides careerists the opportunity to obtain degrees in logistics, supply chain management, business, or management, while providing valuable learning experiences to stimulate innovation.

CES provides progressive and sequential education for civilians who are committed to developing their leadership competencies at key positions throughout their careers. Courses of instruction are provided through blended learning – both distance learning and resident instruction. CES courses are to be taken in sequence over time as civilians progress through their careers.

CLCMO's mission to grow logisticians capable of operating and leading in a joint environment aligns with The Army People Strategy efforts to acquire, develop, employ, and retain talent. Managing the talents of our Army civilian logisticians ensures we have the right individual optimizing support to our Army. Talent management and development ensures Army Civilians are agile and adaptive to adjust to ever-changing requirements.

Additional information about the Department of Army Career Development Program and Competitive Professional Development Training can be found at: [https://cascom.army.mil/s\\_staff/clcmo/index.htm#](https://cascom.army.mil/s_staff/clcmo/index.htm#). Information about the Master Logistician Certificate Program can be found at: <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/civilian-logistics-career-management-office-cp-131724/projects/os-0346-certificate-program>.

**Jeff Garland is a career program manager with the Civilian Logistics Career Management Office (CLCMO), at Fort Lee, Virginia. In this position he exercises leadership and provides career management guidance for approximately 25,000 Army careerists assigned to the Materiel Maintenance Management Career Program. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology and a Master of Science Degree in Human Resource Management and Development. His military education includes an abundance of leadership and management training such as the Army Command and General Staff College (resident course), Army Force Management Course, Support Operations Course Phase I/II and Combined Arms and Services Staff School among others.**

**Kesha Johnson is a career management specialist assigned to the CLCMO. In this role, she is responsible for managing the Master Logistician Certificate Program, supports enterprise-level civilian logistics career development policies, projects, and programs, and she provides expert advice and customer service on professional education, training, and development. Johnson has been an Army Civilian for 17 years, starting her career as a Transportation Management Intern. She holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science, with a concentration in Public Administration, from Norfolk State University, and a master's degree in Business Administration, with a concentration in Management, from Florida Institute of Technology.**



Mark Robinson, material handler (left), Pfc. Saurav Shrestha, 68J Medical Logistician, and Paul Russell, Chief of Logistics, inspect the first shipment of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020, at Madigan Army Medical Center on Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Tacoma, Wash. (Photo by John Wayne Liston)





# BCAP

The Battalion Commander Assessment Program

By Maj. Christopher J. Denton

Candidates from cohort 5 attempt to traverse an obstacle at the Leader Reaction Course during the Battalion Commander Assessment Program January 23, 2020, at Fort Knox, Ky. More than 800 officers will complete cognitive and non-cognitive, physical, verbal and written assessments that will provide a more holistic look of an officer before being selected for battalion command. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Schroeder, Army Talent Management Task Force)

The Army Talent Management Task Force (ATMTF) executed the second Battalion Commander Assessment Program (BCAP) iteration in November 2020. You have likely read other articles describing individual experiences from the first BCAP cohort. I will attempt to avoid repetition since the program remains fundamentally the same. Rather, I will take this opportunity to add insights that Sustainment leaders will find relevant and should consider as they prepare for future BCAP iterations.

BCAP is the Army's program to determine an officer's fitness for command and strategic leadership potential. BCAP has become a requirement for officers competing for battalion command opportunities and consists of a four-day assessment conducted at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Each candidate is assessed on physical fitness, verbal and written communications, and through cognitive and non-cognitive assessments with the program culminating in a panel interview with senior Army officers. In conjunction with the Centralized Selection List process, the BCAP results help ensure that the Army is



selecting the best qualified officers for command.

During my rotation in November, I noted three themes that stood out to me: resources currently available, organizational culture, and self-awareness.

## Resources

The ATMTF Battalion Commander Assessment Program website, located at <https://talent.army.mil/bcap/>, has an abundance of resources for incoming candidates, including a welcome brief, candidate guide, relevant news articles,

and an introduction to the Army Comprehensive Talent Interview panel. These were helpful in demystifying the process and useful in preparing for BCAP.

I recommend spending some time with both the candidate guide and webinar, regardless of when you anticipate attending BCAP. They presented everything I needed to know to navigate the BCAP process. For example, they explain which events screen for an individual's command readiness, which contribute to the Order of Merit List (OML) score, and which inform the

senior leader panel interview. They also explain how to prepare for each event.

