

The Sustainment Mission Command Capability

The Forces Command's sustainment mission command capability enables commanders to provide equipped and sustained forces in order to remain globally responsive and regionally engaged.

■ By Maj. Gen. Jack O'Connor and Maj. Sean D. Smith

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, in his Mission Command White Paper, dated April 3, 2012, says, "Mission command must be institutionalized and operationalized into all aspects of the joint force—our doctrine, our education, our training and our manpower and personnel process." In this statement, Gen. Dempsey describes a culture shift for mission command, and Forces Command (FORSCOM) is fully embracing the shift across all of its warfighting functions.

The sustainment mission command capability (SMCC) concept is FORSCOM's response to Gen. Dempsey's order. It creates a cohesive synergy among modular forces and targets global combatant commander needs. SMCC allows sustainment operations from home station not only to meet validated requirements but also to improve readiness and enhance mission command.

Modularity

A 2011 RAND study describes how, in 2003, the Army adapted its formations in response to existing conflict and emerging challenges, resulting in a significant shift in structure and how the Army wages war. Perhaps the most influential change involved transitioning from a division-centric force into a brigade-centric force—a concept that has become known as modu-

larity. Under this concept, key components and capabilities that once resided within divisions were made organic to brigade combat teams.

Modularity reduced the types of combat brigades from 17 to three (infantry, Stryker, and armor). The move provided the Army with a greater number of smaller, very capable force packages, making it easier to sustain the protracted operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Combat support and combat service support units and force structure were also redesigned to make the entire force more modular. (See figure 1.)

Opinions on modularity vary; however, few would say that it does not promote agility and responsiveness. Unfortunately, every change is met with a give and take approach, and the same characteristics of modularity that promote agility and responsiveness can also cause sustainment gaps.

Modularity, combined with a combatant commander demand for smaller modular enablers, created the unintended consequence of shifting habitual relationships. It also created leadership, mentorship, and training oversight gaps across the sustainment community. The end of operations in Iraq and the upcoming Afghanistan finale are setting the stage for yet another era of evolutionary sustainment change.

Emerging Operational Environment

Shifting from an operational envi-

ronment of unconstrained resources to a more deliberate demand-based environment necessitates an organizational shift to accomplishing what matters with less and accentuates a need for trust and unity of effort.

Another troublesome dynamic of modularity involves supported-to-supporting command relationships. Shifting from supply point to distribution-based operations extended the commander's operational reach and lines of communications. Through modularity, brigade combat teams gained a robust sustainment posture over assets previously at echelons above brigade. Distribution and water assets previously residing in the main support battalion or corps support battalion were placed forward in the brigade support battalion and forward support companies.

As the Army refines, adjusts, and adapts its formations to optimize readiness, we must examine our integrated sustainment strategy to maximize all aspects of logistics capability and capacity. A unity of effort in a time of diminishing resources is imperative to resolving gaps.

FORSCOM's 2013 Expenditure Reduction Guidance for Fiscal Uncertainty, coupled with the Chief of Staff of the Army's (CSA's) intent to deliver strategic land power in an uncertain world, compels commanders to spend wisely and develop training plans that align resources

with known readiness requirements. However, FORSCOM's desired end state remains the same: provide trained and ready forces in support of combatant commanders and the defense strategy.

Property Accountability

The 2012 Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Campaign on Property Accountability (COPA) illustrated that the demands of war, modernization, and modularization added \$200 billion worth of equipment to the Army inventory through rapid equipment fielding, rapid fielding initiative, theater-provided equipment, and left-behind equipment.

COPA addresses some of the "symptoms" of several overwhelm-

ing readiness challenges. Below are a few recommendations that COPA provides to cure those symptoms:

- Invigorate a culture of stewardship.
- Correct property records.
- Provide Soldiers with the right skills and tools.
- Standardize and streamline policy.
- Standardize processes for acquiring property and establishing property records.

Mission Command Integration

The key to sustainment unity of effort and trust in this emerging operational environment is successful mission command integration. The goal of every successful team or major organization is to strike the

right balance between centralized control and decentralized execution. Under a single logistics mission command, resource management is optimized through the efficient and effective application of leadership and authority.

Leaders in both Iraq and Afghanistan struggled with this at first, but they achieved effective resource management once expeditionary sustainment commands (ESCs) arrived to integrate distribution, sustainment formations, and global supply chains. This is easy to do when you have regional responsibility. However, FORSCOM continental United States (CONUS) command relationships do not lend themselves to the mission command

