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Successfully Sustaining the Joint Force: Regionally Aligned, Joint, Multilateral Logistics Structure for the INDOPACOM Theater

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Successfully Sustaining the Joint Force: Regionally Aligned, Joint, Multilateral Logistics Structure for the INDOPACOM Theater

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Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

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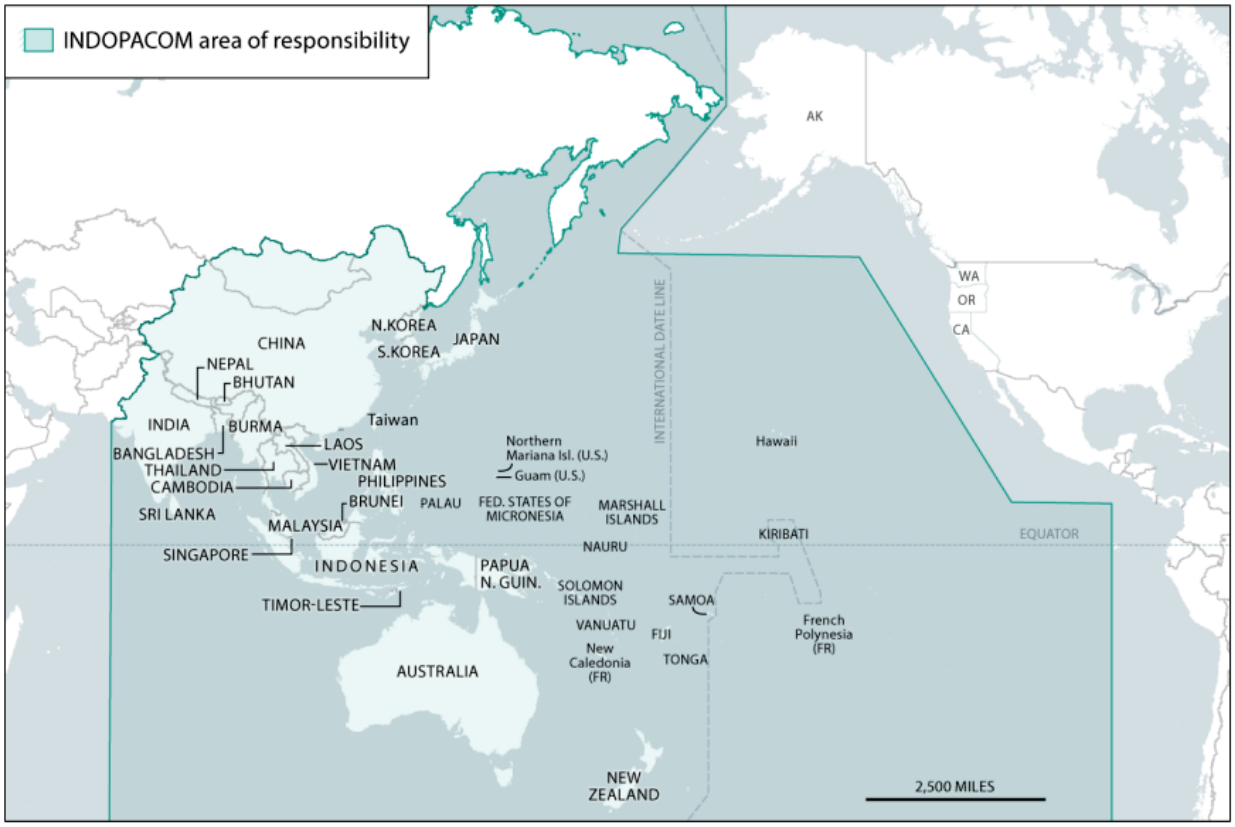
Introduction

Encompassing the seas, islands, and coastal areas of the Pacific and Indian Oceans between the western coast of North America and India (see Figure 1),[1] the Indo-Pacific region hosts more than 375,000 U.S. military personnel using at least 66 distinct defense sites. The 2022 National Security Strategy describes the Indo-Pacific as the "epicenter of 21st-century geopolitics."[2]

The 2022 National Defense Strategy identifies attempts by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to "refashion the Indo-Pacific region" as part of "the most comprehensive and serious challenge to U.S. national security."[3] secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has described Indo-Pacific defense infrastructure as "providing us with the ability to position our troops forward in theater so that we can deter much further forward."[4]

China has developed islands from reefs with capable military runways, has pre-positioned stocks within the Southeast Asia Sea, and claims that all waters and territory within the Chinese-proclaimed 9-dash line are under exclusive Chinese sovereign control. The Chinese military is also continuously harassing civilian sailing vessels, fishing boats, and oil and gas drilling ships within that proclaimed 9-dash line. These harassed vessels belong to countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines, claiming ownership of these waterways and islands.

Figure 1. The Indo-Pacific Region



The National Defense Strategy (NDS) not only identifies the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the most consequential strategic competitor to the United States but also the only competitor capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological capabilities to mount a sustained challenge to the rules-based international order.[5] The joint force must continue modernizing and transforming into a multi-domain-ready force to meet its current, future, and enduring responsibilities. The existing logistics structure must improve sustainment and maintenance capabilities and preposition more equipment, munitions, fuel, and materials needed to deter and fight with the most consequential strategic competitor, the PRC.

INDOPACOM must develop a command organization that is flexible, agile, and jointly solves logistical demands. For the command to efficiently respond to the logistical needs of a joint expeditionary force, the 8th Theater Sustainment Command should command, control,

develop, and implement a Joint Expeditionary Support Command (JESC) within the Indo-Pacific theater.

Additionally, the Department of Defense will no longer operate on a mature Forward Operating Base, which relies heavily on contractors to handle many of its sustainment functions. The U.S. joint force will require service interoperability, regional allies, and the Joint Logistics Enterprise (JLent) to be successful in the Indo-Pacific theater.

A JESC will comprise all services with associated equipment sets and be inextricably linked to its regional allies and partners, including the combatant commands, the Defense Logistics Agency, the U.S. Transportation Command, the Joint Staff J3, and J4. A JESC will be capable of providing operational sustainment and mission command of joint sustainment operations for INDOPACOM, specifically in South Asia and Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Australia, and islands within the central and south Pacific. The JESC will be capable of managing Non-combatant Evacuation operations (NEO), Joint Reception, Staging, Onward movement, and Integration (RSOI) and will provide support to the joint forces, including support to coalition forces.

Currently, the Army's Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) is responsible for establishing Command and Control (C2) of operational logistics in a specified area of operations by employing one or more expeditionary sustainment commands (ESCs).[6] When the Army is the predominant land force operating within a Joint Operations Area (JOA), the TSC or ESC, at the discretion of the JFC, can become a joint logistics headquarters providing logistics support to all joint forces within the Combined Joint Operations Area CJOA. INDOPACOM has the 8th TSC in Hawaii and the 19th ESC currently in South Korea. The one ESC in Korea is not enough to

cover the entire area of INDOPACOM and will require the development of the JESC to share responsibilities. One that is trained, equipped, and ready to support.

