

Army 2020: Top Four Logistics Priorities

By **LTG Raymond V. Mason**
Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4

With the Afghanistan drawdown under way and the combat mission in Iraq over, I gathered the G-4 leadership team earlier this year and asked, “How can logisticians—and the DA G-4 specifically—help the Army prepare for the challenges of an uncertain strategic and operational environment while at the same time leverage the opportunities of the coming decade?” Army logisticians, along with our superb joint partners, performed magnificently over these past 11 years of sustained combat, helping create the best-fed, best-

equipped, best-maintained Army we have ever had since 1775. We cannot rest on our laurels, however. We must focus our efforts on helping shape an Army for 2020; this is especially critical in an era of diminishing resources.



During this session, we reviewed Chief of Staff of the Army GEN Raymond T. Odierno's vision of an Army that has three vital capabilities: prevent warfare, shape conditions and, most important, win. As we looked into this uncertain future, we viewed it through the lens of the President's new strategic guidance; the Secretary of the Army's priorities; the Army Campaign Plan; shrinking defense budgets and reduced force structures, which historically occur following wars; and cutting-edge technology that can truly revolutionize logistics to help create a more agile and versatile Army.

We developed four top logistics priorities. They will help guide the Army-wide Log Nation this year and in the years to come.

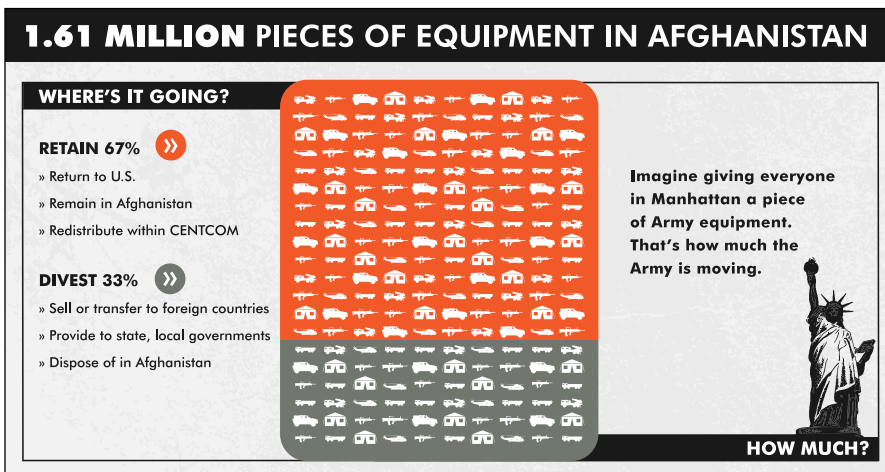
First, although the drawdown in Operation Enduring Freedom has started, we are still fully engaged in Afghanistan, so our primary focus remains sustaining our soldiers in the fight while continuing to plan for the end of combat operations in 2014. The close-out of Operation New Dawn was hugely successful, thanks in large part to the superb planning and execution of the drawdown, and we want to ensure the same success in the Afghanistan drawdown/retrograde.

Second, we must continue to improve property accountability so that all records are complete, accurate and auditable, and assets are redistributed to where they are most needed. As I travel around the Army, I'm encouraged to see commanders and soldiers truly getting after property accountability.

Third, the Global Combat Support System, better known as GCSS-Army, which will revolutionize Army logistics, will be fielded this year. It is a technology 10 years in the making and has the potential to change Army logistics just as Facebook changed the way the world socializes.



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Fourth, we are going to field operational energy capabilities more rapidly, which will help reduce our logistics footprint in the theater, cut costs, save energy and, most important, put soldiers at less risk.

Now let's take a closer look at these four priorities.

Afghanistan: Responsible Drawdown And Retrograde

"Afghanistan is orders of magnitude more challenging for ... [withdrawal] than was Iraq."

—Ashton B. Carter, Deputy Secretary of Defense

We have more than 1.6 million pieces of equipment in Afghanistan, valued at \$29 billion. That is about half as much equipment as we had in Iraq when we started the drawdown there, but it is still a significant percentage of total Army resources. Imagine giving every person living in Manhattan a piece of equipment—an M-ATV, a cargo truck or a Humvee. That's how much equipment our soldiers will need to move out. In addition, we'll need to retrograde ammunition, shut down supply support activities, close bases and bring the troops home.

