

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE GLIDE PATH TO FOCUSED LOGISTICS

by

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ABSTRACT

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A transformation in logistics is a prerequisite to a successful transformation of the U.S. Army. The current plan to transform logistics operations entails a reliance on information systems and automated technologies to provide "Focused Logistics" to the warfighter on the battlefield. To achieve this, the Combat Service Support community envisions a radical change in the business processes inherent to supporting the warfighter. Focused Logistics is not a new term. In fact the ideas which make up the concept of Focused Logistics have been discussed and crafted for almost a decade. Along the way, we continue to develop solutions at all levels to provide the sustainment capability to the warfighter units of the Future Force. After a review of the ongoing modernization effort, I will discuss the nature of Focused Logistics. I will examine the path we are taking to achieve Focused Logistics. Just as logistics is both a combat multiplier and a war-stopper, ineffective logistics has the potential of being a showstopper for Army transformation. This paper identifies data connectivity as the enabler which has become the sine qua non of the Focused Logistics engine of the Future Army.

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THE GLIDE PATH TO FOCUSED LOGISTICS

The Achilles heel in the army after next is not operational speed or killing power. It is logistics. The logistics pipeline must be shrunk, the load lightened, and the closing time cut.

— Army General Johnnie E. Wilson, 1999¹

INTRODUCTION

In the years since the publication of Joint Vision 2010, the concept of the 21st Century Army progressed through a period of conscious transformation into the “Current Army”. A self sufficient, premier fighting force in its own right, the “Current Army” will evolve into the Future Army, a self contained, omniscient, omnipotent entity capable of winning our nation’s wars.²

The transformed U.S. Army will be the product of significant changes in all of the domains of the current force structure. From the leviathan that met the challenges of the Cold War, the U.S. Army has evolved into the lighter, more lethal, joint force which conquered Afghanistan in 2002 and effected a regime change in Iraq in six weeks in 2003. Our stated goal is the construction of a force that is more lethal, more agile, more mobile, and more responsive. Most importantly from a logistics perspective, it must be more sustainable. This future Army will be capabilities-based, rather than threat-based. It will transition from a linear fighting force to one that can decisively defeat any enemy from any direction. Most importantly, it will be able to build and sustain its combat power indefinitely through the 21st Century concepts of warfare which we have been developing jointly with our sister services.

In this new era of non-linear battle, the Army must be not only a self-sustaining organization, but an Army whose units are able to reach in all directions to bring to bear the right amount of combat power to defeat the enemy. Moreover, these units must be able to sustain themselves, and be sustained as necessary, both through the timeframe of battle, and during the ongoing — often overlapping — cycles of building and maintaining combat power. The manner in which the Future Army will sustain itself is still evolving. This futuristic sustainment capability is predicated essentially on the ability to leverage network-centric warfare capabilities to ensure that all components of logistics support are continuously provided as needed to ensure the future commander maintains his capabilities. This ambitious capability has been designated Focused Logistics.

Focused Logistics is not a new paradigm. The tenets which make up the concept of Focused Logistics have been discussed and crafted for a decade. This evolutionary development is a necessary requirement of transforming the force from the current to the future

Army. Still as late as 4 September 2002, in a speech to the AUSA acquisition symposium, Army Chief of Staff GEN Eric Shinseki declared, “without a transformation in logistics, there will be no transformation in the Army.”³ We have been marching down the path to Focused Logistics for a long time. We continue to develop solutions at all levels to provide the optimal sustainment capability to the warfighter units of the Future Force. First, we will consider the current milieu — the current status of the ongoing modernization effort. After a discussion of the nature of Focused Logistics, we will examine the future Army’s sustainment requirements, and the direction we are taking to achieve this capability. Just as logistics can serve as a combat-multiplier or a war-stopper, ineffective logistics has the potential of being a showstopper for Army transformation.⁴ Accordingly, we will identify a resource that must be considered a necessary enabler for Logistics Transformation. This enabler has become the sine qua non of the Focused Logistics engine of the Future Army.

THE CURRENT MILIEU OF THE ARMY LOGISTICS VISION

A full appreciation of the transformative nature of Focused Logistics in a capabilities based force does not come easily. A decade ago, then Army Chief of Staff General Dennis J. Reimer declared, “There can be no revolution in military affairs without a revolution in military logistics.” This simple pronouncement set the stage for sweeping changes in Army logistics.⁵ To understand Focused Logistics, we must first understand the context in which we are forming this capability. Let’s begin with a short discussion of Army Transformation.

