

The methods of selection employed by Simoneit and his team eventually gave rise to the current reaction course. Simoneit hypothesized that a man's actual achievements did not indicate as much about his potential as the way in which he attempted to do things. For this reason he would arrange situations as nearly as possible to those of actual combat to see how a candidate behaved.

When World War II broke out, the British also were obliged to select large numbers of officers in a hurry. In doing so, they developed a system that combined the best features of the German selection system. These techniques were especially effective as employed by the British intelligence services, which designed individual and group tasks such as negotiating a water obstacle with 100 pounds of sensitive radio equipment, as well as other tasks to see which member of a group would emerge as the leader and whether the others would willingly follow him. After the war the British continued to use these same concepts as one way to determine the leadership potential of candidates for Sandhurst and the Royal Air Force Academy.

During the post-war era, the U.S. Army Ground Forces command created

a Leaders Course at each of its training centers to detect and train potential leaders. This six-week course was designed for OCS nominees and for young soldiers who had been recommended by their company commanders as being potential noncommissioned officers.

During the third week, the soldiers ran a Leaders Reaction Course. It consisted of 20 mock situations set up in difficult terrain. The soldiers were formed into five-man patrols. (Each soldier acted as the patrol leader for four of the situations and served as a member of the patrol in the other 16.) The soldiers were evaluated during the reaction course and were then critiqued on their overall performance at the end.

The value of the present LRC for the Army has been demonstrated for more than 30 years. It has helped trainers identify soldiers who were creative, soldiers who could lead, and soldiers who stifled mission accomplishment.

The Army will likely continue to expand its use of the LRC concept, because the course fosters the development of teamwork and promotes cohesion. It also provides immediate leadership feedback—the leader sees quite vividly how his own actions and those of his comrades

either help or hinder the accomplishment of the mission.

It also gives a leader practical experience in evaluating the abilities of other men. By observing the way his team members respond to his actions and orders, he can determine to what degree he is able to get results from others. Finally, the LRC provides an environment in which the validity of a soldier's leadership instruction can be checked.

The LRC is a leader development and assessment course. Its realistic battle-field-like tasks provide an ideal training environment for soldiers regardless of their backgrounds. It also provides an effective analysis of a soldier's leadership abilities, enabling him and his trainers to focus on those leadership skills that require more attention.



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# Rail-loading a Heavy Brigade

**CAPTAIN MICHAEL V. TRUETT**

Moving military equipment by rail is becoming an increasingly frequent task for many infantry leaders. Most Army units in the continental United States are subject to periodic rotations to the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California, just as many overseas units must deploy by rail for major training exercises. In addition, many units are required to rail-load for deployment to support National Guard or U.S. Army Reserve training, or to facilitate their own

off-post training requirements—cold weather training at another military installation, for example.

The planning process for rail-loading is complex and detailed. Rail-loading is done at all levels of command (platoon, company, battalion, brigade), but the higher the level the greater the complexity of the planning and execution. The diversity of a unit's equipment also complicates the operation. For these reasons, a discussion of rail-loading the armor,

mechanized infantry, field artillery, combat engineer, and support battalion elements that normally deploy as parts of a mechanized infantry brigade may be the most useful. And these same considerations can be applied to other levels as well.

When a brigade is notified of an upcoming deployment, the S-4 will usually assume staff responsibility for the rail-loading process. He will be responsible for analyzing the mission upon which the

deployment is based and for building a rail-load concept based on his estimate of the situation.

The division transportation office (DTO) and the installation transportation office (ITO) will pass requirements and provide information to the S-4 on an increasingly frequent basis as the brigade's actual deployment date nears.

One of the S-4's early requirements will be to compile a list of equipment to be rail-loaded, and the individual units must be tasked to provide this information early in the process. Changes will occur, of course, and should be allowed within reason, but this document at least will provide a starting point from which the S-4 can identify the number and type of rail cars needed to move that equipment. And since a large portion of the funds allocated to the deploying unit for the move is expended on rail cars, identifying requirements early can greatly assist the units in managing these funds. (For help with this aspect, see also "Rail Movement Spreadsheet," by Captain Charles B. Pelto, INFANTRY, July-August 1986, p. 17).