As previously mentioned, the PRC is the most compelling challenge to U.S. national security and is increasingly aggressive in refashioning the Indo-Pacific region. The PRC is destabilizing and threatening peace within the Indo-Pacific's area of responsibility and is a pacing challenge for the U.S. Department of Defense and allies in the region.[7] With that said, the 19th ESC, currently based in South Korea, is not a joint expeditionary sustainment command and will quickly become overwhelmed and lack the depth needed to support a large-scale combat operation in the Pacific.

Chapter 1

The Beginnings-World War II: Logistical Challenges

Historians and military generals agree that World War II was a war of logistics. It was mainly characterized by the totality with which workforce and resources were mobilized and by the intensity with which both sides attempted to destroy each other's material resources for war.

On 7 December 1941, Japanese planes appeared over a naval base on Oahu. They dropped torpedoes that dove underwater, guiding their way toward targets in the harbor. Four torpedoes struck the USS *Arizona*, and the massive battleship heaved back and forth in the ocean. Steel, timber, diesel oil, and body parts flew through the air. The Arizona tilted into the sea, and its crew dived into the oil-covered waters. For a country that was at peace, this was a violent awakening. For the U.S., this was the start of the Second World War.[8] ("the date which will live in infamy," as Franklin Delano Roosevelt put it). The U.S. is planning for the next large-scale war in the Pacific, and a critical analysis of logistical lessons learned from World War II will benefit the Department of Defense in solving future problems it may face.

Starting in 1942 in the Pacific, logistically, four primary issues emerged with military logistical efforts. First, there was a lack of an organized demand signal of logistical requirements that would help organize and serve as a guide for procurement. Second, the collective organization and distribution of supplies once procured and passed into the logistical support system. Third, the lack of visibility and accountability of supplies and equipment. Lastly, another significant problem was coordinating efforts between and within the services that emerged early in the conflict. Urgent demands from multiple directions aggravated this and grew steadily and more severe as the war continued.[9]

The Pacific also had limited discharge capabilities at specific destinations and a lack of visibility and control over the movements of vessels once they had been dispatched into a theater. Historically, the most important single problem was the need for forward operating bases that could sustain our combat forces, somewhere in the theater that could deliver to the point of need quickly and consistently.

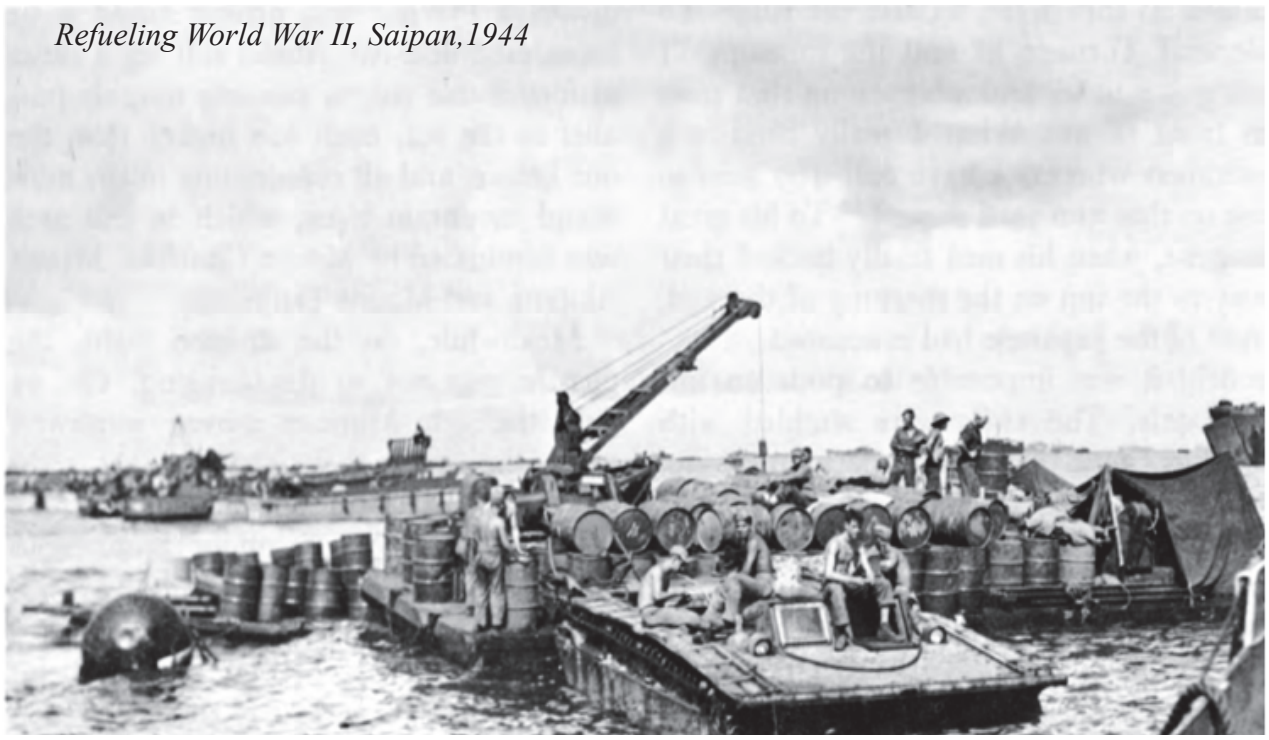
Similarly, in the Pacific, the Army, Marines, and Navy operations were closely entwined, and no service could accomplish its missions without the support of the other services. However, all services competed for the same common user transportation assets. During WWII, all the services felt their needs were the top priority, and this led to duplication of efforts, a shortage of resources, and the congestion of ships and planes at the ports. On 12 November 1943, a combined / joint service transportation regulating office was established in the Pacific. This regulating system eventually developed into a vast, centralized agency for controlling the movement of personnel, equipment, and sustainment throughout the theater on a priority basis. The Agency's functions were to assign priorities for the movement of personnel, unit equipment, and supplies by water, air, and rail movements. The agency's interface between supply and transportation would also come with detailed and synchronized implementation instructions. The staff of the regulating agency came primarily from the U.S. Army and Australian services.[10]

The Army and Navy also developed a comprehensive system of coordinated theater supply known as the "Basic Logistical Plan (BLP) for command areas involving both Army and Navy operations."[11] The U.S. has learned that these combined staff could collectively restore and keep a more organized sense of order, reducing duplication of efforts.[12] This plan began to show how joint logistics sequencing and synchronization within an operation can prevent a culmination point in conflict.

Furthermore, after the Battle of Midway in World War II, the U.S. gained momentum in the offense; however, the sustainers were unprepared for the upcoming combat requirements, as seen in an early offensive operation at Guadalcanal. Moving quickly into operational preparation created sustainment planning gaps, resulting in massive supply download backlogs on shore and landing plans that failed to include comprehensive sustainment.[13] Furthermore, critical air support operations were impacted by the failure to proactively compensate for the lack of nearby dock facilities to handle much-needed aviation fuel download.[14] While Japanese planning assumptions failed to take advantage of the U.S. military's exposed and vulnerable supply trains, the operation's logistical nightmare was significant enough that senior U.S. military leadership quickly emphasized the BLP, as mentioned above. The BLP directed theater commanders to enforce joint theater logistics.[15] Introducing joint sustainment planning early or before operations will, without question, mitigate any potential culmination points. Most importantly, establishing a joint organization before war provides an operational advantage to planning and possible outcomes.

