

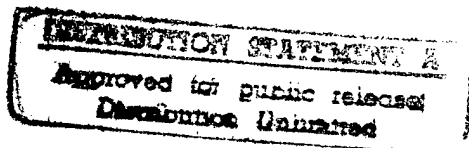
DATE: 4/02/97

**CONTROLLING OFFICE FOR THIS DOCUMENT IS:**

Commandant  
Army Management Staff College (AMSC)  
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

POC: Commandant

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:** Public release



19970402 012

# Logistics Power Projection Platform

by Paul J. Ronan  
AMSC Class 96-1 Seminar 2



---

## Abstract

There is a need for a CONUS based Logistics Power Projection Platform. The Logistics Power Projection Platform brings together an Army depot, DLA distribution site and other elements to form a synergistic package that aids in the rapid transit of logistics to the CONUS based force and to the commander in the field. Red River Army Depot is the prime example of a successfully operating Logistics Power Projection Platform. Key elements for consideration are the capacity of a depot for growth, sufficient infrastructure to assume expanded missions, ready access to rail, highway, air and sea transport facilities and short-haul driving proximity to the CONUS based forces being served.

---

## The Integrated Logistics Delivery System

*"America's army today is a power projection army... Sustaining the tip of the spear requires a sophisticated infrastructure that stretches back through our installations to the industrial base."*

General Gordon R. Sullivan, U.S. Army Chief of Staff  
and Togo D. West, Jr., Secretary of the Army  
Army White Paper, October 1994  
Decisive Victory- America's Power Projection Army

The role of the military as an arm of foreign policy implementation has changed. With the end of the Cold War, American forces have moved to a smaller, more mobile tactical strike force. The current strategy within the Department of Defense is the Power Projection Platform. Logistics also has changed to meet the strategic needs of the global quick response force. With the advent of a strategy of world wide power projection and the demise of the Soviet threat, logistics has moved into a new era. Much of our planning has centered around repositioning logistics support, but there is also a need for a new way of presenting logistics in the continental base. That new way is the establishment of Logistics Power Projection Platforms at key locations in the United States.

The Logistics Power Projection Platform would collocate key elements of the Logistics team at one location thus building a "platform" to springboard supplies and equipment in a highly efficient and tactically necessary fashion. Ideally, these platforms should be located within the depot system at facilities possessing the capacity for growth, sufficient infrastructure to take on expanded missions, having access to rail, highway, air and sea transport facilities and within short haul driving distance of the CONUS based installations they serve.

The value of this concept has already been tested, albeit purely by accident. During Operation Desert Storm, one depot demonstrated the effectiveness of a Logistics Power Projection Platform. That depot was the Red River Defense Complex which intertwined the Red River Army Depot, the Defense Distribution Depot at Red River and the Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant into a platform to meet the needs of the wartime commander. These complimentary capabilities have already provided the Defense Department with an in-place Logistics Platform to support and sustain today's army and to project the

**DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 3**

logistics needs to the battlefield for the force of tomorrow.

An effective logistics platform will contain several basic characteristics. The Logistics Power Projection Platform will be **strategically located** within short haul driving distance of the CONUS based force structure it supports. It will possess or have the immediate capability for the development of a **linked road and rail infrastructure, a non-restricted air space, be unencroached by surrounding communities** providing the opportunity for easy expandability, and **have the availability of at least one major Air Force base and a world class sea port facility.**

Lt. Gen. Leon E. Salomon, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics stated, in an article for the October 1993 edition of *ARMY Magazine* entitled Power Projection Logistics, that "the emergence of defense agencies...and the important role that joint commands/agencies...play in day-to-day support of Army forces are going to require an intellectual change in the way logisticians view jointness." The collocation of facilities at the Red River Defense Complex whether by accident or design has proven the effectiveness of the Logistics Power Projection Complex and the critical role it plays in support of real time battlefield situations.

Using this complex as a model, one can see the desirability of collocating strategic elements of the logistics team at the depot level. In this time of ever diminishing resources, there is a good deal of fiscal sense to be made for reducing the total number of depots while expanding the capabilities of three to four depots in the system located in key parts of the country to meet the needs of the rapid transition assault force called for in the Army's Power Projection strategy. Additionally, CONUS based platforms would serve as a critical back up to our repositioned afloat efforts.

