

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE ARMY FIELD SUPPORT BRIGADE: A SOLUTION TO INTEGRATING
ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS AND TECHNOLOGY**

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This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 15 MAR 2006		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2005 to 00-00-2006	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Army Field Support Brigade A Solution to Integrating Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Kristin French				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, PA, 17013-5050				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT See attached.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 24	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Kristin K French

TITLE: The Army Field Support Brigade: A Solution to Integrating Acquisition, Logistics and Technology

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 10 March 2006 WORD COUNT: 5962 PAGES: 23

KEY TERMS: Army Materiel Command, Life Cycle Management, Supply Chain Management

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The current United States Army Chief of Staff, General Peter J. Schoomaker, recently testified to the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee that the successes enjoyed during the initial stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom were the result of an integrated logistics team of soldiers, civilians, and contractors, all of whom developed innovative solutions to a range of challenges caused by major capability gaps in the current logistics systems. In order to fill the gaps, sustain the future force, and build confidence in combatant commanders, the logistics supply chain must transform. It must keep pace with the future combat force by providing focused logistics that are fully-integrated, expeditionary, networked, continuous, and distributed across the full range of military operations. Army Materiel Command's (AMC) latest initiative to focus logistics is the creation of Army Field Support Brigades (AFSBs). As with many new initiatives there are some issues, but if properly resourced and supported by the Army and AMC, AFSBs can and will successfully meet the critical need to streamline the supply chain by integrating acquisition, logistics, and technology (ALT) requirements on the regional basis.

THE ARMY FIELD SUPPORT BRIGADE: A SOLUTION TO INTEGRATING ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS AND TECHNOLOGY

We need an integrated supply chain that has a single proponent, who can reach across the breadth and depth of resources in a joint, interagency and multinational theater.¹

- General Peter J. Schoomaker,
Army Chief of Staff, testimony to Congress,
February 2004

The current United States Army Chief of Staff, General Peter J. Schoomaker, recently testified to the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee that the successes enjoyed during the initial stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom were the result of an integrated logistics team of soldiers, civilians, and contractors, all of whom developed innovative solutions to a range of challenges caused by major capability gaps in the current logistics systems.² In order to fill the gaps, sustain the future force, and build confidence in combatant commanders, the logistics supply chain must transform. It must keep pace with the future combat force by providing focused logistics that are fully-integrated, expeditionary, networked, continuous, and distributed across the full range of military operations.³ Army Materiel Command's (AMC) latest initiative to focus logistics is the creation of Army Field Support Brigades (AFSBs). If properly resourced and supported by the Army and AMC, AFSBs can and will successfully meet the critical need to streamline the supply chain by integrating acquisition, logistics, and technology (ALT) requirements on the regional basis.

Dependent on its geographic location, an 18-30 AFSB headquarters (HQs) acts as the core of the organization and is charged with providing AMC's end-to-end support to the field. Although a rather daunting task, AMC planners insist their six, newly formed, regionally based, active-duty AFSBs are up to the challenge. As outlined in the AFSB's interim field manual, FMI 4-93.41, the unit has a comprehensive list of tasks and missions, most notably the requirement to maintain visibility of all AMC-related logistics matters in its regional area of operations. Undeniably, several of the missioned tasks and command and support relationships present considerable concerns for an AFSB and necessitate further discussion. Although the AFSB's core requirement to consolidate management and oversight of AMC's forward elements to ensure unity of effort is absolutely essential in today's fast-paced operational environment, the success of an AFSB, as well as its future relevancy, depends on resolving several fundamental issues regarding its missions and span of command and control.

One complex issue for the AFSB headquarters is the enormous task of maintaining accountability, tracking, and assisting all contractors in support of AMC operations. Although

the HQs is allocated a contractor coordination cell, it is by no means neither robust nor has the requisite tools to complete this difficult mission.

Another concern for the AFSB is its relationship with AMC's Life Cycle Management Commands (LCMCs). In 2005, AMC created commodity-focused LCMCs by aligning their systems-oriented major subordinate commands with acquisition offices. This move was intended to integrate sustainment and acquisition personnel to better manage systems' life-cycle support. AFSBs then provide LCMCs a bridge between the generating force and the customer. However, LCMC forward operations can negatively affect AFSBs. The LCMCs routinely deploy systems experts into various regions to field items and equipment, contribute supply support, and provide general-support maintenance and forward repair activity operations. Since the AFSB is held accountable for all AMC acquisition, logistics, and technology missions in its region, LCMC personnel should work for them. But they occasionally circumvent AFSB's command authority and at times operate independently.

An additional issue is contingency contracting in a regional area. Paramount to the success of an AFSB is the mission to integrate all theater-level contingency contracting support into its designated area of operations. The designated contracting teams are authorized to approve host nation, national, and multinational supply and maintenance contracts throughout an AFSB's area of responsibility. As currently configured, contingency contracting officers (CCOs) and teams are functionally allocated to AFSBs. This relationship results in the Army's expectations that AFSBs will coordinate and plan all contingency contracting operations. But even with the new AFSBs, the teams continue to be technically controlled (TECHCON) by the Army Contracting Agency and therefore, TECHCON to the regional Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC). Until AFSBs obtain command and control of the CCOs, they cannot ensure contract operations are streamlined throughout their region.

