

TRANSFORMING ARMY FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

TRANSFORMING ARMY FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

by

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ABSTRACT

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It has been a common presumption over the last generation that the United States Army Finance Corps is going away. Part of this presumption is due to the misperception that the Defense Integrated Military Human Resource System (DIMHRS) will make the Finance Corps obsolete. The Finance Corps, as well as the broader financial management (FM) community, remains relevant, primarily because of its proven value to an Army at war, and its demonstrated relevance in support of commanders, units, and warriors of all Services. However, significant problems exist -- the latest effort at transforming the Finance Corps, called Financial Management Redesign (FMR), eliminated all financial management commands at battalion level and higher, leaving in its wake an operational void. This paper will explain why the US Army Finance Corps and the financial management (FM) mission have survived and thrived to this day, why DIMHRS does not foretell the death of the Army Finance Corps, and how FM Redesign has been a failure. The paper also provides recommendations on how to restructure the financial management force in order to greatly improve financial management support to the Army and our Soldiers.

TRANSFORMING ARMY FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Why the US Army Finance Corps has Survived

The United States Army Finance Corps and the broader financial management community (financial management is defined as the merged core operations of finance and resource management)¹ have supported Soldiers, units, and commanders from the time of the first Paymaster General in 1776² to the present day. Finance operations include banking, currency, procurement support, disbursing, economic development, and military pay. Resource management operations include budgeting, funding, cost management, and accounting. During the last twenty years, the Army has focused much scrutiny on the financial management community, causing considerable angst in the ranks. Paradoxically, during this same twenty year time period, the financial management force has proven to be a critical combat and logistics multiplier for Soldiers, commanders, and units during the Army's deployments from OPERATION JUST CAUSE all the way through OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) and OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). The Army's focus on restructuring or outright eliminating the Finance Corps caused many senior financial management (FM) leaders to adopt a defensive posture. These leaders continually defended the Finance Corps' relevance, and regularly examined new force structures in order to best adapt to the changing environment.

DIMHRS and the Military Pay Function

Much of the speculation regarding the potential demise of the Finance Corps has been related to the emerging Defense Integrated Military Human Resource System (DIMHRS), and the *false assumption* that DIMHRS implementation will precipitate the

transfer of the Finance Corps' mission, as described above, to the Adjutant General (AG) Corps. In fact, when implemented, DIMHRS will take only *one small part* of the financial management mission – military pay – and transfer it to the AG Corps. The Army financial management mission is much broader than just military pay; in fact, military pay functions comprise only a fraction of financial management functions as outlined in financial management doctrine.³

The other *false assumption* about DIMHRS is that its implementation is imminent. However, there have been a great many delays in the DIMHRS implementation timeline over the last ten years.⁴ At present, there is not even a reliable timetable for the implementation of the system⁵ after the Army revoked its DIMHRS implementation Operations Order.⁶ DIMHRS has been delayed five times just since 2006.⁷ The Commanding General of the US Army Human Resources Command, MG Sean J. Byrne, said “the program is nowhere near where it should be for a March (2009) fielding...”⁸ This paper does not assert that DIMHRS is a bad system, or that it should not be implemented; DIMHRS will probably make personnel and military pay functions more efficient. The main point is that the Army should have attempted to turn the above assumptions about DIMHRS into facts before modifying the FM force structure.

FM Support of the Deployed Force

The Finance Corps has survived and thrived into the twenty-first century because its officers, noncommissioned officers, and Soldiers have repeatedly and successfully demonstrated their value and relevance on the battlefield. The following examples from recent operations demonstrate two points. First, these operations illustrate the Finance Corps' importance in supporting the deployed combined/joint force over the last twenty

years. Second, these operations illustrate that the military pay function is an important, yet very small component of the overall financial management mission.

