



Strategically Responsive Logistics A Game-Changer

Going from legacy information systems to GCSS-Army [Global Combat Support System—Army] is similar to when the Army went from the Sherman to the Abrams tank. . . . GCSS-Army finally gives us our MIAI capability, making supply, maintenance and property accountability available to leaders in one system with one set of data.

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Introduction

While the U.S. Army is working to meet the challenges of today's security environment—such as Russian intervention, Middle East regional instability, humanitarian relief and disaster response, transnational criminal organizations and tension on the Korean peninsula—it is also transitioning to address threats of the future. Increasingly capable enemies will employ conventional and hybrid strategies to threaten U.S. vital interests; therefore, the Army continues to adapt and innovate to maintain overmatch. Force 2025 and Beyond—the Army's comprehensive innovation strategy—endeavors to make Army forces more lean, agile, expeditionary and lethal while reducing their sustainment footprint in austere environments. With this strategy, the Army is working to build a balanced, versatile mix of scalable forces that can rapidly deploy to any place on the globe and conduct sustained operations within the full range of military operations.

As the Army looks to the future and continues to downsize, it does so with a new Operating Concept.² This concept highlights unique foundational capabilities only the Army possesses—setting theaters, sustaining joint operations, winning on the ground and providing regional and global stability. These capabilities allow the Army to perform a wide array of tasks, including joint logistics. The era of predictable rotations into the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters of operations robustly supported by contractors is not reflective of tomorrow's requirements in the rapidly changing security environment. What is increasingly needed is the capability for Army formations to operate immediately upon arrival into theater. This means



that the execution of sustainment functions has to be rapid and accurate. Thus, the cornerstone of sustainment operations is the ability to make decisions based on accurate and reliable logistics data. Legacy Army logistics systems (Standard Army Management Information Systems, or STAMIS) lack the capability to rapidly integrate data from factory to foxhole—an imperative in the 21st century.

To support the expeditionary Army now and in the future, the Army is revolutionizing its logistics system through integration of legacy property, supply and maintenance functions into a single system. In the near future the Army will achieve a major milestone by completing the first of two waves of fielding. The system will operate in every Army Supply Support Activity, providing Soldiers with a better way to manage the global supply chain. Furthermore, it interfaces with tactical financial data, enabling near real-time visibility of costs. At endstate, all warehouses, supply rooms, motor pools and property-book offices throughout the Total Army—active Army, Army

¹ *Army Sustainment*, July–August 2015, p. 2, <http://www.alu.army.mil/alog/2015/julaug15/pdf/julaug2015.pdf>.

² U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, “The U.S. Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World, 2020–2040,” 31 October 2014, <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/tp525-3-1.pdf>.



National Guard and Army Reserve—will have the new system. GCSS-Army will enhance not only materiel readiness for the Army but also the readiness of the entire joint force.

Background

Legacy STAMIS systems evolved over time as the combat service support community introduced different systems to improve support to the force.³ Several systems managed six logistics functional areas: supply, maintenance, transportation, civil engineering, health services and other services (such as personnel administration, finance and food service). Although the systems varied in effectiveness, the greatest challenge to the logistics community was the lack of integration among the systems. Additionally, STAMIS existed at every level of command and type of unit, yet no single military occupational specialty combined cross-functional expertise on the various systems. The result was a disparate logistics enterprise that lacked integration and failed to capitalize on opportunities for efficiency.

During Operation Joint Guard in Bosnia–Herzegovina in 1996 and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, this inability to integrate among systems undermined logistics support to the force. In the summer of 2003, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Logistics and Materiel Readiness) and the Joint Staff J-4 sponsored an objective assessment of logistics in Iraq and determined that there was need for updated and more efficient capabilities.

Over the past several decades, the logistics community has invested in and tested technological advancements, culminating with the development of GCSS-Army. In today's Army, logistics automation and unity are an operational necessity. This new system has reengineered the independent STAMIS supply chain systems (supply, maintenance and property-book) into one fully integrated network that interfaces with tactical financial data. It provides warfighters

with a seamless flow of timely, accurate, accessible and secure information that gives combat forces a decisive edge.

Waves of Implementation

The Army is fielding the GCSS-Army program in two waves to mitigate disruption to ongoing operations and deployments. The first wave began in 2013, replacing the supply system in Army warehouses worldwide;⁴ the second wave began in January 2015, replacing older systems in property-book offices, unit supply rooms and motorpools throughout the Total Army. These two waves will complete the first increment of GCSS-Army.

Wave one is over 90 percent implemented, with its completion scheduled for December 2015. When it is fully fielded, it will serve more than 14,000 users at sites worldwide. It also accomplishes the integration of all warehouse activities and increases the ability to control and track the cost of sustainment for brigades and below. This first wave sets the conditions to replace systems that integrate property and maintenance activities from the tactical to the strategic level of sustainment occurring in wave two.

