

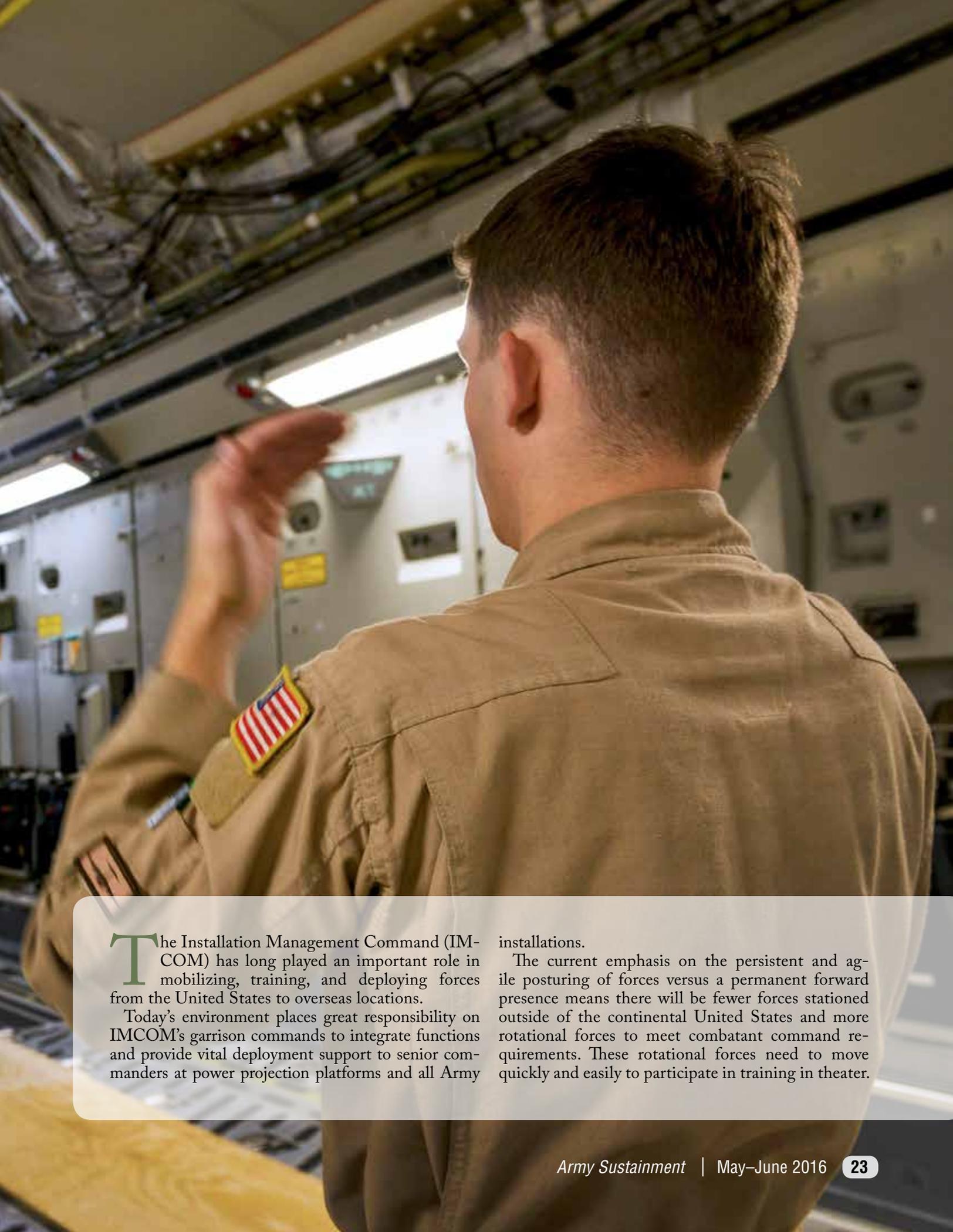
The background image shows a large M1A2 Abrams main battle tank being loaded onto a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft. The tank is positioned on a loading platform, and its turret and main gun are visible. The aircraft's interior structure, including the cargo bay and support beams, is also visible. The scene is set in a large hangar or loading area, with various equipment and personnel visible in the background.

