



Sgt. Roderick Booker, a petroleum supply specialist with the 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, gives a class on issuing fuel to ground vehicles at Fort Stewart, Georgia, on June 25, 2014. (Photo by Sgt. Joshua Laidacker)

The Transformation of a BCT Through Excess Property Divestiture

Reorganizing a BCT and divesting its excess equipment is not an easy task; however, with proper planning and the correct system, it can be done while maintaining readiness.

■ By Maj. Charles L. Montgomery

Divesting excess equipment within Army units, regardless of structure and size, is not a new phenomenon. But because of recent force structure changes, organizations are managing an increased number of equipment transactions that exceed their organic capabilities.

The Army sustainment community must construct a viable system to handle tasks associated with excess equipment divestiture.

In June 2013, it was announced that 10 brigade combat teams (BCTs) would reorganize. The 4th Infantry BCT (IBCT), 3rd Infantry Divi-

sion, at Fort Stewart, Georgia, was designated as one of them. The reorganization entailed reflagging the 4th IBCT to the 2nd IBCT, adding the 1st battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, as a third infantry battalion, converting the brigade special troops battalion to the 9th Brigade Engi-

neer Battalion, aligning the 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, under division artillery, and adding two forward support companies.

The first major action involved scrubbing the brigades' modified tables of organization and equipment (MTOEs) for fiscal years 2014 and 2015. This process allowed the brigade to realize the magnitude of the mission and establish parameters to frame the operational approach. In the process, the 2nd IBCT added 1,237 pieces of equipment, cut 432 pieces of equipment, and divested more than 3,712 items of excess equipment worth approximately \$52.7 million dollars.

The brigade established a permanent mission command element within the 2nd IBCT footprint designed to centrally locate all excess equipment. This facilitated a smoother transition of property. Centrally locating excess equipment created motor pool space so that battalions could add their fiscal year 2015 MTOE authorizations without experiencing space limitations.

The Divestiture Plan

The 2nd IBCT retained mission command to synchronize the activities of multiple organizations across Fort Stewart in order to create a shared understanding of its divestiture goals and external requirements. This structure allowed the brigade to achieve unity of effort based on that shared understanding. Over time, this reduced duplicate efforts and the amount of time wasted.

The mission command system used during this process was the Lead Materiel Integrator Decision Support Tool (LMI DST), an unclassified, web-based collaborative tool that guides stakeholders through the planning and execution of materiel distribution.

LMI DST is the Army Materiel Command's system of record for divesting excess equipment. All equipment identified for divestiture must be entered into LMI DST to initiate the vetting process.

Ensuring an organization's success means having multiple users who are trained on LMI DST and understand its intricacies. The Army Sustainment Command constructed a mobile training team at the 3rd Infantry Division's request. This team trained users at the battalion and bri-

entry into the yard.

The PBO conducted an in-depth analysis of all identified equipment labeled excess. During this process, the PBO identified legacy equipment and placed priority on cross-leveling it with more modern equipment that would remain within

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gade levels on how to operate LMI DST.

The brigade also solicited LMI DST training assistance from the division G-4 asset visibility team. The training targeted battalion S-4 non-commissioned officers and clerks to ensure each battalion had access to the system in order to manage their excess inventory.

The transitioning units had to answer the following five questions:

- Who will receive LMI DST training?
- Who will train the unit on LMI DST?
- How will the unit help the property book office (PBO) handle significant transaction increases?
- Who will consistently interface with the division G-4 asset visibility team?
- How will the unit assist the supply support activity with turn-ins and materiel release orders without interrupting daily unit supply operations?

Executing the Plan

The execution phase started when personnel began relocating identified equipment to the 2nd IBCT excess yard, where a reception team of subject matter experts identified, inspected, sorted, and determined the final location of equipment before its

the organization.

Prior to entering equipment into LMI DST, the PBO had to certify that the equipment was not needed within its organization. If equipment was needed in subordinate battalions, the PBO simply generated an internal lateral transfer. Once a final determination was rendered on truly excess equipment, it was loaded into LMI DST to begin the vetting process.

PBOs and battalion S-4s were required to understand that if the proper documentation was not entered into LMI DST, the equipment was not vetted and remained at the brigade level. Once the equipment met the qualifications, the division G-4 asset visibility team verified and cross-leveled equipment throughout the division before submitting it higher for further vetting.

Ideally, battalion S-4s have access to LMI DST to monitor equipment that has received disposition instructions. The brigade S-4 should create a tracker by directly pulling the data from LMI DST to ensure the brigade remains on a glide path to meet its divestiture goals. However, individual unit supply sergeants are ultimately responsible for making turn-in appointments at logistics readiness centers.

During the execution phase, conducting routine and consistent

stakeholder meetings is essential. Stakeholders have a vested interest in the unit achieving success. Also, the Army benefits when equipment transitions on time from installation to installation because it improves the unit status report ratings of gaining organizations.

Managing Assessments

Continually assessing units' progress ensures that units divest equipment within a reasonable time frame. The 3rd Infantry Division G-4 held a monthly meeting that covered multiple facets of division logistics. In particular, it covered equipment divestiture from a macro perspective. During the meeting, brigade executive officers and brigade S-4s were responsible for briefing current, overdue, and projected statuses of equipment identified for divestiture.

One of the brigade S-4's concerns was how vast and time-consuming the mission was. A brigade S-4 rarely receives additional personnel for such

missions. Therefore, the S-4 had to manage the expectations of the brigade executive officer and the battalion and brigade commanders while balancing operational requirements with divesting excess equipment. The brigade S-4 had to be willing to refine the plan and reallocate resources as necessary.

Establishing time lines will serve as a great indicator on how well or poorly the brigade is accomplishing its divestiture goals. LMI DST will assign a suspense for every equipment transaction, and the brigade S-4 should create a mechanism that alerts battalions when equipment reaches its 90-, 60-, and 30-day windows to ensure the established suspense is accomplished.

Finally, company commanders, supply sergeants, and PBOs must make an effort to clean property books as the organization transitions. Multiple second- and third-order effects occur if the property books are not accurate. These effects include low equipment-density file percentages,

increased overdue maintenance services, and increased financial liability investigations of property loss because of a lack of equipment accountability.

Over the course of this divestiture, the 3rd Infantry Division had coordinating authority with most of the enablers. However, over time this authority became inconsistent. Also, during the preliminary planning of BCT restructuring, units should be aligned and issued direct liaison authorized.

For example, the brigade had a battalion that transitioned from being combined arms to light infantry. The combined arms battalion issued all of its equipment to another battalion on a different installation; however, no backfill was identified to replenish the battalion's light infantry equipment set.

Research proved that the battalion receiving the combined arms battalion equipment transitioned from being a light infantry battalion. So why not align these two units from the start? This is just one issue an established divestiture infrastructure could solve.

To improve divestiture operations, the Army needs to establish an overarching structure with associated authorities to rapidly account for, process, ship, and adjudicate equipment transactions.

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A logistics convoy from D Company, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, conducts an ammunition resupply mission on June 25, 2014, at Fort Stewart, Georgia. (Photo by Sgt. Joshua Laidacker)