

# New Alignment Enhances Training, Planning, and Resourcing

■ By Lt. Gen. Gustave “Gus” Perna



In the last issue, I outlined the importance of synchronizing sustainment efforts for the Army of 2025 and beyond. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, chief of staff of the Army, recently helped us take a big step in that direction when he directed the alignment of sustainment brigades with Army divisions.

In short, by July, all Active component sustainment brigades will be aligned with an associated division headquarters, and Army National Guard sustainment brigades will follow suit shortly thereafter.

This is a significant decision that will have many positive results. It will ensure uniform alignment of sustainment brigades in peacetime, facilitate training, planning, and resourcing of the brigades, and improve their ability to provide direct support for divisions—very important during this time in which nine of 10 Active component divisions are committed.

## Focusing on Division Support

Because of Gen. Odierno’s deci-

sion, we have a great opportunity to further focus efforts on supporting divisions as we redevelop our ability to execute large-scale expeditionary operations. It is important to understand that this home-station relationship will not change the doctrinal employment of sustainment brigades for operations and contingencies.

Some will note that this new relationship appears similar to structures we had during the days of the Army of Excellence organization, when every division had a sustainment brigade called a division support command (DISCOM). There is a major difference, however.

Today’s structure does not include corps support groups, the brigade-level sustainment units that reinforced support for divisions and provided direct support for nondivisional units in the corps area. Instead, division-aligned sustainment brigades will retain responsibility for supporting echelons-above-brigade and echelons-above-division units in their areas of responsibility.

In 2004, when we began transforming the Army to its modular, brigade-centric structure, we were an Army with abundant resources and predictable deployment cycles and missions.

Now we are in a period of declining resources with reduced requirements for forward operating base-type logistics and an increased need to project large formations on short notice anywhere in the world.

Meanwhile, in garrison, many of our brigade combat teams are undergoing extensive reorganization while simultaneously maintaining readiness for global employment. And our

materiel management challenges are growing, not diminishing.

Sustainment commanders must meet these challenges by establishing closer ties and synchronizing efforts across their supported division staffs.

During training exercises with their aligned divisions, combat sustainment support battalions, under the mission command of sustainment brigades, will provide the capabilities that had been shifted out of divisions as part of the brigade combat team reorganization. These capabilities include troop transportation, supply distribution, bulk fuel storage and distribution, and water production, storage, and distribution.

## Solidifying the Change

For sustainment brigades in Korea and Hawaii, this alignment is a big change, but for others it is less of an adjustment, since six of the 11 active component sustainment brigades have been aligned for some time with home-station divisions. However, changes to patches and unit designations will further strengthen the bonds.

Soldiers in sustainment brigades, including subordinate units, will now wear the supported division patch. Units will be redesignated so that the sustainment brigade is called a “division sustainment brigade” and is numbered the same as its supported division.

Some brigades also will change lineage and honors. Although Soldiers are rightly proud of unit lineage, redesignation is not uncommon during periods of transition.

All of these actions will help solidify home-station relationships between

maneuver and sustainment units, allowing us to identify and manage logistics talent on a broader scale, develop leaders, and increase esprit de corps across logistics formations within the Army.

### The Timeline

We have an aggressive timeline to make these changes. The Army G-4 and G-3 partnered to develop implementing guidance, which was released in an execute order shortly after Odierno's guidance was published.

By the end of May, selected Active component sustainment brigades will complete mission command adjustments with their aligned divisions, change patches, and receive new unit designations.

Remaining Active component sustainment brigades will complete the transition by the end of July. Since this is a total Army effort, Army National Guard sustainment brigades

are also developing implementation plans.

I appreciate the challenges associated with this transition. As a brigade commander, I had the privilege of commanding the 4th Infantry Division DISCOM during its transformation into a sustainment brigade (one of the first DISCOMs to make that transition) before deploying to a combat theater.

The transformation had positive outcomes, including greater mission capabilities, the ability to support more units across a much larger area, and an almost seamless ability to synchronize logistics operations with the expeditionary sustainment commands.

Positive outcomes will also be evident as our sustainment brigades work through this transition. Challenges will undoubtedly arise because change is difficult. Responding

to the challenges will require quality leadership.

We still have to plan how we will execute materiel and distribution management. That is being worked now, and updates will be provided. The bottom line is that maneuver commanders should never have to worry about or be constrained by sustainment.

I am confident we have the right leaders and Soldiers to implement these changes and to anticipate and resolve problems. I look forward to hearing about your successes.

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# NEW ALIGNMENT ENHANCES MISSION COMMAND

TRAINING



PLANNING



RESOURCING

