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Organizational Courage: Following Through On Enabling Transformation Innovations In Theater

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Organizational Courage: Following Through On Enabling Transformation
Innovations In Theater

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This manuscript is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

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U.S. Army War College
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Abstract

Title: Organizational Courage: Following Through On Enabling Transformation Innovations In Theater

Report Date: March 2013
Page Count: 42
Word Count: 6835

Key Terms: Theater Army, Theater Enabling Command, Theater Sustainment, Signal Command, ARCENT, USARPAC

Classification: Unclassified

The Theater Enabling Commands (TEC) are among the highest level operational organizations in the United States Army. As part of the Army’s transformation of the past decade, the integration of the TECs promoted significant changes in structure, doctrine, and employment. However, the transformation of the TECs is incomplete and most importantly not fully tested. In this age of austerity, the Army will need to realize its millennial transformation as it will not be able to justify having organizations in the transformed force structure that are not being fully utilized; especially now that the Army is looking to transform itself again as a part of the envisioned Joint Force 2020. This paper analyzes the state of TEC transformation, reasons why Theater Army transformation remains incomplete, and proposes recommendations for the future. These recommendations include adopting an Army culture of innovation at the operational / strategic level, finishing the TEC transformations and avoiding succumbing to a call to return to the pre-transformation ways of functional support, as well as improving the professional development training of theater army doctrine.
Organizational Courage: Following Through On Enabling Transformation
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To realize true change requires a willingness to question the foundational beliefs on which everything depends.

—Kim van Alkemade

During the first decade of the millennium, the United States Army underwent its “most comprehensive transformation” in sixty years. In development prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, the Army’s shift to the organizational concept of modularity was advanced in 1999 by then Chief of Staff of the Army General Eric K. Shinseki, who was intent on making “heavy forces…more strategically deployable and more agile with a smaller logistical footprint, and light forces…more lethal, survivable, and tactically mobile.”

Transformation’s multi-faceted modularity process would integrate “standardized, expandable, Army elements capable of being [adapted] to accomplish virtually any assignment.” This would produce a “tactical force with a larger number of more aggregated capabilities” better suited to support Combatant Commanders’ land power requirements as part of the greater Joint Force. The shift to a modular force structure was to maximize the flexibility of force tailoring to support the Army’s goal to “use only those forces absolutely necessary” to efficiently “respond to a diverse spectrum of” global operations. This in turn would support the vision to transform the Army “into a strategically responsive force that is dominant across the full spectrum of operations” and able to “field a combat-ready brigade anywhere in the world within 96 hours, a division within 120 hours, and five divisions within 30 days.”

General Peter Schoomaker, the 35th Chief of Staff of the Army, accelerated the modularization of the Army, adjusting “to the conditions it faced in the summer of
and applying insights forged from fighting the Global War on Terror (GWOT) in Afghanistan and Iraq. The resulting transformation blueprint “altered every echelon of the force from battalion to [theater] army” with its revamped “combinations of concepts, capabilities, people and organizations.” Much of this was subsequently codified in Army doctrine. However, this formalization did not drive full adherence to the transformation plan. Certain aspects were not implemented and/or tested for their effectiveness. Instead, in a number of cases, localized workarounds were created for missions that were supposed to be executed by designated transformed organizations. The selective endorsement of transformation and modular organizations impeded institutional innovation and resulted in the Army not realizing the full potential of its millennial transformation.

In 2013, the Army is moving forward with a new call for change — this time to rebalance the force structure while retaining operational adaptability and evolving into the Army of 2020. This call for change could herald an opportunity to refine the previous transformation process to the ever shifting strategic environment except that the Army has not yet completed its transformation to modularity. Indeed, some of the ideas being touted for the newest round of Army reforms are similar to those presented to validate transformation. The Army appears to have succumbed to the novelty of meeting a new(er) strategy, without regard to the benefit of maximizing what is already in place — all to meet the similar objectives and “maintain a credible capacity to win decisively and support combatant commanders across a wide range of military operations at home and abroad.” The Army’s inconsistent commitment to
transformation’s modular way of doing business also contradicts the Army ideal of a culture of innovation with the mantra of “adapt or die.”\textsuperscript{16}

The Army could benefit from taking a critical look at its implementation of the transformation to modularity before moving on to another set of changes. A pause to assess the current situation is especially critical in this post-war resource constrained environment specifically as the Army may be called on to justify having organizations in the transformed force structure that are not being fully utilized. It also behooves the Army to ensure it has not missed opportunities to adapt existing solutions to its latest change requirements. A critical examination of modularity may reveal that the Army already has some of the framework for further change for Joint Force 2020 in place. Therefore, the Army needs to reconsider the possibility of completing its millennial transformation first, before beginning another program of change. Having all transformations in place may be capable of moving the Army towards its objective “to adapt the Army to more effectively provide land power” and “provide modernized and ready, tailored land force capabilities to meet combatant commanders’ requirements across the range of military operations.”\textsuperscript{17}

This paper will assess the transformation of some of the Army’s highest level operational organizations, namely the Theater Army Enabling Commands. To limit the scope, this paper will not delve into the entirety of the comprehensive transformation design. It will include an overview of the Theater Army Headquarters and Theater Enabling Commands as well as modular brigade concepts. It will describe aspects of Theater Army transformation that were not fully implemented and consider possible reasons for this selectivity. It will conclude with observations about the benefits of
completing the Army’s transformation to modularity and promoting the Army’s culture of innovation to ensure optimization of all of its organizations in this time of resource challenges.

