



Army Reserve Soldiers from the 236th Inland Cargo Transportation Company use a Kalmar container handler to download shipping containers of ammunition at a railhead at the Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area in Poland, on June 2, 2016, in support of Anakonda 2016.

Exercise Anakonda 2016: Globally Integrated Logistics in Action

USAREUR successfully supported a complex multinational exercise with limited resources by working with partner nations to set conditions.

■ By Capt. Harry Cambrelen Jr.

Anakonda, an annual Polish-led multinational exercise, provides essential lessons that commanders, planners, and sustainers can apply to future operations. U.S. Army Europe's (USAREUR's) recent participation in Anakonda 2016 (AN16) highlights challenges that sustainers should expect in future operations.

The Joint Concept for Logistics asserts that the primary challenge that

logisticians will face in the future is supporting an increasing demand for global integrated logistics in an era of constrained and degraded resources. The complexity of providing unconstrained logistics support to AN16 throughout the USAREUR area of responsibility (AOR) is an example of this challenge.

The 21st TSC

The 21st Theater Sustainment

Command (TSC) is the senior Army logistics command in the USAREUR AOR. During AN16, the 21st TSC supported the reception, staging, onward movement (RSO), and distribution of cargo in theater and enabled the integration functions of U.S. units. The TSC also received movement requests from the 39th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) and oversaw the movement request approv-



Army Reserve Soldiers from the 364th Expeditionary Sustainment Command set up their tactical operations center near Warsaw, Poland, on May 13, 2016, in preparation for Anakonda 2016. The exercise involves more than 25,000 participants from 24 nations. (Photo by Maj. Marvin Baker)

al process for road use and border crossings.

One of the 21 TSC's missions in Europe is to review and process march credits for using German roads, permits to deploy for using Polish roads, and diplomatic clearances for crossing the Germany-Poland border. All of these types of movement requests are required to traverse partner nations' roads. For an average exercise, the TSC processes movement requests for approximately 25 convoys.

However, during AN16, the 21st TSC processed movement requests for more than 189 convoys to and from Germany and Poland. This was over 656 percent more movement requests than normal, which made it difficult for the TSC to main-

tain control and visibility of ground movements.

Movement Control

Currently no standardized system exists to provide control and visibility of ground movements that incorporate the European theater's various movement approval processes. USAREUR organizations and multinational partners track and process data using antiquated and paper-based systems.

The validation and approval processes for movement requests, rest overnight sites, refuel on the move sites, funds verification and use authorizations, and escorts are all tracked by different spreadsheets, by different organizations, and on different timelines. This information is

transmitted by email or, in some cases, by fax machine. These methods cause delays and confusion, restrict holistic visibility, reduce control, and put an unnecessary burden on units.

The Polish and German national movement control centers (NMCCs) coordinate and optimize vehicle movements conducted on their countries' roads. They are the approval authority for land movement of foreign forces within their respective borders.

One of their roles is managing commercial and multinational vehicle movements in order to ensure the movements do not exceed the limits of road infrastructures. The Polish NMCC also coordinates with local law enforcement to provide security escorts for vehicles carrying sensi-

tive items, hazardous materials, and oversized vehicles.

Units' unfamiliarity with the submission requirements for movements in Poland caused half of the movement requests to contain errors. If a movement request contained any errors, the movement control team (MCT) sent it back to the unit for corrections. Because of the lack of a tracking system and visibility, version control became an issue as MCTs received resubmitted movement requests. As a result, the requests bottlenecked at the local MCTs.

The MCTs sent large quantities of movement requests to the 21st TSC, which then sent the requests to the NMCCs. Receiving large numbers of movement requests in such a short period of time overloaded the host nations' systems and caused movement delays.

In the European AOR, the movement request process involves approval from multiple entities. Units should receive clear guidance on the standards and procedures for submitting movement requests and build in enough time to correct errors during the movement planning process. This allows everyone involved in the approval process to review movement requests with enough lead time to make required adjustments.

An automated system should be established to provide control and visibility of ground movements. It should incorporate the various movement approval processes and synchronize all entities involved.

Coordination

U.S. forces had to establish multi-lateral agreements and operate within restricted timelines, routes, and the limitations of partner nations. USAREUR had to form relationships with its partner NMCCs to shape the conditions of road use. The use of partner nations' roads extended logistics capabilities but also widened the range of possible threats.

The 21st TSC analyzed scheduled convoys and routes and presented the information to the German

NMCC. The German NMCC raised concerns about the feasibility of moving such large amounts of convoys into Poland in such a short period of time.

During the time of the operation, a large amount of civilian traffic was on the road for the vacation season. German armed forces were also conducting a military training exercise using the German road network. The NMCC asserted that adding U.S. convoys would greatly exceed the capacity of the road network. After further coordination, the NMCC approved the movements but restricted the movement windows.

The 21st TSC worked around the restricted timeline by rescheduling convoys and establishing alternate routes for entry into Poland. Convoys could move only between 1800 and 0600 hours, and oversized convoys were restricted to moving between 2200 and 0600 hours.

Another challenge that added to

the complexity of AN16 was the limited training time available for Army National Guard and Reserve units. The 364th Expeditionary Sustainment Command entered Poland one week after the deployment phase of the operation and returned to home station during the redeployment phase. The command was not given enough time to complete the required training and execution of all phases of the operations, including RSO and reverse RSO.

Becoming familiar with each country's standards should be included as a part of the movement planning process. This enables synchronization between units, inter-agency partners, and all countries involved.