Another of the S-4's early considerations will be the preparation of a letter of instruction (LOI). Although instructions are usually published as part of the service support annex to the operations order (OPORD) for the exercise, in many cases the rail requirements are due before the OPORD is issued and therefore cannot be clearly defined until immediately before their execution.

Once the initial requirements are known, the S-4 should prepare and distribute a milestone list. (Updates can be published later to pass along current information as it becomes available.) The milestone list should give suspense dates and schedule necessary events. For instance, if the ITO projects that load plans will be available on a certain date, the S-4 should schedule a meeting the following week with all of his unit points of contact (POC) to disseminate this information. To enforce the milestone schedule, the S-4 should provide a copy of the LOI to the ITO and the DTO and should talk directly with the key people in his units to make sure they understand the concept of the move and the importance of staying on schedule.

Likewise, the milestone list should task subordinate units far enough in advance to help them in their planning. For this reason, the milestone sequence must begin at least 120 days before deployment. Additionally, weekly in-process-review (IPR) meetings must be scheduled by the highest staff involved. While the people who attend these meetings may vary as the brigade's deployment nears, the initial attendance of the key staff personnel will ensure a unity of effort. The DTO and the ITO must attend these IPRs as the actual movement day nears, because they can provide timely answers to the units' questions. Written minutes of these meetings must be taken and distributed to the units represented.

### MULTITUDE OF TASKS

In large moves, of course, much equipment is involved, and this means that a multitude of tasks—collective and individual—must be accomplished by the deploying unit. Some tasks, such as preparing vehicles for transport, are done by each unit. Others, such as drawing blocking and bracing material, can be performed one time for all the units involved. Tasks that can be consolidated at the highest level should be identified and delegated to one unit. Also, all taskings must include the requirement that the performing unit identify by name the responsible officer or NCO in charge (OIC/NCOIC) and specify a suspense date. Rail-load teams must also be identified. This process forces leaders to do detailed planning.

An initial meeting with the designated OICs/NCOICs should be included on the milestone list, and the S-4 must hold this meeting well in advance of the actual loading so that the units that fail to respond can be contacted. This meeting can also serve as an excellent way for the S-4 to establish face-to-face rapport with the unit points of contact. If this meeting is conducted early enough, the tone can be more informal, less directive, with more time for questions and for gathering information. A last-minute meeting will necessarily be stiff and directive, with fewer questions and an increased possibility of poor execution.

The designated rail-load teams then need to be trained. At the time their names appear on the list, many of the soldiers involved typically have no idea how to tie down equipment on rail cars. Because of the normal personnel turnover in CONUS units, even periodic training fails to meet unit needs.

