

Logistics Lessons from Somalia

March 25th marked the end of U.S. military involvement in Somalia. A mission that began in December 1992 saw thousands of American servicemen and women take part in a massive humanitarian effort, characterized as an operation other than war although 44 Americans died in carrying out that mission. Participation by members of all U.S. uniformed services, and troops of 13 other nations under the auspices of the United Nations, made Operation Restore Hope a truly "joint" operation.

The efforts of the men and women who served as members of the Joint Task Force were widely reported in the commercial press. An element missing from most newspaper and television reports were the logistics resources required and the number of logistics soldiers employed to sustain the 16-month-long operation.

Providing sustainment support was not an easy task nor did it always go according to plan. Army logisticians learned important lessons from having participated in Operation Restore Hope. Three logistics soldiers share with you lessons they learned as participants in that humanitarian mission. —*Editor*

Supply Accountability in an Operation Other Than War

by Captain Michele Ritchie Roberts

Wartime policies for supply accountability, as outlined in AR 710-2, Supply Policy Below the Wholesale Level, leave large gaps between peacetime accountability procedures and wartime policies. Between the ends of this spectrum lies a need for supply policy modifications that can be effectively applied during operations other than war.

Operation Restore Hope, a peacemaking operation with the United Nations, was an operation other than war as defined in FM 100-5, Operations. United States forces in Somalia were operating in environments of both peace and conflict. Because of the fluidity of the environment and the unit and individual rotations, the peacetime accountability procedures outlined in Supply Update 14 do not adequately ad-

dress some of the challenges encountered by supply personnel and commanders on the ground.

As a result of unit rotations, property in the Somali theater was comprised of equipment brought by units, equipment left in the theater by previous units, and equipment requisitioned and received by units while in Somalia. The property was on property books at home stations and on the theater property book but not necessarily authorized by modification tables of organization and equipment (MTOE), joint tables of allowances, tables of distribution and allowances, or common tables of allowances 50-900 or 50-909. Units in Somalia had equipment that was inherited or brought with them to accomplish their mission. Not only was the equipment ad hoc but, in many instances, so was the unit—soldiers arrived in country as individual augmentees to form a unit without a unit identification code (UIC) or an MTOE.

What is excess and what is authorized? A theater list of preapproved Department of Defense activity address codes and derivative UIC's would allow the

—an Operation Other Than War

theater property book officer (PBO) to legitimize ad hoc units and allow units to assume a local hand receipt. However, no authorization document exists for units to requisition nonexpendable, MTOE items.

Replenishment of battle losses in an operation other than war is problematic for two reasons—operating tempo (OPTEMPO) and authorization. The OPTEMPO during periods of conflict necessitates the use of combat-loss reports. But because the theater is under peacetime accountability procedures, units are directed to generate reports of survey to drop battle losses from property records.

For example, on 25 September 1993, the Somalis shot down a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. The loss of the end item and its components required a report of survey for the theater PBO. The loss of survival radios, night-vision devices, survival vests, and weapons required reports of survey for the division PBO's at Fort Drum, New York, and Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The central issue facility PBO's at both posts required surveys for the organizational clothing and individual equipment items lost. Special issues out of contingency stocks required separate surveys at both posts. Peacetime supply procedures required a total of *seven* reports of survey for that one incident.

Why not a single, efficient combat-loss report? Once an item is dropped from property records, unlike automatic requisitions from combat-loss reports, units must submit requisitions for class VII end items through the theater property book office nonexpendable document register. However, because there is no authorization publication for block "P" on DA Form 2765-1, the requisition is summarily denied at the supply support activity or the national inventory control point if the requisition is received telephonically.

Why not have a local theater blanket authorization for nonexpendable force-protection and critical-mission items? As FM 100-5 states, units must be capable of "rapid transition from a peaceful to a combat posture, should the need arise." In Somalia, the change from peace to conflict was a daily occurrence.

Units cannot transition from peacetime to wartime procedures in the supply arena as quickly as the environment shifts; therefore, procedures for an operation like United Nations peacekeeping must be instituted

to strike a moderate balance between peacetime and wartime procedures in the Supply Update.

Events in Somalia illuminated an urgent need for the logistics community to address and develop modified supply procedures for operations other than war. When there is a need to engage in hostilities short of war and when there is a lull in the hostilities and peace has "broken out," supply accountability procedures must be standard, easy to apply, and protective of the Government's interests.

