



Soldiers from the 348th Quartermaster Company work with a Navy engineer to connect a hose line to a pump during the Combined Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore 2015 exercise in the Republic of Korea. (Photo by Maj. John Jacques)

Tactical Interface on the Shore

■ By Maj. John F. Jacques

Militaries throughout history have sought to project power by deploying troops and equipment across bodies of water either to mount an invasion or to reinforce units already deployed forward. As military and support equipment became larger and forward forces required more resources to advance and occupy objective territory, the capabilities for loading and unloading ships and putting materiel ashore increased.

Modern capabilities to sustain operations by putting materiel ashore were exercised during the Combined Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore 2015 (CJLOTS 15) exercise in the Republic

of Korea (ROK). Although planning and preparation started much earlier, CJLOTS 15 began on June 29, 2015.

The exercise was conducted at Anmyeon Beach on the ROK's west coast and included forces from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard and the ROK Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.

The participating units established logistics support areas just off the beach and at the ROK's Seosan Air Base. ROK marines secured the beach, and the Coast Guard secured the offshore areas. Using a 1,800-foot Trident pier, U.S. Navy and ROK civilian strategic sealift personnel transported and offloaded

equipment, fuel, and water during the exercise.

CJLOTS 15 provided valuable feedback and a proof of concept demonstration for the deployable systems required to operate in varied terrain and adverse environmental conditions. It was also an opportunity for sustainment Soldiers from across the Korean peninsula to participate and conduct hands-on training with a unique equipment set during a nonstandard mission.

Assets and Personnel

The shoreline is the interface where strategic assets meet operational units and where resources are then

funneled down for tactical distribution. Operational assets employed during CJLOTS 15 included a Trident pier to download equipment from strategic sealift, 50,000-gallon bags to store water pumped in from the *USNS Wheeler* in preparation for distribution, and command and staff elements from the 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) and 10th Transportation Battalion.

Soldiers from the 348th Quartermaster Company, 194th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), provided operational support equipment and executed the strategic-to-operational and operational-to-tactical interfaces. Additional capabilities, such as back-up solutions for unique problem sets and equipment compatibility problems, were provided by local nationals and common-use parts from the Korean economy.

A joint task force consisting of the Navy's Expeditionary Strike Group-3 and the 7th Transportation Brigade staffs included members from all supporting military branches. The base staff consisted of Army personnel, and senior planners from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard held primary and critical positions among the staff, which was led by a Coast Guard rear admiral and Marine Corps colonel. An Army colonel had command of functional sustainment.

Navy subject matter experts were well-integrated into sustainment operations to provide required assessment and oversight for the interface between offshore petroleum distribution system operations and the Coast Guard.

Operations

The 551st Inland Cargo Transfer Company (ICTC), 498th CSSB, had the capabilities on its modified table of organization and equipment for managing the requirements for theater opening and reception, staging, and onward movement operations as directed by the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

Once supplies and assets were moved ashore, the ICTC provided rough-terrain container handlers, rough-terrain forklifts, and other transportation assets to move materiel from the shoreline to inland staging areas. Materiel and equipment sorted within the marshaling yard near the shoreline was then prepared for local haul to unit assembly areas as required.

Platoon-sized detachments from the 194th CSSB were organized to complement the ICTC's organic equipment. They provided personnel with the appropriate skill sets for operational bulk liquids storage (for fuel and water) as well as tactical distribution equipment.

A layered support plan can be critical to the success of such a complex operation. Planners must ensure multiple assets are available to provide backup support as requirements change or unforeseen shortfalls are created by environmental factors.

For example, original plans to anchor the Trident pier to the beach called for the use of two winch-equipped D7 bulldozers. Because these assets could not be employed, the integrated plans sections for both the 7th Transportation Brigade and the 498th CSSB quickly provided backup support by positioning two M88A1 Hercules recovery vehicles on the beach for use as pier anchors.

Cooperation

The success of this operation required extensive cooperation between units, different branches of service, and U.S. and ROK forces. The Army provided most of the operational manpower, and other services provided integrated mission command elements and support operations.

Sailors from the Navy held critical positions in the operations sections and on the support staff for logistics, engineer, and intelligence functions. The Coast Guard fulfilled the harbormaster function, providing critical assessment and guidance concerning the tidal schedule and weather effects. Operational support was augmented by medical and food service

personnel from the Army, Coast Guard, and Navy.

The employment of equipment compatible with the ROK army provided enhanced interoperability. The Korean cargo ship was able to interface with the Trident pier and use it to download equipment, and common bulk liquids storage and distribution equipment ensured mutual support capability. ROK leaders operated alongside the U.S. joint command post, making CJLOTS a truly combined operation.

The benefits of this task organization were many and included enhanced engineer support during the construction phase. For example, ROK marines used bulldozers and grading equipment to prepare staging areas and improve pathways from the pier to the marshaling area and handled site preparation for the large logistics support areas that were built for participating forces.

Staff functions were also enhanced by integrating lines of communication management and intelligence functions with offshore combined security responsibilities executed by ROK naval elements and the Coast Guard.

The continual requirement for the Army to deploy equipment into austere environments makes exercises such as CJLOTS important to rehearsing and refining the Army's approach to expeditionary operations. With the range of equipment currently available, adaptable leaders, and the incredible capabilities demonstrated during CJLOTS 15, it is possible to overcome the challenges caused by terrain and inclement weather to meet the needs of tactical units.

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