

Embracing an Expeditionary Deployment Mindset

■ By Maj. Gen. Paul Hurley and Stacey Lee

Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, Operations, and its subordinate publications, Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0 and Field Manual 3-0, are a marked departure from the manuals published before them. This latest 3-0 series still describes Army forces that can operate across the full range of operations, but the point of departure is using large-scale ground combat against a peer threat.

ADP 3-0 states, “Army forces, with unified action partners, conduct land operations to shape security environments, prevent conflict, prevail in ground combat, and consolidate gains. Army forces provide multiple options for responding to and resolving crises. Army forces defeat enemy forces, control terrain, secure populations, and preserve joint force freedom of action.”

The skills, expertise, organizations, and processes to support a patch-chart rotation are different from those supporting a limited- or no-notice deployment to an immature, potentially contested theater. The common requirement is the ability to plan, prepare, and deploy personnel and equipment from origin to destination to meet the operational commander’s requirements. Leaders at all levels in the Army have admitted that those deployment skills are mission critical but have atrophied across the force.

Efforts to rebuild the skills and experience (the muscle memory) are ongoing; however, while you can train a skill quickly, building experience takes time and multiple training iterations.

Historical View of Deployment

In August 1990, the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait and, led by the vaunted

Republican Guard, expected to deter and, if needed, protect Iraq against a ground assault. What it got instead was a lesson in the Army’s new Air-Land Battle (ALB) doctrine, which was applied with devastating effect. The U.S. military and coalition partners had flexed their deployment muscles to assemble from around the globe the largest multinational force since World War II.

In the first 6 months, the United States alone sent more than 296,000 Soldiers and over 2.3 million short tons of equipment and supplies into Saudi Arabia. With help from coalition partners, the multi-corps task force deterred further Iraqi aggression (Operation Desert Shield), drove the Iraqi army back across the Kuwait-Iraq border (Operation Desert Storm), and diminished the Iraqi military forces to the point of ineffectiveness.

Deployment excellence in Desert Shield and Desert Storm equated to these three factors:

- Shaking off the patch-chart rotation mentality that was ingrained through set rotations to Vietnam.
- Developing an expeditionary deployment mindset driven by the operational commander.
- Establishing a deployment culture that enabled a no-notice multi-corps, multinational deployment capable of conducting full-spectrum operations against a hostile state.

Following Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Army began to look for ways to fill gaps identified in its deployment performance. The roughly 150 days required to deploy



The Combined Arms Support Command and the Deployment Process Modernization Office are taking steps to improve the Army’s deployment readiness by drawing on past deployment experiences.

five divisions and the 205 days to deploy the whole force were deemed too long. The Army was charged to look at the end-to-end deployment process, from infrastructure to strategic mobility resources, with the goal of significantly cutting deployment lead time.

The result, published by the Army in 1999, was the ambitious deployment standard of being able to have a division on the ground anywhere in the world in 120 hours and being able to have five divisions on the ground in 30 days. The envisioned force was lighter, more mobile, more lethal, and, more importantly, designed to maximize limited strategic deployment resources.

While the Army's generating force was busy sharpening its force projection skills, the operational force was busy executing multiple small-scale, noncombat operations in places like Bosnia and Kosovo. Studying large-scale deployments in support of major combat operations while executing small-scale deployments for contingency missions enabled the

Army to exercise deployment infrastructure and processes.

However, the small scale and infrequent nature of these deployments did not allow it to build the muscle memory across the force required to execute no-notice, total force deployments in support of large-scale combat operations.

Deployment excellence during the 1990s equated to these three factors:

- Matching an evolving equipment set to limited strategic mobility assets.
- Building deployment flows with a "just in time" mindset to avoid piling up "iron mountains" like those built in Saudi Arabia in 1990.
- Adapting and executing deployments geared to a lighter, faster, more modular force.

A decade after Desert Shield and Desert Storm, following 9/11, the U.S. military found itself once again planning and conducting a large-scale deployment. Operations Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Iraqi

Freedom (OIF) flexed deployment muscles not used in over a decade. Deployment planners began dusting off the old ALB doctrine, but the Army of the next decade evolved into something different.