Other historical examples during WWII also show how fuel management can affect the success of military operations. Creating a Joint Expeditionary Support Command in the Pacific would empower more agile and responsive sustainment efforts and avoid a resource-based culmination point (see Figure 2). The U.S. military has fuel stockage solutions across the INDOPACIFC and mutual support agreements with our partners and allies.[16] The management of all these programs to ensure fuel makes it to the proper operational point at the right time across the theater will require significant synchronization and coordination that the JESC can appropriately manage, especially during war or a crisis.

Refueling World War II, Saipan,1944



(Figure 2) Crowl, P. A. (1944) Pontoon Barge with Crane, U.S. Army

World War II necessitated joint operations. Before this war, the services were relatively small and operated mainly independently. World War II started the transformation from these small independent entities into large operational forces consisting of ground, air, and sea components conducting joint operations around the globe.[17]

A Joint Expeditionary Support Command, complemented with layers of service logisticians, partners, allies, and, in some cases, interagency partners, can forecast and get specific requirements faster to the point of need than working in individual service lanes.

Chapter 2

Operation FORAGER (Case Study)

Operation Forager was America's plan to capture the Mariana Islands from Japan, specifically Saipan, Guam, and Tinian. The Mariana Island chain extends 500 miles from north to south, starting in the north with Farallon de Pajaros to Guam in the south. The southernmost islands are in order from north to south: Saipan, Tinian, and Guam. These three islands were all suitable sites for constructing airfields within striking distance of Japanese targets on the mainland. During the Pacific campaign, senior leaders and planners understood that building air bases or improving existing airfields in the Marianas was the key if we were to take the fight to Japan.

The B29 bomber aircraft could carry a 10,000lb payload and travel approximately 1500 miles to Japan's mainland, drop the atomic bomb on a designated target, and return safely. The first target during the operation was the Japanese military stronghold on Saipan. Because of the proximity of Saipan and Tinian, they were considered a single unit. The preparations for the invasion and capture of the Marians required a one-thousand-mile advance from Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, against islands with ten times the number of Japanese troops defending large areas on the islands. The logistical problems were daunting and, in some cases, overwhelming.

Before the actual ground invasion of Saipan, the Army Air Force and carrier-based aircraft began a bombing campaign in preparation for Operation Forager. Similarly, the U.S. Navy submarines attacked Japanese vessels that were moving to and from the Marianas and conducted underwater blasting of coral reefs and underwater obstacles. These joint preemptive air and sea attacks significantly reduced the threat from the Japanese.

More than 105,000 combat troops supported by a naval task force comprising over 500 ships were to attack, with some 66,000 men participating in the invasion of Saipan and Tinian. During the first day of action, seven battleships and eleven destroyers fired over 15,000 rounds of sixteen-inch and five-inch shells at military targets along Saipan's western coast. The bombardment would continue for the first three days of the operation.[18]

Supply congestion, Saipan, 1944

(Figure 3) Crowl, P. A. (1944) Shore Parties Unloading Supplies, U.S. Army

From this perspective alone, there appears to be no aspect of an amphibious landing against a hostile shore that presents more complex problems than that of transporting supplies from a ship to a shore and allocating them at the proper time and place and in the appropriate amounts to the troops that need them on time. Similarly, no phase of an amphibious operation will likely become disorganized and even as disorderly as a supply ship-to-shore operation. Ordinarily, the assault landing craft with troops and vehicles move from ship to shore in scheduled wave formations and a somewhat organized fashion. Once ashore, the troops deploy

and eventually move inland according to a prearranged plan. Conversely, supplies cannot move off the beach under their own power (see Figure 3).

Often, supplies are dumped at the water's edge haphazardly by landing craft whose naval crews are only interested in getting back out to sea again. The supplies stay at the shoreline until shore parties can segregate them in some order on the beaches or until mechanical transportation comes ashore to haul them to inland drop-off locations. To the civilian observer, at least, the pile-up and congestion of supplies at the shoreline during the first phase of an amphibious assault presents a picture of absolute chaos (see Figure 3).

The chaos is often more apparent than real in a well-conducted amphibious operation. However, even under the best conditions, the problem of ship-to-shore supply is complicated and not an easy problem to solve. In Saipan, local circumstances were even more cumbersome and formidable but not unique. As previously mentioned, the first day of unloading was significantly disrupted by heavy, intense artillery and mortar fire on the beaches that did not cease altogether until three days later. Conditions were unfavorable to a steady movement of supplies and equipment onto the beaches. The results were that division supplies were landed over several beaches, and the troops had to scramble and forage to get what they needed.[19]

Ammo resupply Saipan 1944

(Figure 4) Crowl, P. A. (1944) Pulling Ammunition from an LCM, U.S. Army

Additionally, along the six thousand yards of the beach, there was a significant mix-up of supplies despite leadership's involvement in organizing and supervising the unloading and the movement of supplies to the troop units they were destined.[20]

The Marianas Campaign, from an amphibious viewpoint, had nearly everything: great strategic importance, major tactical moves including successive troops landings on three enemy islands; tough enemy resistance of all kinds, including major Fleet battle; coordination of every known type of combat technique of the land, sea, and air; complex logistic problems; and the buildup of a great military base area concurrent with all the fighting.[21] The Mariana Campaign also taught many lessons that the U.S. must capitalize on. The battle for the Mariana Islands was a joint operation involving all the branches of service. The battle was ultimately a success, and

from this success, it is evident that logisticians from every service must synchronize and organize efficiently into a JESC structure to win and ultimately decrease the number of casualties.

Since WW2 was a two-front war, the battle for the Marianas was challenging in several areas—the current battle in Europe and other regions of the Pacific limited resources for Operation Forger. Surface transportation ships, lack of supply prioritization, and poor tracking significantly hindered needed supplies from arriving to the fight when needed. Lastly, the closest logistic base to the Marianas was well over 1000 miles away at Eniwetok in the Marshal Islands.

Leading up to the battle in the Marianas, the Army, and Marine Corps staff were tormented by supply shortages and continuous changes in shipping assignments with insufficient ship characteristics data to ensure adequate planning for loading their supplies. For example, the Army's 27th Infantry Division could not load more than fifty percent of its intended supplies for the fight because their assigned transport ships were overloaded.[22] Throughout the war, the Army and Navy maintained their supply systems, often creating different living standards and support levels at the exact locations for Army Soldiers and Marines. These early flaws in logistics are glaring reasons why the U.S. military must create a JESC for the INDOPACOM theater sooner rather than later.

