



AUSA BACKGROUND BRIEF



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Army Issue: STRATEGIC MOBILITY, SUSTAINMENT AND ARMY MISSIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Army has developed a strategy to meet its mobility challenges for the 1990s and beyond. This strategy is compatible with the requirement to rapidly deploy Army forces from the continental United States (CONUS) to various crisis regions around the world.

The strategic mobility program helps to focus the acquisition strategy for strategic mobility systems. The Army's intent is to ensure that Army mobility requirements are in concert with sister services and that mobility assets can effectively and efficiently project Army combat power.

The Army continues to stress its mobility requirements because, more than the other services, Army requirements significantly shape mobility procurement initiatives. In order for the Army to meet its strategic requirements, procurements should include additional surge sealift vessels, prepositioning ships and sustainment shipping. Additional strategic airlift needs can be met by procurement of the C-17 Airlifter, which would provide the Army with flexible, responsive troop and cargo lift capabilities.

The Army must continue to meet the needs of a nation with global responsibilities. Therefore, the Army must be capable of rapid deployment to crisis areas.

REQUIREMENT

Strategic air and sea mobility assets must be readily available in sufficient quantities to enable the Army to rapidly deploy a contingency force to a theater of operations. Procurements of shipping and airlift assets recommended by the Army and a viable, ready strategic mobility infrastructure are necessary investments for future successful contingency force deployments.

BACKGROUND

To respond to an overseas crisis effectively, the Army plans to deploy up to a five-division corps. The contingency force would be tailored with appropriate forces to conform to operational requirements and be sustainable once it is inserted into a theater of operations.

The Army's plans visualize inserting a light infantry or airborne brigade (depending on the requirement) into a theater by C+4 (C-day is the day that deployment operations begin). By C+12, the remainder of the light infantry or airborne division would arrive in the theater. The principal means of deployment would be by air.

Next, two heavy divisions would be inserted into a theater no later than C+30. The mobility challenge is to rapidly deploy equipment by fast (or surge) sealift. The entire five-division contingency corps and its support command units would be fully deployed to a theater no later than C+75. The expanding combat support and combat service support units would deploy using the same standards as the combat forces.

The Army intends to place the equivalent of a heavy combat brigade in a prepositioned afloat package. The afloat prepositioning concept is designed to supply common supplies and equipment necessary to sustain other configurations of Army forces — tailored to meet the requirements of a particular contingency — until sea lines of communication are fully established.

Generating the Force

The Army is presently programmed to reduce from a 1991 level of 28 divisions to 18 divisions and two cadre divisions, of which 12 will be active, by 1995. (Some additional reductions may be forthcoming as a result of the ongoing Defense Department bottom-up review of service roles and missions.) This smaller force must still meet the needs of U.S. global interests and responsibilities.

There are four forward deployed active divisions now in place: two divisions in Germany, an infantry division in Korea and a light infantry division forward deployed in Hawaii. All of the forward deployed forces have a mobility mission.

The five-division contingency force is currently programmed to consist of a light infantry division, air assault division, airborne division and two heavy divisions, presumably an armored division and a mechanized infantry division. Each of the two heavy divisions in the contingency force will include a fourth (round-up) brigade from the reserves. The round-up brigades will not deploy in accordance with the same mobility time-lines as the active component of the contingency force.

The other three active divisions are round-out divisions, meaning one of their three brigades is from the reserve components. There are also six Army National Guard divisions, bringing the force to 18 divisions. The final two divisions in the force are cadre divisions. Plans call for them to be maintained at reduced levels of manpower and equipment so they could expand rapidly in the event of mobilization.

The Army Commitment

The mobility spectrum involves the movement of soldiers, equipment and material from depots, forts and installations, through the ports onto air- and sealift assets, then reception and forward movement in a theater of operations.

The Army learned from Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm that shortfalls exist in the availability of fast, strategic sealift early on in a crisis. However, the Army recognizes it takes a complete spectrum of mobility systems, working together, to rapidly deploy a military force.

The mobility spectrum, touching on everything related to transportation, is where the Army is committing a significant portion of resources in the coming fiscal years. In fact, by the end of Fiscal Year 1993, approximately \$261 million of the Army's budget will have been spent on improving Army capability to move contingency forces.

Army Deployment Requirements

The Army has indicated that it must have strategic sealift available that can move heavy armored forces 8,700 nautical miles, port to port, in no more than 15 days. The ability to move forces at this pace enables CONUS-based contingency forces to support more than one unified command.

The bottom-line requirement is to close heavy forces early, which means by C+30. Using a combination of airlift and sealift, three Army divisions (one airborne or light division by C+12 and two heavy divisions by C+30) would be inserted into a theater of operations.

Army Sealift Requirements

The need for militarily useful strategic sealift, which is available early in a crisis, has been identified as one of the key lessons learned from Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The Army categorizes sealift into three general categories: surge or early-on sealift, ships to preposition supplies afloat, and ships to move follow-on forces as well as sustain the force over time.

