



To build joint sustainment coordination capability, senior enlisted leaders from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Coast Guard are briefed on March 11, 2016, about the capabilities of the 8th Theater Sustainment Command's Logistical Support Vessel-4, the Lt. Gen. William B. Bunker at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. (Photo by Sgt. Jon Heinrich)

Joint Theater Sustainment Integration Is Within Reach in the Pacific

■ By Maj. Gen. Edward F. Dorman III and Maj. Marc C. Vielledent

Army power is joint power. As a concept, joint sustainment is not a new idea; however, implementing and executing it is routinely not performed well. Throughout the years, a joint sustainment concept has gained support but has also received criticism based on a variety of factors ranging from faulty organizational constructs and span of control problems to budget constraints and a recurring lack of political will.

The future force is being built with a greater emphasis on joint interdependence, synergy, and cross-service solutions. The Pacific theater is the perfect battle lab to test the potential of such solutions, even if these solutions remain primarily condition-based.

The Time Is Now

Considering the lack of predictability in both resourcing and the Pacific operational environment, there

will never be a better time than now to examine the possibility of joint theater sustainment integration.

Logistics must happen first or maneuver cannot occur. But logistics cannot occur without assured access to the global commons and the ability to gain and maintain access to denied areas. If we wait to test the viability of joint theater sustainment during some notional D-Day in the future, it will be too late.

Integrating what we call joint, interorganizational, multinational, and commercially-enabled (JIM-C) partners into sustainment organizations could flatten mission command processes, which would, in turn, allow a joint force commander (JFC) to combine elements of both national and regional power. As the only two-star logistics headquarters

during these meetings, they did reach some middle ground. They agreed that greater visibility of theater-level sustainment practices and processes is necessary—specifically in the Pacific theater.

Because the leaders faced mutual resourcing shortfalls, they shared the sentiment that they should collectively look at how the Pacific sustain-

ment solutions to strengthen the land component and continually looking for innovative ways to repurpose capabilities for the Pacific JFCs.

The collective power of a joint sustainment headquarters is undoubtedly greater than the sum of what individual components can currently bring to bear. With this in mind, the TSC is the most viable sustainment headquarters in the Pacific to spearhead efforts toward joint theater sustainment integration.

The 8th TSC recognizes that a joint theater sustainment concept would offset the potential for JFCs to become encumbered with uncoordinated logistics and disconnected, ambiguous messaging regarding sustainment priorities. By offering to serve as a joint theater sustainment coordinating component command, the 8th TSC could help fill this void.

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in the Pacific, the 8th Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) is best postured to lead this effort.

Reaching Common Ground

While few disagree that the effective delivery of logistics is crucial to the JFC, the challenge lies in reaching a common agreement and understanding of the purpose of joint logistics. Joint logistics in the Pacific is necessary because the services seldom have sufficient capabilities to independently support the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) and its subordinate unified commands. The sum of pooled resources and efforts always outweighs any individual service's capability or performance.

From October to December 2015, the 8th TSC conducted engagements and office calls with its Pacific sustainment partners and sister-service leaders. These engagements started a conversation about the potential for developing a joint theater sustainment concept to support not only the Army of the Pacific but also the entire joint force. This joint theater sustainment concept centers on a component that could coordinate, synchronize, and integrate sustainment organizations, functions, and processes.

While participants did not agree on every detail of joint sustainment

ment community precisely responds and conducts sustainment integration. A greater unity of effort through PACOM's boards, bureaus, centers, cells, and working groups may possibly be part of the right solution at the right time.

Designating an Integrator

Routinely traveling across 16 time zones has forced Pacific-theater sustainment organizations, including the 8th TSC, to rely on the immense capabilities of allies' and partners' commercial assets. While these capabilities have recently become a viable option, this solution lacks a primary synchronizer and integrator.

Designating a joint theater sustainment coordinating component command would provide additional options, even if only on a conditional basis, to enhance support for PACOM, U.S. Forces Korea, and U.S. Forces Japan. Effective joint logistics depends on clear roles and authorities coupled with strong relationships among the global stakeholders within the joint logistics domain.

As the senior sustainment headquarters in the Pacific theater and as an Army service component command theater enabling command, the 8th TSC is already charged with providing responsive, redundant, and

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