Chapter 3

Evolving Infrastructure for Joint Logistics in INDOPACOM

In the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress funded the Pacific Deterrence Initiative (PDI), ensuring that USINDOPACOM would have all the necessary resources to deter the rising threat from the PRC. This act states, "the Secretary of Defense shall establish an initiative, to be known as the "Pacific Deterrence Initiative" and it will carry out prioritized activities that will enhance the United States deterrence and defense posture in the Indo-Pacific region.[23]

This directive lists five specific priorities that all directly relate to the establishment of a JESC. This legislation directs five clear priorities: "1. Modernize and strengthen the presence of the United States Armed Forces, including those with advanced capabilities. 2. *Improve logistics and maintenance capabilities and the pre-positioning of equipment, munitions, fuel, and material.* 3. Carry out a program of exercises, training, experimentation, and innovation for the joint force. 4. Improve infrastructure to enhance the responsiveness and resiliency of the United States Armed Forces. 5. Build the defense and security capabilities, capacity, and cooperation of allies and partners."[24]

Additionally, in FY2022 and FY2023, activities authorized under PDI were divided into five categories:

- "Presence and Posture ($4.1 billion authorized in FY2022, $6.46 billion authorized in FY2023)
- *Logistics and Prepositioning of Equipment ($360 million authorized in FY2022, $500 million authorized in FY2023)*

• Exercises, Training, and Experimentation ($696 million authorized in FY2022, $2 billion authorized in FY2023)

• Defense and Security Capabilities of Allies and Partners ($489 million authorized in FY2022, $732 million authorized in FY2023)

• Infrastructure Improvements ($1.5 billion authorized in FY2022, $1.8 billion authorized in FY2023)"[25]

According to JP 3-10, Joint Logistics is defined as the art and science of planning and carrying out, by a joint force commander and staff, logistic operations to support the protection, movement, maneuver, firepower, and sustainment of operating forces of two or more Military Departments of the same nation.[26]

Currently, the J4 is the principal advisor to the combatant commander (COCOM) and his staff on all logistical matters. The J4 staff establishes policies and procedures for movements of munitions, petroleum, readiness, maintenance, medical, and mortuary affairs. The J4 staff will also coordinate and negotiate international and wartime Host Nation Support agreements with Host Nations. Additionally, the J4 will plan and coordinate the reception, staging, onward movement, integration (RSOI), and sustainment during crises and conflicts. This current structure is insufficient to manage all PDI requirements successfully. An additional logistical command will be needed to fulfill robust operations, and this command must be developed in advance under the Pacific Deterrence Initiative.

Afghanistan and Iraq Joint Logistics Command Lessons Learned

Joint Logistics Commands (JLC) have been stood up in both Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF); however, a JLC has not been created before a conflict.

The JLC in Afghanistan was established by Joint Task Force -180 in 2002 to coordinate and synchronize logistical efforts in the Joint Operations Area (JOA).[27] By 2004, the JLC had a theater support structure's most extensive and complex presence deployed in a combat zone.[28] This structure introduced mobile maintenance support teams, a containerized delivery system, and a 21-day menu system, increasing fuel storage capacity throughout the JOA. "Nobody would be able to accomplish their mission without the proper support from everyone in the JLC." [29] Many factors led up to the establishment of the JLC during OEF, but looking closely at Operation Iraqi Freedom, which was one of the most successful logistics operations ever conducted, will start to demonstrate the need for an operational-level JESC. Below is a list of logistic feats required to establish a more prominent U.S. presence in CENTCOM AOR during the initial years of occupation.

1. Force Projection: As part of Operation Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, the Joint Movement Center in Stuttgart, Germany, coordinated more than 10,277 missions from October 2002 through April 2004. Approximately 199,881 passengers (PAX), 386,202 short tons, and 6,588,628 square feet of ship tonnage traversed the AOR via multimodal transport. In the first 30 days of OIF, the Air Force expended 10,000 tons of munitions (75% of these were precision guided) via 24,000 sorties, and the Army and Marine Corps conducted the longest and fastest armored assault in the history of warfare, attacking 540 kilometers from the Kuwaiti border to Baghdad. [30]

2. Prepositioned Stocks: 17,000 end items were issued to the Army, and Marines 1 and 2 deployed and discharged nearly 1.3 million square feet of cargo in Kuwait in support of the First Marine Expeditionary Force. All this equipment was in better condition than home station equipment.[31]
3. Bulk POL: Over 1,200 tankers and two side-by-side pipelines covering 250 miles delivered 1.5 million gallons of bulk POL daily in the first 45 days.[32]
4. In OIF, the Army integrated databases from fifteen systems. It could display that data through a single portal, showing cargo on ships and Army supply activities on a single screen. This capability led to what is today the Battle Command Sustainment System (BCS3), also used by the Marines in theater.[33]

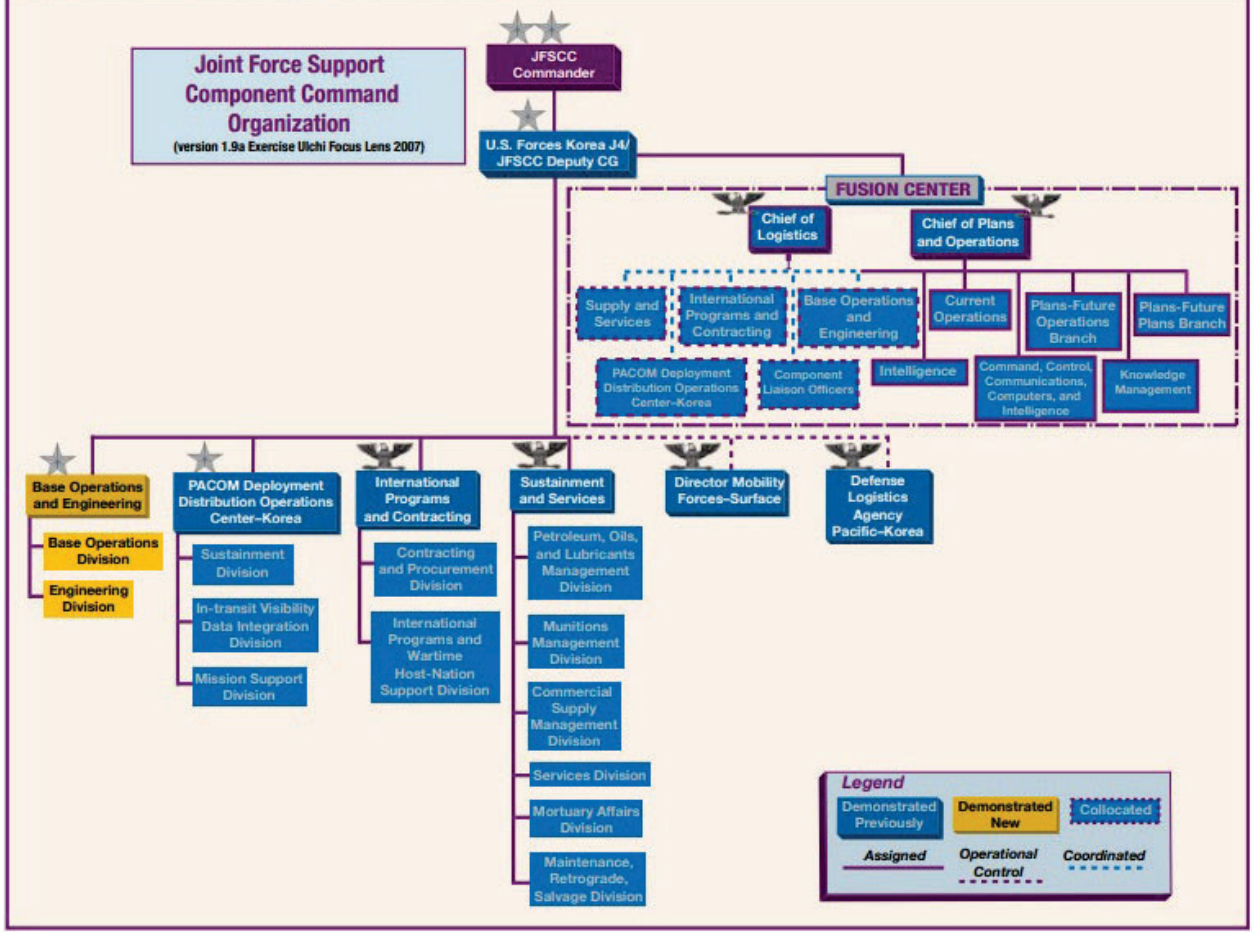
The Joint Force Support Component Command (Concept Korea)