Alongside civilians on the battlefield, LCMC forward representatives, and contingency contracting personnel, AFSBs are also expected to maintain oversight and visibility on all AMC-sponsored activities and organizations within their regional area of operations. This large mission results in an AFSB growing exponentially, especially as theater operations mature. For example, AMC mandates that each program executive officer and project manager deploying within an AFSB's area of responsibility must synchronize operations with the AFSB. The same protocol is expected for depot supporters or maintainers providing reset or AMC-sponsored resupply missions to a unit. AMC expects that all reset teams or maintenance contractors arriving on an installation or base within an AFSB's footprint coordinate their operations through that supporting AFSB. Although the AFSB HQs was never intended to be the sole manager,

facilitator, and executor of the myriad of AMC-sponsored activities across an entire region, it is expected to be aware of and involved in all planned and ongoing operations in its designated area. AMC expects and authorizes AFSBs to influence local AMC-sponsored operations. But AFSBs are significantly challenged if unaware of ongoing operations due to no visibility or poor coordination from others. If this occurs, the AFSB's ability to consolidate and coordinate regional ALT missions would be severely jeopardized.

The AFSB's responsibility to integrate ALT capabilities lends itself to the most complicated challenge related to AFSB operations; the AFSB commander's lack of command authority. When reviewing the AFSB's organizational structure and comparing it to its functional design, it illustrates that the AFSB commander does not command many of the subordinate organizations. Instead, the commander is expected to coordinate with these agencies and forward-based personnel. Although most AMC forward personnel will do what is correct and coordinate actions with the regional AFSB, others routinely report back to and receive guidance from their parent or owning headquarters, thus bypassing the AFSB commander. As long as the regional AFSB commander does not have command authority to direct and lead these forward-deployed AMC elements, his/her charter to be AMC's one face to the field is nearly impossible.

Until these issues are resolved, it will be very difficult for AFSBs to gain the trust and confidence of their supported units. The AFSB must be able to establish itself as a meaningful organization, both needed and relevant in today's complex strategic and operational military environment.

Why AFSBs?

The United States Army Materiel Command has been in existence for over 40 years. It is the Army's premier materiel readiness provider – technology, acquisition support, materiel development, logistics power projection, and sustainment – to the total force, across the spectrum of joint military operations. If a soldier shoots it, drives it, flies it, wears it, or eats it, AMC provides it.⁴ AMC has been synonymous for end-to-end logistics support to the field. Over the years, AMC has mirrored the Army's changes in manpower. Similar to the US Army, AMC has significantly down-sized from a Vietnam-era workforce of 180,000 employees, although its missions and strategic reach have steadily increased. As of 2005, approximately 50,000 civilian and military employees work in approximately 150 locations in over 40 States and 38 foreign countries.⁵

Army Materiel Command's motto is "Essential in Peace, Indispensable in War".⁶ It was initially created as a materiel development and logistics command to manage and develop major weapons and equipment. But over time, AMC has been the focus of major organizational changes.⁷ The most significant restructure since its inception in 1962 occurred after the signing of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols (G-N) Department of Defense (DoD) Reorganization Act, and the 1987 Packard Commission's recommendations, where Congress directed that control of all DoD acquisition functions be assigned to civilian leaders in each of the military departments.⁸ AMC witnessed the transfer of the majority of its project managers to a newly created Assistant Secretary of the Army, Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASA/ALT)/ Army Acquisition Executive (AAE). The AAE structure included newly created program executive officers (PEOs) reporting directly to the AAE, each being given authority over project managers (PMs) in a particular field of equipment development.⁹ As a result, life-cycle/end-to-end systems management responsibilities were now divided between AMC and AAE.

Although AMC's responsibilities continue to span the entire spectrum of Army logistics, one key process has been missing since the PEO split in the late-1980's. This process was the capability to provide complete and seamless life cycle management for materiel from cradle to grave. In 1989, the Army Chief of Staff approved creation of the Army Acquisition Corps. It received further legitimacy in law by the 1990 passage of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWI). The G-N and DAWI Acts established acquisition as an autonomous organization. It was assigned the mission to develop critical systems and services that enable the Army to fight and win the Nation's wars. The separation between the acquisition of weapons systems and the requirement and capability to sustain them created a significant functional split in life-cycle management. The lack of support and responsiveness grew from the industrial base as items were fielded without sustainment packages or plans. Newly acquired equipment was not properly supported, creating exceedingly dissatisfied customers. It became obvious, for maximum efficiency and peak performance, the two (acquisition and support) must dovetail, and the closer they work together, from the very beginning of the life cycle to the end, the better for the Soldier in the field.¹⁰

Another AMC concern was its critical need to modernize and evolve its support operations procedures in order to keep pace with changes in US military doctrine. AMC's survival required that it maintain an unbreakable connection from the logistics industrial base to the frontline soldiers. Politicians, US Army leaders, and logisticians have always expected that AMC would provide rapid, uninterrupted, and synchronized support to the warfighter. Therefore, over the past 40 years, AMC operations have gradually expanded, thereby providing a wide variety of

logistics missions scattered across the world, as elements of the organization participated in every global operation involving American forces. Over time, as more and more AMC subordinate agencies started deploying personnel forward, AMC's global footprint grew ubiquitously, without complementary forward headquarters to ensure unity of effort and unity of command. Stovepipe operations resulted, decreasing efficiency and forcing operational and tactical leaders and supporters to coordinate logistics with multiple agencies. AMC recognized its forward operations were rapidly expanding with no internal controls in place. It needed to streamline operations, thus lessening the burden on its customers.