The focused logistics concept was first articulated in Joint Vision 2010 (JV 2010) during the mid-1990s. JV 2010 established a conceptual template to guide the ongoing transformation of America’s armed forces, and we have continued to build upon and extend that template. The objective of continuous transformation of America’s armed forces is to dramatically increase their responsiveness, operational speed, reach, and effectiveness, making them increasingly more precise, lethal, tailorable, agile, survivable, and sustainable.⁶

Making this Army Vision a reality requires a quantum leap in strategic responsiveness and a corresponding paradigm shift in military logistics. Change started at the joint level with *Joint Vision 2010* and *Focused Logistics*. Likewise, change started at the Army level with a *Revolution in Military Logistics (RML)*. The RML fundamentally determines the conduct of future military operations; it also provides the fulcrum of the Army’s effort to balance readiness and modernization.⁷ This radical transformation moves the Army’s logistics focus from mass supply to distribution velocity and precision—a distribution-based logistics system (DBLS).⁸ This is an important development not only for its impact on the logistics community, but also for its mandate of focused logistics support of the joint force. This connection of Army logistics

operations to support the joint force is important. While nothing may be new in military affairs, the joint vision documents for the first time cite logistics as an essential element of the process of joint warfighting. In effect, operators and logisticians now will ensure that all systems have the deployability, reliability, maintainability, supportability, and interoperability to meet readiness requirements.⁹

The efforts to build a focused logistics capability are evolutionary developments which grew out of the plans and changes initiated after the successful completion of Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Army leaders sought to respond constructively to more than sixteen hundred Combat Service Support related "lessons learned". The systematic change required to move from the supply-based logistics support concept to a supply-chain, distribution-based logistics sustainment concept represented a fundamental shift in our business. The Total Distribution Program (TDP) was developed in 1992 to address many shortcomings, and thus to enhance logistics responsiveness. In February 1997, the TDP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) provided guidance via a new baseline to incorporate the Joint Theater Distribution tenets into Army Logistics, effectively synchronizing the TDP with the Army's concept for battlefield distribution.¹⁰

From the late 1990s, the RML focused on exploiting improvements in automation, communications, and business practices. Beginning with an emphasis on a reorganization of command and control (C2) relationships for better unity of command, RML designed and purchased distribution technologies that facilitated rapid throughput and follow-on sustainment. In a 1999 joint article in *Army Logistician*, the Department of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics; the Commanding General, Army Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee; and the Commanding General, Army Materiel Command collectively asserted: "We expect to continue this focus through the end of the decade. We want to know what our customers need before he requests it. We must anticipate battlefield requirements."¹¹

This is not easily done. Military logistics necessarily distinguishes itself from its civilian counterpart. By adopting the civilian concept of supply chain logistics, however, military logisticians can develop the same partnerships with the warfighter (our customers) and with the industrial base (our suppliers). But while operating in a resource constrained world, we military logisticians must always consider the impact of the enemy on logistics operations. Demand always exceeds supply and time; and limited assets must be effectively allocated in an environment of enemy-created shortages. For the military, logistics is the art of providing resources while overcoming unanticipated shortages in anticipatory support of the dynamic

priorities of the battlefield. Distribution-based logistics ensures the resources are allocated by commanders.¹²

So through the 1990s, the transition from supply to distribution evolved to support the expansive RML. Because resources were scarce, however, the implementation of this concept was incremental. This allowed RML to take shape slowly and gain consensus in the joint community. Finally in 1999, RML was incorporated into General Shinseki's plan for Army Transformation.

The vision of the RML that has emerged is of a truly revolutionary logistics system that marries the power of information with modern transportation and electronic commerce systems. The heart of the vision is the change to distribution-based logistics. To manage this new, dynamic approach to logistics, the Army will evolve a seamless logistics system that ties all parts of the logistics community into one network of shared situational awareness and unified action.¹³

Some viewed the deliberate pace as evidence of inaction or worse – perhaps of subversion. In 2001, the U.S. General Accounting Office reported serious weaknesses throughout DOD logistics activities. One finding exclaimed “Defense logistics strategic planning weaknesses leave economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of future support systems at risk.” Moreover, the reports questioned whether the ongoing reengineering efforts would overcome those weaknesses. The U.S. General Accounting Office reported to Congress in January 2001 that “serious weaknesses persist throughout the Department's logistics activities and that it is unclear to what extent ongoing reengineering management improvement initiatives will overcome them.”¹⁴ Nonetheless, when we achieve RML, we will be in a position to provide Focused Logistics to the U.S. Army.