# IMCOM Enables Mobilization Readiness

The Installation Management Command assists supported commanders by acting as the functional integrator for delivering trained and ready forces and their equipment to a theater of operations.

■ By Lt. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl

*Airman 1st Class Kenneth Whitler, a 7th Airlift Squadron aircraft loadmaster from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, directs an M1A2 Abrams main battle tank onto a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Airmen and Soldiers from across the U.S. European Command theater worked together to transport two tanks to Bulgaria to participate in multinational training in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve.*



The Installation Management Command (IMCOM) has long played an important role in mobilizing, training, and deploying forces from the United States to overseas locations.

Today's environment places great responsibility on IMCOM's garrison commands to integrate functions and provide vital deployment support to senior commanders at power projection platforms and all Army

installations.

The current emphasis on the persistent and agile posturing of forces versus a permanent forward presence means there will be fewer forces stationed outside of the continental United States and more rotational forces to meet combatant command requirements. These rotational forces need to move quickly and easily to participate in training in theater.

## FEATURES

“IMCOM touches every Soldier every day. No other command can say that.”

—Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Hartless, Installation Management Command

As future conditions are unknown and constantly changing, the Army Operating Concept calls for the ability to rapidly deploy and transition forces. To accomplish this, the Army uses IMCOM to integrate and deliver services, quickly mobilize reserve component forces, and thoroughly transition active and reserve component formations from the fort to the foxhole.

Today IMCOM–Europe and IMCOM–Pacific are supporting U.S. Army Europe and U.S. Army Pacific through an unprecedented transformation in the way permanent forces are stationed.

Simultaneously, they are integrating efforts to deliver support such as reception, staging, onward movement, and integration to regionally aligned forces. Enabling Army readiness is IMCOM’s number one priority.

### Supporting Garrison Missions

Garrison command teams work hard every day to ensure facilities are maintained to support training and prepared to handle the increased activity of mobilization and deployment. But for the past decade, the Army has deliberately underfunded infrastructure, which has presented challenges at home stations.

IMCOM professionals are making a clear case at the Department of the Army headquarters that the Army must invest in deployment and readiness infrastructure to avoid mission failure in the future.

Army Regulation 600-20, Army Command Policy, clearly states that the installation senior commander “is responsible for synchronizing and integrating Army priorities and initiatives at the installation.” But many tenant organizations and service providers on an installation are not under the senior commander’s authority or in the direct reporting chain.

The regulation further states that the garrison commander “is the senior commander’s senior executive

for installation activities [and] coordinates and integrates the delivery of support from other service providers.” This integration is a vital role played by a garrison in support of all missions but especially mobilization and deployment.

When preparing a unit for movement, a garrison must integrate multiple installation programs and services to facilitate rapid deployment. The primary concerns are related to logistics, and the garrison team integrates the many services provided by the Army Materiel Command’s logistics readiness centers (LRCs).

LRCs facilitate the movement process in several ways:

- Assisting units with load planning.
- Preparing equipment for movement (inspection and repair).
- Cross-leveling equipment to fill shortages.
- Assisting units with turn-in of excess equipment.
- Supervising rail load teams.
- Processing convoy clearances.
- Supervising arrival/departure airfield control groups.
- Providing troop transportation for training events.
- Scheduling air travel for troop movements.
- Ordering ships for maritime travel from the U.S. Transportation Command.

LRCs work closely with a garrison’s directorate of plans, training, mobilization, and security to ensure all required logistics functions and services are properly scheduled and provided on time.

Like their equipment, active and reserve component Soldiers must remain ready to deploy at all times. The garrison directorate of human resources performs this critical mission. Its job is to ensure all Soldiers are validated for deployment according to Army personnel policy guidance for overseas contingency operations.

