



Sustainment Integration: The Foundation of Expeditionary Readiness

■ By Brig. Gen. Chris Sharpsten

Soldiers with the 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion secure a palletized load system to a railcar, on July 28, 2015, in preparation for their Joint Readiness Training Center rotation at Fort Polk, Louisiana. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael K. Selvage)



FEATURES

The 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command is focused on achieving unity of effort within its sustainment networks to project and sustain combat power.

The XVIII Airborne Corps is the strike force at the center of the Army's expeditionary capability. Its ability to project combat power on short notice into both permissive and nonpermissive environments to the far reaches of the world cannot be matched. The XVIII Airborne Corps provides the spearhead forces of the Army's Global Response Force (GRF). To remain credible, it must always be ready.

This readiness requires careful and constant oversight. Within the XVIII Airborne Corps, sustainment formations are focused on providing that oversight through a synchronized sustainment network. No single unit is responsible for sustainment mission command. Instead, sustainers operate as a unified team. Each sustainment unit has unique roles and responsibilities based on mission requirements from the XVIII Airborne Corps.

At the corps level, the 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) orchestrates sustainment operations affecting deployability, readiness, and expeditionary sustainment. The 3rd ESC monitors fleet readiness and ensures installation support plans are focused on the ability to deploy combat power on contingency time lines.

Additionally, the 3rd ESC works closely with the division sustainment brigades to monitor gaps in sustainment support capacity and capability at installations in the corps' footprint. The 3rd ESC partners with the strategic enterprise to leverage its capabilities and extend its operational reach to the XVIII Airborne Corps' tactical formations.

Sustainment operations in the XVIII Airborne Corps have become a living example of the Army Total Force Policy. The 3rd ESC started participating in both active and reserve component exercises at the baseline level but expanded its participation to include key leaders for contingency and home-station sustainment operations.

Partnering with reserve compo-

nent units has enabled the 3rd ESC to develop mutual understanding, share best practices, and establish a system in which everyone has a common forum to focus the professional development of Soldiers.

The 3rd Infantry Division

The 3rd Infantry Division (3rd ID) Sustainment Brigade (SB) serves as lead sustainment integrator for the 3rd ID. It provides synchronized sustainment through the integration of all organic, attached, and available support units. The 3rd ID SB ensures that wherever there is a "Dog Face" Soldier, there will also be 3rd ID SB support.

On Oct. 6, 2015, the 3rd ID SB established and deployed Task Force Water in support of Fort Jackson, South Carolina, water purification and distribution efforts after Hurricane Joaquin. The 3rd ID SB leaders assumed mission command over the operation, and the unit was instrumental in integrating and synchronizing elements from the 3rd ESC, the 82nd Airborne Division (AD) SB, and the 44th Medical Brigade.

The sustainment brigade's ability to deploy within 36 hours of notification, establish a single sustainment mission command, and provide unity of effort to the Forces Command and the Training and Doctrine Command were key to the unit's success.

In addition to deploying Task Force Water, the 3rd ID SB simultaneously assumed responsibility for the 3rd ID's supply support activity (SSA) mission, which was conducted by 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team (1st ABCT), 3rd ID, Soldiers at Fort Stewart, Georgia. The 3rd ID SB provided forward augmentation to the 1st ABCT's supply officer, support operations officer, and the sustainment automation support management office in support of the 1st ABCT's regionally aligned forces (RAF) mission.

Inactivation support. During the inactivation of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd ID, at Fort Benning, Georgia, the 3rd ID SB



Soldiers with the 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command set up the early-entry command post (EECP) on April 20, 2015, at the Mission Command Training Center on Fort Knox, Kentucky. The EECP is a sustainment mission command headquarters capable of providing a variety of logistics functions. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Justin Silvers)

recognized the need to maintain equipment transfer and divestiture velocity. To assist with this mission, it provided line-haul by military and commercial transporters and maintenance and supply support through the Marne (3rd ID) repair and divestiture yard.