Along with AMC's growing concern for organizing forward operations, the Army determined it needed to reevaluate past Congressional decisions and devise a plan to integrate acquisition and sustainment functions throughout the continuum of military logistics, thus keeping pace with Army transformation/modularization. Clearly the goal was to ensure integrated and synchronized acquisition, logistics, and technology employed seamlessly from the national industrial base to the warfighter during full spectrum operations – essential to sustaining the Army's modular force.¹¹ Integrating the ALT functions at all levels of the military would improve systems, reduce costs, streamline life cycle management, and most importantly, provide the warfighter with a single point of contact. Therefore the Army and the Army Materiel Command leadership commissioned their planners to review logistics processes and capabilities and formulate a restructure across the full spectrum of operations. The AMC Commanding General provided initial guidance calling for the development of an integrated ALT capability within the current AMC forward regional structure. The guidance also mandated pre-designated modular support structures for contingencies and new doctrine for expansion of ALT support at the strategic, operational, and tactical level of logistics.¹² These prescribed parameters quickly developed from an initial concept into an approved organization named the Army Materiel Command's Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB). An AFSB is intended to be a modular expeditionary unit designed to integrate and synchronize the resources of the industrial and technical base and push readiness power forward all the way to soldiers on point.¹³ As prescribed in the AFSB's interim field manual, the AFSB is AMC's bridge between the generating force and the operational/tactical force and provides the first stop for coordinating ALT capabilities in support of Joint, Interagency, and Multinational (JIM) organizations.¹⁴

The AFSBs are designed to extend AMC's operational arm worldwide. Eight brigades are currently planned, six in the active component, one in the US Army Reserve, and one in the US Army National Guard. The six active AFSBs are regionally-based organizations; two in the continental United States (AFSB-CONUS East and West, divided by the Mississippi River), one

in the Far East (AFSB-FE), one in Europe (AFSB-EU), one in southwest Asia (AFSB-SWA), and one in the Pacific area of operations to support the new Stryker units (AFSB-Stryker).

The AFSB Organization

AFSBs are commanded by Department of the Army, centrally-selected colonels (grade O-6) holding a functional area 90 (multifunctional logistician) specialty. The AFSB headquarters (HQs) are designed to be lean organizations. In general, the HQs consists of ten modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) military officers and senior non-commissioned officers, and 18-30 table of distribution and allowances (TDA) military or civilian personnel. The TDA numbers fluctuate per region, depending on mission requirements. The TDA positions support the AFSB headquarters by providing an acquisition directorate to oversee area project managers, a sustainment directorate to supervise logistics and maintenance activities, and a contracting directorate to sustain contracting requirements. Based on the central role the AFSB is expected to play with combatant commanders, AMC, in conjunction with Army Human Resources Command, is expected to maintain priority of fill of the ten critical AFSB MTOE spaces.¹⁵ Therefore, in total, the AFSB HQs organization consists of a command section, a plans and operations logistics section, and a flexible augmentation TDA (FIGURE 1).

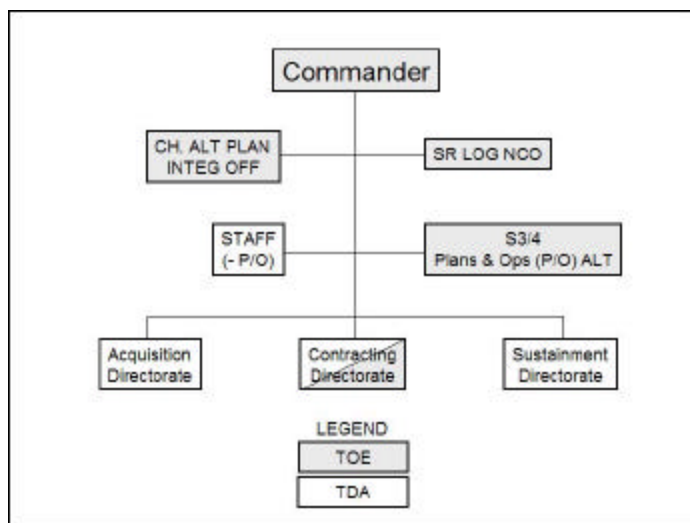


FIGURE 1 - AFSB HQs ORGANIZATION¹⁶

The traditional AFSB headquarters staff embedded within the HQs is designed to provide standard staff functions, to include personnel management, collecting intelligence, and internal administrative and supply support. The functional core of the AFSB staff is the Plans and Operations (P/O) section. The P/O section plans, prepares, and manages AMC's regional support plan for a combatant command's area of operations. From conducting mission analysis in order to determine the appropriate amount of contractor support, to generation of AMC forces and equipment, and from receiving and reporting statuses on current operations, to a multitude of other missions, the P/O section leads the AFSB efforts. The P/O section also has the capability to deploy an early entry module, augmented with contingency contractors, and reserve force reception, staging and onward movement personnel, thus providing the AFSB with the ability to conduct split-based operations.

Since the AFSB is designed to be a modular organization, the three subordinate directorates vary, dependent on the AFSB's geographic region and its current missions. Although these directorates appear on the AFSB functional design for coordination purposes, the majority of the personnel are assigned to US-based AMC organizations or other ALT activities. For example, the Acquisition Directorate may oversee project managers working in the region, field assistant science and technology teams, and LCMC senior command representatives. The Sustainment Directorate could manage several Logistics Support Elements, Brigade Logistics Support Teams, and forward repair activities in the designated area of responsibility, and the Contracting Directorate might supervise contingency contracting representatives or teams in the area as required. Although all are AMC organizations working in a region, all personnel are not assigned to the AFSB. Instead many continue to report to their parent US-based subordinate AMC/ALT headquarters. Figure 2 depicts a typical functional layout of a regional AFSB (not an organizational chart).