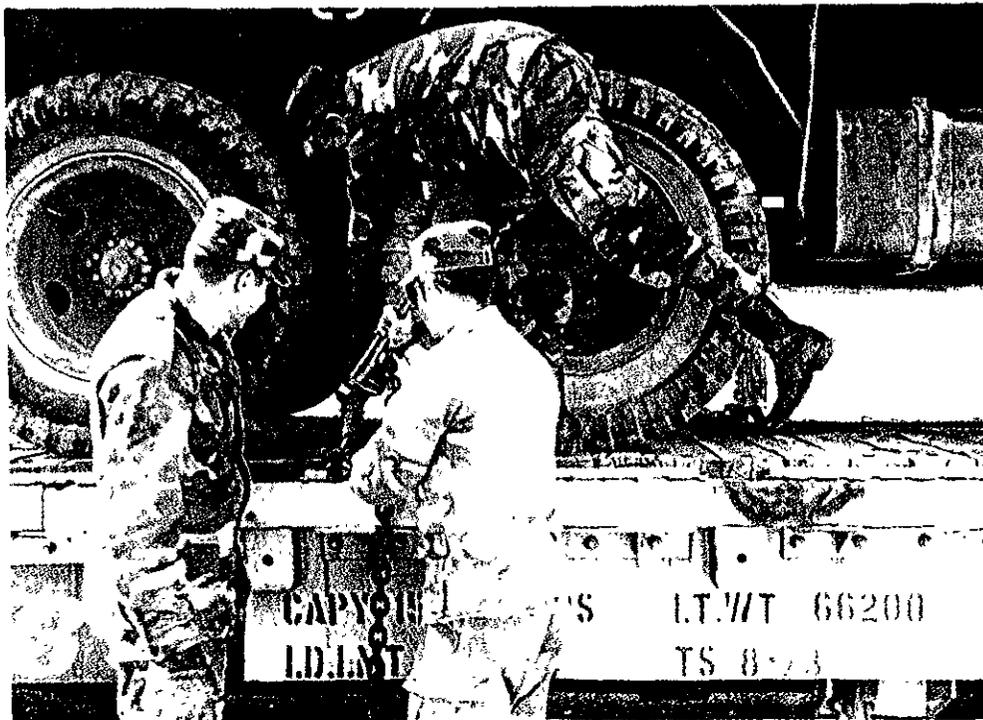
Rail-load training classes are normally conducted by the DTO, the ITO, or by unit personnel. In rail-load "testing" (or the actual deployment), civilian inspectors from the railroad being used approve or reject each piece of equipment. In my experience, it was never possible to have these inspectors conduct training at the unit level three months before deployment. In fact, since the requirement for rail cars is submitted for bidding to all local railroads, the actual carrier is usually not identified until a few weeks before the move. If it were possible to do, the contract should certainly require that the same inspector who conducted the training also qualify the load during actual deployment. I have seen units train to a specified standard only to discover, after an entire track of rail cars had been loaded, that this standard was unsatisfactory to that particular civilian inspector, of that particular railroad, on that particular day.

One solution involves units in conducting familiarization training (as opposed to in-depth training) for its rail-loading teams. In this training, the teams are shown the various tools, the different turnbuckles, and the equipment used and are given detailed safety precautions. On rail-load day, the team ties down the first vehicle on the first rail car; then the entire rail-load team, OIC, and NCOIC gather around as the civilian railroad inspector checks the load. He points out deficiencies and everyone understands what is required. From there, the crews can separate to complete the operation. While this method will get the rail-loading off to a little slower start, it can mean the difference between the soldiers' being at home at 1630 and still there retying vehicles at midnight.

The initial LOI must also consider rail guards to accompany the equipment. The ITO can project this requirement, if it applies, but the unit retains responsibility for the guards. If the assigned units are



Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division load equipment.



tasked early, they can identify the soldiers who are to act as guards—perhaps using men who would prefer not to fly, for example. The tasked unit is normally responsible for feeding the guards as well. The period of rations specified in the LOI must include total travel time, plus any time the guards sit waiting for the off-load teams to arrive.

Above all else, an S-4's planning process must consider what is actually going to happen at the railhead during the loading.

Equipment to be rail-loaded is normally assembled in one location and sequenced in the order in which it is to be loaded—a process referred to as marshalling. If it is performed the same day as loading, the day will be long and hectic. Marshalling, therefore, can take place the day or afternoon before loading. In either case, problems will arise that must be dealt with. It is common, for instance, for a deadlined vehicle not to show up at all. In this case, if marshalling has been done the day before, there will still be time to shift loads or to identify a substitute vehicle. But marshalling the day before may cause other problems: Invariably, the next morning, some drivers will not report on time, or some vehicles will not start, or other equipment will have flat tires. The trade-offs must be weighed carefully.

A maintenance team and a fuel vehicle should be tasked and placed under the control of the marshalling OIC. In most instances, vehicles must move onto rail cars under their own power, and a railroad inspector usually will not accept equipment with Class III leaks but will require that they be repaired.

Rail teams need tools, of course, and a basic list of what is required must be compiled and distributed to the OICs/NCOICs. The teams must bring the tools on the list with them each day of loading. Most of the necessary tools can be found as part of the equipment of armored vehicles. Other special tools or equipment may be needed on a limited basis—such as cable or boltcutters—and these should be available at the DTO in the form of mobilization tool kits. Any specific items that are not locally available should be identified and requested. Team members should also have

leather gloves available.

