

ASC Support for CTC Rotations

by COL Larry R. Dean and MAJ Jerad N. Hoffmann

As the executing arm of the U.S. Army Materiel Command's (AMC) equipping mission, the U.S. Army Sustainment Command (ASC) brings together all of AMC's capabilities to make sure Soldiers have what they need, when they need it, based on the Army's priorities. ASC's logistics support elements (LSE) serve to better connect combat formations with the materiel enterprise.

The LSE, supported by Life Cycle Management Command (LCMC) logistics assistance representatives (LARs) and field service representatives (FSRs), plays a crucial role ensuring high equipment readiness in brigade combat teams (BCTs) during their training at combat training centers (CTCs) by integrating and synchronizing key elements of the sustainment enterprise. The effective integration of LSE and LAR support to the brigade sustainment team significantly enhances the training effectiveness and operational readiness of these units. This support is essential throughout the entire training cycle, from pre-deployment preparations through CTC reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI) operations, and post FoF REGEN activities, as demonstrated by LSE Stewart's LAR/FSR integration during the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT), 3rd Infantry Division (3ID), National Training Center (NTC) rotation 23-05 at Fort Irwin, CA.

Army BCTs use CTCs to conduct realistic, intensive, and demanding training exercises in a simulated combat environment to validate and improve combat readiness and brigade proficiency in critical tasks such as maneuvering, fire support and logistics operations. As stated by Army Regulation 350-50, Combat Training Center Program, paragraph 1-5, "The Army's CTC Program remains the cornerstone of an integrated strategy that builds trained and proficient, combat-ready units and leaders to conduct operations as part of the joint force-ready to win in a complex world."¹

LSEs enable high equipment readiness for the CTC training brigades by providing essential advice, assistance, and training on assigned equipment. Paramount for success is LAR integration during the home station pre-deployment preparation phase that carries on to CTC RSOI operations and post-FoF REGEN activities. Additionally, the LSE is staffed with highly skilled Army logistic management specialists (LMS) who play a crucial role. These LMS professionals closely monitor and analyze supply trends, ensuring equipment readiness is continuously optimized. Moreover, they establish a vital communication channel with the AMC enterprise, enabling seamless collaboration to leverage the full potential of supply capabilities in maintaining top-notch equipment readiness levels.

Pre-deployment prep

The LCMC LARs provide significant value by seamlessly integrating home station Army Field Support Battalion (AFSBn) LAR support with unit training concepts of operation and support. This integration proves crucial during CTC preparation training and extends into rotational exercises, equipping operators and maintainers with essential readiness tools that greatly enhance CTC training effectiveness.



Figure 1. CECOM Logistics Information Technology (LOG-IT) LAR assists with trouble shooting an inoperable

modem with the units VSAT during the NTC Tactical Enterprise Logistics Systems (TELS) validation during the rotation's RSOI. (U.S. Army photo)

During Phase Zero, before every CTC rotation, BCT gunneries, mission command system rodeos, and brigade command post exercises are conducted to validate crews and to ensure equipment is operational before deployment loadouts. Home station AFSBn LARs can be valuable in supporting unit training by ensuring that equipment is maintained and operational, providing technical expertise as needed. During 2nd ABCT preparation training, AFSBn-Stewart LAR support was integrated early with their brigade and brigade support battalion partners. The U.S. Army Tank-Automotive & Armaments Command (TACOM) LARs conducted training on maintenance procedures and best practices that helped to ensure the Spartans were equipped with the skills they needed to keep their equipment at the highest levels of readiness.

One such example is how TACOM Ground Combat System LARs assisted the brigade engineer battalion with equipment troubleshooting procedures and maintenance training on their XM1150 Assault Breacher Vehicle (ABV) fleet. The LARs and unit personnel identified more than ten non-mission capable faults, ultimately leading to accurate parts requisitions and repairs. This focused training assisted the battalion to reach 100 percent operational readiness for their ABV fleet by the sixth day of REGEN. Another example was during division and brigade maintenance meeting, the 3ID enterprise identified low readiness rates for the 120mm mortar tube. AFSBn-Stewart partnered with the brigade sustainers to surge U.S. Tank-automotive and Armament Command (TACOM) assistance that ultimately brought back the battalion's mortar tube operational readiness percentage to nearly 100 percent.

