

The Final Strategic Objectives

■ By Gen. Gustave “Gus” Perna



Two years ago in *Army Sustainment* magazine, I wrote about changes to our operational environment and the necessity of preparing to set a theater for a regionally aligned, rapidly deployable force. I stated that we logisticians must prepare to support an Army that is smaller but more responsive.

While we have made progress, we must continue to prepare our sustainment formations at all echelons to set the theater and establish favorable conditions for conducting military operations. In the articles in this issue, some of the Army’s best logisticians and subject matter experts explore how we accomplish this mission.

In the previous two editions, I introduced four of six strategic objectives that establish the organizational strategy to operationalize the Army Materiel Command as the Army’s materiel integrator: materiel readiness, sustainable readiness, force projection, and battlefield sustainment. In this edition, I highlight the final two objectives: Armywide sustainment and materiel development.

Armywide Sustainment

Armywide sustainment begins with maturing our processes and operations

to best meet Army materiel readiness requirements. To synchronize and integrate sustainment capabilities, we must become experts. We must shape Army doctrine through the Training and Doctrine Command in order to optimize sustainment across the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

Sustainment doctrine must consider our current and future complex and dynamic operational environment to address challenges such as the implications of operating as part of a dispersed, joint, interorganizational, and multinational team and sustaining a high operating tempo while still developing agile, resilient leaders.

Through the codification of lessons learned, best practices, and emerging concepts, sustainment leaders and forces are best positioned to implement current and future sustainment doctrine and are trained to standard to execute the sustainment mission.

We further shape the fight by establishing effective mission command across the entire enterprise and ensuring sustainment unit readiness by manning, training, and equipping. As logisticians, we need to look past our task organizations and focus on all the critical relationships required to fight and win. Through the lenses of mission command, command authority, and command influence, logistics leaders can leverage all sustainment capabilities to support mission success.

Materiel Development

Materiel development begins with leveraging science, technology, research, and development to maintain a competitive edge. With our partners in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology), the Training and Doctrine Command, Forces Command, academia, and industry, we will synchronize and align our sci-

ence and technology investments with the Army’s top challenges to deliver capabilities that our Soldiers require.

The key here is pursuing innovative technologies that match current and emerging battlefield requirements. We must define the problem then innovate and ultimately transition the technology to the materiel developer.

Materiel development has been stifled by a burdensome acquisition process that inadequately and too slowly provides the sustainable materiel solutions that are required. We must shape an acquisition life cycle process that is structured to produce timely, affordable, and sustainable materiel, including rapidly fielded new technologies.

Sustainment costs add up over a piece of equipment’s life cycle. Early in the acquisition process, we must factor in costs and address sustainment in all materiel requirements documents.

Our nation depends on an Army that is ready to respond to any call, to deploy at a moment’s notice, and to operate anywhere in the world. Logistics has always been our military’s strategic advantage; to maintain that advantage in today’s complex world, we must be ready instead of reactive.

If we in the materiel enterprise focus on the six strategic objectives of Armywide sustainment, materiel development, materiel readiness, sustainable readiness, force projection, and battlefield sustainment, we will posture ourselves and, in turn, our Army for success on the battlefield. If we commit to clearly defining requirements, ignoring who gets credit, and aligning our efforts to our outputs, we will collectively provide Army materiel readiness.

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