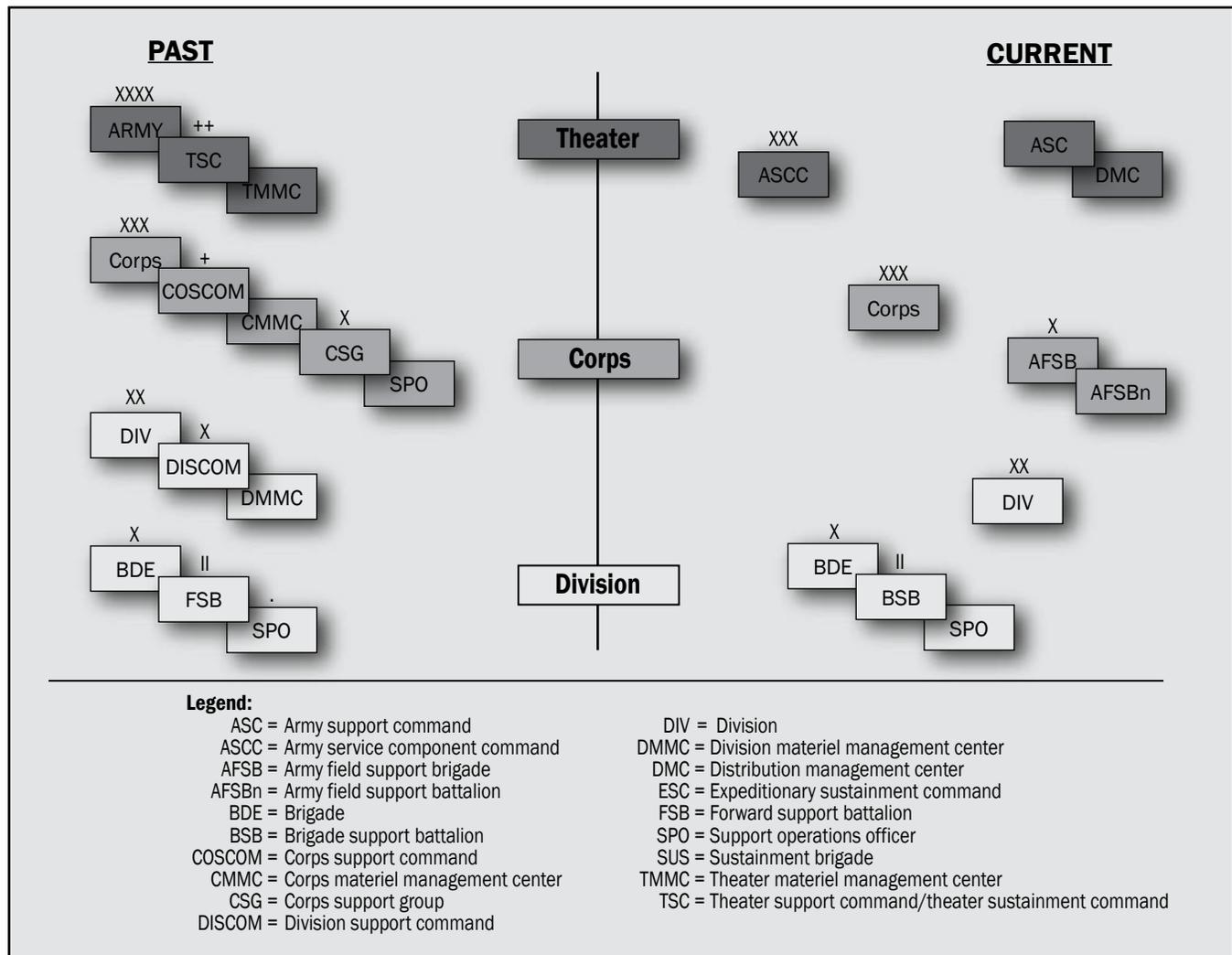


Figure 1. Changes to the Army's sustainment force structure caused by the shift to modularity.

framework found in a deployed geographic combatant commander's region.

LSOC and SOC

In 2010, FORSCOM released an updated execute order (EXORD) about leveraging sustainment organizations in CONUS (LSOC). This EXORD initiated a concept that stemmed from the two CONUS-based ESCs. The LSOC concept was approved on Sep. 8, 2010.

LSOC grants the ESCs coordinating authority on and off their respective installations. Through LSOC, the senior logistician provides perspective from lessons learned both on the battlefield and at home station. It was later determined that sustainment information could be better employed on an installation. That determination resulted in the creation of the sustainment operations center (SOC)

- Provide centralized materiel management.
- Leverage multiechelon sustainment capabilities.
- Replicate operational sustainment during garrison employment.

SMCC

Because numerous boards, bureaus, centers, cells, and working groups collaborate or synchronize support to provide a holistic sustainment response, it is essential for the senior commander to have a unified sustainment view. FORSCOM enhanced the senior commanders' ability to mitigate sustainment gaps by leveraging existing installation logistics support plans and building continuity of sustainment operations.

The future transition to Army 2020, regionally-aligned force requirements, the fielding of Global Combat Support System-Army,

- Create shared understanding.
- Provide a clear commander's intent.
- Exercise disciplined initiative.
- Use mission orders.
- Accept prudent risk.

As outlined in the priorities of the CSA and FORSCOM commanding general, the SMCC concept capitalizes on field observations, insights, and lessons learned pertaining to sustainment enabler integration, enhanced leader development, collective training, and readiness tracking through synergy and collaboration. SMCC also capitalizes on relationships as well as design and process efficiencies in order to ensure unity of effort, trust, and future logistics success.