By combining the expertise and resources of the LARs with unit training operations, personnel are empowered with the necessary skills to navigate and excel in realistic combat scenarios successfully. This collaborative approach ensures that operators and maintainers are fully prepared and equipped to meet the challenges they may encounter during CTC exercises, thereby maximizing training outcomes and operational readiness.

LSE support during CTC RSOI

The RSOI period for a typical CTC rotation is approximately five days. It is the last opportunity for units to leverage the LSE LCMC LARs before FoF starts. RSOI is the LSE's decisive point to enable readiness, often where units struggle to establish communications. Critical for LSE success was having a nonrestrictive moment in the training box allowing the units to coordinate directly with the LSE for LAR support. During rotation 23-05, Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM) LARs were far more employed than any other LCMC on the LSE team.

During rotation 23-05, the preponderance of CECOM LAR support was troubleshooting battalion and brigade's Joint Network Node Satellite Transportable Terminal (STT) system connections, which enabled upper tactical internet for in-theater communications allowing the brigade and battalions to exchange information. Also, the LARs provided technical assistance in helping the units isolate and resolve the issue that would inevitably impact 2nd ABCT's ability to communicate internally and with the division.

TACOM and U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM) LARs also leveraged the advantage of units consolidating equipment during RSOI to capitalize on maintenance training with equipment operators and mechanics. During 23-05, LARs conducted training on maintenance procedures and best practices, helping to ensure that units were correctly maintaining their modernized equipment and providing readiness assessments to the brigade leadership through the LSE team. 2nd ABCT successfully integrated TACOM and AMCOM LARs during their pre-combat checks/pre-combat inspections before occupying their tactical assembly areas to help isolate faults and order the correct parts, minimizing ground and air equipment downtime throughout FoF. LAR integration during RSOI proved valuable, assisting the brigade to stay within 82 percent operational readiness during FoF.

LSE support during CTC REGEN

During 2nd ABCT's 12-day REGEN schedule, Spartan Brigade's pacing fleet achieved a higher operational readiness rate (ORR) by REGEN + 6 than any other heavy training Brigade in the last two years. For tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and Paladins, 2nd ABCT's ORR ranged 20-25 percent higher than the average of the last eight rotations.

The LSE has a critical role in providing support during CTC REGEN operations, helping the supported brigade's maintenance trouble shooting, material resources, and technical guidance needed to rebuild combat power. LSE Stewart and assigned LCMC LARs and FSRs worked closely with brigade and battalion maintenance personnel to provide additional technical expertise and support, ensuring that all pacing equipment was fully operational and ready for redeployment. Also, remaining engaged with maintainers and understanding the maintenance priority ensured the LARs provided the proper assistance for equipment fault verification and accuracy for long lead part requisition across the enterprise.



Figure 2. CECOM Long Haul Transmission LAR assist with software updates on an STT. (U.S. Army photo)

Additionally, essential to LSE support is the close relationship with the 916th Support Brigade (SBDE) located on Fort Irwin to synchronize the national level and the local enterprise for materiel solutions and economy of support. The 916th SBDE ensured that the available parts were delivered from the depots, arsenal, and installation supply support activities (SSAs) to each unit maintainer through the Fort Irwin installation SSA.

As explained in Field Manual 4-0, **Sustainment Operations**, paragraph 2-52, ASC coordinates the delivery of critical classes of supply from the strategic level down to the tactical level.² ASC's forward capability, the LSE, works closely with the 916th SBDE on Fort Irwin to ensure that essential materiel reach tactical formations. The 916th SBDE not only plays a vital role in setting up the operational theater at NTC but also manages the division distribution and sustainment to keep our units ready. Through strong partnerships and coordinated efforts, the LSE and 916th SBDE ensure that parts are efficiently delivered from depots, arsenals, and installation SSAs to each unit's maintenance teams through phases of the CTC rotation.

