

Providing Materiel Readiness on a Joint Battlefield

■ By Gen. Gustave “Gus” Perna



In this changing and complex world, the battlefield of tomorrow will be nothing like that of the past. Our armed forces will need to be prepared to fight across all domains to defeat our adversaries. The joint fight will require joint, expeditionary logistics to support it, and the Army's materiel enterprise must be ready to respond.

In the May–June 2017 issue of *Army Sustainment*, I introduced six strategic objectives that establish the organizational strategy to operationalize the Army Materiel Command (AMC) as the Army's materiel integrator: materiel readiness, Sustainable Readiness, force projection, battlefield sustainment, materiel development, and Armywide sustainment. This edition, focused on joint logistics, provides a fitting platform to highlight force projection and battlefield sustainment.

Force Projection

The U.S. military's strategic advantage is, in part, its ability to overcome the logistics difficulties inherent in projecting forces forward. With its strategic partners in the Forces Command, which organizes forces for de-

ployment, and the U.S. Transportation Command, which coordinates and provides the means for the movement of joint forces, AMC sets the conditions for force projection, from power projection platforms to forward operating locations.

The joint force is better served and, more importantly, more ready when the Army can synchronize force projection to deploy our forces effectively, efficiently, and quickly. Installation logistics readiness centers (LRCs) manage that projection and provide the critical link.

We must optimize LRCs by establishing baseline service support requirements, such as equipment maintenance, ammunition management, food service operations, and supply support activities, and by prioritizing resources for those requirements. LRCs must be able to properly support installations while simultaneously meeting force projection timelines and standards.

Force projection also entails Army pre-positioned stocks that are configured to strengthen national defense and build capacity. Combatant commanders and the joint force rely on equipment sets that are regionally aligned in support of an expeditionary force for training and contingency operations. Pre-positioned stocks must be ready, modern, and configured for combat to ensure rapid and capable land power.

Battlefield Sustainment

Battlefield sustainment requires regional alignment with the force in order to deliver sustainment rapidly to the point of need. To achieve this, sustainers must streamline contracting business processes, organizational structures, readiness, and workforce

capabilities to provide contracting support that anticipates rather than reacts to requirements.

Effective mission command enables AMC to optimize battlefield sustainment and solidify a single “face to the field” through the Army Sustainment Command. This mission-command alignment increases responsiveness to the battlefield sustainment needs and requirements of the joint force.

Another initiative under battlefield sustainment is building partner capacity through security assistance programs. The Army must ensure its security assistance efforts provide the right equipment and services to partner nations in order to meet combatant command requirements.

Through foreign military sales, the Department of Defense offers its partners materiel, spare parts, training, publications, technical documentation, maintenance support, and other services to ensure battlefield sustainment. Being strategic and proactive in security assistance increases the effectiveness of efforts supporting theater security cooperation plans.

As the Army prepares to equip and sustain Soldiers today and in the future under the Multi-Domain Battle concept, we must think jointly. The military relies on the logistics proficiency of our Army. We must develop and deliver capabilities that operate across the joint force and partner nations. Getting force projection and battlefield sustainment right is critical to successful joint logistics.

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