While the line-haul assets helped the brigade remain on its inactivation time line, the missions have also enhanced the 3rd ID SB's force projection. Every movement between Fort Stewart and Fort Benning was conducted like a deployment—established, synchronized, rehearsed, and led according to Marne combat standards.

The 10th Mountain Division

Within the 10th Mountain Division, many units and activities collaborate and synchronize sustainment support for the senior commander. The division G-4, the 10th Mountain Division sustainment brigade, the Army field support battalion and logistics readiness center (LRC) at Fort Drum, New York, and the logistics capabilities resident in tenant

organizations work together to coordinate and execute sustainment operations.

The 10th Mountain Division SB's contribution to the sustainment network includes working closely with the division G-4, installation support agencies, and the maneuver brigades and chairing weekly logistics synchronization meetings and biweekly division maintenance meetings. These meetings comprise all of the sustainment support agencies across the 10th Mountain Division.

In June 2015—for the first time in the history of the Army—a sustainment brigade headquarters was designated as an RAF unit. The 10th Mountain Division SB was officially regionally aligned under U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) on Oct. 1, 2015. With the assignment came a unique set of training opportunities to improve the readiness of the unit and integrate operational-level logistics with the USARAF headquarters.

The sustainment brigade conducted a thorough military decision-making process analysis of the RAF mission

and published its own operation order. The order laid out a rigid training time line culminating in an “RAF Academy” before the Africa deployment. The academy focused on cultural awareness, basic language skills, driver's training, battle drills, unexploded ordnance awareness, African regional history, and medical Soldier readiness.

The 10th Mountain Division SB filled a critical logistics shortfall in the USARAF headquarters, helping to bridge the gap between strategic logistics planning and tactical execution. This gap was filled by logistics planners who provided the USARAF G-4 with enhanced visibility to oversee its mission.

With over 87 theater security operations planned for fiscal year 2016, sustainment brigade planners helped to identify and mitigate critical logistics shortfalls that occur because of the fast-paced, short-suspense nature of these operations. One such event was a Nigerian infantry school training event. Based on an agreement between the USARAF

commanding general and the Nigerian Ministry of Defence, the school needed to train on short notice 550 Nigerian soldiers in counterterrorism battle drills to counter the growing presence of Nigeria's militant Islamist group Boko Haram. The sustainment brigade logistics planners helped to identify the logistics requirements of the eight-month course, which paved the way for the training to be executed successfully.

The 82nd Airborne Division

The 82nd AD SB provides direct support to the 82nd AD and area support to the XVIII Airborne Corps and its separate units at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Like other division-aligned sustainment brigades, the 82nd AD SB provides materiel management, materiel readiness, field services, transportation, human resources, and finance

support to the division.

Additionally, the 82nd AD SB commander and command sergeant major oversee officer and enlisted personnel talent management across the 82nd AD's six brigades.

Unique to the 82nd AD SB is its responsibility to enable airborne operations for its division. The 82nd AD SB has a field-grade officer assigned as the division parachute officer (DPO). The DPO is critical to the management of 82nd AD SB aerial delivery systems that enable the division's airborne operations.

The aerial delivery systems are individual parachute systems, heavy-drop platforms and cargo parachutes, joint precision aerial delivery systems, and container delivery system bundles. With the G-3 air officer, the DPO manages the aerial delivery system requirements and the workload of the 11th Quartermas-

ter Company (Aerial Delivery) to plan, prepare, and execute airborne operations.

The 82nd AD SB's ability to generate, maintain, and recover aerial delivery systems is critical to the division's readiness. In an average month, the 82nd AD, along with its Air Force strategic lift partners, perform over 25 airborne missions, dropping between 8,000 and 10,000 paratroopers and conducting nearly 20 heavy-drop missions.

Additionally, the 82nd AD SB drops more than 450 container delivery system bundles quarterly to rapidly resupply combat forces in austere environments.

Lastly, the 82nd AD SB, as part of its GRF mission, executes sustainment mission command and sustainment support functions at any intermediate staging base (ISB). This mission requires the capabili-



ties resident in both the 82nd Special Troops Battalion and the 189th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB).