The CONUS based platform should have the logistics capability, industrial base, storage capacity and the sophisticated infrastructure to support America's Power Projection Platform which encompasses all branches of the armed forces. The complex at Red River is an exceptional model that can be refined to meet the needs of the force of the 21st Century. Red River is readily expandable, has a low average operating cost for both facilities and personnel and has the capacity to absorb new and expanded missions in logistics, electronics, heavy vehicle maintenance and missile repair. The Red River Defense Complex combining the value of different agencies and activities is the quintessential Logistics Power Projection Platform and is a critical component in the Force of the Twenty-First Century.

America's Army supply system has changed. It has followed the pattern of the Army itself and has become a more responsive and progressively managed power projection platform. It is the nature of modern warfare that supply and redistribution centers be maintained in areas that will provide maximum effective utilization of resources while meeting the requirements for rapid re-supply in a highly mobile global army of the 21st Century. The Logistics Power Projection Platform meshes operations from activities collocated and sharing many installation support functions, thus reducing the overhead cost of operating each entity separately.

The Red River Defense Complex currently provides just such a facility through a complex that includes Red River Army Depot, the Defense Distribution Depot at Red River and the Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant. While other depots' goals and objectives may well be to become a Logistics Power Projection Platform, the Red River Defense Complex achieved that goal some two years ago and is in the process of refining a system that has become, what MG Dennis L. Benchoff in a Fall 1994 AUSA speech, described as, the "Flagship Enterprise" of progressive management within the entire Department of Defense. It is the only DoD installation with a distribution depot, a maintenance depot, an ammunition manufacturer and an ammunition storage and distribution mission on the same military reservation. These complimentary capabilities plus a finance center and the School of Engineering and Logistics give the Defense Department an in-place Logistics Power Projection Platform to support and sustain today's armed forces and to project the logistics needs to the battlefield for the force of tomorrow.

The Logistics Power Projection Platform of the 21st Century should be forward thinking and possess capabilities to work on a variety of vehicles and equipment. It should be located in close proximity to the troops it serves and have sufficient infrastructure to meet the demands of a quick response force. We can

no longer afford a disjointed and compartmentalized system for logistics and must continue to develop new methods of doing business. The Red River Defense Complex demonstrates the value of Logistics Power Projection. It is a strategic facility located within easy short haul striking distance of 41 % of the force. It is situated 18 miles west of Texarkana, Texas and adjacent to a major Interstate highway. This complex serves as a hub for supply and re-supply of a variety of missiles and missile components for all four services. It is the single largest Defense Depot Complex in the Department of Defense today.

During its history, Red River has performed depot level maintenance on every type of vehicle - **TANKS, ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, ARTILLERY, and WHEELED**, and has the capacity for expansion with very little investment. In addition, it has the proven capacity to design and construct prototypes. It provides an unique capacity for the conversion and modification of tracked vehicles and road wheel, track and tire rebuild that is the only such capability in the entire Army through an advanced Rubber Products Division.

The complex also maintains a massive armaments storage facility. The Maintenance operation includes the Chaparral missile system, the Vulcan gun system and provides for support of 80 % of the vehicles in a mechanized division, 75 % of the vehicles in an armored division, and fully 2/3 of the Army combat vehicle fleet and is the only depot currently configured to accept this work load.

The Red River complex covers an immense land mass and is unencroached by surrounding communities. It has ready access to a variety of transportation arteries, air, land and sea; readily available additional work forces; and lower than average overhead expense rates. While these venues increase the value of the complex, the fact that **Red River is the only DoD installation with a distribution depot, an ammunition manufacturer, a maintenance depot, and an ammunition rebuild, demilitarization, storage and distribution mission on the same military reservation** elevates its strategic importance to a critical level. The military value is brought into sharper focus when the shipping cost savings due to collocation and the time savings from the depot complex to the commander in the field are considered.

We have reached a point where military downsizing requires a critical change in the way we perform logistics functions. The logistics platforms which support Force XXI must look to providing services to all four branches of the military. The Red River Defense Complex is at the forefront of these efforts and provides yet another model for the development of an integrated depot supply facility. It already supports all four services on a world-wide basis. It provides secure and environmentally sound storage of conventional munitions including grenades, mortars, bombs, rockets and both large and small caliber ammunition, as well as renovation and demolition of conventional munitions and missiles. The complex provides missile repair facilities and the Missile Recertification program provides for the certification of both Patriot and Hawk missiles which are essential for the Army Power Projection Platform's continual state of readiness. The effectiveness of the missile recertification program received a real time test during the Gulf War as the first Scud missile intercept over Israel was accomplished with a Patriot missile bearing the Red River logo. It is the only CONUS site which maintains an overseas field office. It is currently involved in the repair of the Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Systems for the National Guard and serves as an Interagency Training Site for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. It provides support to the Air Force's Maverick Missile Program and to the Navy through a unique repair and modification of the Cobra Helmet sights. The Defense Department needs to continue to utilize the model established at Red River and transpose it to other key locations in the United States to provide a viable and cost effective method of providing logistics support for the CONUS based force structure during peace time and to the operational commander in time of conflict.