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Not Built for Combat

by Captain Alexander C. Wetzel

Imagine, if you will, deploying to a combat zone outfitted with the best equipment—the very latest technology available. You are supplied with all manner of state-of-the-art gear, from M16A2 rifles to secure radios, from fourth-generation night-vision goggles to hand-held global positioners that can verify your location to the nearest meter. Imagine all of this, but also imagine driving around in that combat zone in nothing more advanced than an old Chevrolet pickup truck. This is not as far-fetched as it sounds, because many of the Army's combat service support (CSS) units did just that in Somalia.

The commercial utility cargo vehicle (CUCV), the M1009, is based on the 1983 Chevrolet Blazer and 3/4-ton pickup truck. It is still a mainstay in many CSS units. It was never intended to be a truly tactical vehicle or a substitute for one, for its design makes it fundamentally unsuited to operation in a combat envi-

ronment. The CUCV was intended to *augment* the fleet. High-mobility, multipurpose, wheeled vehicles (HMMWV's) and other combat vehicles were designed to operate forward, and CUCV's were to be relegated to the good road networks and the passable terrain of division and corps rear areas.

This, however, is frequently not the case. With an ever-increasing emphasis on "support forward," CSS units equipped with CUCV's are finding themselves operating alongside combat units, in hostile environments, under extremely harsh conditions. In Somalia, units equipped with CUCV-series vehicles developed some novel ways to overcome their shortcomings.

Although equipped with four-wheel drive, CUCV's really are not suited to rough or undeveloped terrain. The tires are designed to run mainly on highways and, as such, perform poorly in deep sand or mud. The four-wheel drive system itself is an antiquated, add-on feature not built into the design of the vehicle. It can only be engaged when the vehicle is stopped, requiring either the driver or a passenger to leave the vehicle and engage the front locking hubs. Depending on the enemy situation, this can be a very risky proposition.

Because the CUCV is basically a civilian vehicle, it has other design limitations that make it unsuitable for use in combat. The doors, for example, make entering and exiting the vehicle difficult when wearing combat gear. In the M1009, occupants in the rear of the vehicle have to enter and exit through the driver's or passenger's door. In an ambush, those soldiers would most likely be trapped in the vehicle with no way to escape. Also, the small, civilian-style windows make it nearly impossible for occupants to use their weapons effectively should they come under fire.

Only the pickup version of the CUCV can be adapted for mounting crew-served weapons, and this requires the use of the M4 pintle-mount with pedestal. While effective, this solution provides no protection for the gunner. The M1009 was further modified by removing the fiberglass top that covered the rear of the vehicle. This enabled troops to more easily mount and dismount, and created more satisfactory firing positions for troops riding in the rear.

It is difficult to sufficiently harden the CUCV against mines. Vehicles in Somalia were fitted with a double layer of sandbags in the bed and floorboards. This degraded the handling and cargo capacity and limited the vehicles to carrying only troops or very small amounts of supplies. If a vehicle were packed too heavily with sandbags, the front wheels had a tendency to "float" at speeds over 20 miles an hour, making it very difficult for the driver to control the vehicle; and the sandbags quickly overloaded it to the

point where the rear suspension remained compressed by over 50 percent.

One innovative idea employed to save weight was replacing one layer of sandbags with 3/4-inch-thick aluminum airfield matting. This, of course, could be done only in the vehicle's cargo area and was not a 100 percent solution.

Wire mesh cages initially were mounted over the windshields and side windows to protect against rocks and other thrown objects, but they proved impractical due to very limited fields of fire for the occupants and the difficulty many drivers had just trying to see through them. Also there is no way to secure or tie down the windshield, short of removing it, to keep glass fragments to a minimum or to allow soldiers to more effectively use their weapons.

The aging CUCV fleet also experienced many maintenance problems in Somalia. By December 1993, many of the vehicles were deemed uneconomically repairable by the direct support maintenance facility. Two common problems were numerous drive train failures and rusting out of the body, especially around and under the batteries, rocker panels, and fender wells. The rough, rutted roads common to Somalia also caused suspension and steering problems. Ball joints wore out at two to three times the normal rate, and spring bushings quickly became unserviceable because of transporting excess weight (sandbags alone often exceeded the CUCV's weight capacities).