An essential takeaway is that each theater's AFSB will focus on different missions based on guidance from AMC, its regional Sustainment Command (Theater) (SC(T)), and its supported units. AFSBs deployed in combat theaters have significantly different daily responsibilities than AFSBs located on an overseas garrison or in the CONUS. Each tailors its focus and its support based on its customer requirements. Typically, an AFSB forward-deployed in a combat zone expends most of its efforts on maintenance of equipment and materiel readiness, while an AFSB located at homestation or in garrison spends most of the time working reset and regeneration of equipment for follow-on missions. Finally, it is paramount for an AFSB to not just follow AMC guidance, but also work the priorities and missions given to it by its regionally based SC(T) so the two organizations are cleanly nested.

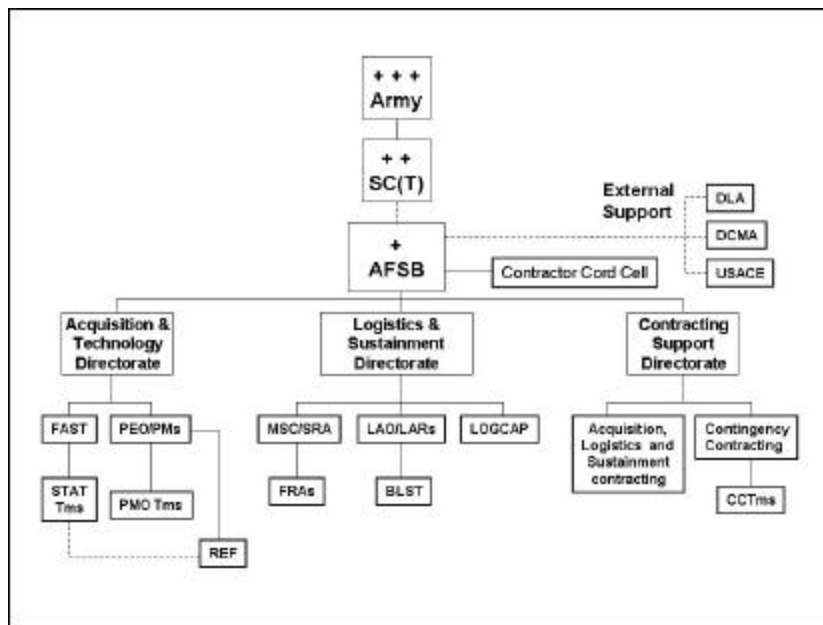


FIGURE 2 - AFSB FUNCTIONAL DESIGN¹⁷

Depending on the location of the AFSB HQs, some AFSB commanders will be responsible for overseeing and managing Field Support Battalions. For example, the AFSB in Europe will oversee the European theater Combat Equipment Battalions, recently renamed Army Field Support Battalions (AFSBns). These battalions provide depot maintenance and other specified tasks. Other AFSBs have responsibility for subordinate units that manage and maintain Army Pre-positioned Stocks (APS). An example is the Combat Equipment Battalion in Northeast Asia/Korea (CEB-NEA) which reports to the AFSB-Far East. These organizations are directly assigned under an AFSB so they follow the AMC Commander's guidance and intent that all AMC-forward elements will be the responsibility of the regional AFSB commander.

Lastly, as stated earlier, AFSBs are regionally based organizations. They are aligned to geographic areas of operations/areas of responsibility. Although they are subordinate to AMC, six were approved in the force structure to support fielding one AFSB HQs per corps (Army) and align one with each SC(T). The intent is to provide the senior geographically-based combatant commander (COCOM = US Central Command, US European Command, US Northern Command, US Pacific Command, and US Southern Command) and his senior logisticians in each designated area, with the capability for one named AMC point of contact for all AMC

issues. Thus the activation of six active-duty AFSBs – one per combatant command, with an additional AFSB to support the Stryker units. As a result of this design, the Army, AMC, and the COCOMs hold the AFSB responsible and accountable for acquisition, logistics, and technology capabilities integration for the operational, tactical, and sustainment commanders during full spectrum operations. It serves as the focal point for all AMC activities in the geographic COCOM AOR.¹⁸

AFSB Missions

As directed in draft Army manuals and AMC regulations, the mission of the AFSB is to deploy in support of the Army component commander and provide integrated acquisition, logistics, and technology functions in theater in support of and in concert with a Sustainment Command (Theater). It provides a single point of contact for all AMC activities in a geographic area of operations. Additional AFSB missions as outlined in the regulations are;

- Accounts for all AMC personnel within the theater using Synchronized Personnel Operational Tracker (SPOT).
- Provides input to the Army Service Component Command and Sustainment Command (Theater) plans.
- Prepares, coordinates and maintains operational, concept, and functional support plans, including plans for continuation of essential contractor services.
- Administers the Logistics Assistance Program (LAP) and provides ALT capabilities to the Logistic Support Elements (LSE) and the Brigade Logistic Support Teams (BLST) as required. The LSE(s) and BLST(s) are attached to the AFSB for command, control, communications, and computers. The BLSTs are normally attached to the LSEs unless under austere circumstances when they remain under the control of the AFSB.
- Integrates capabilities such as Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), National Maintenance Program (NMP), and APS Combat Sets into combatant commanders' operational plans, exercise plans, and executable guidance.
- Assures Timed Phase Force Deployment Data (TPFDD) including all planned AMC deployment requirements.
- Facilitates staffing of plans, coordination visits and conferences with the LOGCAP Program Manager, National Maintenance Manager, Army Sustainment Command and Major Subordinate Commands/LCMCs.