Understanding and leveraging the capabilities of the LSE and the supporting LCMC LARs will vastly increase equipment readiness and material support before and during combat training rotations. The division supporting AFSBn/division logistics support element providing the LSE is the training brigade's operational link to the AMC enterprise, enabling division and brigade combat lethality anywhere – anytime.

COL Larry R. Dean is the commander, 406th Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB), Fort Liberty, NC. He establishes and executes resource strategies and delivers national level material solutions to increase readiness to XVIII Airborne Corps, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, and U.S. Army Forces Command's east coast organization. Under COL Dean's leadership, the 406th AFSB responsively projects power from east coast installations to the forward tactical edge to deliver globally dominant land force capabilities to Total Joint Force. COL Dean's previous assignments include commander, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); director, Subsistence Supply Chain, Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support; chief of sustainment, G-4, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); system synchronization officer for a CAT I program at the Headquarters, Department of the Army Focus Logistics Division (HQDA G8); and commander, Joint Security Support Detachment – Kuwait, Special Operations Command Central, U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM). He holds a bachelor's of science degree in manufacturing engineering from Grambling State University, a master's of science degree in national resource strategy from the Eisenhower School, National Defense University, and a master's of arts degree in leadership from Central Michigan University. COL Dean is certified in Advanced Program in Logistics and Technology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He also earned a certificate in data-driven leadership from Carnegie Mellon University. He is a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and Program Management Professional.

MAJ Jerad Nolan Hoffmann is the brigade large-scale mobilization planner, 188th Infantry Brigade (Combined Arms Training Brigade), Fort Stewart, GA. His previous assignments include battalion executive officer, Army Field Support Battalion – Fort Stewart (AFSBn-Stewart), under the 406th Army Field Support Brigade, Fort Stewart; battalion support operations officer (SPO), AFSBn-Stewart, under the 406th Army Field Support Brigade; brigade deputy SPO, 404th Army Field Support Brigade (404 AFSB), Joint Base Lewis-McChord; and forward support company observer/coach/trainer (O/C/T), Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC), Hohenfels, Germany. MAJ Hoffmann's military schools include Command and General Staff College; Theater Sustainment Planner Course; Support Operations Course; Joint Firepower Course; Operational Contracting Support Course; O/C/T Teir II Certification (JMRC); First Army O/C/T Academy; Air Assault School and Ordnance Basic Officer Leader Course. He has a bachelor's of science degree in sociology (with a minor in criminal justice) from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. MAJ Hoffmann's awards and badges include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Air Assault Badge.

Notes

¹ Army, U. S. Army Regulation (AR) 350-50, **Combat Training Center Program**, para 1-5; May 2, 2018.

<https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/AR.aspx>.

² Army, U. S. Field Manual (FM) 4-0, **Sustainment Operations**, para 2-52; July 31, 2019. [Army Publishing Directorate](#).

Acronym Quick-Scan

ABCT – armored brigade combat team

ABV – assault breacher vehicle
AFSB – Army Field Support Brigade
AFSBn – Army Field Support Battalion
AMC – U.S. Army Materiel Command
AMCOM – U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command
ASC – U.S. Army Sustainment Command
BCT – brigade combat team
CECOM – Communications-Electronics Command
CTC – combat training center
FoF – force-on-force
FSR – field service representative
LAR – logistics assistance representative
LCMC – Life Cycle Management Command
LMS – logistic management specialists
LSE – logistics support element
NTC – National Training Center
ORR – operational readiness rate
RSOI – reception, staging, onward movement, and integration
SBDE – support brigade
SPO – support operations officer
SSA – supply support activities
STT – Satellite Transportable Terminal
TACOM – U.S. Army Tank-Automotive & Armaments Command