FOCUSED LOGISTICS DEFINED

Having established the fundamental importance of logistics to enable the future Army, let us now consider Focused Logistics in detail. What do we mean when we say “Focused Logistics”? What does Focus Logistics provide to our customers, the warfighter? To paraphrase a common saying: “Now that we know we want some, we should decide what it is, and what it will do for us.”

At the strategic level, our warfighting customers view Focused Logistics as a means of provisioning the joint warfighter with the right quantities of the right personnel, equipment, supplies, and support – all at the right time and place. Moreover, this must all occur across the full spectrum of military operations. More succinctly stated, “Focused Logistics provides Full Spectrum Support for the Future Joint Warfighter.”¹⁵ This rich definition addresses the

requirement, but does little to explain how U.S. Army logisticians will make it happen. In the Focused Logistics Campaign Plan, the Joint Chiefs of Staff elaborate:

Focused Logistics is the ability to provide the joint force the right personnel, equipment, supplies, and support in the right place, at the right time, and in the right quantities, across the full range of military operations. This will be made possible through a real-time, web-based information system providing accurate, actionable visibility as part of a common relevant operational picture, effectively linking the operator and logistician across joint forces, services, and support agencies. Through transformational innovations to systems, processes, and organizations, focused logistics will provide the joint warfighter with support for all functions.¹⁶

The impact of providing this effective support by means of what we call Focused Logistics is manifest slightly differently for our customers. For the Army operators, focused logistics provides: faster deployment of forces as well as essential support products to commanders' specified destinations world-wide. It provides the proper Combat Support (CS) and Combat Service Support (CSS) footprint in the combat area, at reduced logistics costs for the appropriate warfighting capability. For Army logistics customers, focused logistics provides a more responsive support structure that is flexible and agile, that can provide support from afar, that provides accurate and timely logistics information, and that will more reliably support systems. In effect, Focused Logistics means an improvement not only in the efficiency of logistics, but also in its effectiveness and responsiveness. These changes, prompting greater warfighter confidence, will produce the secondary effects of reduced sustainment requirements and reduced vulnerability of the commander's lines of communication by reducing his logistics footprint.¹⁷

The Army's JV2020 describes the essence of Focused Logistics: a seamless logistics systems, distribution-based logistics, total asset visibility, an agile infrastructure, rapid force projection, and maintenance of an adequate logistics footprint. The logistics organizations of this future force will be capabilities-based, structured in modules. They will provide visibility of the whole pipeline as well as the operational situation. In this way they can both anticipate the warfighter's requirements and predict the logistics support requirement to sustain the combat force. This inherent flexibility will enable the battlefield logistician to focus his limited logistics resources where needed, and to quickly react to the dynamic battlefield.¹⁸

In an article reviewing the proposed changes in logistics support for the Warfighter, The Commanding Generals of the Army Material Command and the Army Combined Arms Support Command joined the D.A. Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics in proclaiming that "Our

overarching objective is to achieve a single CSS operator at each echelon to facilitate maximum throughput and follow-on sustainment.”¹⁹

At the end of the last century, the head of the Logistics Integration Agency, Mr. Mark O’Konski, explained that the tenets of RML are the hallmarks of the future. These six tenets — seamless logistics system, distribution-based logistics, agile infrastructure, total asset visibility, rapid force projection, and adequate logistics footprint — “will reshape how we project and sustain, and they will ensure that the U.S. Army of the future will be what it is today—second to none.”²⁰

Combat forces will continue to be empowered by logistics. Organizations will evolve and new organizations created that will be tailored to managing distribution-based logistics. The result will be a power-projection and sustainment capability unlike anything the world has seen to date—a Revolution in Military Logistics.²¹

Thus RML crosses three distinct domains: technology application and acquisition agility, force projection, and force sustainment. Integration of these domains produces the revolutionary characteristics of future logistics operations, and creates the backbone of focused logistics. “The agile acquisition system will plug into the global electronic commerce network to ensure an uninterrupted flow of sustainment into the distribution system, ensuring that Army XXI and the Army After Next forces always will have ‘the right stuff—at the right time’.”²² Let us now consider the six tenets of focused logistics, noting their relationship to these three domains.

SEAMLESS LOGISTICS SYSTEM

The baseline for an effective system for providing logistics to the warfighter is its seamless nature. We should consider the relationship of the concepts of seamlessness and jointness. We understand joint as a melding of diverse spheres, ignoring those parts outside the meld. In the same way, we view the meld as the seam that conjoins the spheres, the joint at which the two become one. “Seamless” thus refers to the uniformity of the logistics system. The goal is a system so interconnected that information and commodities flow through it in any direction with total visibility and without impedance.