Surge sealift requirements are met by the vessels designed to rapidly deploy two heavy divisions by sea. The mobility requirements study mandated by Congress determined that 11 new large, medium speed roll-on/roll-off (LMSR) vessels should be built to meet the need for fast strategic shipping; additionally, the current fleet of eight fast sealift ships (FSSs) would be used. A total of 23 modern, militarily useful roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) vessels must be available to move combat support and combat service support forces. This will involve buying and converting vessels from the commercial market.

Vessel requirements for afloat prepositioning can be met by using a mixture of specialized vessels, including nine new LMSRs. The prepositioned LMSRs would be identical to those built for the surge, except they would have add-on humidity control features. After prepositioned supplies and

equipment have been unloaded, the speed capabilities of LMSRs make them useful to help deploy follow-on forces from CONUS.

The final category, follow-on sustainment shipping, must be capable of establishing a sea line of communications by C+30. This requirement can be met by a viable ready reserve force (RRF) and chartered commercial shipping vessels. The number of ships required to sustain the force will depend on the length of the conflict and the size of the force deployed.

Army Airlift Requirements

For the Army, the future of military airlift is with the C-17 Airlifter. To that end, the Army is firmly committed to continued acquisition of the C-17. The C-17 offers the flexibility and responsiveness capabilities needed to ensure continued, responsive strategic airlift for contingency forces.

Although the entire airlift fleet, to include the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF), plays a key strategic role, the C-17 offers an added dimension through its direct-delivery capabilities. Using the C-17, Army forces can routinely deploy into a theater at a location closer to the area where they will fight. Over 6,400 airfields worldwide are available to the C-17 that cannot be accessed by the current C-5 or C-141 aircraft.

Afloat Prepositioning Concept

Afloat prepositioning supplies will include the equivalent of a heavy brigade of combat equipment. However, the prepositioned items are useful to a force of any mix. This includes supplies for initial sustainment and equipment to help establish the theater of operations.

The general concept involves the establishment of an intermediate support base structure on which to build. Items that serve a function common to any force mix, such as aerial and seaport operations services and echelon-above-division support equipment, will be included in the afloat prepositioning stocks. The prepositioning afloat ships can also be used to reduce the CONUS-to-theater mobility requirements for heavy, bulky items, such as airfield landing mats.

The afloat prepositioning vessels will have consumable supplies to support the force structure through C+30. When coupled with the seven days of supplies carried by the deploying units and the planned establishment of sea lines of communication by C+30, these common consumable items will assure the initial basic logistic sustainment of the early-on force.

Afloat prepositioning provides flexibility to support multiple theaters of operation. By preserving the flexibility associated with common items and common support functions, afloat prepositioning assures support regardless of the force deployment sequence.

Strategic Mobility Infrastructure

Infrastructure refers to facilities, highways, rail lines, warehousing, marshalling areas, port improvements, containers, railcars, etc. The Army is committed to the infrastructure improvements necessary to deploy forces and material from forts, camps, depots and installations. No one component of the strategic infrastructure program can be neglected to accommodate another. The entire spectrum of mobility must be addressed — if the railcars are not available to move the equipment from the fort, then idle fast sealift ships become a wasted asset.

The Army expects the Navy's surge sealift vessels and portions of the RRF to be positioned near the Army forces which will use them. Additionally, vessels must be kept in a high state of readiness to ensure that Army forces begin deployments at their appointed time. Army funding includes training initiatives to exercise the mobility infrastructure and Army forces.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Army recognizes that power projection is the environment of the future. The Army is prepared to deploy up to a five-division corps contingency force, along with a corps headquarters and necessary support elements, to a theater of operations in 75 days. Smaller elements can be deployed in much shorter periods of time. The force will utilize afloat prepositioning equipment and material — equivalent to an additional heavy combat brigade — for support until sea lines of communication are fully established.

Strategic mobility assets must be capable of closing three of the divisions into the theater of operations in under 30 days. To meet this deployment timetable, the Army requires strategic sealift support that can project forces 8,700 nautical miles in 15 days (port to port).

The mobility requirements study mandated by Congress determined that 11 new LMSR vessels should be built to meet surge, early-on sealift needs. Nine additional LMSR vessels with add-on humidity control features are also needed to help meet afloat prepositioning needs. Finally, follow-on sustainment shipping must to be supported by a viable, ready RRF and chartered shipping.

The continued commitment to improving strategic infrastructure encompasses transportation networks, warehousing, increased reliance on containerization, and ships berthed at the right place and at appropriate levels of readiness.

Programs which provide the shipping necessary for the Army to meet its strategic mobility needs and a viable strategic mobility infrastructure should be supported to ensure the success of future contingency operations.

(This **Background Brief** was prepared by the staff of the AUSA Institute of Land Warfare.)

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