**Implementation of Modularity**

The early 1990s saw the genesis of the Army’s transformational shift to modularity. Even though the Cold War U.S. Army had successfully defeated Saddam Hussein and driven the Iraqi Army out of Kuwait in 1991, two factors supported an Army overhaul to improve its strategic responsiveness and maintain its relevancy. These were the critical assessment of the cumbersome five month build-up of land forces prior to the commencement of Operation Desert Storm, and the re-evaluation of the Army’s future roles and missions precipitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union.\(^{18}\)

The Army determined it had to adapt “to meet the realities of…current and future [strategic] environments,”\(^ {19}\) by becoming more expeditionary, and changing its organizational design and culture (mindset) to realize a thorough transformation. Advances in technology facilitated changes to “how the Army [was to be] structured and conduct operations.”\(^ {20}\) In addition to revamping unit types, roles, and responsibilities, the Army’s shift to modularity promoted a “flatter and less rigidly hierarchical”\(^ {21}\) organizational design which supported a dramatic change to the Command and Control (C2) of Theater Army units.

To better support the comprehensive Army-wide shift to modularity, complementary adjustments were needed to the Army’s institutional systems in all areas from personnel management to training and education, healthcare and procurement.\(^ {22}\) However, the most change – and ultimately the biggest challenge would be developing a transformed theater structure that would enable the Army to provide the
Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCC) the proper balance of forces to support joint teams across “the full range of military operations.”

Modularity programmed major modifications to the components of the Theater Army / Army Service Component Command (ASCC): it redesigned the Theater Army Headquarters; standardized and assigned regionally-focused Theater Enabling Commands (TEC); and modularized attached or operational control (OPCON) forces allocated to the theater but deployable in support of global contingencies i.e. combat and functional brigades, as well as Division and Corps headquarters. (Figure 1) The Theater Army Headquarters was reorganized into three elements. At the core of each headquarters is the Main Command Post (MCP). In addition, each ASCC was allocated one or more deployable Command Posts: Operational Command Post (OCP) and/or Contingency Command Post (CCP). The OCP has since been removed from the Theater Army Headquarters structure. These reflected transformation’s operationalizing of the Theater Army Headquarters by exploiting “C2 efficiencies…and…technologies that extend(ed) the operational reach of Theater level organizations.”

To better support the GCC, the redesigned ASCC would improve the Theater Army’s ability to meet the challenges of expanded theater-wide roles and functions:

- Execute “combatant commander’s daily operations requirements” which includes the Army’s mandated statutory Title 10 / Administrative Control responsibilities.
- Conduct activities “to set the theater” or “Joint Operations Area (JOA)” in order to establish the conditions for unified land operations (formerly full
spectrum operations)\textsuperscript{28} and “provide Army support to Army, joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational forces.”\textsuperscript{29}

- Serve as a Joint Task Force (JTF) Headquarters “providing mission command for immediate crisis response and limited small-scale contingency operations.”\textsuperscript{30}

**Army in the Theater**

**General**

![Diagram of Army in the Theater]

Figure 1. Army in the Theater\textsuperscript{31}

The TECs were designed to facilitate the Theater Army’s execution of the aforementioned functions and operations in support of the GCC with the Main Command Post orchestrating the employment of these integral extensions of the Theater Army Headquarters. “Habitually associated and regionally focused,”\textsuperscript{32} the TECs consolidated functional support units under specialized headquarters. The flattening of the force structure was intended to support the theater wide expansion of Command and Control (C2) by functions (e.g. sustainment, signal, intelligence) which prompted
the major change to the theater C2 structure. Changes would result in a revolutionary shift from single geographically focused headquarters having command and control of all units in their geographic area, to disbursed C2 with Theater Enabling Commands assuming C2 of their functionally aligned units based throughout the Theater. This change in C2 was also meant to change support relationships — with TEC Commanders providing direct and / or general support to Mission Commanders through their functionally aligned brigades/batteries.

Transformation was also supposed to alter the designation of and delineation of Army Forces (ARFOR) command, modifying standing relationships with Joint Force Commands (JFC) to include GCC Sub-unified Commands and Joint Task Forces. Traditionally, an ARFOR, as the “Army Service component headquarters for a joint task force or a joint / multinational force,” is “the conduit for most Service-related issues and administrative support” for the majority of Army units in a JOA. Eighth Army (Field Army), U.S. Army Alaska and U.S. Army Japan are examples of standing ARFORs for Army units in their respective Subunified Commanders’ (Korea Command, Alaska Command and U.S. Forces Japan) AORs. However, the shift to TEC command and control modified this model. Transformation redefined ARFOR responsibilities, with multiple Army headquarters supporting the interests of Army units in each operational area; sharing ADCON with the ARFOR which at a minimum maintains the responsibility for coordinating security and executing its General Court Marital authority for forces operating in its area of operations.

The implementation of transformed C2, would see the disbursement of Title 10 / ADCON and OPCON tasks across multiple headquarters for units stationed at
geographic nodes throughout the theater. This had the potential to maximize TEC capabilities during all phases of military operations. Though designed not so much with steady state execution in mind, dedicated alignment with theater armies would enable TECs to promote long term success through unilateral to multilateral operations in a single theater, continuously developing an understanding of the geography, and the prevailing culture, values, and partner/host nation systems. In addition, the responsibility for various aspects of “Army and Joint support in [the] AOR” was also to be transferred to the regionally focused Theater Headquarters and its enablers, reflecting a change from the past when the most senior headquarters was given the Army-to-Army or to other Services support mission. Geographically focused headquarters would be relieved of command responsibilities for functional brigades/battalions. In this way, Corps, Field Army, and Divisions would no longer be the sole C2 element for brigades. However, tactical brigades would continue to be assigned to either a Division level Headquarters or a Three Star Operational level headquarters.

