

## Preface

The fundamental purpose of the US Army is to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. It does this by deterring war and, if deterrence fails, by providing Army forces capable of achieving victory on and off the battlefield. To accomplish this mission, the Army must maintain trained and ready forces capable of rapid deployment. If deterrence fails, the Army must repel or defeat a military attack and end the conflict on terms favorable to US and allied interests. The ability to accomplish this is based upon sound planning—strategic, operational, and tactical—with support planning as a critical part of each.

This manual provides operational-level support doctrine for Army service component commanders (ASCC), Army forces commanders, and other senior leaders and their staffs employed in joint, combined, or interagency circumstances across the scope of military operations. The ASCC establishes a plan for support of United States corps or other Army operational elements based on priorities established by the combatant commander.

This manual implements relevant doctrine from joint publications, especially Joint Publication 4.0, and is fully compatible with the Army's operations doctrine as contained in FM 100-5, FM 100-7, and FM 100-8. It also links FM 100-10, FM 100-17, and other support doctrinal manuals.

The proponent of this manual is HQ TRADOC. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 directly to Commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, ATTN: ATDO-A, Fort Monroe, VA 23651-5000.

Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns or pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.
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## Introduction

The mission of the United States Army is to deter war and, if deterrence fails, to fight and win. The Army, along with other services, civil agencies, and nations, must be able, when called upon, to defend and promote national and collective security interests throughout the world. The massing of combat power relies on the Army's ability to mobilize, deploy, sustain, reconstitute, and redeploy a crisis response force and reinforcing forces. It must also be able to project forces from CONUS or forward presence locations in response to requirements from the National Command Authorities (NCA). This combat power, in conjunction with joint and/or multinational forces, must have the strategic ability to mass a decisive force or render quick assistance to end a crisis swiftly. Forces will be provided to supported theater combatant commanders and subordinate joint task force (JTF) commanders who are responsible for planning and executing campaigns or operations within their theater and operational areas.

Logistics is the process of planning and executing the movement and sustainment of operating forces in the execution of military strategy and operations. It is the foundation of combat power—the bridge that connects the nation's industrial base to its operating forces. Logistics is basic to the ability of operating forces to initiate and sustain missions across the range of military operations. The threat to our nation will come from many different sources having a wide range of weapons, tactics, training, and political motivation. High degrees of weapon system lethality and mobility can generate devastating losses and require challenging solutions in the areas of doctrine, training, leader development, organization, materiel development, and soldiers.

In such circumstances, the role of logistics and support capabilities at the operational level—to develop and sustain combat power while exercising operational art—takes on even greater importance. Operational-level Army commanders must establish and/or coordinate support functions to allow tactical commanders to focus their attention on the battle rather than on support activities. Support organizations are tailored to support the ASCC's plan in either a mature or immature theater. The theater-of-war base and the theater-of-operations forward operating bases provide both strategic and operational support, respectively, to the tactical support bases.

Operational logistics and support activities support the force during subordinate campaigns and major operations within a theater of operations. Support of the force at the operational level extends from the theater of operations support bases to forward logistics elements and facilities organic to tactical formations. In performing support functions, the theater of operations forward operating bases within the communications zone (COMMZ) link strategic logistics to tactical logistics.

At the operational level, the familiar distinction between *operations* and *support* begins to erode. Planning support is synonymous with operations and becomes a significant undertaking of the ASCC and his staff. Operational support differs from tactical support by the longer planning and preparation time required to sustain extended operations. Support of the force includes balancing current consumption with the need to build up support for

subsequent major operations, lengthening lines of communication (LOC), and staging other combat support and combat service support forward as required to sustain the tempo of operations.

As the commander in chief (CINC) develops his strategic concept of operation, he concurrently develops a concept of support in coordination with his ASCC. CINCs and their staffs consider a myriad of support factors, including logistics priorities, that affect the ability of the operational forces to conduct operations. At the campaign and major operation planning levels, support can be a dominant factor in determining the nature and tempo of operations. Sound support planning and analysis allow for rapid changes to operation plans.

Operational-level leaders must determine the proper balance between centralized planning and decentralized execution of support functions and responsibilities. Too much centralization often results in rigidity and sluggish response, while too little often causes waste and inefficient use of critical resources. Centralizing functions to avoid unnecessary duplication is not always justified. Limited duplication may be beneficial and necessary for adequate flexibility and mobility. However, centralized management and planning prevent optimization of support functions and activities. Decentralized execution is important to carrying out effective planning. Smaller operating units tend to be more flexible and responsive than larger ones. The ASCC's staff helps leaders to focus by providing broad policy direction and coordinating functions both internally within the component and externally with joint, combined, interagency, nongovernment, private voluntary, United Nations, and host nation (HN) agencies.