Deployment excellence in OEF and OIF equated to these three factors:

- Units entering the predeployment cycle as soon as possible to validate the mission and timeline, link up with the deployed units, and train theater-specific tasks.
- Knowing deployment plans down to the individual Soldier level months in advance.
- Turning unit equipment over for storage prior to deployment. (Under a long lead-time model, this was almost as important as deploying.)

Current Initiatives

The Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Army Capabilities and Integration Center leads the Army's efforts to describe the future operational environment. It develops



A company from the 101st Airborne Division marches across an apron to board the aircraft that will carry them to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield on Jan. 23, 1991, at Fort Sumter, S.C.

the framework to guide the future force from a concept to fully functional units that are ready to deploy and fight.

Documents such as the Army Operating Concept and the Multi-Domain Battle white paper form the underpinnings of the conceptual effort used to guide changes to doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF).

As a product of this conceptual thinking, Field Manual 3-0 indicates that the Army must regain its lost deployment muscle memory and reestablish the deployment culture across the operational force. However, as ADP 3-0 notes, the challenge is not a complete reset but an effort to capture the valuable skills and experiences from OEF, OIF, Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and other deployments of the 1990s and combine them into a road map for the Army going forward.

The Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM) and Sustainment Center of Excellence leads the effort to develop and integrate the sustainment and logistics portions of this effort. Whether in concept or execution, the Army's ability to rapidly deploy around the globe with little to no notice and fight against a peer competitor touches every aspect of DOTMLPF.

Doctrine. Deployment and sustainment doctrine is getting a major overhaul in order to be synchronized with the new 3-0 series of publications. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-35, Army Deployment and Redeployment; ATP 4-16, Movement Control; ATP 4-93, Sustainment Brigade; and ATP 4-94, Theater Sustainment Command, among others, are all being revised. Deployment and reception, staging, onward movement, and integration are primary focus areas.

Organization. Theater movement control elements are being fielded to give Army service component commands a greater ability to plan and conduct deployment, distribution,

and redeployment operations. Feedback from the field and events like the Sustaining Decisive Action War-game are informing this effort.

Training. Mission-essential task lists are being revised to include (or in some cases reintroduce) more deployment-related skills and tasks. CASCOM is developing a movement control training support package for the command post exercise-sustainment. The package is focused on theater sustainment command, expeditionary sustainment command, and sustainment brigade reception, staging, onward movement, and integration and movement control tasks.

Materiel. The Deployment Process Modernization Office (DPMO) is aggressively working to improve current deployment information systems and supporting processes. DPMO and CASCOM's Enterprise Systems Directorate are developing the requirements for future deployment information systems.

Leadership. Leadership training and education is focused on a multi-functional culture in which sustainers and logisticians can support across all functional areas. Professional military education for all cohorts and across courses is being revamped to add more rigor and relevance.

Personnel. Tables of organization and equipment and grade plates are being analyzed to ensure the right skill sets are in the right places. CASCOM is performing an in-depth review of sustainment and logistics organizations to ensure a correct balance between the active and reserve components.

Policy. CASCOM is analyzing current policies for relevance and revising or rescinding "dead end" or restrictive policies. DPMO is analyzing the deployment process end-to-end to identify policy gaps and develop solutions for decision-makers in the Army and joint communities.

Looking Toward the Future

As TRADOC's Multi-Domain Battle white paper notes, "Potential

adversaries now possess capabilities that allow them to contest both the deployment and employment of U.S. forces in greatly expanded areas of operation, interest, and influence."

The Multi-Domain Battle concept and the 3-0 series publications envision a force that is trained, equipped, postured, and positioned to "fight tonight" against a peer threat and that is supported by fully networked enterprise resource planning systems. This force will be able to operate with joint partners and strategic enablers in an integrated environment and be fully synchronized from the strategic support area to the deep fires area.

Overcoming adversaries' capabilities in order to provide the operational commander with freedom of action across multiple options, partners, domains, and dilemmas requires trained, experienced, and empowered deployment professionals.

Deployment excellence for the future force will equate to deployment professionals with these attributes:

- An expeditionary deployment mindset.
- The ability to leverage capabilities across all domains to see and understand faster than the adversary.
- The experience to develop for the operational commander options that capitalize on windows of opportunity in an increasingly fluid operational environment.

A tremendous amount of work has already been done to build the bench, but much is left to do. Deployment excellence for the future will require personnel, systems, and processes acting in concert at the speed of war.

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