



# DLA Troop Support Supplies Army Expeditionary Logistics

■ By Brig. Gen. Charles R. Hamilton



*Soldiers of the 1430th Engineer Company, Michigan Army National Guard, along with Airmen and a ground crew, offload an aircraft in Liberia in preparation to assist Liberian engineers in building new barracks in November 2015. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Robert Sutton)*

Before engineers from the 1430th Engineer Company, Michigan Army National Guard, deployed to Africa to build barracks with their Liberian counterparts, they needed the construction materials to get the job done. Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Troop Support offered a menu of options to support this project for Liberia's growing army, and it made sure all of the materials were in place when the engineers deployed to Mon-

rovia in November 2015.

DLA Troop Support regularly provides the Army a wide array of support. As the Army downsizes, the organization can support a smaller force that will likely respond to more missions in remote locations around the globe.

As one of the Army's key unified action partners, DLA Troop Support is an essential resource for an Army that is transitioning to a smaller, expeditionary force. Given the reductions

to Army logistics formations and the resource-constrained environment, it is critical for Soldiers to understand how to leverage the joint capabilities of unified action partners, including DLA Troop Support.

#### **About DLA Troop Support**

DLA Troop Support, headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, annually provides \$13 billion worth of food, clothing and textiles, con-

## FEATURES

From food to industrial hardware and on-the-ground maintenance support, DLA Troop Support provides warfighters what they need to accomplish the mission.

struction and engineering equipment, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and equipment, and industrial hardware items for U.S. warfighters and other valued customers worldwide. It has a global workforce of approximately 2,900 civilian and military personnel.

The organization manages five diverse supply chains and is the Department of Defense's executive agent for class I (subsistence), class II (clothing and individual equipment), class IV (construction and barrier materials), and class VIII (medical materiel).

DLA Troop Support is the link between the Army and civilian industry partners that can provide these supplies. On one end, its employees work with Army customers to help develop requirements. On the other end, the acquisition workforce partners with industry to determine the best way to get required items to customers when and where they need them.

DLA Troop Support representatives also are on the ground to help customers reach the best logistics solutions as fast as possible. It does this through two regional offices: DLA Troop Support Europe and Africa, headquartered in Kaiserslautern, Germany, and DLA Troop Support Pacific, headquartered at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. From these two offices, DLA Troop Support provides representatives throughout each theater of operations, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait.

### **Expeditionary Support**

The Army is transitioning from almost 15 years of repeated deployments to well-established bases to increased presence in places the Army did not expect to be.

Lt. Gen. Gustave Perna, deputy chief of staff, G-4, wrote in his September–October 2015 *Army Sustainment* article, "With the days of predictable rotations over, and new missions arising all over the world, logisticians must prepare to support an Army 2025 force that is smaller but more responsive to contingencies

in austere environments worldwide."

DLA Troop Support has a long history of supporting expeditionary forces. During the Civil War, when it was still known as Schuylkill Arsenal, it employed 10,000 seamstresses to make uniforms for the Union Army.

More recently, the maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO) program has enabled customers to order materials for facilities maintenance and construction projects. The MRO contract in Africa had only been in place for a year when the 1430th Engineer Company came to DLA Troop Support for construction materials for the Liberian army barracks project.

The MRO team at DLA Troop Support Europe and Africa began working with the 1430th in September 2015. Along with the regional vendor, it developed the specifics of the construction materials requirements. The engineers were presented with several support options based on lead time and cost.

Delivering heavy materials such as gravel and lumber can be challenging in Africa, where infrastructure, local sources of supply, and transportation options are limited. But within 14 days of the order being issued, all of the materials were delivered, including roofing and framing materials, walls, doors, windows, and electrical supplies.

DLA Troop Support has supported U.S. Army Africa on various projects in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. The MRO vendor in the region has established partnerships with local providers for transportation. Regional MRO contracts are now in place to provide this kind of support throughout the United States and the world.

### **Class I Support**

Through contractual relationships with food vendors around the world, DLA Troop Support is able to feed troops wherever they go, from feeding the first units on the ground during a contingency to supplying full-service dining facilities.

During various exercises in Europe

last summer, DLA Troop Support's subsistence team ensured Army units on the move were fed and had bottled water. DLA Troop Support also arranged for delivery of meals ready-to-eat (MREs) and unitized group rations (UGRs) for missions in remote areas throughout Africa.

During Operation United Assistance, DLA Troop Support provided 57,000 cases of MREs, 90,000 cases of UGRs, and 165,000 cases of bottled water. The subsistence team also locally purchased milk, bread, and fresh fruits and vegetables. The vendor even leased warehouse space to handle the receipt and distribution of construction, food, and medical items.

To accomplish class I support for United Assistance, DLA Troop Support again worked with industry partners to navigate the austere environment with limited transportation options to get Soldiers what they needed to accomplish their mission on time.

### **Class VIII Support**

Personal protective equipment was among the medical items urgently needed during Operation United Assistance. DLA Troop Support's medical team quickly responded and provided more than 1.4 million protective sets that included full-body suits, hoods, masks, gloves, boots, aprons, goggles, and more.

Service members and employees and volunteers from other government and nongovernmental organizations working in the region during the Ebola response used the sets once and then disposed of them.

Wherever the Army needs medical supplies, including pharmaceuticals, DLA has several innovative support programs that enable the delivery of those items within days, not weeks or months.

### **Support on the Ground**

DLA Troop Support's logistics experts are on the ground to receive the Army's demand signal as soon as possible and help units find logistics



*Spc. Deffor Benjamin, left, of the 104th Engineer Company, 62nd Engineer Battalion, and a Liberian soldier build an Ebola treatment unit in Gbediah, Liberia, on Dec. 19, 2014. Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support provided most of the construction materials used to build such facilities. (Photo by Sgt. Ange Desinor)*

solutions. As construction on Ebola treatment units in Liberia began and the materiel requirements changed on the fly, the DLA Troop Support representative in Monrovia initiated the necessary order adjustments. Contracting officer representatives were also co-located with industry partners to ensure they understood and fulfilled customers' needs.

DLA's overall ability to respond quickly to contingencies is stronger now than ever with its recent formation of two rapid deployment teams. The teams consist of experts from each of DLA's supply chains and its distribution, disposition, information technology, expeditionary contracting, and legal service sections. These professionals are trained, equipped, and able to deploy around the globe on short notice.

DLA Troop Support continually improves its acquisition processes, fostering innovation to deliver the best products as fast as possible at the best value to its customers. It does this without losing sight that the warfighter comes first in everything it does.

As one of the Army's key unified action partners, DLA Troop Sup-

port is primed to support the Army as it emerges as a more expeditionary force.

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Brig. Gen. Charles R. Hamilton is the commander of Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Troop Support. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Virginia State University, a master's degree in public administration from Central Michigan University, and a master's degree in management studies from the Marine Corps University. His military education includes the Quartermaster Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Senior Service College as a 2012 Office of the Secretary of Defense corporate fellow, the Marine Command and Staff College, and the Joint Forces Staff College.

DLA Troop Support provides effective and efficient support to U.S. Army warfighters in order to allow them to achieve their global missions. For more information about the Defense Logistics Agency's other field activities supporting the Army, read "The Army and DLA: On Time, Every Time" by Air Force Lt. Gen. Andy Busch, the director of DLA, on page 16.