In 2005, U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) experimented with a Joint Force Support Component Command (JFSCC), which reports directly to USFK as a sub-unified command structure per the JFSCC Standing Operating Procedures (SOP). This is not an operational unit during peacetime; USFK can establish the JFSCC to support the theater for logistical requirements in a crisis or war. This is a great idea, but it would take 21-45 days to get the staff and units in motion at the start of a crisis. The JESC concept would be a permanent command with downtrace units responsible for coordinating, integrating, and synchronizing sustainment functions for the joint warfighter.

This JFSCC, when needed, would provide a command structure that would be empowered with the authority, processes, and visibility to execute coordination and synchronization control of joint theater logistics for the Commander United States Forces Korea (COMUSK), which would ultimately provide increased efficiency and effectiveness in

supporting the joint warfighter. Through the centralized coordination and synchronization control of joint log operations, this sub-unified command would provide coherence, guidance, and organization to the logistical effort and maintain the ability to focus log capabilities and forces wherever needed across the theater of operations. (Draft JFSCC SOP, July 2007)[34] The JFSCC structure would be suitable for managing crises in and around Korea, Japan, or the North Pacific, integrating with USFK J4 and 19 ESC JOA.[35] This is a great concept; however, it does not negate the need for a JESC under the 8th TSC to satisfy other regions within INDOPACOM.

Joint Foces Support Component Command Concept (Korea)



The JFSCC was created in 2005 to unify theater logistics under a single logistics commander responsible for coordinating, integrating, and synchronizing joint-centric theater logistics functions. The commander of this functional command was tasked with moving USFK

away from current stovepipe service-centric logistics processes to a single collaborative joint logistics process that will improve warfighting capability. Specifically, the JFSCC was trying to fix some of the recurring problems that joint theater commanders were continually facing:[36]

- Logistics by committee, no single person in charge
- Lack of total asset visibility
- Poor communications
- Redundant, wasteful, unconnected distribution system
- Excessively complex, inefficient procedures
- Lack of standing capability
- Poor linkage between logisticians and operators

The JESC, just like the JLC and JFSCC Concept, is to eliminate the duplication of sustainment, facilities, and functions among the service component commands. It would provide the TSC commander with a coordinated effort for joint logistics at the operational and tactical levels.

The U.S. Army's Theater Support Command (TSC) is currently responsible for setting the theater in INDOPACOM. They are also accountable for theater opening, distribution, and sustainment, extending the joint force's operational reach, endurance, and freedom of action. As we have learned, large distances posed a challenge for both U.S. and Japanese forces during World War II and remain a challenge today for forces and sustainment operations throughout the Indo-Pacific. The JESC concept will bring us closer to solving these challenges from the past.

Chapter 4

Evolving Priorities and Potential JESC Locations in the Pacific

As the most forward U.S. territories in the Pacific, Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) are critical to U.S. regional security in the theater. The Department of Defense and the Government of Japan have committed more than $7Bn for military construction and family housing projects on Guam in FY22-FY28 to meet the U.S. commitment to Japan under the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI). This investment in Guam, home to 170,000 American citizens, highlights the island's importance for sustaining the joint force as a primary operating base.[37] The island of Guam is a prime example of an evolving priority with the potential to serve as a strategic staging base with prepositioned equipment and supplies needed for the JESC.

Another critical strategic location for implementing a JESC would be the strategic location of Northern Australia in the City of Darwin. At the 31st annual Australia – U.S. Ministerial Conference (AUMIN), there was an agreement on "Enhanced Force Posture Cooperation and Alliance Integration." This is a new level of the Force Posture Initiatives signed between the Obama administration and the Gillard Labor government ten years ago, which focused on the rotational basing of U.S. Troops in the strategic northern location of Australia.[38] This cooperation and the Australia-UK-US (AUKUS) military alliance would allow the U.S. to establish a JESC headquarters in the City of Darwin or the northern part of Australia with increased logistics and sustainment capabilities, including prepositioned equipment and supplies. The JESC would be a combined logistics, sustainment, and maintenance enterprise able to support high-tempo warfighting and integrated military operations in the Southeast Asia Sea and Southeast Asia region, allowing the 19th ESC to focus on the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

The U.S. Department of Defense must continue to build a robust network of Allies and Partners in the region, focused on trust and shared interest, synchronizing the capabilities we need to be successful. Sustaining the joint force, delivering advanced warfighting capabilities, and developing agile, robust theater logistics will be the linchpin when we go head-to-head with the PRC, the most consequential strategic competitor to the United States.

Lt. Gen. Stephen R. Lyons, a previous director for logistics on the Joint Staff, once said that "the purpose of today's Joint Logistics Enterprise is to project and sustain military power, enable global operational reach, and provide a full range of flexible and responsive options to joint force commanders."[39] According to the Doctrine of Joint Operations, “operational reach is the distance over which military power can mass effects and be employed decisively. The operational approach is lines of operation that connect the force with its base of operations and its objectives.”[40] The U.S. and Allies must ensure that our coalition of forces is never cut off from any form of sustainment. Keeping its lines of communication short will prove to make this possible. The JESC concept will keep our lines of communication short.

Additionally, USINDOPACOM is pursuing permanent and rotational operating locations across "clusters" throughout the Indo-Pacific. Funding provided by Congress in 2023 and the President's Budget Request (PBR) requests for 2024 will allow USINDOPACOM to continue the necessary planning and implementation efforts to disperse the joint force, enhance interoperability, and build capacity with allies and partners—a perfect opportunity for 8th TSC to implement a JESC concept into the IINDOPACOM theater.

JESC Structure

The potential structure of the Joint Expeditionary Support Command.

1. The JESC would be responsible for a specific area that would not interfere with 19 ESC in Korea. It would exercise complete control over component service logistical units within its area of responsibility that were not assigned or attached to tactical units. This joint command would include all services, including Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. It would be led by a service 1-star general specialized in logistics.
2. The JESC will be the Executive Agent (EA) in several areas of responsibility.
3. The JESC is a permanent organization that builds interoperability and participates in bilateral and multilateral exercises annually. Available for all contingencies in its area of responsibility.
4. The JESC will be positioned in a host nation with robust logistical facilities to house all services and logistical needs. The JESC is tailored to fit the specific conditions of the Pacific Theater and designed to accomplish all service-specific logistical missions.