It would be convenient if we could just replicate the drawdown/retrograde process we so successfully executed in Iraq and apply it to Afghanistan, but Afghanistan has many unique challenges. The road network is limited; there are no viable railways and no seaports; there are many political constraints to the external routes out of Afghanistan; there is currently no staging base like we had in Kuwait; the Afghanistan forces do not have the ability or need to absorb as much equipment as the Iraq Army did; and our coalition partners must also draw down. Consequently, the Afghanistan drawdown will likely be five to 10 times more challenging than that in Iraq. With the incredible adaptability of the Army team, however (along with that of our outstanding U.S. Transportation Command partners), I am confident we are up to the task.

Of course, there are lessons we learned in Iraq that will help us meet these challenges. Among those is to make timely decisions on equipment disposition so that we can plan where everything should go and get it to the right

place economically. To maximize the effectiveness of the retrograde process, we will need two to three years after cessation of hostilities to reset and ready the equipment for whatever the next mission the nation asks of the Army. U.S. Army Materiel Command, as the Army's lead materiel integrator, is playing a central role in this effort, including total equipment visibility and rapid redistribution.

We plan to retain about 67 percent of the equipment, whether it is to return to the United States to fill Army shortages, redistribute into Army prepositioned stocks, provide to the State Department, or other uses. The remaining 33 percent will be divested, either through foreign military sales or transfers to our allies, provided to state or local governments, or disposed of with the help of our Defense Logistics Agency partners.

Through it all, we want to bring a decade of war to a successful end, to a state in which Afghans can take full responsibility for the security of their nation and in our shared goal of defeating al Qaeda and its extremist surrogates.

Property Accountability: Personal and Leader Responsibility

"Supply discipline and property accountability is everyone's responsibility."

—GEN Lloyd J. Austin III, Army Vice Chief of Staff

In 11 years of war, the Army has fielded an unprecedented amount of new, complex equipment and positioned it around the world with incredible speed. To do this, however, we have to sometimes cut corners, and basically it's as if we have been running a car rental company, whose units didn't necessarily own equipment but just "borrowed it." It was the right thing to do at the time, but it also created unintended consequences in the areas of responsibility and accountability.

Consequently, in 2010 the Chief of Staff of the Army directed the establishment of the Campaign on Army Property Accountability to reinvigorate supply discipline. The good news is that leaders and soldiers are actively pursuing the accountability mission. Units across the active, Reserve and National Guard components have used the campaign to recount, redistribute or turn in excess property. As a result, we've reallocated \$57 billion worth of equipment across the force in the last two years. There have been 6,000 property accountability training and mentoring events and 30,000 unit-level command supply discipline program inspections across the Army. The bottom line is that commanders and NCOs are serious about property accountability.

Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. This spring, MG Timothy McHale led a Vice Chief of Staff of the Army-directed Army property accountability review

and identified a number of friction points and gaps. As a result of this review, we have made process and policy changes and are using new leading indicator metrics to better measure property record accuracy.

All leaders, upon taking command of a battalion or brigade, must sign a statement acknowledging their responsibilities for the property under their charge. At the Headquarters, Department of the Army level, we are spotlighting different accountability areas and metrics every quarter, gathering reports from every unit in the Army to track progress, and reporting trends to the senior Army leadership. It is paramount that we do this right and be good stewards of our precious resources to ensure that we are both effective and efficient. The CSA-directed goal is to have all property brought to record, with all records complete and accurate, by December 2013, well ahead of Congress' requirement to be auditable by 2017.

Global Combat Support System-Army (GCSS-A)

"GCSS-Army gives leaders and operators transparency and a common operating picture at all levels of logistics."

—CW3 Gregory W. Besaw, Army Logistics University

As we've been fighting two wars, logistics information technology that can help shape Army 2020 has not stood still. GCSS-A has been under development, and beginning later this year it will be fielded to tactical and installation supply warehouses. This will produce a huge leap in the Army's ability to see ourselves and especially "lean out" our processes.