The most recognized and celebrated modularity change was the restructuring of the Army’s brigades. This shifting of the Army from its World War II initiated division-centric focus to a brigade-based organization was to create a “lighter and more mobile” force deemed “superior” in terms of “deployability, employability and sustainability.” Under transformation, brigades were to become the deployable building blocks of the modular force with the capacity to move from one Theater to “plug and play” in another. Either as stand-alone units or aligned to a Division, Corps and ultimately Theater Enabling Commands, modularization would provide greater flexibility to mix and match brigades depending on the operation. Transformation created
standing multifunctional tactical brigades (Infantry, Heavy, Stryker Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs)) “containing the combined arms capabilities necessary to deploy to a fight.” Transformation also saw the development of two types of modular support brigades. Multi-functional support brigades were to complement the BCTs and provide extended “depth and duration [for] land operations” in areas such as maneuver enhancement, combat aviation, fires, and battlefield surveillance. Functional support brigades were created to sustain theater-wide operational requirements in specialties such as Air Defense; Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear; Engineer; Explosive Ordnance Disposal; Military Police; Information Operations; Theater Aviation as well as Sustainment; Signal; Medical; Intelligence; and Civil Affairs.

The five transformed theater enabling capabilities assigned or accessible to Theater Armies through their TECs are sustainment, medical, signal, civil affairs, and military intelligence. In addition, regionally aligned Army Air Missile Defense Commands (AAMDC) in USARPAC and USAREUR have evolved into “the most jointly integrated theater enabling commands.” Other subordinate commands that may also be aligned to the Theater Army Headquarters, “based on AOR specific requirements” include the Engineer Command. Each TECs’ distinct organization and function are matched only by their unique “command…relationship with the theater army” headquarters, with their subordinate units and for some, with their higher Direct Reporting Unit headquarters.

The Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) was developed to meet “the need for establishing a single sustainment command and control (C2) element for theater logistics” and facilitate the theater army’s dominant role in sustaining Army and joint
forces (as directed). The TSC consolidated echelons of sustainment units formerly assigned to Corps and Divisions, and subsequently transformed into functional Sustainment Brigades. The TSC was designed to execute “the Theater Army’s AOR-wide support responsibilities” to provide “sustainment (less medical) for all Army forces forward-stationed, transiting, or operating within the” Theater; plan and conduct theater opening; conduct reception, staging, onward movement and integration; and provide Common User Logistics. The TSC would accomplish its Theater mission through its forward-deployed command post, the Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC), maintaining “direct mission command over the sustainment units providing support within the areas of operation.”

The medical enabling command, the Medical Command (Deployment Support) (MEDCOM(DS)), is structured to operate in coordination with the TSC and serve as “the theater’s senior medical force provider in support of the theater army.” The MEDCOM (DS) provides Army health system services through its subordinate medical brigades and battalions which have a Direct Support/General Support relationship with the operational forces in the JOA. The MEDCOM usually maintains C2 of its medical brigades to retain the “ability to rapidly task-organize and reallocate medical assets across command and geographical boundaries” in the AOR.

Another enabling command similarly organized, is the Signal Command Theater (SC(T)). This TEC was created to provide “communications and information systems support to theater, joint, governmental, and multinational forces as required.” The SC(T) is a TEC with a unique relationship with its higher DRU headquarters as it is assigned to the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Signal
Command (Army) (NETCOM/9thSC(A)), while under operational control of the Theater Headquarters.\textsuperscript{66}

Another transformed theater capability is the Civil Affairs Command (CACOM). This specialized enabling command is focused primarily on providing Strategic Level civil affairs expertise through the allocation of staff augmentation to the GCC and Theater Army Headquarters.\textsuperscript{67} The CACOM maintains an administrative relationship with its higher headquarters USACAPOC (U. S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command) while under the operational control of the ASCC.\textsuperscript{68}

The fifth Theater Enabling Command is the Military Intelligence Brigade (MIB). The MIB provides multi-discipline intelligence support to include “regionally focused intelligence collection and analysis” for the theater army and other U.S. and coalition forces operating “in JOAs within the AOR” as required.\textsuperscript{69} It provides support via reachback to higher assets and from MIB subordinate battalion collection or analysis assets attached or under OPCON or direct support to the operational ARFOR.\textsuperscript{70} The MIB is another TEC with dual higher headquarters; assigned to the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) and under operational control of the Theater Army.

This was the plan for transforming the main components of the Theater Army. Transformation was not always executed as it was intended. An understanding of the scope of change comes from an analysis of how and if transformation was implemented. A look at examples of modularization by two Army Service Component Commands, U.S. Army Central (USARCENT) and U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC)
provides a basis for comparing the level of compliance with the Army Transformation Plan and doctrine.

Analysis of Theater Army Transformation

When it came to the Theater Enabling Commands, instead of transformed organizations, one saw the creation of parallel organizations / systems in order to perpetuate a legacy C2 structure. These work-arounds to the TECs created non-transformed solutions for managing functional units and also created a demand for additional personnel and other resources to augment Headquarters to C2 the units they should have relinquished. In the case of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Corps based Coalition Forces Land Component Commands had to supplement their Joint Manning Documents to round out their headquarters and facilitate managing functional support in their areas of operation. This resulted in a drain on assets with the inefficient utilization of highly capable TEC headquarters also operating in Theater.

The transformation of two Army Service Component Commands, USARCENT and USARPAC, provides examples of issues with the implementation of modularity and more specifically at the Theater Enabling Command level. In addition, two of the five regionally aligned TECs, the Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) and Signal Command (Theater) (SC(T)), also illustrate issues with the establishment, employment and integration of TECs with these Theater Army Headquarters.

Many aspects of modularity were fully implemented, however, certain transformation objectives were only partially executed while others were ignored altogether. Transformed TECs were declared as having attained Full Operational Capability (FOC) even though they had not been comprehensively tested as complete organizations as their subordinate units were not aligned to them. Some perceived the
TECs inability to execute their functional mission as justification to call for pre-
transformation command relationships with subordinate functional support units. This
promoted work-arounds to maintain current C2 relationships and highlighted the Army’s
challenges with optimizing complex change.

