



Sustaining Fight Tonight Readiness

■ By Brig. Gen. John P. Sullivan and David E. Dutcher

In the Republic of Korea (ROK), sustaining “Fight Tonight” readiness is the primary mission of the U.S. Army’s 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC). The command strives to be ready to support Eighth Army’s mission of deterring North Korean aggression and maintaining peace on the Korean Peninsula.

The 19th ESC is headquartered in Daegu, ROK, and its units are geographically dispersed across all four areas of the theater. The 19th ESC is the sustainment synchronizer and integrator on the peninsula. It provides operational sustainment to Eighth Army as it executes com-

bined and joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (CJRSOI), noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO), and Army support to other services within the Korean theater of operations.

Fight Tonight is more than just a slogan. The strategic importance of the Korean Peninsula in the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility, coupled with the dynamic, ever-evolving threats on the peninsula, underscores the importance of Fight Tonight readiness.

Readiness serves as a cornerstone and an enduring priority for both Eighth Army and the 19th ESC. Every 19th ESC training event serves

to better set the theater and prepare the command to execute its contingency missions.

Realistic Training

One of the command’s key missions in support of Eighth Army is the reception, staging, and onward movement (RSO) of personnel and equipment arriving on the Korean Peninsula. Along with the major theater exercises conducted there each year, Key Resolve and Ulchi Freedom Guardian, the rotation of forces to the peninsula provides the command ample opportunity to train on this critical mission set.

During 2016, the 19th ESC sup-



Pfc. Drestan Thompson, 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, is tested on his ability to react to unexploded ordnance during Expert Field Medical Badge testing near Panmunjeom, South Korea, on April 25, 2016. (Photo by Pfc. Lee Kyeong-min)

FEATURES

Readiness is a cornerstone and an enduring priority for the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command and Eighth Army.

ported the deployment of the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and the redeployment of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, as well as several smaller unit deployments. Capturing the RSO lessons learned from each unit rotation allowed the command to improve RSO processes and hone readiness.

Integrating strategic sustainment partners, including the Army Materiel Command's 403rd Army Field Support Brigade and the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's 837th Transportation Battalion, into RSO support operations allows the ESC to harness the unique capabilities of these organizations.

The 19th ESC also works with ROK partners, such as the ROK Transportation Command and the ROK's 2nd Operational Command, which further improves interoperability.

CJRSOI Training

Over the course of 2016, the 19th ESC led multiple tabletop exercises and rehearsal of concept drills to ensure synchronized CJRSOI procedures. These meetings were attended by U.S. and ROK leaders and staff sections from across the peninsula, from within the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility, and from stateside units scheduled to attend CJRSOI exercises in the ROK. These events culminated with ground and aerial inspections of CJRSOI nodes.

The 19th ESC also led two field training exercises (FTXs) in 2016 that involved ROK partners and running convoys from the port of Busan to northern staging areas by road and rail. In addition to training Soldiers on the multimodal transportation of personnel and cargo, the FTXs stressed the convoy escort responsibilities of ROK partners, mission command for both U.S. and ROK units, and combined communication and in-transit visibility.

Numerous ROK Homeland Reserve divisions operated throughout the battlespace to train on route and area security responsibilities. Both

FTXs involved area of responsibility transfer and coordination at the ROK joint chiefs of staff and ROK Transportation Command levels as the convoys crossed from one ROK field army operating space into another.

The 19th ESC continually addresses limitations in the current CJR-SOI framework to improve tactics, techniques, and procedures. Specifically, U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) and Eighth Army lead annual wartime host-nation support, Wartime Movement Program, and Korean Service Corps conferences to capture CJRSOI requirements.

NEO

The 19th ESC is responsible for ensuring Fight Tonight readiness for the NEO mission in area IV. Although the declaration of NEO is ordered by the Department of State, it is the responsibility of the Department of Defense to evacuate civilians affected by NEO. The Department of State estimates that about 500,000 people in the ROK would need to be evacuated in the event of hostilities.

While most noncombatant evacuees are located in the areas surrounding Seoul, most evacuation nodes are located in the southern coastal regions where the 19th ESC is responsible for establishing and operating relocation centers.

The 19th ESC works closely with ROK counterparts and the U.S. Transportation Command to ensure the timely relocation and evacuation of noncombatants to minimize the amount of time they stay in harm's way.

NEO training is addressed continually to ensure readiness. NEO tabletop exercises and ROC drills are held in conjunction with those supporting the CJRSOI mission, ensuring joint and combined partners understand that these mission sets will likely be executed concurrently in a wartime setting.