Equipment Examples

An example of a piece of equipment designated for an area under the JESC would be the United States Naval Ship (USNS) Spearhead, the first of 10 Joint High-Speed Vessels (JHSV), was delivered to Military Sealift Command under TRANSCOM in December of 2012. It was designed for rapid intra-theater transport of troops and associated equipment. The JHSV is a 338-foot-long aluminum catamaran capable of transporting approximately 600 tons of military troops, vehicles, and supplies with a range of 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots. It can operate in shallow-draft, austere ports, and waterways. The JHSVs' aviation flight deck supports various aircraft, including CH-53 Super Stallions. Each JHSV has sleeping

accommodations for up to 42 crew members and 104 mission personnel and airline-style seating for 312 people.[41]

Another example of equipment that would fall under the JESC would be key platforms with the Army watercraft fleet, the Logistics Support Vessel (LSV). The LSV can provide worldwide transportation support of vehicles and sustainment cargo and is used for intra-theater line haul for tactical resupply missions in remote, underdeveloped coastlines and waterways that can be regularly found in regions in the Pacific. The LSV is used to discharge strategic sealift vessels such as Large and Medium Speed Roll-on / Roll-Off. The LSV is perfect for areas when drafts within a port are not deep enough to receive larger ships. LSVs can transport all tracked and wheeled vehicles, including M1 Abram tanks. Both are excellent examples of units that would fall under and train with the JESC and partner nations for contingencies and disasters if needed.

Currently, PACOM has six operational LSVs and 35 remaining in Army pre-positioned stock (APS); the impact of these six active sustainment and maneuver support has been demonstrated through the support of multiple PACOM – Pacific Pathways exercises throughout the first and second island chains of the pacific.[42]

On Nov. 19, 2020, USAV LTG William B. Bunker (LSV-4) returned to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH), Hawaii, after completing 94 days of continuous operations at sea and culminating 20,000 nautical miles of operations. During its operations, it supported multiple Army and joint training exercises, conducted proof of principle and experimentation tasks, and performed theater opening, distribution, and sustainment tasks. On July 18, the USAV Harold C. Clinger (LSV-2) sailed from JBPHH to Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, completing a 7,500 nautical mile sail and the longest point-to-point sail of an Army watercraft since World War II.

Coordinating the movement through the U.S. Navy maritime operations center (MOC), the vessel traversed multiple fleet locations and the Panama Canal. The MOC synchronized the transition of overwatch between multiple naval agencies. Additional LSVs should be pulled from APS and positioned forward within the JESC JOA.[43]

JESC Executive Agent (EA)

The JESC will utilize the Army as the Executive Agent (EA) in several different responsibilities that will be discussed later. First, what are the E.A.'s responsibilities? A broad delegation of authority from the Secretary of Defense to service secretaries or combatant commanders to provide specific support to other U.S. Government agencies or service components. As the executive agent, the Army ensures that the other services have sufficient capacity and capability to execute their missions around the globe or in a specific area of a combatant command. [44] The following are examples of particular Army support provided to the collective joint force:

- *"Tactical Water*: DOD Directive 4705.01E designates the Army as E.A. for the production, storage, and distribution of tactical water, with production being the most critical contribution to the joint force in a tactical environment.
- *Petroleum Operations:* Although the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) is the E.A. for fuel, the Army is responsible (per DODD 4140.25) for all inland fuel distribution, especially in a contested environment. When DLA cannot provide support, the Army is responsible for fuel distribution from the high-water mark to the point of need.
- *Mortuary Affairs:* Although there is no longer a designated E.A. for mortuary affairs, the Army is the lead service for such responsibilities for USEUCOM,

United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), and United States Central Command. As a result, the Army has the only active mortuary affairs capability to receive, store, process, and prepare remains for repatriation or internment. The Army is also the only service capable of safely receiving, storing, and handling contaminated remains.

- *Contingency Contracting:* The Army has been appointed the lead service for contingency contracting by the combatant commander within USEUCOM and United States Africa Command, and the Army supports the Air Force in this role in USINDOPACOM."[45]

The INDOPACOM region needs a JESC and control structure that will dissolve the current service sustainment stovepipes by creating a sustainment structure that is capable of rapidly deploying personnel, equipment, materials, and all classes of sustainment to the point of need jointly and collectively with its allies and partner nations.

Prepositioning of Material Configured in Unit Sets

The prepositioning of material and equipment is a deterrent, a force multiplier, and a necessity within the INDOPACOM theater. Army prepositioning strategy and Prepositioning of Material Configured in Unit Sets (POMCUS) was established in the early 1960s and has evolved from defending Western Europe from a Soviet invasion to a global power projection platform strategy. The Pacific Theater has prepositioned stocks that are less mature than European Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS).

The underlying concept of the preposition stock program is to match airlifted deploying unit personnel and prepositioned equipment in the theater of operations. Strategically positioned equipment configured for combat and ready for employment increases velocity and expedites

draw times to provide commanders with maneuver options. Pre-positioned equipment should be configured for combat to the maximum extent possible to minimize draw times and enable rapid build-up of combat power by the supported command. For example, prepositioned equipment stocks routinely utilized in major exercises might be maintained at a higher state of readiness to reduce equipment preparation and assembly times at the tactical assembly area (TAA).[46]

The pre-position of equipment allows a rapid buildup of forces to demonstrate U.S. resolve, reduce the risk of open conflict, and counter hostile actions before the arrival of sealift and expansion forces.[47] Planning considerations must include verifying prepositioned equipment configured for combat to reduce the speed of assembly and draw times, accelerate the RSOI process, and mitigate operational risk. Prepositioned equipment enhances force projection capability by reducing the time to deploy any sized force because service members will link with equipment configured for combat already in the theater or close to the area of operations (A.O.). Forward-positioned stocks also reduce the initial required strategic lift to support CONUS-based power projections. They will sustain service members until sea lines of communication are established and the industrial base achieves surge capacity.[48]

The military must work with allies in the Pacific Theater to develop new prepositioned locations and hold annual exercises to test capabilities, assess prepositioned equipment, and improve allied coordination.[49] Australia and Guam are perfect areas for prepositioned stocks of equipment and ammunition for the joint force managed by Army Sustainment Command and operationalized by the JESC.

Key Insights:

1. The military has underfunded POMCUS/APS, except for

the Carter-Reagan buildup, which affected its readiness and capabilities.

2. The modernization of prepositioned stocks remains an ongoing task that requires significant balancing between training, readiness, and modernization of both units and stocks to ensure that deployed units are issued with equipment and weapons they are trained to use.

3. The lag between issuing a unit with new equipment and prepositioning the same new equipment in prepositioned unit sets hinders rapid deployment and creates vulnerabilities.

4. The prepositioned stocks program provides ready training sets for deploying forces.

5. Prepositioned stocks are an integral part of expeditionary force projection capabilities.

6. As the joint force prepares for potential large-scale combat operations (LSGCO), the rapid deployment of heavy forces during the early stages of conflict may help avert potential disaster(s).