The basis of an effective logistics component to support the force comes from the precision management systems that will make up the Seamless Logistics Systems (SLS). The linkage of commercial, joint, tactical, and warfighter systems to provide interoperable networks of information based sustainment and distribution is the key to SLS. This is not merely a computer system. Rather it is a coherent process that integrates production, management, supply, distribution, and feedback components throughout the logistics chain. The Army

logistics team will connect the full spectrum of support operations to capture information from the military's digitized weapons systems and then reach out in all directions to anticipate the future support requirements and provide that support from anywhere in the supply chain to anywhere the customer needs it. Each member of the team will respond to the customer's requirements in a manner that is unimpeded by the boundaries of the organization.²³

This SLS will permit any logistician to access the global commercial network to leverage military and industrial suppliers of products and services. The sole criterion for evaluating SLS is the expeditious provision of support to the customer on the battlefield. This novel way of conducting business is crucial to making focused logistics a reality. SLS depends on four complementary processes. Each of these extends throughout the logistics support process, from the provider of the support to the consumer on the battlefield.²⁴

The first process is Readiness Management—the logistician's systematic understanding of the planning requirements of the operational flow, along with his analysis of the current state of the organization as well as the various capacities of the supporting systems in the field. The managerial product fuses the warfighter's operational plans with: his current fielded forces, his prognostic feeds from those current resources, and the estimated capacity of logistics support units. Readiness management permits field commanders, and their logisticians, to determine the logistics feasibility and survivability of their units, and to identify the limiting factors which will impact the mission.²⁵

Along with Readiness Management, the logistics intervention process gives the logistics commander a tool to target a specific improvement in the readiness posture of his organization. The logistician directs a customized package of logistical capability to overcome the limitation that was identified through the readiness management process. The package may be materiel or equipment that the unit requires to achieve his objective. It may also be a package of labor or skills that are necessary to improve some unit requirement. Combinations of these packages are bundled according to customer specifications. Then they are linked to a specific readiness improvement goal. Significantly, these packages are tailored for efficient use, and they are tracked to permit reuse of available assets throughout the logistics network.²⁶

The last two processes are distribution management and asset management. Both of these leverage the nature of the seamless logistics system to gain efficiencies and responsiveness. Distribution management provides for the transparent movement of assets to the customer. Asset management provides for the prioritized allocation of limited assets to support selected requirements. The asset and distribution management processes work jointly

to direct logistics support in a changing and volatile environment. They provide for the timely acquisition of additional assets to meet customer demand.²⁷

DISTRIBUTION BASED LOGISTICS

The term “Iron Mountain” refers to the stockpiles of materiel — all classes of supply — that emerged in the build-up of forces in the Gulf leading to the liberation of Kuwait in 1992. Not only were there massive supply depots, but the system consisted of numerous nodes along the lines of communication — all of which contained much excess. These excesses were so great, in fact, that the logistics operators were unable to manage and account for all of the material, problems that were caused by lack of asset visibility, insufficient materials handling equipment, lack of a prioritized requisition system, and uncoordinated generation of shipments from CONUS.

Reacting to this “Iron Mountain”, Army logisticians began transitioning to a DBLS. Initiated under the RML umbrella, the DLBS concept has survived virtually unchanged to be a central tenet of Focused Logistics. Future Army logistics support will receive sustainment through the synchronized efforts of a situationally aware and informationally enabled team of logisticians. They will effect seamless logistics through an operationally effective distribution system that reaches from factory to foxhole. DOD recently designated USTRANSCOM as the DBLS process owner.

Although USTRANSCOM now owns DBLS, the key is not a new, improved transportation system. Rather, DBLS represents a fundamental change in the manner that distribution is managed and the business processes that make up the distribution system. In essence, DBLS will substitute velocity for mass. The “Iron Mountains” of Desert Storm will be replaced by the supply pipeline itself. Through incorporation of the right technology, logisticians will maintain continuous awareness of the situation on the battlefield, monitoring the warfighter’s consumption of resources. Inventory control and shipments will respond to changes in the requirement — not only to quantities and timeliness, but also to destination and unit configuration requirements. Hence, the managed flow of materials will obviate the need for multiple echelons of inventory. Pipeline capacity will replace warehouse inventory. Reliable delivery will displace unit stockpiling as the metric for confidence in the supply system.