OPERATION JUST CAUSE (1989)

The United States launched OPERATION JUST CAUSE in December 1989 to remove Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) General Manuel Noriega from power, after he was indicted in the United States on drug-trafficking charges.⁹ The primary Army finance missions during OPERATION JUST CAUSE were procurement support, banking and currency support, weapons for cash operations, and enemy prisoner of war processing. Military pay support constituted an important, but relatively minor, element of the overall finance mission.¹⁰ Illustrating this point is the following excerpt from the Finance Just Cause First Impressions Report: “While pay of soldiers at the right time is important, the other support provided ensured units could obtain necessary supplies and equipment, either through the economy or the supply system, and was vital to mission success in (this) austere/light environment.”¹¹ Another after action report from the field stated “this operation gave us the opportunity to learn some lessons about the finance wartime mission: providing pay support to soldiers will not be our first priority ... the need for ... rapid procurement action ... banking functions, confiscating cash and valuables were the initial finance missions...”¹²

OPERATION DESERT SHIELD / DESERT STORM (ODS/ODS) (1990-1991)

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August of 1990, President George H. W. Bush determined that “this will not stand.”¹³ Then President deployed forces to defend Saudi Arabia, thereby launching OPERATION DESERT SHIELD, which became OPERATION DESERT STORM in January of 1991. Throughout ODS/ODS, financial management units executed the full range of their battlefield functions. Early deploying

finance units focused on procurement and contracting support – because what the Army could not *bring*, it had to *buy*. Finance units and Soldiers provided currency to enable commanders and leaders to purchase critical supplies and services such as day laborers, construction materials, service and rental contracts, and a host of other essentials for mission and troop support.¹⁴ Describing the Finance Corps' efforts in the operation, then-Major General Gus Pagonis, Commanding General of Army Central Support Command said:

Having been here from the start, I can attest that the rapid build-up just could not have been accomplished without the contribution of the Finance Corps, particularly in supporting procurement operations. Finance placed purchasing power in the commander's hands by allowing ordering officers to immediately procure goods and services from the local economy to sustain our forces. This has become especially important, given our very extended supply lines ... they serve as true combat multipliers by enabling the log base to be established as commanders obtain what they need locally. Bottom line is that there is definitely a need for a TOE finance structure in our Army. It works, and should not be civilianized nor combined with any other branch.¹⁵

Although military pay support (primarily the input and management of combat pay entitlements for Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines) was a significant part of the finance mission during ODS/ODS, it certainly did not compare to the sheer volume and complexity of procurement and banking support. According to an article entitled "Corps Finance Rides to Soldiers' Rescues" ¹⁶ by Michael Hixson, 49th Public Affairs Detachment, the life support of the combat forces was enabled in large measure by finance soldiers. Mr. Hixson described how the finance mission in Saudi Arabia was to control and supply currency, fund post exchanges, and purchase for units and Soldiers essential items such as water, food, transportation, and shelter.¹⁷ Military pay support was clearly an important, but lower, priority. My own deployment as a finance lieutenant in support of ODS/ODS further substantiates the above report.

OPERATION RESTORE HOPE (1993)

The United States initiated OPERATION RESTORE HOPE to protect United Nations (UN) relief workers in Somalia. The US-led coalition approved by the UN Security Council in December 1992 was charged to create security and to protect humanitarian operations in that war-torn land.¹⁸ Financial management support for the operation focused on contractor support, local hiring, banking capability, finance policies, claims, and financial advice;¹⁹ in other words, many of the same battlefield functions that were executed in support of earlier operations. Military pay support was important, but amounted to a fraction of the FM units' deployed mission.

Other Stability Operations of the Mid/Late 1990s

OPERATION PROVIDE PROMISE (Balkans), OPERATION SUPPORT HOPE (Rwanda), OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY (Haiti), and OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR (Bosnia) had in common three things: a.) finance units deployed early to provide critical procurement, banking, and currency support; b.) financial management officers, noncommissioned officers, and Soldiers provided timely and accurate advice to commanders and other leaders; and c.) military pay support constituted a small piece of the broader financial management mission.²⁰

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) / OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF)

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the United States commenced the Global War on Terror (GWOT). Once again, financial management units deployed in support of these operations, and proved to be a combat and logistics multiplier for the deployed force.²¹ Finance units deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait to provide finance support for commanders, to support Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines, and to ensure funds were properly allocated and controlled. I can testify from my own OEF

deployment (as a finance lieutenant colonel Task Force Commander) that once again, military pay support was an important, but relatively small, part of the financial management wartime mission in support of GWOT. The US Army Finance Corps, and the broader financial management community, have survived and thrived because of their relevance to the Army, especially during the last twenty years in support of an Army and Joint Force at war. The eventual implementation of DIMHRS will not alter this equation, since, as shown above, military pay is but a small fraction of the overall financial management mission.