7. The military needs to expand its prepositioned sites in the Pacific to ensure it meets the theater's needs and should hold regular exercises to test military capabilities and stocks.[50]

While prepositioned stocks have existed in Korea and Japan for many years, the Pacific Theater lacks the diversification of prepositioned sites currently in Europe to deter Russia. Furthermore, the prepositioned sites in SWA are also more mature and act as an exceptional deterrence to hostile nations such as Iran. Establishing prepositioned locations within INDOPACOM will require close work with U.S. allies and partners. To build the robust and dedicated prepositioned sites necessary for the Pacific, the military must work closely with allies and establish agreements for new sites that can act as a deterrent and compete with Chinese power and influence.

Additionally, the JESC in the Pacific Theater will require a different joint force structure and equipment set compared to European APS sites. The INDOPACOM JESC will require sets and equipment that will meet the theater's needs, particularly building much smaller sets in numerous locations tailored to the size and characteristics of the Pacific's geography. The 8th TSC and Army Sustainment Command will work together to employ the APS, remembering what history has shown: prepositioned sets are often shifted quickly for use in crises in other parts of the theater. The Army and JESC must be prepared for tailoring on-the-fly in those cases.

The Army and the JESC must expand prepositioned stocks in the Pacific and ensure they meet the theater's needs. To do this, the JESC must hold frequent joint, multinational exercises to test capabilities and stocks. As INDOPACOM increasingly focuses on great power competition, the joint force requires an updated and expanded preposition stocks system in the Pacific that is capable and as mature as the European theater stocks. When the 8th TSC and Army Sustainment Command build new preposition stocks, it will require interoperability and working closely with our regional allies. As mentioned, the nature of warfare in INDOPACOM differs from that of Europe and Southwest Asia and will require unique tailored joint packets rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. The development of new preposition stock sites in the Pacific, coupled with annual exercises, will demonstrate the United States' commitment to our regional allies and will continue to deter Chinese power and influence. The JESC construction and expansion of preposition stocks in the Pacific is an evolving strategic necessity.

The JESC and APS equipment must be modernized to match unit home station equipment to reduce training requirements upon deployment. The JESC APS Strategy will provide combatant commanders and the 8th TSC with responsive capabilities to execute lesser

contingencies and theater security cooperation activities while reducing lift requirements in the early phases of military operations.

The current INDOPACOM logistics structure must become more responsive logistically as far forward as possible. A shared degree of standardization between the services will improve flexibility and responsiveness. A similar standardization must also be shared with our allies and partners to act coherently, effectively, and efficiently to achieve our operational and strategic objectives. The JESC must continuously build enduring allied partnerships and relationships as low as the company level within all services utilizing current exercises and facilities. Similar to NATO exercises in Europe, the JESC in INDOPACOM should train collectively with a capstone exercise that is multinational and multi-echelon. Building interoperability with our partners and allies will ensure that the U.S. and its partners are logistically prepared to sustain combat operations.

Chapter 5

Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements and Interoperability

Initially, the JESC must train and identify logistical shortfalls and then provide sufficient information to mediate strategic-level negotiations between the authorities of the State Department, the combatant commands, and, ultimately, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Multinational agreements like acquisition and cross-servicing agreements (ACSA), which formally fell under statutes such as the NATO Mutual Support Act of 1979, must be implemented in the Pacific. An ACSA is an agreement that authorizes the Secretary of Defense to acquire logistical support of supplies and services for U.S. Armed Forces deployed forward. An ACSA identified and developed by the JESC will be a bilateral negotiated agreement between the U.S. and an ally or coalition partner within INDOPACOM in exchange for support. This support could include Class I (food), Class III (fuel), Class V (ammunition), Class VII (equipment), and some form of transportation via surface or air. This agreement will provide mutual logistical support to decrease logistical burdens, improve efficiencies, and exercise flexibility for critical everyday logistical needs, increasing interoperability between partners and allies. The JESC will identify and understand the resources each partner nation brings to the fight and the resources the U.S. is legally allowed to provide. Not all countries will have the ability to offer the same resources. The JESC will understand the region's proper requirements and capabilities within the multinational Joint Operations Area (JOA) through training, agreements, and stipulations.

The military response to an urgent crisis or conflict will involve coming to the aid of an ally or partner. 8th TSC and the JESC must establish a clear and specific purpose or plan for military interoperability efforts within the context of bilateral and multilateral mutual sustainment engagements. For example, engagements involving integrating U.S. military

equipment will also ensure that U.S. forces are familiar with partner systems and platforms. These engagements can increase the chances that partner forces might plug into joint or combined combat operations to provide niche capabilities or serve as critical logistical nodes when needed. A coherent theater interoperability plan can offer a critical supporting context for achieving results from such engagements: Tying all these activities into such a plan can boost the value of each and is an essential aspect of a more coordinated and effective process to enhance interoperability relationships.[51]

Interoperability will be a crucial function for the JESC while operating in foreign countries, potentially in a contested area. Interoperability is a much deeper concept than having interoperable logistical platforms among multinational partners. Interoperability will be the ability of the US, our partner, and allied forces to train, exercise, and operate effectively to execute our assigned logistical task. For example, the Reception, Staging, Onward movement, and Integration (RSOI) of people, supplies, and equipment in the INDOPACOM JESC assigned region. Interoperability with partner nations will reduce redundancies or duplication of efforts. It will allow the pooling of much-needed resources and produce the synergy needed for a victorious outcome in any situation.

Furthermore, the 8th TSC and JESC must invest in sustainment-related relationships with partner nations in the Indo-Pacific region. A leaner sustainment concept will enable a faster, more decisive response when needed. One obvious way to mitigate that risk is to rely on local resources. Engagements with partner nations during day-to-day competition should include some degree of focus on cultivating these relationships so they may be available during crisis or conflict.

Elements of the JESC must be positioned in Australia, which is a highly supportive ally with the U.S. Australia's perceptions of increasing threats from China and cognizance of the importance of the United States to Australia's defense suggests that Australia would welcome American intervention in a conflict to which it was a party. Given Australia's expansive view of its security interests in the broader Indo-Pacific region and emphasis on the importance of allies and partners, Australia is open to cooperating with the United States in regional contingencies in which it is not directly involved. It will also likely cooperate with the United States to shape the strategic environment, engaging in multilateral military cooperation to influence regional states.[52]

Currently, Australia allows the US DOD to rotationally deploy several ground and air forces to bases within the country, including a rotational U.S. Marine Air Ground Task Force known as Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (at Royal Australian Air Force Base Darwin and Robertson Barracks) and rotational deployments of U.S. Air Force bombers and fighters under the Enhanced Air Cooperation (EAC) initiative. Additionally, as part of the Australia-United Kingdom-U.S. (AUKUS) pact, U.S. and U.K. nuclear-powered submarines will begin rotational deployments to Australia's HMAS Stirling naval base in 2027 (U.S. submarines will also reportedly increase the frequency of visits to this base starting in 2023). The Department of Defense's growing presence in Australia is widely seen as a response to worsening relations between U.S.-aligned countries and the PRC.[53]

The JESC will be responsible for capturing and funneling logistics status (LOGSTAT) reports to the 8th TSC, who in return will satisfy the request and work with the Joint Enterprise (JEnt) to keep the forces sustained at the JESC. The JESC will emphasize getting to know the different requirements for each item of the services' combat equipment, including our

multinational partner's equipment. The JESC team will be required to develop and refine a standard daily LOGSTAT report, and it must remember to incorporate the requirements for all classes of supplies for all the services and multinational partners it supports in its JOA. Capturing and knowing its supported unit's combat power is essential in sustaining the fighting force. Joint and multinational synchronization meetings will be required at the JESC level to ensure the communication gaps are flattened early on and throughout exercises, crises, and conflicts. A liaison officer from the JESC will be assigned to the 8th TSC staff with clearly defined sets of tasks and purposes to facilitate clear communications among all entities.