Like the Seamless Logistics system, DBLS will require a streamlined acquisition cycle. Moreover, its success will depend on a constantly updated awareness of the operational situation. The keystone for the realization of both streamlined acquisition and situational awareness is an accurate and responsive information management system that monitors the

logistician's entire C4 environment. The Global Combat Support System (GCSS) is designed to provide the logistician with all of the accurate and timely information he needs.²⁸

AGILE INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to remain responsive to the demands of the customer, Focused Logistics will require an infrastructure that is more agile. As the future Army becomes more flexible, Army logistics must be able to adapt to that increased flexibility. As the warfighter becomes more mobile, so too must his logistician maintain the situational awareness to re-direct the pipeline itself to ensure his demands are met at the right time and at the right place. The supply and distribution pipeline must be able to anticipate requirements and present the right service in the right amount according to the dictates of a changing environment.²⁹

TOTAL ASSET VISIBILITY

The ability to pass logistics information to all participants in the seamless logistics system relies on more than just the suppliers of the materiel and their counterparts in the industrial base. Everyone who can influence the commander's sustainment capability must share a logistics common operating picture. This picture includes not only the various components of the distribution-based logistics system, but also the operational commander, his logistician, and his military/contractor logistics support on the battlefield.

To be effective, this common operating picture must encompass all echelons of logistics support, crossing organizational as well as functional boundaries. This picture must provide not only situational awareness of the operational and logistics environment, it must also provide asset visibility, including materiel and the manpower/organizational assets to effectively manage those assets. Without asset visibility, customer confidence in the system fails, causing the pipeline to become clogged. A clogged pipeline then fails to provide responsive distribution, which causes a breakdown in numerous nodes along the seamless logistics system. Without total asset visibility that is interoperable and available across the joint environment we lose the common operating picture. This loss denies the commander the ability to sustain his combat power. Focused Logistics thus depends on joint total asset visibility.³⁰

RAPID FORCE PROJECTION

For the operational warfighter, rapid force projection provides the timely application of combat power. This is also true for the operational logistician. The future army's logistics commander must swiftly provide the technological enablers wherever needed in the logistics infrastructure to enable soldiers to employ DBLS in a seamless manner. Beginning with the

selection and placing of the right enablers in soldiers' hands before deployment, including fielding and training on the critical information systems necessary to provide the logistics common operating picture, logistics force projection requires the timely allocation and deployment of the tools necessary to make DBLS work to deploy and sustain the warfighting force. These enablers are not simply information systems. Essential connectivity enablers must complement the information systems to convey essential information on materiel, force capabilities and systems characteristics to the battlefield C2 systems. Incorporation of enablers to various capabilities and procedures like embedded diagnostics, palletized and configured loads, and materials handling equipment will provide not only the visibility of the current situation, they will also facilitate the management of these essential resources in a timely and responsive manner. Rapid force projection means having the parts and tools available to swiftly move and sustain the force. Strategic seeding of the pipeline and the proper investment in lift capabilities are as essential as the management and control of those assets. Flexibility and agility in this area are often dependant on the availability of monetary resources to support contingencies, as well as the results of prior R&D efforts.³¹

ADEQUATE LOGISTICS FOOTPRINT

Focused logistics means the ability to provide the right logistics force anywhere in the world. Moreover, it means positions the proper logistics organization with the correct resources and capabilities at the proper location to support a logistically austere fighting force. For the warfighting operational commander, the presence of an adequate logistics footprint means he can field an organization with a minimal logistics presence. The warfighter can confidently rely on the presence of a logistics support organization to meet his requirements to sustain his combat power. Depending upon the situation, the logistics footprint may consist of a military organization with a mix of soldiers, civilians, contractors and local support personnel. The footprint will be capabilities-based, regardless of the source of the capability.³²

ACHIEVING FOCUSED LOGISTICS

Following this review of the six tenants of focused logistics, the reader may justly be concerned that Focused Logistics is a pipedream — an unrealistic ideal. For more than a decade, the Army has conducted its operations at the expense of the institutional Army. When we hear of "Risk Acceptance", we should interpret this as acknowledgement of insufficient resources to accomplish the objective under less than ideal circumstances. Focused Logistics offers a way to overcome the insufficiency of resources necessary to provide the full spectrum of logistics support; hence, the concept represents the Army's effort to focus the logistics effort

to meet only the essential requirements. Indeed the Army's transformational innovations will be enabled by a real-time, web-based, information system — one that effectively links the logistician and the operator — which will provide the joint warfighter the proper personnel, equipment, supplies, maintenance and transportation resources whenever and wherever he needs them. By leveraging the force multiplication effects of 21st century technology, logisticians will organize to anticipate the needs of soldiers across the world. Focused logistics supports all functions of the joint warfighter in the future, modular environment.³³