- Provides on-site command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I); provides (or coordinates) life support, logistics and force protection planning for assigned personnel.
- Coordinates training, TPFDD, TOE and contingency TDA requirements with the Army Sustainment Command.
- Develops and maintains AFSB planning guidance and other documents facilitating transition of deliberate plans to crisis action plans.¹⁹

Several of these missions seem rather ambitious for a small, streamlined organization. Expectations for mission success need to be codified so AFSBs clearly adhere to their mission support essential tasks. For their own benefit, all AFSBs must understand what is required of them, carefully track regional missions, prioritize their supporting units' requirements, and closely coordinate all operations with AMC and their supporting SC(T).

Strong, capable AFSB leadership cannot solely ensure mission success. There are several issues that must be addressed and corrected by AMC and the Army before the AFSB can truly be a force multiplier on today's expeditionary battlefield.

Issue – Contractors on the Battlefield

Of concern for today's military leaders is the number of contractors currently circulating around and throughout military organizations and during operations. The US Army continues to struggle with how to manage, account for, and secure contractors on the battlefield since military authority is limited based on the scope of each contract. There are three major categories of contractors; 1) systems support contractors, normally with high levels of technical expertise hired to support specific military systems, 2) external support contractors who are hired predominantly from outside the operational area to support deployed operational forces (includes third country nationals and local national personnel who are hired under a subcontract relationship) (example is the Army's Logistics Civil Augmentation Program - LOGCAP), and 3) theater support contractors who are hired and operating in a specific operational area (non-essential services and general labor).²⁰ Contractors on the battlefield are essential and absolutely vital for sustaining US combat power, and will continue to be a part of the military environment indefinitely. To understand the magnitude of their presence on today's battlefield, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) currently estimates that at least 48,000 contractor personnel are working in support of US contracts in Combined Joint Operations Areas Iraq, Afghanistan, and Horn of Africa.²¹

Although the US military has worked with contractors on the battlefield for years, Department of Defense (DoD) recently published Instruction 3020.41 (dated 03 October 2005) that establishes policy and guidance concerning DoD contractor personnel authorized to accompany the US Armed Forces (known as contingency contractor personnel). The Instruction establishes guidelines for contractor planning, visibility, accountability, deployment and redeployment of contractors. It also covers the amount of force protection, logistical support, and medical care authorized. With the growing number of contingency contractors it is essential to establish one agency organized to account for and manage contractors on the battlefield.

Therefore, Army leadership chose AMC, as the Army's readiness provider, to serve as the executive agent for contractor accountability and visibility on the battlefield.²² As such, AMC gave AFSB(s) the mission to provide contractor support and accountability to the warfighter. Each AFSB's Contracting Directorate acts as the integrator between contractors and the requiring activities/units to assist in coordinating contractor movement within the area of responsibility.²³ An AFSB's four-person contractor coordination cell (3C) is charged with managing contractors throughout its theater to include; battlefield tracking and accountability, ensuring all force protection measures are disseminated and followed, and providing a conduit of information flow for casualty reporting for all US and host nation contractors working for the US.²⁴ The core of the 3C section is a civilian chief, administrative assistant, database manager, and contractor accountability specialist. Staffing of the 3C is dependent on the mission, but the requirement is to be capable of running 24-hour operations. Realistically, the mission to track 48,000, or even 1,000 civilian contractors, is a major effort requiring a requisite staff able to sustain a vast database. This mission currently does not account for the many contractors that operate throughout each region supporting non-logistic related tasks. Nor does it give the AFSBs the authority to manage contractors working for other services such as the Air Force or the Marines. The regional AFSB does not have the capability to appropriately manage thousands of logistic contingency contractors. It is an overwhelming mission.

A more reasonable solution is to mandate that all military units employing contractors be held responsible for accounting for and reporting their contractors to the regional AFSB. Currently AMC uses the Synchronized Personnel Operational Tracker (SPOT) to account for contingency contractors operating in a region. SPOT is a web-based, net-centric, scalable construct that maintains accountability and provides standard and ad hoc reports on the status of contingency contractor personnel.²⁵ Although recently published DoDI 3020.41 requires that defense contractors awarded external support and system support contracts input employee

data and maintain by-name accountability in SPOT's joint database, and states that the geographic COCOM may designate use of the database for theater support contracts,²⁶ it gives no direction on who should track and maintain all the data. Rather than have the AFSB's 3C responsible for inputting the majority of the data and continually verifying all inputs in SPOT, military units should be required to use SPOT to report all their supporting contingency contractors, send the data through command channels, and have them report statuses to the AFSB. This will help keep the data updated and assigns one agency, the AFSB, accountable for managing the regional database. Department of the Army should approve and disseminate Army-wide policy that directs battalion-sized units and above to sustain, manage, and regularly report the status of their supporting contractors. Otherwise, the AFSBs have been given a complex mission that is currently unrealistic.

Issue – AFSB/PARC Relationship

An ongoing issue for AMC is the split between acquisition/contracting support and sustainment. Although somewhat corrected at the national level with the creation of LCMCs, the separation continues to challenge AFSBs.

The Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition oversees contractors and contracting operations throughout the DoD. Subordinate to the Deputy Under Secretary are regional Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC) offices that are traditionally centrally located so a few specialized acquisition and contracting personnel (both civilian and military) can support a wide array of forces. When a contingency occurs, the PARC deploys contingency contracting officers (CCO) who usually consolidate in one location to perform contracting support. The CCOs occasionally co-locate with operational commands, but generally locate close to the vendor base or as dictated by the operational mission/situation considerations. Per DoD, the CCO's missions are to serve as the lead unit for contingency contracting in support of the regional combatant commander and execute the PARC's Contracting Support Plan (CSP). If designated by the COCOM as the lead service for contracting in a joint operation, the PARC may plan and command all joint contracting mission support.²⁷

Currently the PARC is an acquisition officer designated and assigned to each region/theater that reports to the major command. Although an AFSB HQs staff can do extremely limited contracting, its embedded contractors are placed there specifically to interface with the larger, regional military contracting community. As stated earlier, the Army Contracting Agency retains technical control (TECHCON) over the PARC and as such, the PARC retains

TECHCON over the CCOs. In order to establish synergy and command and control of all life-cycle management issues in a region/theater, the COCOM must mandate the CCOs to report to the regional AFSB, even if the PARC maintains TECHCON of the CCOs. AMC Contracting Command is currently drafting Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) General Officer decision #6 that would recommend transferring all contingency contracting officers to AMC, but the Army Contracting Agency disagrees with this change. Until the AFSB has the ability to command and control, rather than just coordinate with all contingency contractors in theater, it will not be able to effectively streamline end-to-end logistics management.

Issue – AFSB/LCMC Relationship

Another concern for the AFSB is its ability to affect LCMC forward-deployed personnel. AMC purposefully gave the regional AFSBs the authority and capability to reach back and obtain assistance from AMC's four Life Cycle Management Commands (LCMC). These commands, the Aviation/Missile LCMC, the Soldier/Ground Systems LCMC, the Communications/ Electronics LCMC, and the Joint Ammunition LCMC, are newly designed organizations that align the four AMC systems oriented commands (the former Aviation/Missile Command, Tank/Automotive Command, Communications/Electronics Command, and Joint Munitions Command) with the project managers with whom they already work. LCMCs provide equipment, procurement, and fielding, through sustainment and retirement support, ie; actions across the entire life cycle of the systems associated with their LCMCs. Many times they forward-deploy selected personnel to maintain situational awareness of ongoing support issues. AFSBs are expected to pass their supported units' logistics needs and issues through LCMC senior command representatives and other forward LCMC personnel who then get additional assistance from the CONUS-based LCMCs.

In order for this to work, the AFSBs and LCMCs must clearly establish and closely manage their working relationship to ensure responsive, efficient, and timely logistics support. The recent initiatives by LCMC better integrate Army acquisition, logistics, and technology efforts through closer alignment of AMC's major subordinate commands with their regionally associated PEOs. The single LCMC commander is the focal point and has primary responsibility for the life cycle of all of the groupings of systems assigned to the LCMC.²⁸ Although commodity-specific, the LCMCs' goals are quite similar to that of the AFSBs, streamlining ALT support and enhancing modular sustainment worldwide, while AFSBs support on a regional-basis. As directed by AMC, LCMCs are expected to initially coordinate regional activities through AFSBs rather than circumventing them and conducting direct interaction with customer

units. But contrary to this guidance, LCMCs are currently establishing a soldier focused life-cycle (SFL) management program. SFL is an organizational and management transformation for weapons systems management that focuses on integrating LCMCs, related PEOs, and supporting functions at the operational level.²⁹ This program enables the PM to make decisions that capitalize on their weapon's go-to-war capability while maximizing system performance. Although SFL is a positive initiative designed to improve life-cycle management, if not managed closely it has the potential for LCMC representatives to evade the AFSB and work directly with units. As a result, AFSBs become unaware of AMC-related operations occurring in their battle space. Consequently, AMC's desire to have a regional AFSB as the single ALT face to the combatant commander is compromised.

Undoubtedly, LCMC representatives, SFL teams, and PM-hired contractors will continue to remain in and support forward regions. However, to meet the AMC Commander's intent for AFSBs being the one voice for ALT functions, and in order to facilitate coordination and simplify operations, AFSB and LCMC personnel must continually coordinate and communicate. The AFSB staff should interface daily with LCMC forward employees. More importantly, AMC leadership must hold LCMC personnel accountable if they discover LCMCs are not working regional issues through the supporting AFSB. A professional and responsive AFSB/LCMC relationship, using one voice and working towards one objective, needs to be maintained to alleviate any additional sustainment burdens on the warfighter.

Issue - Command and Control

As stated earlier, the AFSB is responsible for overseeing all AMC-sponsored activities and organizations within its regional area of operations. Based on this mission, the most disconcerting issue is the AFSB commander's lack of command and control, since he/she is ultimately held responsible for accomplishing the missions. As currently designed, the 18-30 personnel headquarters section is assigned and commanded by the AFSB commander as are some support elements that are operationally controlled by the AFSB. But many, if not most, AMC forward representatives merely coordinate or collocate with the AFSB. PEOs and PMs continue to work for and report to the Army Acquisition Executive (AAE), LCMC senior command representatives embed with the AFSB but continue to report to their parent organizations, and contingency contractors are controlled by the regional PARCs. Additionally, depot maintenance teams and forward repair activities deployed on a military installation or forward base remain assigned and accountable to their parent depot/LCMC. Unless a clear command relationship is determined and published, the AFSB commander has neither the

authority to ensure his/her priorities are being met nor the ability to lead and command most AMC-forward personnel.