The JESC will need to get comfortable conducting Joint Sustainment Rehearsals, allowing the leaders and their service members to practice key aspects of operations in a multinational, joint environment. The rehearsal will promote mission command while allowing for synchronization and coordination with the supported and adjacent units. More importantly, this is an opportunity to see if there is any duplication in efforts, friction points, or risks and simultaneously develop ways to mitigate any of the mentioned points. A shared understanding of the operation will allow JESC to synchronize and sustain collectively with the joint force it commands and the multinational partners it has associated with logistically. The JESC sustainment rehearsals will confirm that the subordinate logistical units understand when, where, and how sustainment will occur during all phases of the operations over space and time.

Chapter 6

Counter Argument

An Army Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) already exists in theater and has the capability to provide mission command for attached units in an area of responsibility. An ESC may serve as the basis for an expeditionary, joint sustainment command when directed by the combatant commander or his designated coalition / joint task force (JTF) commander.[54] When the ESC serves as an expeditionary, joint sustainment command, the headquarters should be augmented by personnel and equipment from the other services, alleviating the need for a JESC in INDOPACOM.

Furthermore, the Army is responsible for many wartime executive agent responsibilities. The Army has inherent responsibilities to support other services because it has historically been the significant logistics provider of a theater commander. The Army's Theater Support Command is designed to provide standard support to the other services. Doctrine states that utilizing the TSC to provide standard support will eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort in joint logistical operations. Army doctrinal manuals embrace the concept of common support and give a joint force commander tremendous capability.

Additionally, there are no standing operational joint logistics forces. A Joint Support Command can only be established upon the directive of a unified commander. This would usually be done to meet temporary requirements. Establishing a permanent Joint Support Command at the operational level would probably contradict the intent of Title 10 and challenge the authority of the services. The J4 of the PACOM joint staff is the only standing entity to coordinate joint logistics issues with the TSC.[55]

Conversely, the risk of establishing a Joint Expeditionary Support Command on short notice is that it will not be trained, organized, equipped, and manned to perform its assigned mission. Even if a Joint Expeditionary Support Command is established, its primary purpose would be to provide standard joint logistics support. Unique service requirements would still be provided through service channels. The concept of a Joint Expeditionary Support Command also suffers from other drawbacks. First, the Army already has theater support commands to meet Army logistical requirements and standard support requirements for the other services. Finally, force structure in today's environment is generally a zero-sum game. The creation of joint logistics forces will most likely come at the expense of the other services. In a quest to establish more centralized and efficient logistical forces, the overall effectiveness of logistical support to the services may suffer and end up a total waste of resources.[56]

The Army also modified its organizational structure by developing the TSC to meet common support requirements for the other services. A Joint Expeditionary Support Command would provide the same support as a TSC, only further forward and forecast much sooner than the TSC. In today's cost-conscious environment, creating a joint organization to perform a mission that one of the services is already organized to serve seems unnecessary. Finally, a Joint Expeditionary Support Command would most likely reduce the logistical forces of each service while also infringing upon the statutory responsibilities of each service to raise, train, equip, and support its troops.[57]

Today, joint doctrine also allows combatant commanders to form a Joint Logistics Command that should be able to support joint operations. The services currently do not have staffed, equipped, or trained organizations to become a Joint Logistics Command. More importantly, a Joint Logistics Command is unnecessary. The same benefits of utilizing a Joint

Logistics Command can be obtained by designating a lead service for common logistics support. Although the choice of lead service is based on the predominance of forces and the actual situation, the Army TSC is the most capable organization to provide common logistics support for most circumstances. Joint doctrine should continue to clarify the tasks and responsibilities of each service regarding joint logistics.[58]

Conclusion

In conclusion, INDOPACOM must develop a command organization that is flexible and agile and jointly solves logistical demands. In order for the command to respond efficiently to the logistical needs of a joint expeditionary force, the 8th Theater Sustainment Command should command, control, develop, and implement a Joint Expeditionary Support Command (JESC) within the Indo-Pacific theater so that it can solve logistical demands jointly in a highly demanding environment.

The logistical challenge in the future operational environment will be anticipating and meeting all joint logistic requirements before they become operational shortfalls, which will require rearranging traditional service logistics capabilities, developing new capabilities, taking advantage of existing Host Nation or multinational capabilities, and contracting specific capabilities. [59] During any conflict, the military must function as a joint team capable of conducting multinational joint logistics. Stovepipe support systems in the individual services will not support focused logistics. An operationally joint and combined logistics force structure must be developed for the future.[60]

Based on lessons learned and current and future operating environments, a single operational logistics command and control organization that is joint and multinational is required. This organization would report directly to the TSC commander. A truly joint logistics command operating efficiently in a combined environment is critical to wartime or crisis success. The U.S. military can no longer afford a fragmented and compartmentalized logistics support structure that duplicates efforts and generates waste. The JESC will be able to see requirements and respond with appropriate capabilities and will also provide a versatile and flexible command and control structure that can provide tailored tactical support forces the capacity to execute any

mission with superior results. Forward positioning the JESC will shorten the extended distances within the Pacific. Also, working jointly and building multinational relationships will ultimately help manage scarce resources and generate efficiencies in support of operational and tactical requirements at the point of need every time.

From the study of this subject, it is evident that there are many advantages to a JESC. These advantages are as follows:

1. Reduces duplication and wasteful competition between services.
2. Comradery, cooperation, and teamwork among service members are more effective.
3. A headquarters that can build interoperability and multilateral relationships and collectively train before a war.
4. Specialized service members from each service are familiar with technical and tactical nomenclatures and procedures and are centrally located to solve problems jointly.
5. Joint command can ensure all logistical requirements are forecasted and requested through the joint enterprise.
6. Coordination between the tactical fight and logistics is more efficient.
7. Input required for theater-level planning is flattened.
8. Joint stock at depot locations reduces facilities, transportation, and stock levels.

The JESC will support all services in the South China Sea, Southeast Asia, and Indonesia by coordinating common-user land transportation and logistics. These are the critical functions of traditional Army support that will now be a joint endeavor only to improve the speed of support and operational reach to the other services. The JESC will prevent redundancy, as it always has

historically, and help the services achieve the desired level of interdependence to succeed collectively.

Additionally, this structure will allow the 8th TSC to reach back to logistical partners from the joint logistics enterprise, including the Defense Logistics Agency and the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, who will ultimately provide reach-back to the national strategic bases to assist with readiness and responsiveness for INDOPACOM. Navigating this complex, logistical web in a dynamically dangerous environment will require relationships between the services, cooperative planning, and the rapid flow of information from the command organization and direction of a JESC! In the final analysis, a JESC is a force multiplier necessary to sustain the joint fighting force that will help meet the current and future challenges of the modern and continuously evolving battlefield.

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