



Soldiers with Ghost Troop, 2nd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, unload Strykers during a rail operation at Gaiziunai, Lithuania, on April 21, 2016. The equipment made the troop fully mission capable as it began its rotation in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Behlin)

Putting Movement Control Back Into Movement and Maneuver

■ By Stacey L. Lee

Army movement control is faced with a number of challenges, including its force structure and the doctrine and associated capabilities supporting it. Some challenges are caused by environmental factors, and others are caused by the normal ebb and flow of Army processes.

But the most significant challenge faced recently has been one of perception or, more accurately, misperception. As the Army transitions from a multitheater, conflict-driven, rotational force to the fully expedi-

tionary force envisioned in the Army Operating Concept, it is time to relook at the critical role movement control plays in enabling the maneuver commander.

The Army Operating Concept describes an Army capable of several types of operations. Military forces will contend with anti-access/area-denial and cyber threats from state and nonstate actors, conduct movement and maneuver over strategic and operational distances, and face a number of other requirements that will stress deployment and mobility

systems and processes.

All the requirements for this future force have a common prerequisite: an enhanced ability to coordinate movements in time and space in order to meet the commander's intent. Other demands of these types of operations will include the following:

- High effectiveness with maximum cost-efficiency.
- The ability to integrate and even reconfigure forces while en route.
- Nearly immediate transitions from deployment to employment

of units—a true “fight off the ramp” capability.

- The ability to see and influence assets in time and space.
- Full integration with joint and coalition partners and allies.

The combat enabler that meets all these demands and more for the maneuver commander is Army movement control.

Defining Movement in Doctrine

For the Army, fulfilling requirements starts with precise doctrinal language. From the sustainment standpoint, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 4-16, Movement Control, defines movement control as, “The dual process of committing allocated transportation assets and regulating movements according to command priorities to synchronize the distribution flow over lines of communications to sustain land forces.”

While this definition is accurate, it is decidedly sustainment-centric, making it less useful to general discussions between maneuver and sustainment planners.

From the maneuver standpoint, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, Unified Land Operations, defines movement and maneuver as, “The related tasks and systems that move and employ forces to achieve a position of relative advantage over the enemy and other threats. Direct fire and close combat are inherent in maneuver. This function includes tasks associated with force projection related to gaining a positional advantage over the enemy.”

While the ADP 3-0 definition is also accurate, it is decidedly maneuver-centric, which once again makes it less useful to discussions between maneuver and sustainment planners.

All warfighting functions support the maneuver commander in the command of forces conducting operations, regardless of the mission. So, for a doctrinal definition of movement control to bridge the doctrinal-operational divide and span the broad

range of mission types and requirements, the definition needs to clearly link sustainment functions to maneuver functions.

The precursor to ATP 4-16 (Field Manual 4-01.30, Movement Control) proposed a more useful definition than the current publication does. It defined movement control as “the planning, routing, scheduling, controlling, coordination, and in-transit visibility of personnel, units, equipment, and supplies moving over Line(s) of Communication (LOC) and the commitment of allocated transportation assets according to command planning directives. It is a continuum that involves synchronizing and integrating logistics efforts with other programs that span the spectrum of military operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. Movement control is a tool used to help allocate resources based on the combatant commander’s priorities, and to balance requirements against capabilities.”

The operational reality is that movement control requires a delicate balance between art and science. That balance constantly fluctuates based on the phase of an operation and how successful the operation has been. The efficacy of both have atrophied considerably over the last 14-plus years.

Improving Relevance

For Army movement control units to be relevant to the maneuver commander, and “a tool used to help allocate resources based on the combatant commander’s priorities,” a number of changes must occur.

Train the science of movement control. The Army’s institutional training and associated programs of instruction must instruct junior and midgrade Soldiers and leaders in the science of movement control. This includes reinvigorating training on concepts like march tables, pass times, refuel on the move operations, and the battlefield calculus of moving forces for positional advantage.

That training must be in the con-

text of the maneuver commander’s intent; sustainment planners should know the maneuver synchronization matrix as well as or better than the maneuver planners.

Learn to speak the language. Those same junior and midgrade Soldiers and leaders have to learn to speak the language of the maneuver force. During the early years of Apple’s iPod, several other brands of portable music devices could store more music, had longer battery lives, and included other features that made them better than the iPod. The makers of those other devices used “technobabble”—descriptions of all of the technical and engineering details—to market what were technologically better products.