GCSS-A, the largest enterprise resource planning system in worldwide production, will replace 40,000 local databases with one common master logistics database. Embedded in it is a financial function, so for the first time logistics and financial actions will be linked. This is critical to achieving clean audits, as mandated by Congress.

We successfully tested it at the National Training Center and at Fort Bliss, Texas, and soldiers are already seeing the benefits. WO2 Romulo Santos, a battalion maintenance technician, said his "aha" moment was when he simply pushed a button and got his equipment status report, something he used to spend five hours researching parts to produce.



A soldier from 1st (IRONHORSE) Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, works through hand receipts during equipment draw operations at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in January.

Clerks, who used to perform just one task at a time, can now work on multiple screens to open and close dispatches and order parts, greatly increasing their productivity.

The first fieldings will begin this fall at Fort Lee, Va., with Army National Guard units in Virginia and Army Reserve units at Fort Bragg, N.C. Fieldings will expand each quarter; within five years more than 160,000 logisticians worldwide will be using GCSS-A daily. It will touch every company throughout the Army.

We have created a GCSS-A training program, and we are ramping up a help desk to assist users. The key to success is that all soldiers are GCSS-A-ready before the program shows up on their screens.

Like all technologies, there is a new look, all-new terminology and new feel to it, so productivity could initially dip before users are fully up to speed and see the huge benefits. So 180 days before GCSS-A is turned on, commanders need to aggressively clean up their data and ensure that every soldier conducts online training. With GCSS-A we will truly have a 21st-century combat log information and management tool.

Operational Energy

"As we deploy, we have to develop ways where we save energy and reduce the cost."

—GEN Raymond T. Odierno, Army Chief of Staff

In the last decade we have seen the Army's energy needs skyrocket. Today soldiers on a 72-hour mission in Afghanistan must carry 70 batteries of seven different types, weighing 16 pounds, to power up their night-vision goggles, optics, communication gear, flashlights and global positioning systems. Right now, to support one soldier on the battlefield requires 22 gallons of fuel per day; during World War II it was only one gallon per soldier.

This increased energy consumption is a burden on the unit as well as a huge funding and resource requirement, and most strikingly it is an opportunity for the enemy to interrupt our combat operations. Every time a convoy moves fuel, soldiers are ex-

Soldiers with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, conduct hands-on training with the Rucksack Enhanced Portable Power System in Afghanistan. The 10-pound battery-recharging kit runs on renewable energy using a solar panel.

FIELDING GCSS-ARMY

wave 1 capabilities

2013 - 2014

- Material Management
- Supply Support Activity Ops
- Financials

wave 2 capabilities

2015 - 2017

- Unit Supply
- Maintenance
- Property Book

posed to enemy fire and improvised explosive devices. The more fuel that is needed, the more storage is required, so our forward operating bases must be bigger, and therefore more security is needed. Second- and third-order effects of the huge demand for fuel on the battlefield create friction and risk; thus it is imperative that we reduce our operational energy needs as we execute effective combat operations.

This year, the DoD is investing more than \$1 billion in operational energy improvements. The challenge is to understand how we use energy to

get the most out of this precious resource. To do this, we are fielding more fuel-efficient generators, solar panels, water recycling and micro grids, and finding ways to give soldiers lighter and rechargeable batteries, so that they can lighten their combat loads.

As an institution, the Army must change, but so, too, must the culture. It's like changing one's diet: There are lots of ways to eat healthier, but it starts with the right mind-set. The individual's and the unit's will to incorporate energy changes into their lives and functions is essential to success. It's all about executing energy-informed operations.

Army 2020

Having met every challenge we've faced in the last decade, I'm certain logisticians will continue to lead positive change to ensure that we remain the best-fed, equipped and sustained Army in the world. By focusing on supporting the fight in Afghanistan while we execute a responsible draw-down, improving property accountability, fielding GCSS-A, and incorporating operational energy technologies, we will help build an even more agile and effective Army in this decade and into the decades to come.

Logisticians are Army Strong!