One of the FORSCOM commanding general's priorities was to "improve communication—internal and external," and the SMCC achieves this goal through a consolidated sustainment network of capability. Communication within the installation sustainment community should be through the senior commander's designated sustainment focal point to synchronize sustainment operations. FORSCOM's focal point for execution is the sustainment brigade with oversight from the deputy commanding general (support) and the LSOC-aligned ESC.

As stated in ADP 6-0, collaboration is required to establish human connections, build trust, and create and maintain shared understanding and purpose. Shared understanding and purpose form the basis for unity of effort and trust.

The Army training vision states that commanders should balance current operational missions while simultaneously preparing forces to meet future requirements. FORSCOM captures this vision through the following objectives:

- Provide centralized materiel management.
- Enable and enhance senior commander training and readiness au-

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in April 2012.

While LSOC addresses the "art side" (sustainment coaching, teaching, and mentoring) of sustainment, the SOC addresses the "science side" (materiel management and asset or personnel cross-leveling). The SOC is an LSOC subcomponent and causes no growth to the Army and minimal infrastructure adjustments. FORSCOM's SOC objectives, in partnership with other commands (the Army Materiel Command, Installation Management Command, Training and Doctrine Command, and Defense Logistics Agency) are to:

- Enable and enhance senior commanders' training and readiness authorities.

the Afghanistan retrograde mission, and enabling Army readiness all require the constant and consolidated visibility of senior commander sustainment functions. More importantly, they require a fusion of field- and sustainment-level partners to maximize effectiveness.

In December 2012, FORSCOM released an EXORD that expanded the current SOC concept to the SMCC in order to align with Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0, Mission Command, in which the commander is the central figure.

In line with ADP 6-0, SMCC is guided by the following principles:

- Build cohesive teams through mutual trust.

thorities.

- Leverage multiechelon sustainment capabilities.
- Replicate operational sustainment during garrison employment.

FORSCOM's SMCC embodies the concepts and principles of Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, and ADP 6-0. In line with ADP 3-0, Unified Land Operations, SMCC is the commander's exercise of authority and direction using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders. Key SMCC principles include commander's intent, mission-type orders, and decentralized execution.

FORSCOM's SMCC is the senior commander's mechanism to execute his support mission. Not necessarily tied to an organization or structure, it holistically describes the ability to synchronize, coordinate, resource, and execute sustainment operations and training within the sustainment commander's span of influence. SMCC's enabling tools, assets, organizations, and personnel include the following:

- The deputy commanding general (support).
- Mission support element and mission support command logistics officers.
- The ESC.
- The sustainment brigade.
- Logisticians in brigades and support battalions.
- Support units (including medical, finance, human resources, and signal).
- Garrison support.
- Strategic and operational enablers (the Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. Transportation Command, Army Materiel Command, Training and Doctrine Command, Network Enterprise Technology Command, Intelligence and Security Command, and Installation Management Command).

Applying SMCC

Under SMCC, FORSCOM ESCs

will provide area support. The ESCs will provide sustainment reach back capabilities to FORSCOM senior commanders and provide senior sustainment mentorship, training, and materiel management. The ESCs will also play a pivotal role in supporting senior commander regionally aligned forces requirements, and FORSCOM is reestablishing ESC CONUS relationships and roles.

Another SMCC key output is unity of effort through sustainment fusion. It ensures sustainment requirements are nested with operations, and it is essential to command and staff integration. Sustainment fusion ensures continuous requirement assessment at every level of command.

Aligned with ADP 6-0, the principles of SMCC assist commanders and staff in balancing the art of command with the science of control. SMCC is enabled by a system of personnel, networks, information systems, processes and procedures, facilities, and equipment. The desired end state involves determining the most effective means for getting the supported commander what he needs, when he needs it, and where he needs it.

FORSCOM logisticians are aggressively working through SMCCs, generating greater efficiencies and effective outcomes in the Army's supply chain. By building a network of networks that is mutually supporting, FORSCOM installation SMCCs are meeting the Army's 2017 auditability goal and contract reduction by replacing contracts with troop labor.

FORSCOM's SMCC assists commanders at all levels in establishing and overseeing resource control measures such as the management review file, commanders' exception report, and monthly materiel review sessions (logistics readiness reviews).

Working with near real-time data offers logisticians a significant advantage. The CSA's marching orders direct us to "train as we fight—make it realistic and challenging," and FORSCOM's SMCC allows the sustainment formations to use daily

synchronization as a training opportunity.

As stated in FORSCOM's 2013 Optimizing Readiness EXORD, we must adapt by improving efficiency and effectiveness. As budgets constrict, leaders will be presented with difficult choices. But they also will have an unprecedented opportunity to eliminate inefficiencies, improve processes, and focus formations more sharply on their missions. The challenge is not cutting spending but optimizing readiness to ensure a highly capable force.

FORSCOM's mission is to provide trained, ready forces to meet combatant commander requirements. FORSCOM's SMCC leverages multiechelon field sustainment functions, enabling FORSCOM senior commanders to provide equipped and sustained forces in order to remain globally responsive and regionally engaged. Without question, SMCCs offer a logistics evolution, provide the sustainment backbone for the Army's regionally aligned forces, and facilitate uncompromised readiness for the decisive action force.

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