Wave two is currently only about 4 percent complete. The majority of its fielding will occur in 2016; it is scheduled to be completed in late 2017. It will focus on the integration of property and maintenance of legacy-system functionality. A key element to transitioning the sustainment enterprise from legacy systems to GCSS-Army is training Soldiers and leaders to leverage the system as an effective tool for planning and execution. When fielding is complete, more than 140,000 leaders and Soldiers will use this system to plan, execute and track sustainment functions.

The GCSS-Army training strategy occurs in six sequential phases that build individual and collective proficiency. The phases of training include: early education, web-based prerequisite training, lead user program, new equipment training, over-the-shoulder support and sustainment support. The goal of the training strategy is to build the skills required to transition from STAMIS to GCSS-Army without disrupting the daily sustainment requirements of the unit. The training begins before the unit fielding and continues until the unit has the ability to internally sustain the capability.

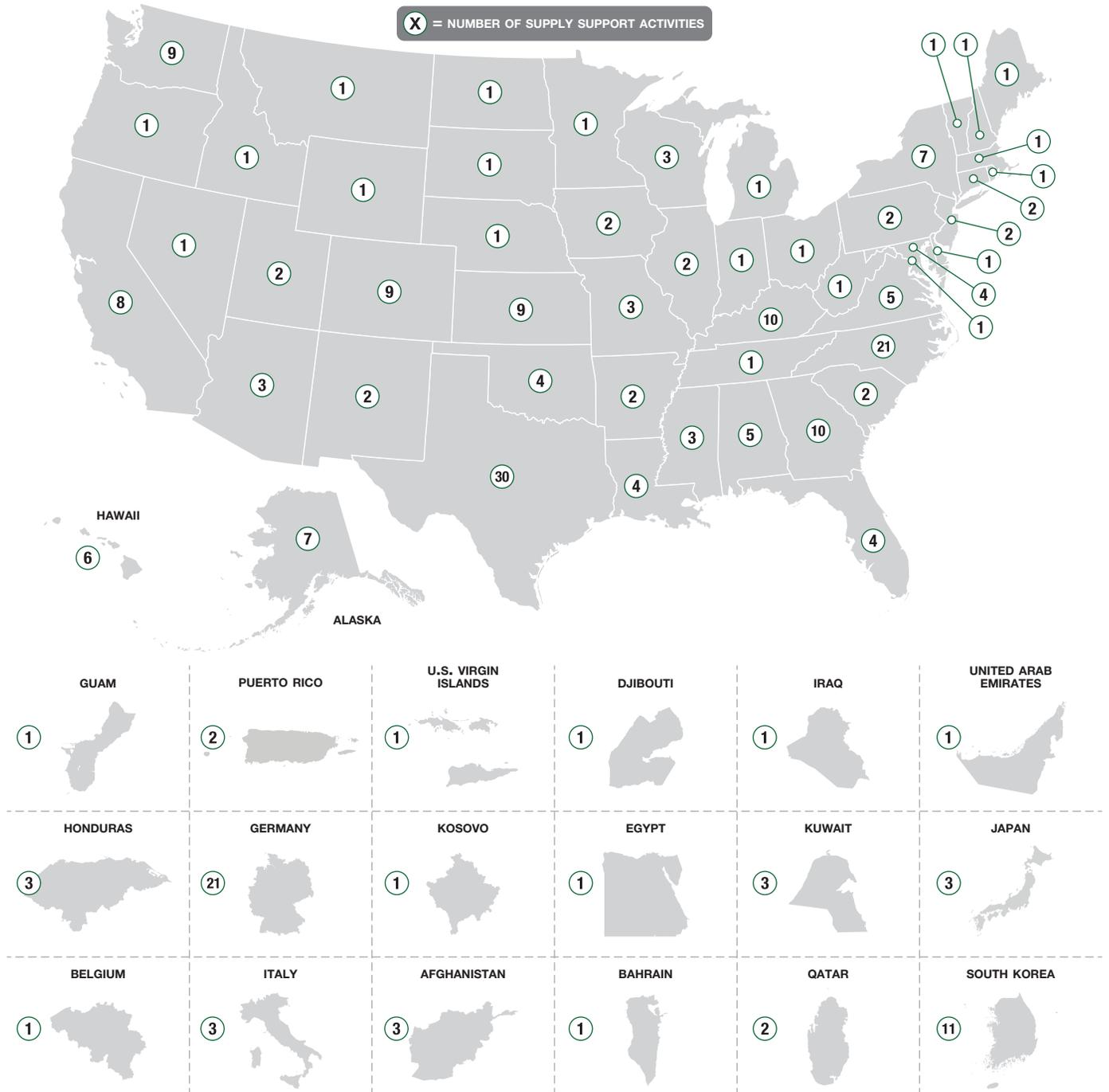
A Total Army Solution

GCSS-Army is being fielded throughout the Total Army and fully integrates the force into the Army of 2025 and beyond. It is based on a commercial software program and will eventually be the largest enterprise resource planning (ERP) system in the Department of Defense (DoD), replacing

³ Chief Warrant Officer (W-4) Jacqueline L. Wallace, "Improving Logistics Automation Support," *Army Logistician*, September–October 2005, vol. 37, issue 5, <http://www.almc.army.mil/alog/issues/SepOct05/logautosupprt.html>.