USARCENT/Third Army as the Army Component of Central Command
(CENTCOM), with its geographical area of responsibility in South West Asia and the
Middle East, is uniquely challenged in that its headquarters is based in the Continental
United States (CONUS) and not the CENTCOM Theater. Prior to the initiation of
transformation, Third Army successfully supported the invasion of Afghanistan and
subsequently the invasion of Iraq as the designated Coalition Forces Land Component
Command (CFLCC) for both operations. As the Army initiated the implementation of
transformation, Third Army was supposed to focus on providing Title 10 support and
services to U.S. Army forces in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility. However, after
transitioning the CFLCC missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, USARCENT had relatively
minimal impact on the units executing operations in these areas. The islands of isolated
command and control in Iraq and Afghanistan prevented ARCENT from fully executing
its transformed doctrinal ASCC mission.

In addition, ARCENT was to all intents and purposes, a split-based headquarters.
Though presented as a fully functioning ASCC, the ARCENT element in Kuwait was no
more than an MCP(-) with the ARCENT OCP serving as the core of ARCENT Forward
(Kuwait). Use of the OCP in this way precluded ARCENT from being able to deploy an
operational JTF or Joint Force Land Component Command headquarters to C2
joint/combined operations in the USCENTCOM AOR if required by the GCC. The actual
ARCENT MCP remained in CONUS serving as a reach-back capability and was also heavily involved with the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) move to Shaw AFB completed in 2011.73

Split basing challenged ARCENT’s ability to execute its transformed theater-wide functions in support of the GCC, as did the restriction of ARCENT’s span of control due to the supplanting of its execution of Title 10 and operational responsibilities by the C2 nodes in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was also highly unusual and beyond the doctrinal scope of the ARCENT OCP to take the place of the MCP as the designated integrator/orchestrator of Theater Enabling Commands throughout the CENTCOM AOR. However, the most significant issue with ARCENT TECs was they were not operating as completely transformed commands.

Though declared FOC, they were never tested and certified in their fully organized state. For example, the ARCENT Theater Sustainment Command (1st TSC), established its headquarters in Kuwait, but did not conduct theater sustainment support through subordinate sustainment organizations across the CENTCOM Theater of Operations. The TSC was unable to execute its theater sustainment mission because units in Theater did not relinquish C2 of Sustainment units in their operational areas. Instead, the Corps based CFLCCs in Iraq and Afghanistan, chose to maintain a pre-transformation C2 structure which included maintaining organic logistics commands, rather than accept a Direct Support / General Support relationship with these functional support units. Because neither of the Expeditionary Sustainment Commands with their subordinate units in Iraq or Afghanistan were ever aligned to the 1st TSC, the only major units the 1st TSC had command and control of in Theater were units in Kuwait. As with
the TSC, the other ARCENT TECs were also hamstrung in their efforts to C2 their functionally aligned units in theater.

Instead, ARCENT with its TECs had to adapt to the work-arounds developed by individual headquarters as alternatives to managing functional units and adopted in defiance to the original TEC transformation objectives. In addition, as the forward element of the ARCENT Headquarters was limited in its conduct of ASCC functions throughout the CENTCOM AOR, it focused the majority of its efforts on operations in Kuwait, as attested by its list of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OND/OEF) sustainment themed successes.74 ARCENT (FWD)’s primary post transformation missions included reception, staging, and onward movement for all Coalition Land Forces entering the theater through Kuwait and managing Kuwait based sustainment support operations. This blurred the lines between ARCENT and the 1st TSC in the management of sustainment in and through Kuwait. All the while, the ARCENT MCP could have executed its ASCC functions from CONUS and the 1st TSC, per the intended transformation design, could have individually spearheaded the execution of sustainment from Kuwait even as it attempted to develop minimal sustainment oversite inroads in the rest of the theater.

In the end, the transformed construct of Theater Headquarters with a complement of fully functional and effective Theater Enabling Commands was not implemented in ARCENT. Many of these General Officer (GO) level commands were basically limited to commanding and controlling one functionally aligned brigade geographically collocated with their TEC headquarters in Kuwait. In the case of the 1st TSC, this resulted in having a four star Theater Army Headquarters with multiple
General Officers (GO), and a complement of Colonels, Senior Civilians, Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers overseeing a two-star level TSC headquarters, with its similar complement of senior leaders, exercising command and control of a single Colonel-led Sustainment Brigade.

The recent national security strategy shift to rebalance in the Pacific started with modularity as the number of organizations and Soldiers in USARPAC increased significantly between 2000 and 2010. However, as with ARCENT, USARPAC has yet to complete its transformation and fully adapt the TEC construct. Whereas the shift to modularity by Modular Support Brigades and Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) was well received and successfully implemented, the meeting of all transformation objectives by the Theater Enabling Commands (TEC) has yet to be fully realized. This includes establishing transformed Command and Control relationships with all of the functional units based in Korea, Japan, Alaska, and Hawaii. For example, the 19th ESC and 1st Signal Brigade continue to perform missions as subordinate units of the Eighth Field Army in South Korea, while the 8th TSC in Hawaii has only one Sustainment Brigade (SB) aligned to it and the 311th SC(T) has only one Signal Brigade. Local C2 of functional units in Japan, Alaska and Korea has prompted requests to expand the number of personnel in the senior Army headquarters at these locations to facilitate command and control. Meanwhile, the Theater Army TECs to which the functional units at these locations should be aligned, remain underutilized.