Red River already provides a wide range of unique supply support assistance to Army Program Project Managers and Major Commands in the fielding of weapon systems that should be transposed to depots on the east and west coast of the United States. Red River's support is available to all armed services during developmental and operational testing, contractor logistical support, initial fielding, performance testing, unit training and system displacement or discontinuance. The success of this mission is based on the adaptability and flexibility to respond to frequently changing demands and the savings this can generate. The mission encompasses serving as a central requisitioning activity, managing Program Managers' assets, administering tool and kit operations and providing special support services.

The complex has additional expertise essential in the staging of the United States Army Missile Command In-Theater Missile Repair Activity. This mission is a wholesale commodity repair operation, which provides essential material and combat service necessary to enhance the war-fighting capability of deployed forces. Support provided by the complex encompasses posts, camps and stations during their joint rotational training exercises at the Joint Readiness Training Center. The Logistics Platform should stand ready to support the concept of jointness, a concept which has already proven effective in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, and Haiti.

The value of a logistics platform was first fully tested during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, which was conducted between 7 August 1990 and 28 February 1991. This effort represented the largest U.S. military mobilization effort since the Vietnam Conflict. According to a GAO study conducted in April 1992, during the operations, the Army's depot supply and transportation systems moved over 519,000 tons of Army supplies to Southwest Asia. Red River processed much of the supplies and materials that were sent to support U.S. and U.N. forces in the Persian Gulf; averaging 123,600 lines per month. It is no accident that materials were processed in such large quantities and in such a timely manner from this facility. Collocation saved precious days and hundreds of thousands of dollars in shipping costs and spelled the difference between success and failure in countless numbers of the skirmishes that took place during that concentrated period.

In order to meet the requirements for an effective Logistics Platform, a depot should have the qualities of strategic location, sufficient infrastructure to meet the needs of Force XXI, and be able to provide for effective shipping by land, rail, sea and air. Again, Red River provides a model for the development of other effective logistics platforms.

The Red River Defense Complex is located in the very heart of the current force structure. Currently, more than 41 % of the active military component is located within short haul driving distance of the depot. It has the added capability of rapid air transport through its proximity to three major Air Force bases: Barksdale in Louisiana, Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma and the Air Force Base at Little Rock in Arkansas. In time of crisis, the ability to ship by land, air and sea is a critical necessity for the depot of the 21st Century. Red River is complemented by its access to world class seaports at New Orleans, Louisiana, Houston and Beaumont, Texas, thus making it a key depot in the Defense Department with immediate and vital access to air, land, rail and sea transportation networks essential to the success of the military's Power Projection Platform.

The complex at Red River is in possession of an immense and well maintained infrastructure that directly links to major interstate highway and rail arteries. The ammunition area of Red River covers nearly 9,000 acres. Ammunition and missiles are warehoused in 17 standard magazine buildings, and more than 700 concrete, earth-covered igloos are linked to the 74 miles of railroad track and 273 miles of internal roadway that covers the installation. The complex ships and receives more than 250 tons of ammunition a day, and stores about \$1.78 billion worth of it on a 9,000 acre tract of the reservation. The combination of a strategic location, an exceptional infrastructure and the ability to transport munitions directly to and from the complex result in an highly efficient and cost effective method of managing the Department of Defense's ammunition and missile inventory.

The advantages of collocating a major Army Maintenance Depot, a DoD Distribution Depot and ammunition manufacturing, renovation, demilitarization and storage facilities truly sets the Red River Defense Complex apart. Efficiently providing the necessary world wide mobility support for Multi-Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) and the Bradley and M-113 armored personnel carriers requires a centrally located distribution facility with easy access to all transportation modes. If the Defense Department were to design and locate an industrial facility from scratch, it would look like the Red River Defense Complex and it would have a location and proximity to the force and land, air and sea arteries that mirror that which already exists at this strategic Logistics Platform.