⁴ The systems replaced by GCSS-Army include the Standard Army Retail Supply System, the Property-Book Unit Supply–Enhanced (PBUSE) and the Standard Army Maintenance System Installation–Enhanced.

GCSS-Army Wave 1: 260+ Locations Worldwide



Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army, G-4

more than 40,000 local databases with one common master logistics database. ERPs exist in automotive, aerospace and retail industries to store and share information among users and facilitate near real-time collaboration. This system not only has all the benefits of commercial ERPs but also satisfies the unique needs of the Total Army and the unusual demands placed on the logistics system.

Total Army Analysis (TAA)⁵ resulted in a significant transfer of sustainment force structure from the active component to the reserve component (the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve). By the end of 2017, 78 percent of Army sustainment units will reside in the reserve component.⁶ GCSS-Army is a Total Army solution that facilitates full integration of logistics across the force.

⁵ The TAA is a phased force structure analysis process. It examines the projected Army force from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Army Regulation 71-11, "Force Development Total Army Analysis," 29 December 1995, p. 1.

⁶ Colonel Robert Hatcher, Jeffrey A. Martin and Lieutenant Colonel Karl F. Davie Burgdorf, "Sustainment for the Army of 2020," 5 May 2014, http://www.army.mil/article/125006/Sustainment_for_the_Army_of_2020.



In addition, it enhances readiness and the commander's decisionmaking throughout the Total Army.⁷ The integrated system provides commanders more visibility over sustainment during training, crisis response and contingency response. It allows them to make decisions on accurate and reliable near real-time logistics data. The system connects all users at all echelons to a single database. This increases transparency, which enables Army logistics commands to anticipate requirements, support the other services and track the support of operational requirements. Since it can be accessed from anywhere in the world, it supports a readily deployable Army and an Army on the move.

Once GCSS-Army is fully implemented, it will revolutionize how Army sustainment supports operational forces. It is a multiyear project scheduled to complete fielding in 2017. When fully fielded, it will assist the Army's transition to a more expeditionary force that is less reliant on forward operating bases (FOBs). Additionally, in a fiscally constrained environment, it will enable a more efficient and auditable use of resources.

Proposed legislation requires DoD to submit a report ranking all military departments and defense agencies prioritized by how advanced they are in achieving auditable financial statements as required by law.⁸ GCSS-Army enhances the financial transparency required by Congress as it is directly linked to the General Fund Enterprise Business System, the Army's financial ERP. The Army must ensure all activities that have financial impact (such as procurement and asset management) are integrated into a system that provides financial controls and traceability throughout the activity. This revolutionary system efficiently accomplishes the requirements established by Congress by institutionalizing a process to control and track financial data. This eliminates the need for units to submit documentation for audit readiness assessments.⁹

The Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, G-4 leads the implementation of GCSS-Army and ensures that units will transition with limited impact on operations. The success of this strategy was evident when one brigade combat team (BCT) from the 82d Airborne Division deployed their Supply Support Activity to the Joint Readiness Training Center less than



90 days after completing their transition. The brigade used the system throughout this training rotation and it allowed the Army to put stress on the system and capture lessons learned in a combat-like environment. Currently, units across the Total Force—including units in XVIII Airborne Corps, III Corps, United States Army Europe, the Vermont, North Carolina and New Hampshire Army National Guard and the United States Army Reserve Command—are using the system for daily operations and in training.

Conclusion

The Army's vision of the future focuses on a Total Force that is globally responsive and sets foundational capabilities to enable joint operations. GCSS-Army provides a technically innovative solution to a complex issue that has plagued the Army and the joint force for the past several decades. Force reductions combined with budget constraints require the Army to become increasingly expeditionary to respond to growing global demands and instability.

Expeditionary forces need to have the capability to operate with the benefit of responsive logistics but without relying on large FOBs or mature theaters. The integration of sustainment systems across the active Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve is essential to enable a globally responsive land force capable of executing the wide array of tasks assigned to the Army. Whether it is a BCT responding to a crisis, the Army Corps of Engineers dredging a port or DoD responding to a natural disaster, the GCSS-Army not only enables sustainment for Army forces, but also enhances readiness for the entire joint force.

⁷ Association of the United States Army, "The U.S. Army's Expeditionary Mission Command Capability: Winning in a Complex World," Torchbearer Issue Paper, September 2015, <http://www.ausa.org/publications/ilw/DigitalPublications/Documents/tbip-g6-expeditionary/index.html>.

⁸ National Defense Authorization Act 2016, Subtitle A—Financial Matters Section 1004, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/1735>.

⁹ In the interim, the Army is developing an interactive guide to assist units to meet existing audit requirements by providing a "What right looks like" guide as the Army transitions from PBUSE to GCSS-Army's Property-Book Module. The PBUSE version of the guide is available at the G-4's Logistics Innovation Agency website. An updated version will be available prior to the General Equipment audit testing of units operating under GCSS-Army.