Contracted Support

USAREUR and its multinational partners had to support AN16 with limited personnel and staff. USAREUR and its subordinate units re-



U.S. and Polish Soldiers prepare for the departure of a vehicle convoy conducted by the 361st Engineer Company. The convoy was leaving the port in Szczecin, Poland, to take part in Anakonda 2016.

lied on external support because of the increased operating tempo and the limited number of sustainment units within the AOR. Contracted line-haul, rail assets, and host-nation law enforcement escorts enabled the successful rapid deployment of forces.

A civilian German railway cargo carrier is the primary mover of U.S. Army cargo transported by rail. AN16 increased the demand for European railcars, and the carrier struggled to support the mission. The primary problem was a shortage of specialized cars that were required to transport oversized vehicles, such as tanks and M88 Hercules recovery vehicles.

The U.S. European Command (EUCOM) Intratheater Commercial Transportation Branch's (ICTB's) primary role during AN16 was to negotiate and establish tenders of service with commercial trucking and bus companies to support the movement of cargo and personnel participating in the exercise. Supporting AN16 was challenging for this nine-person staff because it was also still supporting the entire EUCOM theater. Last-minute requirements and shifting movement priorities strained commercial asset procurement efforts.

USAREUR and subordinate units have a limited number of trailers that are certified according to the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road. As a result, USAREUR had to request support from the ICTB.

Polish escorts are required to accompany foreign nations' vehicle movements through their assigned routes if they are oversized or contain sensitive items. Under normal circumstances, the escorts would be able to provide this service, but the number of convoys exceeded the capacity of law enforcement personnel available.

AN16 exemplified the challenges associated with increased demand on logistics, limited resources, and

increased operating tempo. USA-REUR and its multinational partners were still able to meet mission requirements because of the relationships formed and the intensive planning involved. All joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners should be included early in the planning process before any major operation or exercise.

Redeployment

At the conclusion of the exercise, the 21st TSC provided sustainment mission command of all redeployment operations and assumed tactical control of all redeployment movements. Using a lesson learned from the deployment phase of the operation, the 21st TSC developed a theater transportation plan.

The plan included centralized planning and decentralized execution to identify intratheater vehicles and a movement schedule for redeployment. After receiving notification of their movement windows, units submitted their movement requests through the proper channels to the 21st TSC.

The redeployment process was more successful than the deployment because units were familiar with the movement request submission process. The 21st TSC held a daily redeployment synchronization meeting to create a shared understanding among EUCOM, the USAREUR staff, the 21st TSC, and supported units. The meeting was a forum to correct freedom of movement issues and prevent problems from occurring.

Lessons Learned

Large-scale exercises involving joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners require the participation of all entities involved during all phases of planning. USAREUR and subordinate units could have mitigated some of the visibility issues and delays experienced during the movement request process if the NMCCs were included in earlier phases of planning.

USAREUR could have also established a standardized system that is easily accessed and interpreted by all parties involved. USAREUR, in coordination with EUCOM, allies, and multinational partners, should establish a common tool that comprises commonly available software that NATO partners and allies can use for requests, approvals, management, integration, and execution of convoys and commercial assets.

Operation and exercise planning should reflect the units' timelines and availability. The amount of time that the National Guard and Reserve units participated did not allow for required training and execution of all phases of the operation. Units with a limited amount of training time should deploy to execute in phases and plan repeating large-scale operations and exercises to focus on different phases every year.

Higher headquarters should empower subordinate leaders by providing clear decision-making authority. This will allow commanders on the ground to make decisions in accordance with host-nation escort requirements. Leaders down to the convoy commander level should be encouraged to make decisions based on the guidance given from their headquarters.

U.S. forces must work within the constraints and limitations of joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners. They must abide by conditions set by allies and remember that roads owned by the allies are a shared resource. Partner nations' military traffic and commercial and civilian vehicle traffic should be thoroughly analyzed and explored in depth to identify and mitigate potential conflicts.

It is important to establish and maintain relationships with host-nation entities prior to movements to allow for integrated planning and risk mitigation. This allowed USA-REUR to streamline the approval process for movement requests.

AN16 provided important takeaways for commanders, planners,



Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, commander of U.S. Army Europe, speaks during a briefing with allied military and civilian personnel prior to a demonstration of allied military capabilities during Anakonda 2016 in the Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area near Oleszno, Poland, on June 16, 2016. (Photo by Sgt. Ashley Marble)

and sustainers at all levels in the areas of mission command, information management, setting the theater, and training.

Mission command. Understanding the authority and the mission requirements of the assigned and attached forces that require support is key to a logistician's success. Task organization, battlespace ownership, and reporting requirements are required knowledge to set the conditions for the mission. Without adequate and clearly defined mission command, movements can go unreported or potentially face delays.

Information management. The ability to prioritize, organize, and distribute movement data enables the synchronization of multimodal movement timelines and provides transparency among key organizations. Information availability allows units to solve issues and prevent de-

lays. USAREUR developed a mobility operations board to facilitate discussion on current and future movements.

Setting the theater. Getting the right things to the right place at the right time requires advance planning and coordination. A deployment or redeployment plan ideally has its own distinct operation order or fragmentary order. This allows the supporting units to understand the requirements, roles, responsibilities, and conditions to meet the end state.

Train as you fight. Logisticians should treat the deployment and redeployment movements of all exercises as tactical operations. Sustainers operate under the same tasks, conditions, and standards for exercises as they do for operations. If sustainers fail at their missions, supported units will go without food, ammunition, and critical assets. The same level

of detail required for coordinating resources, planning, and accepting risk should be applied whether it is a training event or a real mission.

USAREUR and multinational partners supported the logistics-intensive AN16 exercise while operating with limited assets and degraded logistics capabilities. USAREUR's ability to integrate multinational partners and interorganizational capabilities to establish freedom of movement and speed of assembly was critical to achieving interoperability and building readiness.

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