When the teams start to work, they will need some basic equipment, which will vary depending on the type of equipment being loaded and the type of rail cars being used. Again, the DTO, ITO, or installation engineers can help determine the unit's needs. Some examples of the equipment needed are turnbuckles, clamps, cable, chock blocks, nails, lumber, shackles, banding material, lacing wire, and tape. Some of these items must also be available in different sizes and lengths to accommodate particular pieces of equipment. (While this may sound obvious, I have witnessed loadings during which a unit was unable to tie down vehicles sitting on the rail cars because its loading teams had the wrong size of lifting shackles. The short time it would have taken to check the equipment against the vehicle a month earlier would have been time well spent.)

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation at the railhead, with all the vehicles there, would not seem a likely problem, but key personnel frequently find themselves unable to maneuver. The S-4 or the rail OIC must seek alternate transportation from non-deploying units or from unit vehicles that are to be moved later (possibly by air). All deploying units will have some transportation problems during this time, because all their cargo carriers will have been prepared for loading.

Accordingly, all rail-loading plans should include buses to return drivers to the company areas after marshalling and loading their vehicles, and to take the rail-load teams to and from the railhead. Some form of transportation will also be needed to deliver the blocking, bracing, packing, crating, and tiedown (BBPCT) materials to different locations as they are needed. (The deploying units will have bought this equipment. Because of the amount of equipment and the time required for loading, it may be necessary to secure the BBPCT in a central location over a period of days.)

The dangers to personnel loading heavy equipment is evident in rail operations. Therefore, a medical evacuation

vehicle with trained medical personnel cannot be overlooked. Although an ambulance is the preferred vehicle, it is not required as long as some kind of suitable vehicle is available.

The final item on the subject of transport is supplying food for the rail-load teams and drivers, who will probably be working through at least one meal. Buses can be arranged to take troops to a dining facility, if one is not readily available. But the time used for travel and for dining slows down the momentum of the loading. In addition, it takes time to secure tools, board buses, unload, find missing soldiers, and so on. An alternative is to plan for sack lunches—or for hot food—to be delivered to each loading site. Some form of transportation is required in either event. (Planners should also be aware of the morale value of having coffee or juice available for the unit loading teams, especially when they are either loading in the snow or tying equipment down in 110-degree heat.)

Command and control at the railhead are vital. The overall OIC (usually the brigade S-4 or his representative) cannot run the operation from his garrison office. He must be on the site, with a known command post (CP) location where everyone involved can reach him, including visitors. And visitors will abound, from company commanders to the division or installation commander. The need for someone knowledgeable to be on hand to meet incoming VIPs cannot be overemphasized.

The CP can be a tent, if no other structure is available. It should contain copies of the LOI and possibly charts that depict the rail schedule and track the progress of the loading. It is a good idea also to control the medical evacuation vehicle and personnel from this central location as well as a vehicle loaded with BBPCT to respond to unit needs.

When loading is suspended for the day (usually at dusk, for safety reasons) guards must be posted and the CP can then become the sergeant of the guard's headquarters. The vehicles awaiting loading and already on rail cars—including CONEX containers with unit equipment packed in them—represent a substantial investment. And some of the containers undoubtedly will hold sen-

sitive items such as night observation devices, machineguns, and TOW equipment. Guard duties can cease when rail-load activities resume the following morning.

## CONTROLS

Backbriefs are an effective control measure. While loading, crews can be operating at several tracks at the same time. Some crews will complete their loading before others, and when they are finished for that day, the load team OIC should brief the responsible officer before leaving. This insures that all the rail cars are in fact completed and that the railroad inspector has accepted the load. In addition, it provides an opportunity for outlining the following day's activities and for discussing any problem areas (late buses, inadequate rations, and the like).

Communication equipment is also needed for command and control, but the deploying units typically will have packed all their radios for the move. A solution is hand-held radios (walkie-talkies). (Although these are not authorized by TOE or MTOE, some installation agencies such as DTO, ITO, or the military police may have them. The local procurement channel is another alternative that will let the unit retain the radios for off-loading and redeployment operations.) This ability to communicate can solve many railhead coordination problems quickly and also increase the responsiveness of medical personnel. Perhaps most important, it allows the OIC more mobility, and there is no substitute for being on the scene, watching the progress of the loading and anticipating needs.