The essence of focused logistics is agile sustainment of the warfighter on the battlefield. Everything from the training base, the industrial base, the distribution network, the support nodes, the logistics information network, and the rest, are relevant since they provide value to those logisticians who are directly furnishing the fruits of all of this structure to the operators on the battlefield.³⁴ The logistics community must operate in support of the modular design of the future army to provide the commander with everything he needs with minimal impact on his force. The desired end-state is to have one logistician at each echelon who will act as the single liaison. Each unit will rely on one individual to facilitate maximum CSS throughput and provide for the delivery of follow-on sustainment. The whole CSS structure must be designed to enable that single CSS provider.³⁵ To the extent that this structure acts as a line of communication for the future force, it is also considered a strategic vulnerability. When commanders fail to receive support and are unable to sustain their combat power due to disruption in the flow of these resources, soldiers will die — and units will fail their missions.³⁶

The deployment of modular units of action with the minimal CSS component will strain the logistics team by preventing the formation of habitual relationships that empower the current force. By design, the future army will no longer be personality dependant. Logistics teams and CSS support personnel will be required to establish new team relationships each time there is a change in task organization, mission, or logistics channel requirements. The transparency from the industrial base to the theater will promote responsiveness at the expense of personal dynamics. We will build and sustain combat power by leveraging installation assets and distribution networks. In fact, the future logistician will be reliant on these resources.³⁷

Minimal personnel presence on the battlefield is achieved by leveraging situational awareness to effect anticipatory logistics pushes of sustainment capacity into the dynamic distribution of the future battlefield. We must ensure the logistics infrastructure is in place to give the warfighting customer the flexibility to surge and modify his rate of consumption as needed. Accordingly, our physical and informational installations become valuable targets to the belligerent. The force projection and sustainment roles of the sustaining base will define our

installations as operational hubs of combat power for the future armed forces. Its value will be directly related to the flow of information, intelligence, engineer, and logistics support from these locations. For the enemy of the future force, our combat force capability will be delimited by the effectiveness of our installations to provide deployment and sustainment operations.³⁸

The challenge to achieve focused logistics then is three-fold. Primarily, we must develop a common picture of the operation from the perspective of the logistician and his customer, the operator. This picture must provide a reliable image of all required and available assets, including the location of those assets in the logistics pipeline. Moreover, this picture must provide the operational commander — and his logistician — with access so that he can influence the speed and direction of those assets through the pipeline. Secondly, we must significantly improve the agility and precision of our sustainment effort to the warfighter. We must do this by transforming our policies, processes, and capabilities to provide the customer's logistician with the visibility, capacity, and control he needs to support the future commander. Finally, we must provide the operational commander with the tools to effectively oversee the management of the logistics effort that supports him. By giving him this capability, we empower him to employ the full spectrum of logistics operations. The glide path to achieving focused logistics is marked by these three challenges.³⁹

GETTING TO THE TARGET

Focused Logistics can succeed only through situation awareness and real-time information exchange. Likewise the timely distribution based logistics support systems requires the immediate proliferation of demand and supply information throughout the channel, to enable system functionality. VADM Holder, the joint staff proponent for focused logistics, explains in the *Focused Logistics Campaign Plan*:

Combatant commanders and joint task force (JTF) commanders do not have an integrated logistics information system, nor is there a source of accurate, real-time, seamless logistics information on which to base such a system. Traditionally, service logistics information systems have been service- or function-specific stovepipes, invaluable to the service component but fragmented at the JTF level. We want to provide the future joint warfighter with real-time logistics situational awareness. Our Logistics Transformation initiative helps provide the foundation for this awareness and helps instill warfighter confidence by: optimizing logistics business processes, transitioning to a logistics system open architecture that provides interoperable and actionable logistics information, and enhancing logistics response to the joint warfighter.⁴⁰

Future Logistics support to the combat commander will provide a timely and accurate operating picture of assets in terms of their visibility, control and management. The commander

will have unimpeded access to both operational and logistical information through a common integrated operating picture. This concept is called information fusion. Essential to meeting all of the focused logistics challenges, this capability will enable the commander to efficiently match his critical logistics capabilities with his operational requirements.⁴¹

