CSS Matrix

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Field Marshal Erwin Rommel is often quoted as saying that "the battle is fought and decided by the quartermasters before *the shooting begins.*" The "quartermasters" of the fighting forces are the combat service support logisticians (S-4), the administrators (S-1), the maintenance officers (BMO), and the medical platoon leaders. Even if all the equipment, fuel, ammunition, personnel, and transportation assets are available, though, the fighting units must receive their proper allocations at the proper times and places on the battlefield, and sometimes that is not a simple matter.

Paragraph IV of operations orders, along with logistics annexes and service support overlays, are routinely tucked away near the end of the orders. Tacticians, interested primarily in Paragraph III, often only glance superficially at Paragraph IV. The existing logistical manuals are heavy on doctrine but short on technique for tactical units.

We have a tactical execution matrix to use as an easy-to-read, quick reference for the execution of instructions. (See INFANTRY, September-October 1985, pp. 34-36.) Why not a combat service support matrix that works the same way? The CSS matrix shown here is a technique for incorporating the combat service support concepts into a more practical and useful format. It is a one-page matrix that is designed to help company commanders and logisticians understand how their support is to be accomplished.

With it, a commander, executive officer, or CSS representative knows exactly when, where, and how much of each class of supply his unit will receive and also the source of the unit's medical and maintenance support. Thus, the service support and tactical matrices stand alone, saving the user the time it would take him to search through pages of operations orders to extract the information he needs.

To develop the service support matrix, the S-4, on the basis of his commander's guidance, first determines how he will support the planned operation. He considers all of the available assets, all information dealing with supply, recovery, and evacuation, and then develops Paragraph IV of the operations order, which includes the matrix itself.

SAMPLE

In preparing the matrix, he lists the task force elements across the top and the classes of supply, evacuation, recovery, and other support along the left margin. Inside the blocks, he notes all the pertinent details, including amounts of each class of supply, LOGPAC windows, and priorities.

The sample matrix shown here has been developed in this manner:

Class I. The S-4 has entered for each unit where the LOGPAC will be, when it will be there, and whom the unit will support or receive support from. Company A of the infantry battalion (A IN), for example, will support the scouts, while the Vulcan section will receive its Class I supplies with Company B of the infantry battalion (B IN).

Class III. He has noted which vehicle will come to each unit (TPU, HQ 54 to A IN); he has shown that the engineers will have a vehicle attached and at what point they must notify the S-4 to resupply them.

Class IV. In these blocks, the S-4 has written what type of barrier packages each unit will receive. These packages are designated as company-sized and then broken down into platoon-sized packages ("2 IN" and "1 AR" stand for two infantry platoons and one armor platoon).

Class V. The S-4 has shown in these blocks what type of package each unit will receive and how much and what type

	A/IN	B/IN	C/AR	D/AR	E/IN	4.2	SCT	VUL	ENG
CL I	LOGPAC WINDOW 1400-1700 LRP 2 SCTs	LOGPAC 1400-1700 LRP 4	LOGPAC 1400-1700 LRP 4 VUL	LOGPAC 1400-1700 LRP 2	LOGPAC 1400-1700 LRP 3	LOGPAC w/TOC	From TM A	From BP 23 TM C	LOGPAC 1400-1700 LRP 5
CL III	TPU HQ 54 SCTs	TPU HQ 55	TPU HQ 56	TPU HQ 57	TPU HQ 58	TPU HQ 59 w/TOC	Same as --	CL 1	TPU HQ 60 Attached Contact S-4 When 1/3 Left
CL IV	2 IN 1 AR Packages	2 IN 1 AR Packages	2 AR 1 IN Packages	2 AR 1 IN Packages	2 IN	1 IN	1 IN		2-8 Trucks (B-121 B-244) MK 123456
CL V	Standard Push Packages Plus Prestock		Requested Amounts Plus Prestock		Standard Push Packages 2½ BL for Prestock	Prestock 50 WP 25 ILL 100 HE	BL Reestablished	Prestock 11 BL	Reestablishes BL Plus Prestock from TM C
MED	ENG 23 SCT Add 1 AMB	Secondary Asset to Engineers Vulcan Sec	Assist GSR, ENG, VUL		MED AMB Area Coverage from CP 4	MED EVAC from CP 4	From TMs A, C, D	From TMs B, C	
MAINT	1-88 Area Coverage Dozers, Tanks, TOWs, Vulcans, C&C, M113s.					Self-recovery to CP 4	Any vehicle not self-recovered will be destroyed		