Finally, on command and control, once the deployment sequence starts, it must proceed on schedule. The OIC will know where he can take extra time and where he has none to spare. Weather cannot be allowed to control the operation. This may require warming tents at each track or simply wet weather gear for the men. Whatever the extreme, the OIC must plan for all contingencies and be prepared to carry out the plan.

Plans for loading the rail cars must also include certain considerations of how the

equipment will be unloaded at the other end and also who will need to be there. For example, if the units want to have a hot meal immediately upon their arrival, the mess equipment should be put on the first train out.

Drivers and crews for off-loading should be among the first soldiers deployed, and the drivers should make sure they have with them the keys to their vehicles. In any event, the OIC, who should also be on that first plane, should have "master keys," in the form of boltcutters, on hand and should use them judiciously.

Maintenance personnel and equipment must be immediately accessible at the unloading site. Since equipment arriving in the first train may have been on the rail cars for as long as a week, some vehicles may not start, may have flat tires, or may even have no batteries or fuel.

An immediate source of water will be needed to refill dry radiators, and units should have appropriate oils and hydraulic fluids on hand. If an immediate road march is projected as soon as the equipment is unloaded, the importance of

many of these considerations increases tenfold. Tow cables, wreckers, and slave cables are especially important.

During off-loading, many events will occur as a reverse process of the loading sequence. But during loading, flatbed trailers are usually available for hauling the CONEX containers, cranes are there to help load the containers, and there are many forklifts. Later, at a strange railhead, these items may not be available. If they are, it will be because they have been requested in advance.

#### SUPPORT

The unit may ship its own support assets, but, once again, their placement on the trains may be critical. If the CONEX containers arrive on the first train but the crane is on the last, hot meals will be delayed and the ration cycle destroyed.

Finally, plans must be made in advance for the redeployment as well. The equipment used to rail-load the unit (the BBPCT) should be salvaged and secured in a consolidated location. Some items, such as a certain number of the chock

blocks, will not be usable for redeployment. Extra chock blocks, nails, lumber, and wire may be procured from the redeployment railhead source, but if this cannot be positively confirmed, redeployment supplies should be shipped. These can be turned in for credit later if they are not used or if they are still usable. Logistical flights from the home installation may also be able to deliver pre-planned redeployment supplies.

While these considerations are not all inclusive, they do cover some of the recurring and, hopefully, more applicable concepts. They have not been listed in order of priority. With our current doctrine to fight anywhere in the world and under any circumstances, though, the importance of a unit's ability to deploy efficiently by rail is obvious. These thoughts should help unit logisticians meet that need.

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# Brigade First Sergeant

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS PAUL H. JOHNSON

Because of the nature of a brigade headquarters company, the job of brigade First Sergeant is different from that of a First Sergeant at other levels. Yet it is not a subject that is often written about.

I realize that there are many First Sergeants who have held this position in the past, and each of them probably has his own unique insights and opinions about it. But these are my ideas after serving for six months in the position in a brigade in Germany.

First, the person selected for this job does not always have the experience or the training for it. I am a prime exam-

ple—I was not even on the list for promotion to first sergeant when I took the job, and I had to submit a request to attend the First Sergeant Academy after I began the job. (I still don't know when, if ever, I will be attending.) But my brigade command sergeant major, who interviewed me for the position while on a field problem, said he had faith in me and expected me to be on the next promotion list, so I accepted.

Without the benefit of the academy, I, like many others before me, had to start digging, recalling my experiences with all the good and bad First Sergeants I had

known and considering a lot of advice from just about everyone. I had an idea where to start, but the company and I suffered a little while I grew into the position.

All First Sergeants, no matter their experience, are automatically supposed to possess an endless wealth of knowledge on every subject in the Army. They are also supposed to be able to handle every situation no matter how critical, with cool expertise. The company commander and the company personnel rely upon him for his judgment and advice.

As a platoon sergeant or a staff NCO,