The US Army and AMC agreed to position a centrally-selected colonel as the AFSB commander, rather than a senior executive service coordinator, due to the wide breath of agencies and vast scope of issues that occur in a theater of operations. AMC senior leaders concur that the position requires multifunctional talents, let alone some acquisition/contracting training or background, while operating in an austere operational/tactical environment.³⁰ The field experiences and multifunctional attributes of a US Army logistics colonel are not found in most specialized senior Army civilians. Additionally, a military commander brings significant rank and authority to the table when interacting with senior tactical leaders and supporters. Certainly one can justify the need for an experienced, multifunctional leader who can balance multiple priorities and work the issues through completion. Since the AFSB warrants a senior military commander, the most effective method for ensuring integration of the various AMC-related operations in a region is to attach all forward activities to the AFSB. Per AMC planners, the AFSB commander sets the priorities and workloads of all AMC assets within his/her AOR, at least that is the intent.³¹ Currently there is no documentation supporting that objective. Undeniably when attached, PEOs, PMs, LCMC forward-personnel, contingency contractors, and all other AMC forward-deployed representatives and teams should continue to keep their parent organizations informed of their operations, but they all must answer to the AFSB commander. This gives the AFSB commander the ability to better effect operations. Publishing attachment orders formally attaching all AMC-forward personnel to the regional AFSB would empower the AFSB and its commander to truly fill their intended role – act as the single integrated and coordinator of ALT support to the warfighter.

Conclusion

The Army Field Support Brigade Headquarters is not designed as a large, manpower intensive, organization. It consists of a core contingent of senior logisticians and contracting experts who provide detailed, informed analysis and products for their supporting COCOM and SC(T) - a single, integrated entity, easily accessible, operating in an environment where logistical challenges can be raised and resolutions obtained in areas where AMC elements could weigh the battle.³² AMC tasks AFSB subject-matter experts to identify requirements and when required, oversee modular teams and units that are tailored to accomplish specific missions in a theater without duplicating capabilities. Once these assets are required, the brigade grows proportionally, in order to support the forward warfighter.

The success of the AFSBs is incumbent on several areas. First, all AFSB HQs positions must be manned with competent and experienced logistics and contracting personnel. With such few authorizations, each billet is critical to mission success. Second, the AFSB must not be expected to be the sole manager nor required to personally account for all US and US-led logistics contractors on the battlefield. Instead, it should be the custodian of the theater database. Third, AMC must further define and AFSBs must carefully cultivate working relationships with agencies such as the PARC and LCMC. These organizations must be linked, as they are all critical to ensure single supply chain management and integrated logistics support to the warfighter. Lastly, AMC must grant AFSB commanders the authority to command all AMC-forward elements in their region. If all AMC forward activities are not formally attached to the AFSB, the AFSB commander lacks the authority to truly be the regional decision-maker for ALT support. When the US Army and AMC resolve these four concerns, the AFSB has the inherent capability to integrate all ALT functions into one organization. It can and will meet the intent of the AMC Commander as the focal point for all AMC operations in a specified area of responsibility. The United States Army and Army Materiel Command designed a viable organization that can successfully meet the critical need to integrate acquisition, logistics, and technology on a regional basis. Once the issues are decided upon, it is the responsibility of each AFSB to promote itself to its supporting COCOM, aggressively pursue, synchronize, and resolve regional sustainment issues, and remain a force-multiplier on today's modular, expeditionary battlefield.

Endnotes

¹ R.L. Brownlee and General Peter J. Schoomaker, *Defense Subcommittee Hearing on FY05 Army Budget: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2004*, Posture Statement presented to the 108th Cong., 2d sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 05 February 2004).

² Ibid.

³ Department of Defense, "Focused Logistics Joint Functional Concept," December 2003; available from http://www.dtic.mil/jointvision/jroc_fl_jfc.doc; Internet; accessed 27 January 2006.

⁴ Charles Baldwin and James Knies, "AMC Lessons Learned Program Overview to General Griffin," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, United States Army Materiel Command Headquarters, 17 November 2005.

⁵ Colonel Stephen Gerras, ed., *How the Army Runs, A Senior Leader Reference Handbook 2005-2006*, (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College, 30 September 2005), 264.

⁶ Army Materiel Command, "The Army Materiel Command Strategy," March 2004; available from http://www.amc.army.mil/about_amc/StratPlan04.pdf; Internet; accessed 28 November 2005.

⁷ AMC was established as a materiel development and logistics command on 08 May 1962 and became operational on 01 August of that year. AMC's first commander, Lieutenant General, later promoted to General Frank Besson Jr, oversaw the command's predominant task of materiel life-cycle management. He focused on balancing user needs with program resources. During his seven-year tenure, his 186,000-person command established over 60 project managers (PM) responsible for acquiring and managing critical, leading military systems. But the two commanding generals that followed Besson had a different approach and decreased AMC's focus on and number of PM programs. The 1970s/post-Vietnam era saw additional cuts in AMC military and civilian manpower. During these years, and well into the mid-1980s, AMC changed names several times, set up subordinate readiness and development commands, and adopted a more military, less corporate feel. The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act and 1987 Packard Commission recommendations transferred the majority of its project managers to a newly created Army Acquisition Executive. After this split, the early-to-mid-1990s was known as a "turbulent period," due to the need to downsize the Army, as well as to continue to respond to new missions. Numerous headquarters reorganizations as well as several subordinate command consolidations, redesignations, and activations resulted from AMC's continued downsizing. During this time, AMC retained three of its traditional, commodity-focused commands – Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM), Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM), and Tank and Automotive Command (TACOM) as well as established the Army Field Support Command (AFSC) and Research, Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM). The onset of the 21st century, including the events surrounding the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, has required AMC to keep on transforming. AMC's logistics missions continue to evolve, its organizations continue to adapt, and its requirements continue to change. Throughout its four decades of existence AMC has downsized from 186,000 personnel to a leaner workforce of 50,000, while continuing to sustain strategic-level logistics support for the soldier.