The 101st Airborne Division

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Sustainment Brigade's (Lifeliners') recent deployment from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, Louisiana, marked a paradigm shift for sustainment and support training exercises. Until recently, the JRTC's role as a training venue for sustainment operations was limited to brigade combat team (BCT) and CSSB enablers tasked to support rotations.

In September 2015, the Lifeliners became the first sustainment brigade to provide mission command to the rotation's CSSB, a role previously executed by the JRTC's

operations group.

Over a 30-day period, the Lifeliners deployed a 45-person tactical command post to provide logistics planning and mission command during reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI) and maneuver support. While the rotation allowed the Lifeliners to exercise critical mission command systems and increase the core competencies of the brigade's battle staff, the exercise did not live up to the overall training potential.

Throughout the process, the sustainment brigade identified several ways that combat training centers could be used for sustainment brigade validation and more realistic and relevant sustainment training.

Live or constructive integrated training. The Lifeliners established operations at an ISB about 55 miles from Fort Polk. That distance pro-

vided realistic constraints that forced logistics planners from both the supported and sustainment units to become more efficient. The concept of support and priority of effort for the execution included all real and notional combined joint task force (CJTF) units.

The CJTF included a majority of notional maneuver units and CSSBs with only a small part of the scenario including the actual BCT and CSSB. This allowed the Lifeliners to conduct training on their doctrinal mission of supporting echelons above division and the BCT through simulated and actual sustainment operations. The use of digital simulations in future rotations could more thoroughly train the sustainment brigade's staff.

Synchronization. The support operations office broke new ground during the JRTC rotation by fulfill-



A 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) landing craft utility attempts to dock at the causeway at Fort Story, Virginia, on Aug. 25, 2015. Soldiers from the 188th Brigade Support Battalion, 18th Field Artillery Brigade, practiced loading and offloading equipment and vehicles with the watercraft. (Photo courtesy of the 188th Brigade Support Battalion)



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Stephanie Weber, a human resources operations branch technician with the 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC), manifests paratroopers from Poland, Aug. 21, 2015, in Kaiserslautern, Germany. The 3rd ESC was deployed to support XVIII Airborne Corps during Operation Swift Response. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Justin Silvers)

ing roles and responsibilities for a sustainment brigade headquarters. It synchronized the planning and support of sustainment operations across the CJTF.

Operating out of the ISB, the support operations office served as a critical link between the BCT and CSSB during RSOI operations and the maneuver exercise. With the 101st Airborne Division Sustainment Brigade tactical command post present to allocate and prioritize sustainment, the training audience conducted sustainment operations and used request procedures that better represented those used during actual combat operations.

The 7th TB (Expeditionary)

The 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) provides a combatant commander with an expeditionary Army or joint force headquarters to conduct over-the-shore intermodal operations globally in support of unified land operations. The brigade exercises mission command of up to seven terminal battalions and is focused on early-entry and

port-opening operations.

Located at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, the brigade deploys with its equipment or draws equipment from two Army pre-positioned stock (APS) sites to reduce response time for watercraft missions or logistics over-the shore (LOTS) and joint LOTS (JLOTS) requirements.

The brigade operates as the theater sustainment command executing force, or under the ESC if given a theater-opening mission. The brigade moves equipment and supplies, through LOTS and RSOI tasks to the supported force or acts as the joint task force headquarters for JLOTS. These capabilities connect RSOI from ports to the assembly areas, where forces conduct integration using the brigade's total over-the-shore capabilities including its inland cargo transfer companies and movement control teams. The brigade also provides Army watercraft in support of contingency operations and humanitarian aid and disaster relief efforts where access to port facilities is degraded or nonexistent.

The brigade's internal watercraft

capabilities include logistics support vessels, landing craft utility vessels, landing craft mechanized vessels, and the modular causeway system consisting of a 1,200-foot floating Trident Pier, two roll-on, roll-off discharge facilities (which attach to a strategic vessel to enable cargo offload at anchor), and a causeway ferry to transport cargo to the beach.