The baseline sustainment capability must be effective as well as efficient. Agile organizations must provide responsive sustainment to ensure flexible solutions. These solutions are essential to meet the joint force commanders requirement to build combat power and conduct sustainment operations. They are necessary for the future force to achieve dominant maneuver in the face of the enemy. Increased efficiency can also increase flexibility through the mix of logistics forces, including host nation and contractor support. The logistics infrastructure must provide tailored support packages of all logistics assets to meet the warfighter's needs when and where he needs them. We are accomplishing this by the replacement of mass with speed and precision. Through rapid distribution of tailored units as well as configured loads, focused logistics maintains right-sized inventories in-theater. We are leveraging successes in this area to develop customers' confidence, thereby furthering their confidence in the reliability of his support.⁴²

Finally, Focused Logistics will provide commanders at all levels with the tools necessary to manage logistics flow. With the proper management tools, the operational commander will be able to visualize the flow of logistics, and enable him to receive the right logistics throughout his area of operations. These tools will seamlessly allow him to tap corresponding host nation, coalition, and interagency resources.⁴³

THE NEXT STEP

The key to focused logistics is the seamless logistics system which provides agile sustainment to future forces based on commander's requirements as determined from a common operating picture. The keystone, then, is the common logistics operating picture. We must produce the network-centric logistics environment in which we will focus our logistics effort. Modernized computer systems and timely data exchange are two essential elements of this environment. These elements are realized through the assimilation of enabling technologies as well as integrated joint tactics, techniques and procedures. This infrastructure and support system succeeds when we develop appropriate those tools and metrics that the operational commander can use to synchronize his logistics support to his need for combat power. These are the issues we must complete to achieve our goal.⁴⁴

Last December, the Army G4 published the “Army Logistics White Paper”, wherein he identified the immediate need to “enhance our current capabilities while transforming Army Logistics for tomorrow.” LTG Christianson addresses the shortfalls in our current structure by focusing on four areas that require immediate attention. To achieve focused logistics, we must begin by: connecting Army logisticians, modernizing theater distribution, improving force reception, and integrating the supply chain. While other efforts are important, these four areas are necessary to provide support to the warfighter today.⁴⁵

In terms of communications and connectivity for logisticians, currently there is insufficient bandwidth within the joint commander’s area of responsibility to handle all of the data transmission demand.⁴⁶ Even where bandwidth exists, logisticians’ access to that bandwidth is not assured.⁴⁷ In fact, the prioritized focus of inadequate communications resources is justified under the rubric of efficiency, and characterized as “risk acceptance.” Often this “risk acceptance” is manifest by the lack of timely and sufficient communications infrastructure, as well as the absence of systems interoperability across CSS units, not to mention between the CSS system and the commanders’ C2 system. As we recently observed, our profession must sometimes measure risk acceptance in this area in terms of the lives of soldiers and the endangerment of tactical units. In support of the Future Army, successful logistics support — focused or any other kind — will require a robust and redundant access to sufficient, reliable, and responsive communications infrastructure.

Without connectivity we will not succeed in the four G-4 Focus Areas. Until we accomplish these four tasks, we will not make progress toward the triad of Information Fusion, Agile Sustainment, and Joint Theater Logistics Management. Without this triad we will not achieve Focused Logistics. Without Focused Logistics, there will be no transformation of Army Logistics — and no successful Army Transformation.

CONCLUSION

While the manner of providing sustainment to the Army continues to evolve, the transformation path to future logistics support to the warfighter is clear. The leadership is in place and the organizational structures are adapting to the changes in demands to effectively support the future customer. We know what is required to build the logistics force of the future. We have known it for almost a decade. It remains to be seen if we will get there in time. “Focused Logistics means doing logistics right.”⁴⁸

Focused Logistics, and timely distribution-based support is built on logistical awareness of the situation and real-time information exchange. Yet we are still building systems that do not

talk to each other. Rather than assuming that the communications networks will be in place, we must dedicate the resources to seamlessly move electrons between the C2 systems, the warfighter information systems, and the logistics supporting information systems. Seamless logistics support requires an accurate and timely common operating picture of the joint operational and logistics environment. Otherwise, focused logistics will remain an unrealized goal. Assured communications support is a necessary requirement for success.

Focused Logistics is an operational issue. Without this data connectivity, future force commanders will be able neither to build nor to sustain combat power. We know what we have to do. We must dedicate the resources.