Critics have mistakenly attributed problems to the TEC construct as poorly designed and ineffective. The declaration of FOC for the TECs centered on the establishment of the TEC headquarters and not the full implementation and testing of
the TECs as complete organizations. The BCTs, on the other hand, were tested as complete organizations with FOC contingent on more than just the status of the BCT HQ. This operational criteria was not applied to the TECs. The complete reorganization and alignment of functional brigades and battalions to support the execution of functional TEC missions per the transformation plan was not a prerequisite of their operational capability assessment. When all was said and done, the USARPAC TECs, and more specifically the 8th TSC and 311th SC(T), underwent only a superficial validation of their organizations.

Over time, the lack of the functional realignment was explained away in some instances with conditional declarations, e.g. only when certain conditions are met will the functional unit be aligned to the TEC. For example, early transformation planning for the former 19th Theater Support Command in Korea tied the transformed 19th ESC coming under the operational control of the 8th TSC to when “conditions permit and peace/reconciliation occurs on the Peninsula.” Instead of supporting the attainment of the ultimate goal of peace on the peninsula, transformation became contingent upon it.

In addition to the issues highlighted above in the broad overview of CENTCOM and PACOM ASCC transformation, the following further details issues with aspects of Theater Army transformation. As units evolved from Initially Operationally Capable (IOC) to FOC, it became apparent leaders were reluctant to execute certain aspects of transformation. The major overhaul of the Theater Army Headquarters and the integration of the TECs involved many major changes, some more difficult to comprehend and or adopt than others. Changes were meant to include the: restructuring of the theater army staff, addition of a deployable theater command post,
establishment of varied linkages of TECs with Direct Reporting Units and the Theater Army Headquarters to include shared administrative control (ADCON),\textsuperscript{77} extension of TEC span of control with the alignment of functional units, theater-wide, to the TECs, and the modification of command and support relationships to Direct Support / General Support (DS/GS).\textsuperscript{78} Leaders who had never worked in or with an ASCC had limited understanding of and at times unease with, the new Theater Army construct and were led to rely on tactical C2 lessons that often did not apply at this organizational level. An added challenge was transforming while supporting the GWOT and adjusting to varying strategic commitments and pace of change driven by resource availability.

When the ASCC was first proposed, the intent was to create a set of standardized ASCCs and ultimately develop the force structure to achieve complete joint interdependence. A case in point is the Joint Logistics Enterprise, envisioned to build on the efficiency of an Army TSC. However, instead of being driven by doctrine, the transformation of theater enabling capabilities was driven by personality, with leaders making indiscriminate and ill-informed changes to the standard organizational templates. This made the flattened and integrated Theater Army organization all the more confusing and the lack of understanding persists to this day. Therefore, the sustainment and signal enabling commands continue to operate at only partial capacity, even though they are doctrinally mandated as the functional experts to manage functionally alike units and execute direct / general support to theater units.

The concepts and details of theater-wide command and control met with the greatest skepticism. From the ASCC Title 10 support to all Army units in Theater, to C2 of multiple capabilities by individual commands across multiple time zones and
operational phases, dispersed C2 was deemed a novel concept for those conditioned to having *one person in charge*. The fact that ASCCs with their Theater Enabling Commands were intended to streamline and maximize support during all operational phases was not apparent to all. In the past, a unit's wartime organization often differed from their garrison organization. Everyone prepared for a period of adjustment and trained from a peacetime organization for their wartime organization. Transformed C2 across all operational phases was designed to simplify this by making the shift to contingency operations less disruptive – especially as it applies to sustainment and communications. As codified in the earliest transformation doctrine and reinforced in the newest field manual on theater army operations, having dedicated functional TECs operating continuously in support of their theaters, could be viewed as achieving the ideal organize- as-one-fights capability. For example, the TSC during Phase 0 operations would develop its knowledge of theater sustainment through its ESCs and Sustainment Brigades conducting day to day sustainment missions and peacetime engagements. This knowledge includes: host nation support agreements; partner sustainment capacity and requirements; logistics infrastructure to include APODs, SPODs, shipping lanes, and commodity resources; and regional contracting capabilities. The same organization, augmented with plug and play brigades, would be able to seamlessly transition and C2 expanded operations in subsequent operational phases as required.

The crux of the problem of accepting the TECs and Theater Army transformation was leaders’ resistance to relinquishing subordinate functional units to the TECs and accepting a Direct Support / General Support relationship with these enabling
capabilities. This was partly due to a lack of understanding and trust in these relationships. A recent operation in 2012 highlights this as an enduring problem in the Army. During the Libya crisis and Operation Odyssey Dawn, it came to light that “planners and operators on all staffs lacked clear doctrinal understanding of the various command relationships— ‘OPCON/TACON/ administrative control/DS.’” This includes the belief that unless one has OPCON of forces “‘someone can take them away when you need them.’” As command relationships “affect… responsibilities at all levels” not understanding the “benefits and drawbacks” adds to the confusion.

Mission commanders continue to justify their reluctance to relinquish C2 of their enabling units to the Enabling commands and exemplify the Army mindset of not trusting Direct Support. Senior leaders “inculcated with the Army view that ‘support’ is not a legitimate command relationship, inappropriately call for ‘OPCON’ or ‘TACON’ while developing theater-based or national command and control structures.” Per Dr. Christopher Paparone, “a support relationship is more appropriate when it is essential that the technical direction remain with the assigned organization so it can best provide task direction and use of resources as it supports from forward areas in a theater or in a joint operations area.” This supports the technical expertise of TEC C2 of functional units as well as the idea “the Army needs to get on board with…‘support’ [as] a command relationship.”