Significantly, very few fuel-related problems became evident, even though the theater of operations used JP-5 instead of DF-2 as the primary ground fuel. To counter some of the problems, my unit implemented an accelerated service schedule that took care of the basics. The bottom line: keep the filters clean and keep everything lubricated.

CUCV's are one of the few remaining vehicles in today's versatile, highly mobile Army that cannot be sling-loaded. However, the Army is now in the process of replacing CUCV-series vehicles with HMMWV's, which are truly tactical vehicles by any standard. Until the changeover to HMMWV's is complete, many units will have to make do with ad hoc modifications and innovative ideas.

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Challenge in Field Feeding

by Captain Stephen Bolton

From August to December 1993, the 13th Corps Support Battalion deployed to Somalia, supporting United Nations forces. The Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment ensured that class I (subsistence) support was provided to the battalion, and that support presented several unique challenges.

During the deployment, the headcount at the two dining-facility sites ranged from a high of 700 to a low of 350. Eight cooks initially supported 600 soldiers at each site during the transition rotation in August, when elements of outgoing and incoming units were present simultaneously. Once outgoing units redeployed, headcounts settled at about 350 at each site.

In October, the headcount went back up to 700 because combat and combat support units were deployed to form the Joint Task Force (JTF) to stop Mohammed Farah Aidid's forces. As these forces arrived, we received two additional cooks at each site. Ten cooks supported 700 soldiers at each site for a period of 6 weeks; a ratio of 1 cook per 70 soldiers.

In an attempt to relieve the cooks' work load, eight kitchen personnel (KP's) were tasked to support each dining facility site. The KP's were beneficial in two areas—cleaning and maintaining equipment and assisting the cooks in serving food. The equipment was maintained by strong emphasis on preventive maintenance checks and services and thorough sanitation practices. The KP's assistance was enough to offset the shortage of cooks.

The shortage of cooks occurred because the predeployment plan did not and could not plan for the deployment of the JTF. However, we should have deployed with an additional two or three cooks. This would have eased the work load overall and would have helped immeasurably during the JTF deployment phase.

The lesson learned for a unit deploying to an unstable theater of operations for 4 to 6 months is to take additional cooks. A unit should not depend on other units to augment its shortages.

Another challenge the dining facilities faced on a weekly basis was the use of all types of rations (A, B, T, and MRE [meals, ready to eat]). We served A rations at the dinner meal twice a week. We served B rations six times a week for breakfast and four times a week for dinner. T rations were served 1 day a week for both meals. MRE's were allocated at one per-soldier-per-day.

With all of the rations there was never a problem preparing the meals. The cooks were always resource-

ful and never faced critical shortages. Rather, a primary problem, at times, was storing excess. The theater class I distribution point was not able to accept excess, thus creating a problem for dining facilities. Dining facilities, according to AR 30-1, cannot dispose of rations nor can they give them away to local nationals without approval from the chain of command. Because we could not dispose of rations, unless they were spoiled or damaged, an abundance of excess rations was generated. This does not seem to be cost effective. In an effort to make the system cost efficient, AR 30-21 instructs that 10 days of menus be posted, so dining facility managers can request items for those menus based on excess supplies on hand. This reduces the storage requirements and some of the waste.

The T ration did not create storage or waste problems. T rations were used for two meals 1 day a week. Additionally, they were used to augment some B-ration meals and when there were shortages of A and B rations. This is the best way to use T rations during long deployments. T rations do not offer a wide variety of menus, so their use should be minimized.

The primary rations used should be A and B rations. A and B rations do create storage problems, but they are the best to use during long deployments. Two key considerations for serving A and B rations are flexibility for the cooks and morale of the soldiers.

First, cooks should have the flexibility to prepare the rations in a variety of methods, according to regulations. This helps cooks improve their skills and prevents them from getting bored with the same routine. The flexibility given to the cooks improves their morale as well as that of the soldiers whom they are feeding. Second, most soldiers said the quality of the food was much better than they expected. Because of the morale factor, every effort should be made to provide the highest quality food for soldiers during lengthy deployments.

Food service soldiers constantly face challenges of preparing various types of rations and serving population increases during long deployments. Given flexibility and adequate resources, food service soldiers can prepare quality meals in garrison or in the field, using all types of rations.

ALOG

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