There are no attempts to deceive candidates. The ATMTF established transparent processes to ensure every candidate has the opportunity to succeed and present their best self. The task force took to heart the principles of fairness, consistency, and safety and went to great lengths to reduce the variables that could stymie the process.

In addition to preparing officers for BCAP, the online repository sets the tone for the ATMTF and BCAP process. From the instant I received

notification of my BCAP participation, the ATMTF team displayed a level of professionalism that underscored the priority the Army has placed on identifying the next generation of battalion commanders.

## Organizational Culture

I admit, my first read-through of the candidate guide was somewhat self-serving, and understandably so – I was the one attending and I was the one responsible for my performance. However, as I progressed through the five-day assessment, I refocused my attention to the opportunities for leaders to develop their people and enhance their organization. For example, while being assessed on my own communication acumen, I questioned how well I had prepared my subordinates in their communication skills. I stopped thinking about myself and started thinking about how I can create a unit culture that encourages continuous development.

And then there was the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT). Almost every discussion in advance of BCAP attendance centered on the APFT. The test was professionally executed to the Army standard and should not be a cause for concern, especially given that all candidates had at least 16 years performing to the tested standard. The real lesson was that not all units hold their people accountable to that standard. My grader, for example, did not count two of my push-ups, and as soon as he said no-rep, I understood exactly why. Others in my cohort had many more push-ups not counted. This made me consider, again, that perhaps we don't hold ourselves and

our subordinates to the exact Army standard.

I realized that all the assessments at BCAP, whether of physical fitness, communication skills, or cognitive ability, were testing against standards that had been spelled out throughout my career. I knew my ability to meet those standards, but had I done enough to ensure others could as well?

## Self-awareness

BCAP also offers a unique opportunity to gain deeper insight into each candidate. The observations of an operational psychologist, peer and subordinate feedback, cognitive/non-cognitive assessments, and psychometric testing informed the senior leader panel of my true readiness for command. While the information from the session with the operational psychologist is used by the panel, I found the final out-brief a priceless opportunity to gain new insight into my own character.

The psychologist's out-brief explained how my dominant characteristics might influence my leadership abilities. This candid and dynamic feedback helped me appreciate where my actions may not align with my self-image, and how a misalignment may have unintended personal or professional consequences. More relevant to my success as a battalion commander, I needed to understand how a unit might perceive me as a leader. This level of self-awareness is useful, especially given the variety of organizations we may be called upon to lead and the cultures within each of those units.

As I reflected on my results from both the psychometric testing and out-

brief with the psychologist, I thought deeply about the type of command I might be best suited to. Had I gone through a similar assessment before submitting my command preferences, my list might have been very different. The BCAP process as a whole shifted my thinking and will undoubtedly help me prepare for any future assignment by exploiting my strengths and bettering my weaknesses.

## The Take-away

The Sustainment community has an opportunity to capitalize on the efforts of the ATMTF to develop our junior and mid-level leaders. By utilizing the resources available and upholding standards universally across our organizations, we will develop successful leaders at all levels.

I encourage everyone to keep an open mind when it comes to how others view you, and discover how external perceptions affect your leadership and your unit writ large. We shouldn't wait until attendance at BCAP highlights areas for improvement to become more effective leaders. We can take action now to embrace the Army's approach to ensuring we are developing the best leaders going forward. And whether I command a battalion or not, I will certainly implement these thoughts in every job I have henceforth.

**Maj. Christopher J. Denton is currently serving as an Office of the Secretary of Defense Sustainment Fellow following his assignment with the Joint Staff J4. He is a graduate of the Transportation Officer Basic Course, Combined Logistics Career Course, and Command and General Staff College. He holds a bachelor's degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and a master's degree from the University of Kansas.**



Maj. Gen. J.P. McGee, director of the Talent Management Task Force, answers questions from candidates during the out-brief and after action review portion of the Battalion Commanders Assessment Program January 21, 2020, at Fort Knox, Ky. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Schroeder, Army Talent Management Task Force)



# Feeding THE Force

## Class I in a Compromised Environment

■ *By Lt. Col. Christopher M. Richardson, Command Sgt. Maj. Willie C. Allen Jr., Maj. Phillip Hetteburg, and 1st Lt. Rebecca Jeffrey*

In September 2020, 2nd Cavalry Regiment (2CR) was faced with an outbreak of COVID-19 that rapidly spread within its Regimental Engineering Squadron (RES). The outbreak happened after a few Soldiers attended a festival in the local city of Nuremberg and a spouse attended a social gathering. Unit surveillance testing identified the Soldiers and the dependent; unfortunately, these personnel unwittingly had direct contact with several others. Out of an abundance of caution, the squadron immediately underwent 100% testing and isolation. In an effort to safeguard the remaining and adjacent forces, the entire RES was placed under isolation restrictions that day. Only 24 hours after identification of the first case, it was identified that several others within the RES had contracted the virus.

