



Maj. Gen. Duane A. Gamble, commanding general of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, speaks to 1st Human Resources Sustainment Center Soldiers about the importance of having two strong teams for U.S. Army Central and U.S. Army Europe during the unit's 2016 deployment in support of U.S. Army Central.

Expeditionary Human Resources Sustainment: From Theater Committed to Theater Expeditionary

■ By Col. Thomas Seifert and Lt. Col. Marcos Suarez-Morales

The Army is operating in a resource-constrained environment and has to make some difficult force management decisions. Sometimes this means deploying a theater asset to another important area of operations. This was the case for the 1st Human Resources Sustainment Center (HRSC), 21st Theater Sustainment Command (TSC), when it deployed from Europe to

support U.S. Army Central (ARCENT) in early 2016.

The 1st HRSC was already committed to U.S. Army Europe for Atlantic Resolve when it received orders to deploy its teams and capabilities to support Operation Inherent Resolve. Almost simultaneously, it received additional short-term missions to deploy postal teams to Turkey and Cameroon to support

U.S. Army Africa. To be called upon to support three different theaters of operation at once was rare for the 1st HRSC.

Deploying the 1st HRSC from Germany created a gap for units operating in Europe and a dilemma for the 21st TSC. Because the 21st TSC sustains regionally aligned forces operating from the Baltics to the Black Sea region, it could not completely

relieve the 1st HRSC of its mission in Europe.

To meet the requirements of all three theaters, the HRSC had to be task-organized and divided into two separate elements. One element remained in Germany to continue supporting the European theater and U.S. Army Africa contingencies. The second element became an expeditionary HRSC for the ARCENT area of responsibility. Fortunately, the HRSC's readiness had never been higher, with 96 percent of its personnel deployable.

An Expeditionary Force Structure

The 1st TSC operational command post and the 451st Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) provide the decisive logistics that underpins the success of coalition forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. The 451st ESC's daily support operations are critical to building partner capacity. In March 2016, the HRSC joined the 451st ESC and immediately started synchronizing human resources (HR) sustainment for ARCENT.

To fit into a hybrid TSC-ESC design, the HRSC brought the essential HR teams and capabilities that would contribute to a leaner, more expeditionary sustainment structure. These capabilities included commodity managers for theater-level casualty management, personnel accountability, and postal support operations.

People and Mail

People and mail are two of the most important commodities managed by the 1st TSC operational command post. Every week, the TSC distributes more than 381,000 pounds of mail to approximately 76,000 customers; this is an average of five pounds per customer per week.

Each day, several hundred people transit through ARCENT's area of responsibility. Each arrival into the theater is accounted for by the Army's HR enterprise. Personnel transactions trigger the pay events to start

or stop entitlements.

Every week the TSC processes an average of 15 casualty reports for mostly non-hostile incidents and minor injuries. The few seriously injured casualties require patient tracking, follow-up reports, and potentially next-of-kin notification.

People and mail are constant. Although the volume has significantly decreased over the past decade, the average weekly volume is still im-

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pressive. There is no room for complacency as the TSC, ESC, and HRSC deal with this steady volume and the serious logistics challenges of moving mail and people around the battlespace.

An Expeditionary Role

Historically, an expeditionary HR organization has been important for large sustainment operations. During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Army employed modified table of organization and equipment organizations, such as theater personnel commands (PERSCOMs) and corps personnel groups. During major campaigns, theater PERSCOMs and corps personnel groups were commanded by brigadier generals and colonels, respectively.

When the Army reorganized in the 1990s and 2000s, the PERSCOMs were inactivated and the deployable HR sustainment functions critical to the warfighter were made part of the TSC force structure. In Europe, the 1st PERSCOM was inactivated entirely, and the 1st HRSC was established as a directorate under the 21st TSC.

Since 2006, the 1st HRSC has deployed from Europe to support Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring

Freedom, New Dawn, and Inherent Resolve.

The HRSC works closely with the TSC-ESC support operations (SPO) staff to support theater opening, theater distribution, and theater sustainment. The HRSC director is best described as the HR SPO who manages theater postal services, casualty support and assistance, and the deployed theater personnel accountability database. Each of these tasks is

critical to supporting the warfighter.

During each operational phase, the HRSC has specific tasks to accomplish for the sustainment commander. During theater opening, the HRSC supports the joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of units by enabling personnel accountability at the point of entry.

During theater distribution and theater sustainment, the HRSC works with the SPO team to distribute mail and tracks the repatriation of casualty remains. The HRSC also supports the force management of the Army's HR companies, postal platoons, mail movement terminals, casualty liaison teams, and theater gateway personnel accountability teams.

Partnerships

The 1st HRSC is one of five theater HRSCs in the Army force structure. The other theater HRSCs are:

- The 8th HRSC in Hawaii.
- The 14th HRSC at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.
- The 3rd HRSC (Army Reserve) in Birmingham, Alabama.
- The 310th HRSC (National Guard) at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

The five theater HRSCs work and

train together during mission rehearsals. They shape doctrinal concepts, standardize collective training, and share best practices. All of these units have previous expeditionary experience and can expect to play a role in future operations.

The HRSC must always contribute to the TSC-ESC SPO's concept for sustainment. The 1st HRSC was well-prepared for this important partnership from working with the SPO in Europe as part of the 21st TSC.

The 1st HRSC also invested in readiness and relationships with key partners. Before departing Kaiserslautern, Germany, the HRSC built rapport with all of the Army HR partners and program managers for each of the critical HR functional areas. These included the Human Resources Command,

the Military Postal Service Agency, and the Casualty and Memorial Affairs Operations Center. Building strong relationships with these organizations was critical for mission accomplishment.

Synergy and Opportunity

From its command post in Qatar, the 1st HRSC shared information with two important partners: the 18th Financial Management Support Center and the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support). By working together, a synergy emerged among the HR, financial management, and medical communities during Operation Inherent Resolve.

Taking care of HR involved more than just the theater HRSC and HR line units. The theater finance team managed the combat zone entitle-

ments processes that occurred after deployed personnel records were verified by the HRSC and personnel accountability teams. In similar fashion, the theater medical team shared helpful information to facilitate the tracking of casualties who received patient care at medical treatment facilities.

In the future, there will be tremendous opportunities for the Army sustainment community to employ HRSC teams in the best places to create value, unity of effort, and simplicity for sustainment operations.

As the Army adapts to a cost-conscious force structure and a fresh approach to operations, there will be opportunities for expeditionary HR functions to be further embedded and aligned within the greater sustainment framework. For example, mail movement and distribution functions are just like other commodities that the SPO manages; mail has a priority for movement with a required delivery date, like any class of supply.

The Army should also consider aligning and embedding HRSC casualty management and assistance within patient administration and patient care functions. These are best accomplished in the Army medical arena.

Ultimately, the HRSC remains a vital organization to provide the critical HR sustainment for enduring operations. It has been an enabler for the expeditionary sustainment of deployed units, Soldiers, civilians, and contractors.

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Soldiers of the 1st Human Resources Sustainment Center stand during the arrival of the official party during the unit's transfer of authority ceremony at Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar, on Dec. 6, 2016. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Naurys Marte)