

The Expeditionary Sustainment Advantage

■ By Maj. Gen. Larry D. Wyche



The Army has become adept in recent years at deploying on a predetermined Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle in order to support ongoing operations. Institutional knowledge of the theaters and defined missions, along with mature lines of communication, has made movements in and out of theater almost routine.

However, challenges will arise as we prepare to move from an Army at war to an Army of preparation. The Army must regain the skills and techniques of rapidly deploying an operationally significant force to an austere theater while conducting and sustaining unified land operations.

The Future Army

The chief of staff of the Army's future vision includes forces that are tailorable, scalable, rapidly deployable, and able to respond to contingencies and conduct forcible entry operations anywhere in the world on short notice. The Army will accomplish this through an effective mix of Total Army Force capabilities, a network of installations at home and abroad, and Army pre-positioned stocks.

We must reinvigorate our core deployment and sustainment competencies. Force 2025—regionally aligned and based in the continental United States (CONUS)—must be prepared for surprise contingencies that will continue to test our ability to deploy and conduct operations in order to prevent, shape, and win in a complex environment.

What We Must Do

To accomplish this, we must better define our sustainment requirements by echelon and type of operation. Our plans must be updated and validated to ensure we account for the latest organizational and doctrinal changes. Once the demand is known,

we must match our capabilities to meet the requirement.

If there are gaps, we must pursue technologies that allow us to reduce the demand. We must ensure we create and retain the lean and agile sustainment capabilities that the warfighter requires.

Army pre-positioned stocks compose one leg of our strategic mobility triad and enable the rapid air deployment of Army forces. Units that do not deploy their unit equipment and supplies will be required to draw pre-positioned stocks. The location and composition of these stocks must be validated to ensure they best support the operational commander. Army units must relearn how to fall in on this equipment and transition to decisive action operations.

Lastly, we must ensure that our strategic mobility capabilities provide the extended operational reach, freedom of action, and prolonged endurance the Army needs to execute unified land operations.

Finding Support Solutions

The Army sustainment community has done an excellent job of aligning its formations and capabilities to support the combatant commanders. The Global Response Force continues to evolve as units rotate into the mission.

The Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM) has partnered with the Global Response Force and regionally aligned forces to determine the capabilities needed to support forcible entry operations. We are also capturing their requirements for mobility and a lean sustainment tail and working to develop solutions. The CASCOM team is using unit input to develop long-term solutions that will help all Army units deploy rapidly to an austere environment.

I have visited our special operations forces (SOF) and listened to their les-

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sons learned. These regionally aligned Soldiers are operating in very austere locations with little or no outside sustainment support. I have seen their ability to reduce their sustainment equipment to the bare essentials in order to maximize their mobility. Our team will use solutions that SOF units have developed and will try to apply them to minimize sustainment requirements for the entire sustainment community.

REDI

CASCOM is supporting the chief of staff of the Army's priority for a globally responsive Army with the Rapid Expeditionary Deployment Initiative (REDI), which is designed to improve unit and installation deployment readiness. In contrast to the deliberately planned and executed deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, REDI refocuses our Army with an expeditionary mindset that makes it capable of conducting a full range of military operations with little to no notice.

In partnership with the Headquarters, Department of the Army, (HQDA) G-3 and G-4, CASCOM is improving the Army's deployment processes, policies, doctrine, and training. We are assisting HQDA in updating Army Regulation (AR) 525-93, Army Deployment and Redeployment, which will be published this fiscal year. A key component of AR 525-93 is the establishment of a command deployment discipline program (CDDP), which sets deployment standards for units at all echelons.

Annually, units at the company level and above will be required to conduct a CDDP inspection to certify that their knowledge is current and units are prepared. This will help units identify deployment readiness deficiencies, improve both unit and installation deployment skills associated with moving units from fort to port, and ensure proper collection, transfer, and use of deployment data.

The Deployment Readiness Exercise

Another key component to improving efficiency and effectiveness for

deployment and redeployment operations is a reinvigorated deployment readiness exercise (DRE) program.

The purposes of the DRE program are to conduct realistic training, have units perform their deployment mission in a scenario to test what they have learned, and allow them to experience the pressures of a live operation. Each unit will have an annual requirement to conduct a DRE tailored to the level of the unit and its current ARFORGEN cycle status.

Units in the ARFORGEN reset pool will conduct at least one level 1 DRE annually. A level 1 DRE is designed to evaluate a unit's ability to alert, assemble, and conduct Soldier readiness tasks. It also ensures that appropriate deployment certifications, appointment orders, standard operating procedures, movement requests, and other documents are in place for a no-notice deployment.

Units in the train/ready pool will conduct a minimum of one level 2 DRE annually, which includes all level 1 DRE activities plus enacting plans and testing systems and processes. This is designed to evaluate a unit's ability to complete load-out operations and installation turn-in activities that support a limited no-notice deployment.

Units should actually pack a representative sample of unit equipment onto transportation platforms, but installation turn-in can be simulated. Transportation mock-ups may be used.

Units in the available pool will conduct a minimum of one level 2 DRE annually and be prepared to participate in a level 3 DRE. In a level 3 DRE, a unit will be evaluated on its ability to conduct strategic movement by air or surface in support of a limited no-notice deployment.

Units will be expected to deploy personnel and equipment to a designated site, execute their training mission, and redeploy assets to home station. Their unit deployment list will be followed, and their unit deployment readiness will be validated.

Finally, the units must confirm the installation's ability to support the de-

ployment load out and validate that the force projection infrastructure is sufficient and maintained.

DPMO

To assist units in becoming better prepared to rapidly deploy, the Deployment Process Modernization Office (DPMO) has taken deployment readiness to the next level by "operationalizing" REDI. DPMO is accomplishing this mission through multiple efforts, including a one-stop repository website for deployment planners called the REDI Toolbox.

The REDI Toolbox is a deployment assistance team program in which subject matter experts use the REDI lessons learned strategy to collect, analyze, and act on deployment-related findings from the field.

DPMO is making products as user-friendly as possible by using technology, including web and mobile apps, to support the warfighter.

Additionally, the DPMO staff regularly participates in the Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM) Command Engagement Program to discuss current deployment initiatives, raise awareness of REDI products, and encourage participation across the deployment community.

Expeditionary sustainment will play a key role as we posture ourselves to be a CONUS-based Army. The Army is developing tools and initiatives to regain the advantage that expeditionary sustainment provides the Army over its adversaries.

Readers desiring additional information about REDI are encouraged to log in to the REDI Toolbox at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/689011>. I also encourage you to visit the Sustainment Unit One Stop located at http://www.cascom.army.mil/g_staff/g3/SUOS/.

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