WORD COUNT = 5995

ENDNOTES

- ¹. General Johnnie E. Wilson, LTG John G. Coburn, and MG Daniel G. Brown, "Our Revolution in Military Logistics --- Supporting the 21st Century Soldier", *Army Logistician*, January-February 1999, available from <<http://www.almc.army.mil/ALOG/issues/JanFeb99/MS401.htm>>; Internet; Accessed 7 DEC 2003.
- ². LTG John M. Riggs, "Testimony On Ground Force Modernization To The Subcommittees On Military Procurement And Military Research And Development, House Committee On Armed Services, United States House of Representatives", Washington, D.C. 11 April 2002; Available from <<http://armedservices.house.gov/openingstatementsandpressreleases/107thcongress/02-04-11riggs.html>>; Internet; Accessed 3 MAR 2004
- ³. Ms. Donna Shands, "Transforming Army Logistics", brief to the Chief Information Office Executive Board, chart 3. Although the name has changed from "revolution in military logistics", to "logistics transformation", to the current vision of "future logistics" the words do not significantly change. In a 27 March 2003 Statement to the Subcommittee On Terrorism, Unconventional Threats And Capabilities Concerning Science And Technology, House Armed Service Committee, United States House Of Representatives, Dr. A. Michael Andrews, the Deputy Assistant Secretary Of The Army For Research And Technology And Chief Scientist spoke about logistics Science and Technology. He told the committee, "The revolutionary capabilities projected for the Objective Force will not be achieved until there is a corresponding revolution in military logistics.
- ⁴. Wilson, Coburn, and Brown, The literal quote is, "Logistics is not just a combat multiplier; rather, it is a warstopper!"
- ⁵. Major Jeffrey W. Drushal, "Team Development in Objective Force Logistics", *Military Review*, July-August 2002 English Edition, Command & General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth KS, available from <<http://www-cgsc.army.mil/milrev/english/JulAug02/drushal.asp>>; Internet; Accessed 23 NOV 2003.
- ⁶. VADM G. S. Holder, Director of Logistics, *Focused Logistics Campaign Plan*, Washington, D.C., The Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2003, p. 7.
- ⁷. Wilson, Coburn, and Brown.
- ⁸. LTC Robert McKay and Kathy Flowers, "Transformation in Army Logistics", *Military Review*, September-October 2000,: available from <<http://www-cgsc.army.mil/milrev/english/sepoct00/mckay.htm>>; Internet; Accessed 23 NOV 2003.
- ⁹. Holder, p. 8 & 9.
- ¹⁰. McKay and Flowers.
- ¹¹. Wilson, Coburn, and Brown.
- ¹². McKay and Flowers.

¹³. Mark J. O’Konski, “Revolution in Military Logistics”, *Army Logistician*, January-February 1999, available from <[http://www.almc.army.mil/ALOG/issues/JanFeb99/MS 364.htm](http://www.almc.army.mil/ALOG/issues/JanFeb99/MS_364.htm)>; Internet; Accessed 24 OCT 2003.

¹⁴. General Accounting Office, *Report to the House and Senate Congressional Armed Services Committees*, “GAO-02-106 Strategic Planning for Logistics Transformation”, U. S. General Accounting Office, October 2001.

¹⁵. Holder, p. 4.

¹⁶. Ibid, p. 6.

¹⁷. Ibid, p. 8&9.

¹⁸. Wilson, Coburn, and Brown.

¹⁹. Ibid.

²⁰. O’Konski.

²¹ Ibid.

²². Ibid.

²³. Ibid.

²⁴. Ibid.

²⁵. Ibid.

²⁶. Ibid.

²⁷. Ibid.

²⁸. Ibid.

²⁹. Ibid.

³⁰. Ibid.

³¹. Ibid.

³². Ibid.

³³. Holder, p. 6.

³⁴. McKay and Flowers.

³⁵. Wilson, Coburn, and Brown.

³⁶. Danny G. Nobles, "Transforming The Army Sustaining Base", in *Army Transformation: A view from the U.S. Army War College*, Williamson Murray, ed., Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle, PA, July 2001. p. 262.

³⁷. Drushal .

³⁸. Nobles, p. 262-263.

³⁹. Holder, p. 26, 30, and 44.

⁴⁰. Ibid, p. 11.

⁴¹. Ibid, p. 44.

⁴². Ibid, p. 31 and 32.

⁴³. Ibid, p. 26.

⁴⁴. Ibid, p. 27, 33, and 45.

⁴⁵. Army Logistics White Paper, "Delivering Materiel Readiness to the Army," Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4, Washington D.C., December, 2003, available from <<http://www.army.mil/features/LogWhitePaper2004/LogWhitePaper.doc>>; Internet; Accessed 18 FEB 2004.

⁴⁶. Shands, chart 20.

⁴⁷. MAJ Charles Dickens, "Focused Logistics Investment Strategy", briefing, October 2002.

⁴⁸. Holder, p. 4.

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