The true test of the effectiveness of any military system comes in time of crisis. Like the Army itself, the logistics complex has peace time defense sustainment, war time and national and regional disaster relief missions. Mirroring the larger mission of America's Army, the Red River Defense Complex's Integrated

Supply Delivery System has been tested on several occasions in the recent past. In a January 30, 1995 article in the Army Times, VADM Philip Quast, chief of the Military, Sealift command addressed the issue of the poor performance of the prepositioned ships during Desert Shield; further, pointing to the need for a reliable stateside back up to our overseas logistics efforts. During Operation Desert Storm the Red River Defense Complex was one of the very few who sent a "volunteer" non-directed civilian work force to assist on-site in the battle zone. Operations at the complex were increased by 150 % and some 315 technical specialists were dispatched to the middle east. The Defense Distribution Depot at Red River Texarkana has consistently demonstrated its capacity for support during the Gulf War, in Panama, Somalia, Rwanda, Columbia, in Haiti, and in Korea. The Red River Defense Complex Power Projection Platform also played a vital role during Hurricane Andrew, provided extensive relief assistance during flooding in East Texas and Louisiana in 1992 and supported the relief efforts in Somalia throughout 1994.

But the value of a strategic complex expands beyond its ability to react to crisis in a timely and efficient manner. It includes the ability to meet the real time needs of commanders and managers through innovative approaches to sustaining the force. Driven by shrinking funds, program and commodity managers continue to look to the complex for support. This support has evolved at the Red River Industrial Complex to include the design and development of prototype vehicles. An example of the creative capabilities of the complex was the research, test, design and evaluation of a vehicle to mimic the Russian made BMP-2 for combat training of our own armed forces at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California and the modification of 26 Land Assault Vehicles confiscated from Panamanian forces loyal to Manuel Noriega during Operation Just Cause, resulting in savings of approximately six million dollars. The core competency of the Red River Defense Complex Power Projection Platform has been its capability to provide prompt and sustained combat equipment service support to the commander in the field.

Logistics plays a vital role in maintaining the strategic edge in Battlefield Sustainment Doctrine. The proximity of the Red River complex to more than 41 % of the active military components in the U.S. and its location with relation to a major east-west corridor and north-south highway and rail system, major air terminals at Barksdale, Tinker and Little Rock Air Force Bases and the Ports of New Orleans, Beaumont and Houston increase the strategic value of the facility dramatically. A soon to be completed four lane Interstate highway just outside the gates of the complex lends further testimony to the strategic and economic value of this centrally located Logistics Platform.

Logistics Power Projection in CONUS is elemental to the success of our military. It provides the first level of support to troop units as they prepare to deploy, performs follow-on missions once troops arrive in a theater of operations and provides support and quick response as an assist and, in emergency situations, as a replacement for prepositioning efforts. The need to incorporate CONUS based logistics support will continue into the next century. By forming strategic logistics activities that bring several entities under one roof, the Defense Department will create a sustaining base that will serve and support U.S. troops into the next century. The Logistics Power Projection Platform as it exists at Red River can reshape the way we think of logistics and increase the capabilities of our fighting forces both at home and abroad. The concepts and methods utilized at this complex should be copied and duplicated on the east and west coasts of the United States respectively to provide a CONUS based logistics platform capable of meeting the needs of the commander at the training base at home and in the real time scenario of active conflict. CONUS based logistics platforms are a logical and cost effective back up to our efforts at prepositioning logistics afloat and in theater logistics supply centers.

### References

- Bell, Madonna. Executive Officer, Red River Army Depot. Personal Interview, 18 Jan. 1996.
- Benchoff, MG Dennis L. "Red River Army Depot." AUSA Annual Meeting. Texarkana, Texas, Sept. 1994.
- Knapper, LTC Andrew. Commander, Defense Distribution Region Texas, Interview, 20 Feb. 1996.

Matthews, William. "A Prepositioned Breakdown." Navy Times, 30 Jan. 1995: 30.

Salomon, LTG Leon E. "Power Projection Logistics." Army Magazine, Oct. 1995: 115-119.

Sullivan, GEN Gordon R. and Togo D. West. Decisive Victory- America's Power Projection Army: Army Whitepaper. Washington: GPO, October 1994.

United States. General Accounting Office. Operation Desert Storm. Washington: GPO, April 1992.

Wright, Lonnie. Base Transition Coordinator/Director of Public Works, Red River Army Depot, Interview, 15 Feb. 1996.

[Back to Publications Page](#)