“Many transformation programs fail to be sustained” as “the organization simply waits for the initiative to pass over like a storm cloud.” Instead of concluding the problem with transformation was from not adhering to the plan, critics of Army Transformation resorted to work-arounds whereby headquarters maintained C2 of
functional units, as they continued to call for returning pre-transformation organizations to the inventory. To this day, they question the need for TECs and echo the opinion of many individuals at the corps level and below that TECs are an excess layer or a waste of a headquarters.  

This opinion leads to proposals to return functional brigades to ownership by Divisions and Corps. Options discussed also include changing the TSCs into ESCs and having them work for Corps, along the lines of the pre-transformation Corps Support Commands. Others are calling to permanently align support units, more specifically Sustainment Brigades, to specific Divisions. Some Sustainment Brigades (SB) are now being C2’d by their Divisions as they develop relationships in garrison. Divisions are also coordinating for the synchronization of the deployment of SBs with the Division and its BCT(s). This discounts the fact the SB would plug and play into the concept of support unit array developed by the TSC/ESC and does not guarantee and should not presume control of the SB by the Division let alone Direct / General support by the SB to that particular Division’s BCT(s).

“Migration to a brigade centric Army reflects a significant…shift” and highlights a way to adapt to the “continuous challenge of change” to maintain the advantage in this ever volatile world. Transformation saw the modular conversion of maneuver brigades, the transition of division headquarters to the modular headquarters design and the conversion of combat, combat support and combat service support units to modular support brigades. However, the Army hesitated when it came to the conversion of echelons above division to modular configurations. Analysis so far shows a commitment to transforming components but at the Theater Army level all the pieces were never put
together for a test drive. One is left wondering what prevented leaders, who pride themselves in being bold and innovative, from completing the transformation of the Theater Army.

The following are recommendations for the Army to fully benefit from the transformation implemented over the past decade.

Recommendations

“Cultivate Innovation in Our Army”

Insights from businesses that have to adapt in order to stay ahead of their competitors and survive can be applied to the Army, concerned with staying ahead of adaptive adversaries to ensure the survival of its Soldiers and the nation it is charged to protect. Major General (Ret.) David Fastabend and Robert Simpson espouse the Army would do well to maintain superiority “in the art of learning and adaptation” as these are essential for an effective culture of innovation brought about by extending the Army’s legacy of tactical innovation “to the strategic and institutional dimensions of our Army.” It should be accepted that change will not happen overnight, but before moving on to new options, the Army should finish, test and evaluate the current planned changes. Resistance can also be overcome through the application of the following tenets:

every single person in the organization is invested in the organization’s success and feels a responsibility to implement new and better ways to achieve organizational objectives. People are encouraged to try alternative paths, test ideas to the point of failure, and learn from the experience. Experimentation and prudent risk taking are admired and encouraged. Experimentation is not a destination to be reached, but an unending process of trial, feedback, learning, renewal and experimentation again. The organization as a whole is agile, ready to learn, continually changing, and improving. It is fast, flexible and never prepared to say “we have finished getting better.” Innovative organizations depend less on forecasting, planning and control and more on scanning,
agility and feedback. Innovative organizations embrace uncertainty, recognizing that an uncertain future potentially holds as many opportunities as it does threats.97

Adapting these to improve the Army’s institutional agility supports a “culture of innovation.”98 The disinclination to test the TECs and in particular the TSC and SC(T), demonstrates the Army has not fully adopted innovation. The opportunity to remedy this will be missed if ad hoc modifications to transformed organizations are not resolved. However, it appears in some areas, especially at the Division level and below, there is a willingness to take a chance and experiment.99

Complete the Transformation Process

The Army should finish the reorganization of TEC units by aligning functional units in Theater to their functional TEC IAW Transformation doctrine and taking the ASCC with its TECs out for a real test drive. Completing the reorganization will overcome the deliberate crippling of these units that prevented them from ever demonstrating their full potential. Without a test drive, the ill-informed assessment that the modularity concept for units at the Theater level did not work will persist and with it the basis for a call to return to the Corps and Division structures of old.

Do Not Go Back to the Old Ways

The Army needs to stop enabling workarounds and the resurgence of pre-transformation organizational elements. Ten years after the start of transformation, these elements continue to reduce the initial transformation objectives reflecting more of what has been accepted, rather than what could have been.

Improve Doctrinal Instruction on the ASCC Concepts and Methods

Instruction at all school houses starting with the Captains level advance course, Advanced noncommissioned, and Chief Warrant Officer courses, should include a block
of instruction on the ASCC / Theater Army. These courses produce the personnel in grades that serve on and with ASCC and TEC staffs. To be innovative requires one to be informed. Because so many leaders have never worked at the Theater Army level, ASCC instruction will enable them to function in, interact with or support a Theater Army. Transformation was not change for the sake of changing, but a thought-out and refined process that had evolved from the Objective Force concept to an accelerated transition to modularity. A familiarity with the revolutionary aspects of transformation will garner support for this complex concept. Innovative ways to train the transformed construct should include an ASCC / TEC Rock Drill with coalition and joint partners.

**ARCENT Operates from CONUS**

In the future, the ARCENT MCP should operate from CONUS and integrate the execution of ASCC functions with the full support of its Theater Enabling Commands throughout the CENTCOM AOR. ARCENT can operate from CONUS and, with its TECs, would better serve the CENTCOM GCC with the full force of its Main Command Post. It would also be prepared to deploy its CCP as required.

**Utilize Doctrinal C2 Relationships to Best Advantage**

The Army needs to accept Direct Support / General Support as a relationship and innovate in a major way. Once the Army removes the hurdle of accepting Direct/General support as a command relationship, the TEC transformation dominoes, with everything related to the optimization of the Theater Army organizational structure and the TECs, will fall into place.

