



Transportation specialists from the 823rd Movement Control Team and the 1120th Transportation Battalion ground-guide a vehicle in the marshaling yard of the joint maneuver training center at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. (Photo by Spc. Caitlyn Byrne)

Combining Three Transportation Specialties Into One

■ By Maj. David J. Forsyth, Maj. Joel M. Machak, and Maj. Curtis L. Yankie

If one thing remains constant in the Army, it is change. Whether it is in the camouflage pattern for the combat uniform, the way we conduct physical training, or force structure, change is constant. In this ever-changing environment, Army sustainers must be adaptive and responsive in order to provide the best possible support.

The Army may be able to provide

increased support by combining the three transportation military occupational specialties (MOSs) that perform most of the tasks associated with the deployment processes. These include MOSs 88H (cargo specialist), 88M (motor transport operator), and 88N (transportation movement coordinator).

Consolidating MOSs is hardly a new concept. In 1993, the Army

created the MOS 92A (automated logistical specialist) by combining MOSs 76C, 76P, 76V, and 76X. Today's 92A Soldier performs the duties of 16 supply MOSs from the Vietnam War era.

Recent and Upcoming Changes

The regionally aligned forces (RAF) concept is an example of one of the latest major changes un-

dertaken by the Army. Under RAF, forces are aligned with a geographic combatant commander on a full-time basis with the goal of deterring crises through partnerships rather than deploying Soldiers in response to a crisis. Simply put, the vision of RAF is to transform the Army into a regionally engaged, agile, culturally savvy force capable of global response.

In addition to the RAF efforts, the Army is in the process of transitioning from an Army at war to an Army of preparation for rapid response. This preparation involves a great deal of focus on the command supply discipline and command deployment discipline programs.

At the same time, the Army is downsizing to meet budget con-

straints, meaning that units will have to meet mission requirements with fewer resources.

Meeting Transportation Needs

With the known requirements to engage partner forces globally and prepare to deploy forces rapidly with fewer resources, we must ask this key question: Does the Army have the right transportation occupational specialty structure to support future deployment requirements?

Currently, the roles of unit movement officer, hazmat certifier, and air load planner are additional duties appointed by unit commanders to Soldiers within their formations. These additional duties are not the Soldiers' primary role within the

organization, and quite often they do not perform these roles until it is time for a unit to deploy.

Additionally, the personnel who are appointed to these duties tend to have limited longevity in the position, meaning that periodically replacements must be appointed and trained. As a result, organizations often require a great deal of assistance from movement specialists in higher or adjacent organizations in order to properly deploy their units.

The population of movement specialists who most often assist Army units in the deployment process is composed of the installation transportation office or transportation management office civilian workforce, mobility warrant officers, and Soldiers with the MOS 88N.



The military personnel in this group fall into the category of low density MOSs, meaning that they account for an extremely small portion of the Army population. For example, a typical light infantry brigade combat team of approximately 3,300 Soldiers will have three or four transportation movement coordinators.

Career Management Field 88

The Army will benefit from restructuring the career management field 88 because of the shortfall in deployment expertise at the tactical and operational levels and an increasing requirement for deployment preparedness.

Currently, MOSs 88H, 88M, and 88N perform much of the deploy-

ment process. All of these specialties share in planning, preparing, and executing unit deployments, but they receive highly functionalized training, which results in a stove-piping of involvement in the overall deployment process.

Soldiers with 88H and 88M MOSs spend comparatively less time performing their actual MOS duties in garrison than do Soldiers of many other specialties. According to the current career management field 88 career map, an 88-series Soldier will have little opportunity to interact with or supervise other 88-series Soldiers outside of his primary MOS until he reaches the grade of E-8. This further perpetuates the functional nature of the career field, leaving senior noncom-

missioned officers somewhat unprepared to provide expert advice and training to those outside of their immediate MOSs.

A Mobility Specialist MOS

The Army should combine the 88H, 88M, and 88N MOSs, creating an MOS 88C (mobility specialist). By combining these three MOSs into one, the Army will reap the benefits of widely proliferated deployment expertise, which directly affects deployment readiness and maximizes the use of personnel.

The core competencies of the 88C must be centered on the requirements that are uniformly applicable to every deployment: deployment planning, distribution, and documentation. By focusing on these



Staff Sgt. Erik A. Jordan, an Army Transportation School instructor, grades Spc. Yessinia Y. Beyer, a student in the Kalmar RT-240 Rough Terrain Container Handler's Course, during the operator exam portion of the course at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Alexander Burnett)

core competencies, 88C Soldiers will be the process owners and functional experts for unit deployments.

Deployment planning. The core deployment planning competencies could include movement planning, Integrated Computerized Deployment System load planning, cargo preparation, transportation movement release procedures, and general equipment maintenance.

Distribution. The core distribution competencies could include mobility operations, in-transit visibility, the Battle Command Sustainment Support System, and general equipment operation.

Documentation. The core documentation competencies could focus on hazmat documentation and certification, Transportation Coordinators–Automated Information for Movements System II, and customs documentation.

The requirement to operate materials-handling equipment and trucks will become a corollary duty for MOS 88C personnel based on unit-specific requirements. Every unit is equipped differently; therefore, each unit has different requirements for licensed operators.

The model for equipment training relies heavily on the concept of postponement. Postponement is a concept in supply chain management where the manufacturer produces a generic product that can be modified at the later stages before shipping it to the customer. In this case, the product is the 88C Soldier, and the demand refers to the unit-specific equipment operator requirements they must fill upon arrival at their new unit. All the while, the 88C Soldier maintains the core competency skills to assist in the deployment process regardless of duty assignment.

Implementation

The implementation of this MOS consolidation would require a significant amount of effort from a broad group of stakeholders and involve all aspects of doctrine, organi-

zation, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities. The Army must first determine the demand for this MOS in the Active and Reserve components.

Perhaps, like the railway-specific specialties (MOSs 88P, 88T, and 88U), the Reserve component may benefit from retaining some 88M, 88N, and 88H authorizations based on component-specific circumstances.

Initial-entry requirements, programs of instruction, and new career maps would also have to be developed. Initial-entry requirements should include the ability to obtain a security clearance and achievement of minimum general technical scores. Tables of organization and equipment would have to be modified for units with 88C Soldiers in their formations, increasing the dissemination of automation systems for deployment and distribution.

Currently the training for the three specialties occurs at three different Army installations: Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia; Fort Lee, Virginia; and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. From these locations, the Army must choose the optimal location for MOS 88C training based on yet-to-be-determined criteria.

The employment of MOS 88C could manifest in any number of ways. One such way could be that the subordinate unit that has the most 88Cs will serve as the deployment preparation process owner for the next echelon of command. For example, forward support companies would take on the responsibility for preparing its battalion's equipment for deployment. This general principle also could be applied to combat sustainment support battalions and sustainment brigades.

The current Army transportation force structure should be optimized in order to better meet emerging deployment requirements brought about by the RAF concept and other requirements. By establishing a new, consolidated mobility

MOS, the Army can optimize the deployment process, increase key deployment skills among a greater number of units, and create a single deployment process owner at the unit level.

As the military faces an environment of diminishing resources, it is vital that we look to maximize the utilization of our personnel; an MOS consolidation of the 88H, 88M, and 88N would do just that.

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