⁸ Gregory L. Alderete, "Nonstandard Logistics Support in the Stryker Brigade Combat Teams", *Army Logistician* (March-April 2005): 9.

⁹ Scott R. Gourley, "Army Materiel Command History", in *Army Materiel Command*, ed. Ross W. Jobson and Peter M. Antell (Tampa, FL: Faircount Publishers, 2005) 159.

¹⁰ Michael A. Robinson, "Life Cycle Management Commands – A Better Way to Support the Soldier", in *Army Materiel Command*, ed. Ross W. Jobson and Peter M. Antell (Tampa, FL: Faircount Publishers, 2005) 23.

¹¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Field Support Brigade - Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, Field Manual Interim 4-93.41, version 1.0 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, October 2005), v.

¹² Henry Buck, "AFSB Mission – AMC Commander's Preliminary Guidance," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, United States Army Materiel Command Headquarters, 22 December 2005.

¹³ Charles W. Fick, Jr, "Pushing Readiness Power Forward: Army Field Support Brigades Move Out in Europe and Iraq", *Army Magazine*, December 2005, 23.

¹⁴ U.S. Army Field Manual Interim 4-93.41, 2-1.

¹⁵ William Rittenhouse, United States Army Materiel Command Future Operations Officer, interview by author, 22 December 2005, Fort Belvoir, VA.

¹⁶ Gregory L. Kee, "Army Field Support Brigade Briefing," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, United States Army Materiel Command Headquarters, 19 October 2005. AFSB headquarters size dependent on current missions. TOE = table of organization and equipment personnel authorized remain standard for all AFSBs while TDA = table of distribution and allowances personnel authorizations fluctuate between AFSBs. As of 22 December 2005, TOE positions include one military commander, one military contracting/ALT officer, one senior military logistics NCO, and seven plans and operations military personnel. The remaining 8-20 positions are a combination of military and civilian personnel.

¹⁷ William Rittenhouse, "Army Modular Force Logistics Assistance Program Support Concept," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, United States Army Materiel Command Headquarters, 22 December 2005. The figure depicts a functional layout, not an organization chart, since all the agencies are ALT organizations but many are not assigned or attached to the regional AFSB. The acronyms are; Army – Corps or above HQs, SC(T) – Sustainment Command (Theater) (usually the senior logistics headquarters in a COCOM's AOR), DLA – Defense Logistics Agency, DCMA – Defense Contract Management Agency, USACE – US Army Corps of Engineers, FAST – Field Assistant in Science and Technology Activity, STAT Tms – Science and Technology Teams, PEO/PMs – Program Executive Officers, Program Managers, PMO Tms – Program Manager Officer teams, REF – Rapid Equipping Force team, MSC/SRA – Major Subordinate Commands/Special Repair Activities, FRAs – Forward Repair Activities, LAO/LSE – Logistics Assistance Officer, Logistics Support Element, BLST – Brigade Logistics Support Team, LARs – Logistics Assistance Representatives, LOGCAP – Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program, CC Teams – contingency contractors teams.

¹⁸ U.S. Army Materiel Command, *Deployment, Employment and Redeployment of Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology Resources – Army Field Support Brigade*, Army Materiel Draft Regulation 500-4 (Fort Belvoir, VA: U.S. Army Materiel Command, January 2006), I-5k.

¹⁹ Ibid, I-5k.

²⁰ Department of Defense, *Contractor Personnel Authorized to Accompany the U.S. Armed Forces*, Department of Defense Instruction Number 3020.41 (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 3 October 2005), 25-27.

²¹ Major General Brian Geehan, "Joint Logistics," lecture, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 26 January 2006, cited with permission of MG Geehan.

²² U.S. Army Materiel Command, *Contractors Deploying with the Force*, Army Materiel Command Interim Regulation 715-9 (Fort Belvoir, VA: U.S. Army Materiel Command, February 2006), I.1.8.

²³ Ibid, I.4.1.

²⁴ U.S. Army Field Manual Interim 4-93.41, E-1.

²⁵ U.S. Army Materiel Command Interim Regulation 715-9, I.1.8.

²⁶ Department of Defense Instruction 3020.41, 11.

²⁷ Gregory L. Kee, "Army Sustainment Command Update," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Fall 2005 PARC Conference, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, United States Army Materiel Command Headquarters, 02 November 2005.

²⁸ Major General James H. Pillsbury, "Life-Cycle Management - Reducing the Burden on the Soldier", *Army Logistician*, March-April 2005, 3.

²⁹ Ibid, 4.

³⁰ Thomas Preston, AMC Current Operations Doctrine and Policy team, e-mail message to author, 30 January 2006.

³¹ Abraham Anderson, AMC liaison officer to Combat Arms Support Command (CASCOM), e-mail message to author, 30 January 2006.

³² Fick, 24.