**Implement Mission Command for the Theater Army**

“The requirement for empowered and decentralized leadership is once again being recognized in the United States.” Mission Command supports the concept of
flattened C2. Aptly applying the tenets of mission command to this command and support structure and transferring this impetus to functional enabling commands will also promote trust in the direct support relationship.

Create a CONUS Structure of TSC-ESC-SB Alignment

Continue to leverage sustainment organizations in CONUS to reflect the transformed theater sustainment structure. Though some Divisions continue to promote the permanent alignment of SBs at their installations, this should be nothing more than a habitual DS/GS relationship. CONUS sustainment organizations need to practice how to operate as a part of a theater sustainment enterprise and practice the synchronization of sustainment. This will better their ability to train as they fight and prepare them to deploy and plug and play into overseas regional sustainment organizations when required.

Utilize TEC Functional Units as Resident (Permanent not Rotational) Regionally Aligned Forces

By maximizing its set of enabling commands, the Army could add the TECs to the Regionally Aligned Force pool for their respective Theaters. Recognizing them as a resident RAF capability will round out the RAF the Army is trying to carve out of CONUS based units. The TECs ability to continually focus on their theaters and interact with partners and allies highlights their uniqueness as potential RAFs.

Conclusion

Transformation produced unique concepts to change the Army. In some cases, as units underwent the process of modularization, the desired changes failed to be implemented or “were implemented in such a watered-down manner” as to lose the full effect and benefit of transforming in the first place. The Army balked at implementing
transformation objectives which primarily affected the efficacy of the Theater Enabling Commands. For these units, one questions the return on the investment made to establish them.

Transformation involved changing the organization, concepts and the way the Army conducts land operations. It is admittedly difficult to implement such a comprehensive plan, but the dichotomy between what is in doctrine and what is actually executed creates tension between transformation ideals and human nature, detrimental to the betterment of the Army. The tendency to move on to the next new idea, in this case the Army changes for Joint Force 2020, could be chalked up as another example of the Army selectively following its own doctrine. Another explanation is the Army’s challenge with transforming to a culture of continuous change. Rather than fully transform, the Army conformed to its tendency to preserve “traditional structure” because of its “lack of desire to experiment with major changes.” Then with its can do culture, the Army created workarounds for these self imposed constraints. The Army deliberately allowed a dual force structure (transformed and non-transformed) for the execution of specific functions. In this age of austerity, the Army will need to determine whether it wants to move forward and realize its millennial transformation or dismantle its transformed organizations, endorse the workarounds and revert to the old way of doing things. The Army ultimately needs to go from the can-do culture to the innovative can-do-it-better culture willing to adapt to change. We can better the Army by promoting a culture of innovation – Adapt / Innovate / Learn, in order to carry the Army forward to 2020 and beyond.
Endnotes

1 Kim Van Alkemade, interview by author, Carlisle, PA, March 20, 2013.


8 Eric K. Shinseki, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, prepared statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, October 26, 1999.


10 Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 19.


12 Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 3.


15 Ibid., iii.


19 General Casey as quoted in David Jerome, Army Transformation: What Does it Mean? (University of Arkansas, December 2011), 166.


21 TRADOC PAM 525-5, 3-2.


23 U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Operation Planning, Joint Publication 5-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 11, 2011), i.


27 Ibid.


32 Ibid., 1-11.
Two categories of support “a CCDR may direct over assigned or attached forces to ensure the appropriate level of support is provided to accomplish mission objectives” are direct and general support. Direct Support - a mission requiring a force to support another specific force and authorizing it to answer directly to the supported force’s request for assistance. General Support - support which is given to the supported force as a whole. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, Joint Publication 1-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 20, 2009), IV-11.

U.S. Department of the Army, Theater Army Operations, FM 3-93, 1-4.

U.S. Department of the Army, Operations, FM 3-0, Change No. 1, B-1.


John Bonin, interview by author, Carlisle, PA, April 3, 2013; U.S. Department of the Army, Theater Army Operations, FM 3-93, 1-5.

Theater Army Headquarters would exercise administrative control (ADCON) and all that it entails in support of Army forces in theater.

Unless modified by the Secretary of the Army, administrative responsibilities normally flow from Department of the Army through the theater army to those Army forces assigned or attached to that combatant command. U.S. Department of the Army, Theater Army Operations, FM 3-93, A-1 – A-2.

Administrative control is direction or exercise of authority over subordinate or other organizations in respect to administration and support, including organization of Service forces, control of resources and equipment, personnel management, unit logistics, individual and unit training, readiness, mobilization, demobilization, discipline, and other matters not included in the operational missions of the subordinate or other organizations (JP 1). It is a Service authority, not a joint authority. It is exercised under the authority of and is delegated by the Secretary of the Army. ADCON is synonymous with the Army’s Title 10 authorities and responsibilities. U.S. Department of the Army, Theater Army Operations, FM 3-93, A-1 – A-2.

“Theater armies usually “share” administrative control for at least some administrative or support functions.” “Shared administrative control” refers to the internal allocation of Title 10, U.S. Code, section 3013(b) responsibilities and functions. This is especially true for Reserve Component forces. Certain administrative functions, such as pay, stay with the Reserve Component headquarters, even after unit mobilization. Shared administrative control also applies to direct reporting units of the Army that typically perform single or unique functions. The direct reporting unit, rather than the theater army, typically manages individual and unit training.
for these units. The Secretary of the Army directs shared administrative control U.S. Department of the Army, *Theater Army Operations*, FM 3-93, A-1 – A-2.

40 Bonin, April 2013.

41 Rickey Smith, “Modular Forces Overview,” briefing slides with notes (Fort Eustis, VA: TRADOC Army Capabilities Integration Center, January 19, 2005), Slide 9.