Unlike for CJRSOI operations, the civilian population is heavily involved in NEO. Families new to the

Korean theater of operations receive initial NEO briefings during newcomer's orientation sessions. They are required to meet their NEO wardens, build their NEO packets, and receive their field protective masks from the central issue facility before being issued a ration control card.

These dependents also participate in annual NEO training exercises to include Focused Passage and Courageous Channel. The latter requires all family members to process through an assembly point in areas I, II, or III or a relocation center in area IV.

Key Resolve and Ulchi Freedom Guardian test NEO mission command and reporting procedures. During each exercise, USFK uses forward engineer support teams to identify and provide recommendations about existing ROK infrastructure that could potentially serve as NEO mission areas.

Follow-on meetings are scheduled with ROK leaders to validate the availability of locations recommended for the NEO mission. Although wartime host-nation support is only applicable to the CJRSOI mission, ROK support (in the form of the Wartime Movements Program and the Korean Service Corps) allows the 19th ESC to update and notify the ROK military of requirements to support the NEO mission.

As it does with CJRSOI, the 19th ESC trains as it fights regarding the NEO mission set and constantly challenges both U.S. and ROK units to make the training scenarios as difficult and realistic as possible. This was demonstrated during Courageous Channel in October 2016, when the 19th ESC trained on NEO by leveraging the redeployment of 300 Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

Using the redeploying Soldiers as role players allowed the 19th ESC to train realistically on evacuating civilians as part of a NEO event. With the injection of a master scenario events list, Soldiers simulated having medical problems, lost passports, frustration, and other realistic issues

associated with a NEO movement.

To further provide realism, the 19th ESC worked closely with U.S. Forces Japan and U.S. Army Japan to establish temporary staging support at Yokota Air Base, Japan, for the Soldiers before onward movement to the continental United States.

The 19th ESC also "evacuated" volunteer family members to Okinawa, Japan, aboard a Marine Corps C-130 Hercules aircraft. Joint partners cared for the evacuees for two days at a Marine Corps base before returning them to South Korea.

Operation Pacific Reach 2017

The 19th ESC put all aspects of sustaining Fight Tonight readiness to the test in April 2017 at Pohang, ROK, during Operation Pacific Reach. This two-week U.S. Transportation Command, Combined Forces Command, and USFK exercise was a multidomain, multiechelon, combined, and joint sustainment exercise.

The 19th ESC took on the mission of an expeditionary joint sustainment command in leading and exercising mission command of combined joint logistics over-the-shore, air terminal supply point, and area distribution center operations. It established its command post in an austere environment to provide mission command to all sustainment units and synchronized operations across multiple domains.

The Materiel Support Command-Korea established distribution operations to provide sustainment and Army support to other services. Its central receiving and shipping point simulated bringing cargo into an austere environment, breaking it down, and sending it out to forward-echeloned units.

The ROK's 2nd Logistics Support Command and the 2nd Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade established a combined logistics element to increase interoperability. They conducted combined sustainment including aerial delivery with both ROK and U.S. riggers.

The Joint Task Force-Port Opening

and ROK Combat Response Squadron combined to rapidly deploy and operate from two airports. They loaded U.S. and ROK cargo onto C-130 and CASA-235 transport aircraft at Gimhae Air Base in Busan, ROK, and discharged it at Pohang Airport.

The Navy's Expeditionary Strike Group 3, the 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary), and the ROK Flotilla 5 established a combined joint operations center, which tested the synchronization of discharging containers and equipment from U.S. and ROK vessels over the shore.

The exercise validated bulk fuel system interoperability of the off-shore petroleum discharge system, the marine amphibious assault fuel system, and the inland petroleum distribution system.

The 19th ESC's operational reach on the Korean Peninsula in the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility underscores the importance of Fight Tonight readiness. Readiness is a cornerstone and enduring priority for both Eighth Army and the 19th ESC.

Brig. Gen. John P. Sullivan is the commander of the 19th ESC. He has a bachelor's degree from Fordham University and master's degrees in logistics management from the Florida Institute of Technology and in national security and strategic studies from the College of Naval Command and Staff. He served as a senior service college fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

David E. Dutcher is the 19th ESC deputy G-3. He is a retired Air Force officer and holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Oregon and an MBA from Webster University. He is a graduate of the Air University, Air Command and Staff College, and Squadron Officer School.

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