The outbreak and isolation restrictions caused an immediate need for field feeding of the quarantined personnel. A squadron of Soldiers (around 650 Soldiers) were no longer able to obtain food from the dining facility (DFAC), commissary, or similar infrastructure. This created a unique problem set with the additional difficulty of the squadron being located on a different post than their parent unit, 2CR.

### Defining the Problem and Building Solutions

Sustainment leadership did not just have to respond immediately, but with caution – safeguarding our force was our number one concern. Soldiers would not be able to feed from a mermite line or obtain Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) distributed similar to a field exercise due to the possible





interaction they could be having with other personnel. The Soldiers in the barracks would need to be brought food in order to quarantine and prevent spread of the virus. The Regimental Support Squadron (RSS) and RES leadership were in contact early and often with each other to develop courses of action to immediately deliver Class I to RES Soldiers residing in two barracks housing around 145 Soldiers each. The units developed two courses of action to support this emerging requirement.

The first course of action was to inventory how many MREs were available across the regiment to determine how long the unit could sustain in case the DFAC could not support. After inventory was completed, it was determined that the two squadrons had seven days of supply (DOS) to feed both barracks of Soldiers, if needed for this duration. Soldiers in each room would receive a 96-hour supply, which would be enough to sustain them through isolation to ensure the Soldier was negative for COVID-19. This method would prevent Soldiers from co-mingling with each other and potentially infecting other Soldiers.

The second course of action was to have mermite meals delivered to the barracks three times a day in order to support Soldiers while Restriction of Movement was in place. Soldiers from the forward support troop not affiliated with the trace would take all preventive measures available to fix meals and not contaminate in the process. In an effort to minimize contact transmission, predetermined personnel would deliver mermite meals to the isolation facility. Clamshell plates and saran wrap were used to prepare the meals in each building; personnel would deliver to each room wearing gloves and masks as PPE. Soldier delivering the meals would knock on the door of the isolated Soldier, and then the isolated Soldier would wait 10 seconds before opening the door to retrieve the meal. This additional safety measure would prevent further containment, while safeguarding the supporting Soldiers.

## Actions Taken

The 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), located on the same post as the RES, reached out to the 2CR RSS the evening following the outbreak to lay bare the logistical constraints of immediately shifting to mermite-based support for those troops. In a joint effort between the RSS Support Operations (SPO) and 18th CSSB SPO,

emergency provisions were set in place so that the 18th CSSB would provide immediate support while receiving assistance from 2CR DFAC assets so that they may work through the near-term logistics hurdles. For the first N+1, +2, +3 days, Soldiers were told to purchase their own rations from the commissary or on-post dining facilities and were then provided a refund in the form of meal vouchers. This would sustain them for the first 96 hours of quarantine. 2CR held the 96 hours' worth of MREs in stock in case of an emergency. At N+4, the 2CR DFAC supplied rations for the next 24 hours in an effort to ensure Soldiers were getting hot chow. At N+5 days, 18th CSSB took over mermite operations in order to cut down on the logistical support needed to transport the 2CR mermite supply.

## Lessons for the Future

As operations returned to normal with testing proving that the outbreak had been isolated and contained, units increased their basic load of MRE stock in the case of another outbreak, supply staff increased orders for paper products to transport meals, and DFAC soldiers continued to be regularly tested in order to prevent cross contamination. The logistical response tested 2CR's systems, communication lines, and our external relationships. Building relations between support structures has proved vital to units located in Europe and other OCONUS locations. These units are reliant on one another for continual readiness during operations and mission support for the required yearly international exercises.

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**1st Lt. Rebecca Jeffrey is currently the Deputy Support Operations Officer for the Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment. She is a graduate of Medical Service Officer Basic Course.**

### Featured Photo

**U.S. Army Sgt. Karina Micahel, a culinary specialist assigned to 2nd Cavalry Regiment, 7th Army Training Command, prepares meals for U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, at Grafenwoehr Training Area to support Atlantic Resolve in Germany, June 23, 2020. (Photo by Sgt. Allelea Oliver)**

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