of ammunition will be cached. For example, the 4.2-inch mortar platoon will receive 50 rounds of WP, 25 of illumination, and 100 of HE. (The S-4 decides on the size and make-up of Class IV and V packages in accordance with his available assets.)

Medical evacuation. He designates units to assist independent elements such as the mortar platoon, scouts, or antiarmor company. He also designates whether a unit will receive additional support assets. The scouts, for example, will evacuate to A IN, while A IN assists the engineers and receives an additional ambulance; E IN will receive its evacuation vehicles from CP 4.

Maintenance. In this block, he shows how the battalion maintenance officer (BMO) will support the task force. For example, the 4.2-inch mortars will recover their vehicles to CP 4; an M88 recovery vehicle is reserved for area coverage. This block details maintenance priorities, which in this example are bulldozers, tanks, TOWs, and Vulcans, in descending order.

Separate units are an additional effort for the support planner. Air defense artillery, mortars, antiarmor elements, scouts, tactical operations centers, trains, and others do not have organic support; they are supported by the nearest element that does have organic support.

The combat service support matrix can be used for either offensive or defensive missions. In defensive missions, the matrix includes Classes I, III, IV, and V. Offensive missions will emphasize Classes I, III, V and recovery and evacuation of personnel, recovery of vehicles, and maintenance priorities.

Once a task force staff has been trained to the point of being able to formulate a solid, comprehensive logistical plan on the basis of METT-T, the next problem is seeing that the plan is executed properly.

Although the subordinate elements could get the necessary logistical information they need from Paragraph IV of the operations order and from the service support overlay, that effort would cost them valuable time and could lead to some confusion.

The service support matrix, which is a quick, simple compilation of logistical information, can save a user that time just as it will eliminate any possible cause of confusion.

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The Vital Link

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Division 86 is now being implemented throughout the Army. This is the most significant reorganization of the Army's ground combat power since 1962. Combat support elements once again have been moved into the headquarters company. A fourth line company has been given to the armor and mechanized infantry battalions, and an antiarmor company (Company E) has been added to the mechanized infantry battalions.

One of the most important things about this reorganization is the radical change it makes in the way battalions conduct their maintenance. Trends toward removing administrative burdens from the maneuver company commands were apparent in the mid-1970s — such as the consolidation of personnel administration at battalion level — but the idea of centralizing maintenance has always met with resistance. The old line mechanized infantrymen and tankers were always concerned about responsive logistics for mounted operations — Would they be able to keep their vehicles operational?

FEARS

The idea of eliminating organic maintenance at company level, at least in garrison, raised fears of a potential for failure in several areas: the need for operators to identify parts failures through their preventive maintenance; the responsive requisitioning of those parts; and a consolidated maintenance support activity's ability to be responsive in repairing vehicles in the large numbers found in the mechanized infantry and armor battalions.

The Israeli experience of recent years, however, argued strongly for a consolidated maintenance effort. The fluid battlefield and the numerous vehicle casualties spawned by modern mechanized warfare showed clearly the wisdom or timely and rapid recovery and repair well forward in the operational area using efficiently pooled resources.

In our own Army, garrison maintenance crews, when considered in the context of personnel realities in the 63-series MOSs, had always seemed to operate short of the number of skilled personnel required to keep a unit's vehicles operational. How better to provide high-quality maintenance in this situation than to consolidate the available resources? Reality,