

Lock-Step Readiness Requires a Well-Rounded Soldier

Training sustainment Soldiers, maintaining equipment are equal parts of readiness.

■ By Command Sgt. Maj. James K. Sims

Throughout my travels as the command sergeant major of the Army Materiel Command, I have seen great excitement as units tackle the business of re-establishing systems across our various posts, camps, and stations.

To win in a complex world, Army logisticians must be able to provide the timely and consistent support our Army expects and deserves. The ability to install, operate, and maintain each piece of equipment within an organization is a critical component of materiel readiness.

Equipment readiness is a lock-step process that starts at home stations and continues through deployments. Whether they are deploying to a theater for contingency operations or to one of the combat training centers, sustainment Soldiers must always strive to maintain the highest level of readiness.

Readiness extends well beyond maintaining our equipment. Every Soldier must be both physically and mentally prepared. This means that every sustainment Soldier must be physically fit and technically proficient.

Logisticians have the unique challenge of blending their everyday responsibilities with the ability to employ their expertise in the tactical, operational, and strategic environments. Diligent training prepares them to lead convoys and call for air, medical, and fire support as necessary.

Responsiveness

In order to ensure responsiveness, sustainment Soldiers must be highly adaptable subject matter experts. They must be able to anticipate needs, accumulate resources, and provide timely and accurate support.

Each sustainment military occupational specialty plays an integral role in readiness. For example, transportation coordinators must identify the most efficient mode of transportation through rail, sea, or ground for a specified mission, know the deployment requirements for the installation, and be able to communicate those requirements to the units they support.

A tracked vehicle repairer must correctly identify deficiencies, conduct services to standard, and install repair parts. And an automated logistical specialist must be proficient in the Global Combat Support System—Army and work closely with maintainers to ensure the correct parts are ordered and received.

Readiness

Part of building and sustaining readiness is understanding the process. To do so, we must leverage sustainment training to ensure all Soldiers understand their roles and comprehend the big picture of how sustainment forces are aligned, from the forward support company to the theater sustainment command. Sustainers should also know what strategic assets are available to support their missions.

The Army Materiel Command has a multitude of resources available to every unit. It delivers solutions for contracting, transportation, research and development, and life-cycle management from the factory to the foxhole.

Most Soldiers interact with Army field support brigades and battalions that provide training, maintenance, and supply parts solutions through brigade logistics support teams or logistics assistance representatives. These assets provide sustainment Soldiers and units access to the entire materiel command enterprise and its solutions for operational readiness.

Logisticians executing sustainment operations are critical enablers to readiness across our Army. The development of our Soldiers, coupled with investment in their abilities to install, operate, and maintain equipment, will ensure that the Army remains ready during this transition to sustainable readiness.

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