Apple turned the idea on its head and simply stated that the iPod could “put a 1,000 songs in your pocket.” Apple used language that consumers understood; sustainers have to use language the maneuver team understands. Save the technobabble of logistics for conversations among sustainers in the tactical operations center.

Conduct rehearsals for everything. Prior to 2001, the combat service support rehearsal was a key component leading up to any exercise or operation. On par with the combat rehearsal, it was attended by many of the same Soldiers, especially the combat leaders responsible for operations. Even an operation as simple as a road march to exercise vehicles during sergeant’s time training kicked off with an early morning rehearsal.

Sand tables or the actual ground where the operation would occur were used to rehearse actions on contact, requirements for refuel and resupply on the move, and myriad other details. The rehearsals were conducted as many times and in as much detail as required to ensure everyone—not just the logisticians responsible for the physical execution of the events—understood their roles and responsibilities.

Today systems such as the Command Post of the Future provide even more options to leverage the power of

rehearsals. As stated in Field Manual 4-01.30, the Army's movement control capability in doctrine and in execution has to focus on "synchronizing and integrating logistics efforts with other programs that span the spectrum of military operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels" so that every commander can ask for that "tool" designed "to help allocate resources based on the

and equipment will stabilize. But in the interim, a focused and disciplined effort has to be made to reinvigorate the art and science of movement control.

Improving Relationships

Change starts with recognizing and mitigating some of the factors that complicate the relationships among the maneuver force and the

and other resources, by limiting the amount of materiel that deploying units need, and by drawing, to the greatest extent possible, from host-nation sources.

Establish relationships at home station. The relationship between the supporting movement control element and the supported maneuver element must be established at home station long before receiving an order to deploy. Habitual relationships, even those accomplished through simple administrative reorganizations, like aligning MCTs with brigades and divisions at home station, will go a long way toward bridging gaps and reasserting movement control as a critical enabler both on the battlefield and, more importantly, in the mind of the commander.

For the apostles of mobility, movement and its control are perhaps the most important capability and technique of land warfare.

—Richard E. Simpkin, *Race to the Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-First Century Warfare*

combatant commander's priorities, and to balance requirements against capabilities." Rehearsals are part of synchronizing and integrating logistics effects.

Find or make the expertise. One of the most intimidating challenges for today's new leaders is that typically no seasoned movement controllers are available to show them the ropes. The Army has substituted civilians and contractors for Soldiers in places where deployment and movement control expertise are needed. Even today's seasoned leaders likely spent most of their formative years in the Army relying on a mix of contractors, established channel flights, lockstep programs, continental United States-based replacement centers, and personnel assistance points.

The solid analytical thinking, teamwork, relationship building, and negotiation skills required to control movement has been turned over to contractors, which is unsustainable because contractors rarely deploy with the unit.

The good news is that over time the institutional knowledge will be rebuilt, smart books will be remade, and modified tables of organization

movement control capabilities that support them.

Ensure MCTs are trained and equipped. Movement control teams (MCTs) must be staffed with trained Soldiers—preferably transportation Soldiers—and led by experienced mobility warrant officers and transportation captains in order to fully support the maneuver commander. Training and experience must be coupled with the latest equipment, systems, and processes to support the capture, analysis, and flow of information.

Train for the fight. Misconceptions brought on by the relative ease of the rotational deployments of the past 14 years must be addressed. Exercises, training events, and simulations must place as much rigor on predeployment and Phase 0 operations as they do on Phases 3 and 4. Wishing away the movement of forces during the deployment phase of an operation—generally referred to as the "magic move"—may work in simulations and exercises, but real logistics always obeys the laws of physics.

Interestingly, savvy logistics planners understand that they can cheat physics by leveraging pre-positioned stocks, operational contract support,

For the maneuver commander who understands how to employ it, and the sustainer who understands how to sell it, the Army's movement control capability is a maneuver enabler that is second-to-none. A trained, integrated, and resourced MCT that is able to coordinate assets in time and space, eliminate waste and inefficiency before and during operations, and provide near real-time in-transit visibility increases the number of options available for the commander.

Fully leveraging and employing Army movement control capabilities gives the maneuver commander the one resource not typically in excess during an operation: time. The bottom line is that it is time to put the movement back into movement and maneuver.

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