42 Ibid., 6-7.


44 Made up of a small number of battalions and/or other units (to include regiments, squadrons), this subdivision of the Army serves as one of its fundamental formations and represent(s) the smallest unit for independent operations. Oxford Dictionaries, April 2010. Oxford University Press. http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/brigade (accessed February 25, 2013). Prior to modularity, a tasked combat brigade would reorganize for missions by cobbling together elements from throughout the division to support mission requirements.


55 Ibid., 1-11.

56 Ibid., 1-4.


65. “SC(T) and its units plan, engineer, install, operate, maintain, and protect the Army portion of the theater wide area network and leverage the capabilities of the Global Information Grid [GIG] to provide services to the ASCC and the supported GCC.” U.S. Department of the Army, Theater Army Operations, FM 3-93, 1-4.

66. Direct Reporting Unit (DRU) An Army organization comprised of one or more units with institutional or operational support functions, designated by the SA (Secretary of the Army), normally to provide broad general support to the Army in a single, unique discipline not otherwise available elsewhere in the Army. DRUs report directly to a HQDA principal and/or ACOM and operate under authorities established by the SA. U.S. Department of the Army, Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands, and Direct Reporting Units, Army Regulation (AR) 10-87 ((Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, September 4, 2007), 41; U.S. Department of the Army, Theater Army Operations, FM 3-93, 1-12.

67. Civil Affairs (CA) Elements are not organized as a Civil Affairs hierarchy. Whereas the CACOM is aligned to Strategic level headquarters, CA Brigades, Battalions and Companies are focused and directly aligned to units at the Operational and Tactical Level. The CACOM does provide C2 of CA Brigades prior to their deployment in support of theater operations. Once, deployed CA units are attached to the organizations they are supporting (FM 3-93, 1-4); The CACOM’s “major role…is to assist” with “theater-level CAO [Civil Affairs Operations] planning, coordination, policies, and programs in support of the GCC’s regional CMO strategy and stabilization, reconstruction, and development efforts.” (Kathleen H. Hicks and Christine E. Wormuth, The Future of U.S. Civil Affairs Forces (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic & International Studies, February 2009), 42.; U.S. Department of the Army, Civil Affairs Operations, FM 3-57 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, October, 2011), 2-14; It also manages and oversees the pre-deployment “regional focus and training” of “subordinate reserve component civil affairs units.” Hicks and Wormuth, The Future of U.S. Civil Affairs Forces, 42.

68. USACAPOC is a subordinate command of the Army DRU; U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC), FM 3-57, 2-39; AR 10-87, 24.


70. Ibid., 1-13.
The implementation of the last round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) saw ARCENT move from Fort McPherson in Georgia to Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina in 2011.


Ibid., Slide 14-15.

OND
• Reduced troop levels from 136K to 50K within 15 months
• Redistributed equipment valued at $1.12B from OIF to OEF
• Issued over 14K pieces of equipment to Iraq Security Force valued at over $145M
• Redistributed over 1.2 million CL VII Non Rolling Stock items in FY 09/10; Retrograded over 50K containers
• Shipped over 18K CL VII Rolling Stock items to CONUS depots for Army Reset in FY 10
• Removed 7K tons of ammunition from Iraq; Redistributed 3K tons to OEF
• Maintained asset visibility of 4.5M items valued at over $18B
• Improved Container Management

OEF
• Deployed and integrated 30K troops and 4,000 pieces of rolling stock four months early
• Established Theater Sustainment Stocks to support rapid replacement of Battle Loss/Battle Damaged Equipment (611 pieces)
• Equipped 21 coalition partners with over 100K pieces of equipment
• Retrograded via air and ground 4,839 vehicles to support Army RESET requirements
• Improved Container Management
• Managed Title 10 oversight of property valued at over $26B

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Shared ADCON of TECs between the Theater Army Headquarters and DRUs. FM 3-93, A-2.

Functional units would no longer be organic to Divisions and Corps but would instead provide Direct or General Support to them. FM 3-93, 1-6.


83 Paparone, “COCOM, ADCON, OPCON, TACON, Support – Do You Know the Difference?,” 48-49.

84 Ibid., 48.

85 Ibid., 49.

86 Ibid.


89 Even before some of the Sustainment Brigades were deemed IOC, Divisions often coordinated for the numbering of the Sustainment Brigades to match the Division the pre-transformed unit or Division Support Command (DISCOM), was originally aligned to.


91 Fastabend and Simpson, “Adapt or Die The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army,” 2.

92 General Peter J. Schoomaker as quoted in Fastabend and Simpson, “Adapt or Die The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army,” 1.


94 Fastabend and Simpson, “Adapt or Die The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army,” 2.

95 Ibid., 3.

97 Fastabend and Simpson, “Adapt or Die The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army,” 3.

98 Ibid., 1.

99 45 SB Vignette. A positive example of evolution towards trust in DS at least at the Division level: When the 25ID was preparing to deploy to Iraq in 2006-2007 the Division Support Command (DISCOM) was also preparing to deploy. However, it was deploying as a transformed Sustainment Brigade to be placed under the C2 of the Expeditionary Sustainment Command in Iraq. During one of the deployment IPRs in the Spring of 2006, the Division Commander looked over at the SB Commander and commented on how the SB CDR was going to take care of the Division in the box. Take care he did as one of four Brigades (a mix of transformed SBs and a CSG providing logistics support in the Multi-national Division North area of operations. Direct Support worked and kept the Division from having to delve into the business of sustainment. The Division adapted to replacing its organic DISCOM with Direct Support from multiple SBs demonstrated an understanding that the ESC would overlay the most effective / efficient support concept by its units to ensure the Division and its BCTs were successful in the execution of their missions.


101 CIO Academy, “Does your organization have the risk appetite for strategic transformation?,” CIO Academy, 2013, Slide 5.


103 Kugler, Case Study in Army Transformation, 8.