The brigade displayed its capabilities at the combined JLOTS 2015 exercise in Korea, from May 2015 to August 2015. The exercise comprised a 1,165-person CJTF consisting of 41 separate active and reserve organizations and included both U.S. and Republic of Korea forces.

The 419th CSB

Activated in April 2013 at Fort Bragg, the 419th Contracting Support Brigade (CSB) enhances installation and operational contract support for Army commands and serves as the RAF contracting enabler for the XVIII Airborne Corps.

As a subordinate command of the Mission and Installation Contract-

ing Command, the 419th CSB is the vanguard contracting brigade in Department of Defense, strengthening contract compliance and oversight while providing installation and global expeditionary contracting support.

The brigade comprises more than 150 Soldiers and 250 civilians assigned to six field contracting offices located at Fort Bragg, Fort Drum, Fort Polk, Fort Stewart, Fort Campbell, and Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Three contracting battalions are integrated with the field contracting offices: the 900th Contracting Battalion (CBN) at Fort Bragg, the 922nd CBN at Fort Campbell, and the 925th CBN at Fort Drum. In the summer of 2016, the 904th CBN will stand up at Fort Stewart to complete the Army's contracting battalion coverage for each active division.

The 419th CSB focuses on installation contracting support to five Army garrisons and operational contract support to the XVIII Airborne Corps and its four subordinate divisions. The brigade provides contracting reach-back as required in support of expeditionary or garrison operations.

The 419th CSB's contracting center is responsible for awarding contracts valued at more than \$7 million from all of the offices in its footprint and conducting operational contract support to deploying units worldwide. The brigade has two battalions deployed in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel and Operation Inherent Resolve in Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively.

The 406th AFSB

The 406th Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB) located at Fort Bragg is a deployable, modular organization designed to bring logistics power forward to every element of the expeditionary Army. The brigade executes materiel enterprise operations in support of unified land operations in a garrison, joint, or combined environment and integrates acquisition,

logistics, and technology at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

The 406th AFSB has mission command of subordinate Army field support battalions at Fort Bragg, Fort Campbell, Fort Drum, and Fort Stewart. It also has mission command of the APS program headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina, six logistics support teams, 18 brigade logistics support teams, and 26 LRCs throughout its 27-state area of responsibility.

The 406th AFSB's ongoing operational support includes building an armored brigade's worth of mission-ready equipment for the European Activity Set, managing the APS-3, serving as the lead materiel integrator coordinating Army Materiel Command's equipping of the force, managing and maintaining predeployment training equipment, and providing installation-level support to Forces Command and Training and Doctrine Command units through local LRCs.

The 597th Transportation Brigade

The 597th Transportation Brigade is the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's global surface transportation expert focused on the U.S. Northern Command area of responsibility. The brigade headquarters is located at Joint Base Langley-Eustis.

With a workforce of more than 300 military and civilian personnel, the brigade meets the surface deployment, redeployment, and distribution needs of warfighters and Defense Transportation System customers in the United States. The 597th has three subordinate battalions: the 833rd Transportation Battalion at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, the 841st Transportation Battalion in Charleston, and the 842nd Transportation Battalion in Beaumont, Texas.

Each battalion maintains multiple deployment and distribution support teams consisting of 10 military transportation experts who directly assist with the movement of hazardous materials, equipment, containers

and unit movement data preparation and documentation.

Unique to the 597th Transportation Brigade are three specialized detachments assigned to the 833rd Transportation Battalion. The 688th, 689th and 690th Rapid Port Opening Elements support the U.S. Transportation Command's joint task force-port opening requirements. These units deploy quickly in a crisis or contingency operation to help the air and sea ports of debarkation receive follow-on personnel and equipment.

The XVIII Airborne Corps sustainment network is built around key sustainment commands in the corps' footprint. We achieve improved effects when we operate as a team, rather than in silos. The sustainment network's core strength is unity of effort. Together we are focused on achieving optimal solutions to enable our maneuver commanders to project and sustain combat power. Individual units execute our sustainment mission, but as a sustainment network, we are a unified team intent on enabling maneuver commanders.

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