The directorate of human resourc-

es also provides full-service redeployment support and reintegration for all Soldiers returning from overseas deployments. It provides reassignment, sponsorship, separation, retirement, and transition services as required.

### **Orchestrating Mission Success**

From conducting monthly home-station Soldier readiness checks to providing facilities at the National Training Center for brigade combat team predeployment training, IMCOM is the integrator and synchronizer that orchestrates mission success.

When a unit is deploying, the garrison determines a consolidation plan for rear detachments to save costs, focus resources, conserve energy, and make facilities available for renovation or maintenance. It provides personal vehicle storage lots and assists in accounting for unit equipment.

Although unit commanders are ultimately responsible for their Soldiers and families, IMCOM provides indispensable assistance through programs and services that prepare Soldiers and families for the challenges of being apart.

For example, Army Community Service provides education services that help Soldiers and families prepare for separation. It provides information about deployment, reintegration stressors, and indicators of mental health problems to build the resilience of Army families. It also trains, coaches, and manages funds for family readiness group leaders.

Military family life counselors help Soldiers and families develop coping mechanisms and learn about community resources.

When it comes to deployments, units are more resilient if they coordinate with the garrison to connect their families with IMCOM support services, attend preparation classes, and build a strong support network.

At many joint bases, like Joint

Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, the presence of joint operational forces like the Army's Pacific-focused I Corps and the Air Force's 62nd Airlift Wing demands the involvement of the joint base garrison command team in the day-to-day maintenance of infrastructure to support mobilization.

While serving in I Corps, I saw firsthand the vital role played by the garrison in the U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Central Command deployments and redeployments of several special operations forces units, the 7th Infantry Division, I Corps headquarters, and the 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

At Joint Base Lewis-McChord and elsewhere, the joint base commander is uniquely positioned, resourced, and chartered to bind together supportive relationships across multiple commands, agencies, and organizations on the installation. Garrisons enable the projection of combat power and operationally ready forces anywhere around the globe.

### **Expecting Tough Conditions**

Unit rotations to Korea, Europe, and other locations are neither unaccompanied tours nor combat deployments, so overseas contingency operations funds are not available for these missions.

Soldiers should expect to train hard and to live in austere conditions with minimal services. While discussing this at a U.S. Army Europe commanders conference, leaders considered "Spartan plus Wi-Fi" as an appropriate benchmark.

This quote is from the original 1950 edition of the *The Armed Forces Officer*: "Though Americans enjoy a relatively bountiful, and even luxurious standard of living in their home environment, they do not have to be pampered, spoon-fed and surfeited with every comfort and convenience to keep them steadfast and devoted, once war comes. They are by nature rugged, and in the field will respond most perfectly when called on to

play a rugged part."

### **Fine-Tuning Services**

In garrisons, IMCOM is working with senior commanders to identify programs that have grown beyond their original intent and to transform them to meet the actual needs of Soldiers where the demand is the greatest.

IMCOM will seek policy changes to bring this back into alignment and ensure the programs and services it provides going forward contribute directly to Soldier and unit readiness and rapid deployment.

IMCOM will seek public and private partners to provide alternatives to the programs that are eliminated to support readiness. IMCOM has made great strides in developing partnerships for this purpose over the past decade and sees this as a key element of its strategy going forward.

With a smaller force and fewer resources, the Army must pay close attention how it uses time, money, and leaders to meet its global commitments. This requires even greater focus on the ability to deliver trained and ready forces and their equipment to a theater of operations rapidly and safely. IMCOM will be there as the functional integrator and primary supporting unit every step of the way.

---

Lt. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl is the commander of the Installation Management Command. He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and has a master's degree in social psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College. He served as a national security fellow in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and completed a federal executive fellowship at the Brookings Institution, where he focused his efforts on U.S. government interagency reform.