Purpose of Financial Management Redesign (FMR)

Financial Management Redesign was predicated in part on the assumption that DIMHRS would be implemented Army-wide around the same time as the transformation of the financial management force structure.²² However, DIMHRS is in the midst of yet another delay, and there is currently no reasonable expectation that the system will be operable in the near term. Clearly, the Army made a mistake by transforming its financial management force structure before any force structure savings could be realized from DIMHRS implementation. A 'DIMHRS dividend,' if you will, never materialized.

Execution of FMR

Financial Management Redesign originally had as its focus the merger of the finance and resource management career fields; this part of FMR has since been successfully executed,²³ and is of great value to the Army. The genesis of the major problems the Finance Corps would experience under FMR was first reported in the spring of 2004, when the Chief of the Finance Corps announced that there had been changes to the originally approved FMR concept: "The most significant change to the

approved FMR is in our force structure.”²⁴ He then went on to explain that all finance battalions, finance groups, and finance commands would be inactivated.²⁵ While well-intentioned, the elimination of finance battalions, finance groups, and finance commands fundamentally changed the way FM support is provided, and led to a host of problems in the ensuing years. These issues are covered later in this paper.

All command select list (CSL) positions in the finance branch were eliminated. Financial management companies (FMCo) and financial management centers (FMCs) were created and activated to replace the legacy finance battalions, finance groups, and finance commands. The new FMCos are commanded by majors, and fall under the command and control of Sustainment Brigades (SBDE). A SBDE has a financial management support operations (FM SPO) section, consisting of two FM Majors, and one FM master sergeant. The new FMC is a staff element that reports to the Theater Support Command (TSC).²⁶

New Structure Under FMR: The Financial Management Center (FMC)

According to post-FMR financial management doctrine, the Financial Management Center “asserts technical coordination over all Financial Management Companies and detachments in theater.”²⁷ This one statement is particularly illustrative of how dysfunctional an FMC is. An organization either has command, control, and commensurate accountability, or it does not. A Financial Management Center simply does not, and is therefore unable to “assert coordination.” Those who promulgated this aspect of Financial Management Redesign may not have realized the inherent difficulties in “asserting coordination.” A more cynical view would be that by framing the new doctrine this way, it would have the effect of marginalizing senior Army finance officers holding these FMC director positions. The FMC does not have command or real

accountability for *anything*, other than its own small staff. The deputy director of an FMC recently stated that while his organization has been given responsibility for military pay, it does not own any of the financial management units in its footprint.²⁸ Those FM units are instead commanded and controlled by their parent sustainment brigades. The OIF after action report from another FMC reported that the “FMC needs command and control over finance assets if they are being held accountable by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), the United States Army Finance Command (USAFINCOM), etc, for day to day (finance) operations.”²⁹

Another FMC deputy says that his unit “continues to be recognized as a separate brigade in most respects.”³⁰ “We must conduct the bulk of our own staff support out of hide”,³¹ he continues, describing how the inadequate force structure of the organization causes his FMC staff officers to perform as shadow S1, S3, S4, and S6 officers. The requirements placed on his FMC require that these staff functions be performed, but an FMC does not have the organic capability or structure to execute these functions. This is pure adhocism. He then describes how the FM Company in the FMC footprint is utilized by its parent sustainment brigade:

The Special Troops Battalion (STB) frequently imposes priorities which conflict with the company’s mission requirements. This situation, along with a lack of mid-level NCO manpower strength and experience in the company, causes mission impairment. The FMC provides technical oversight of the company’s technical mission. However, we are limited in our authority due to the command relationships. Unity of command is necessary to ensure unity of effort. Unity of effort (from a financial management perspective) is from FM detachments to FM companies, to FMCs...logically, unity of command should follow the same structure. Therefore, FMCs should become commands with command and control over FM companies in order to establish a proper alignment between command and effort...³²

Prior to the implementation of Financial Management Redesign, the last legacy finance group responsible for finance operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) was the 13th Finance Group (FG), based out of Fort Hood, Texas. The unit that replaced the 13th FG in theater was the 336th Financial Management Center. While the 336th FMC *replaced* the 13th FG, there was no transfer of authority ceremony – specifically because the 336th was not going to *have* any authority. From the 13th FG’s official AAR: “The Financial Management Center is not staffed to provide its own life support, yet during our transition, 336th FMC shadow staff sections had to be incorporated into the structure. The FMC has a Unit Status Report (USR) reporting requirement, sourcing responsibility, and order production requirement...the FMC is not resourced to have personnel for these functions...the FMC is viewed as a quasi-command entity, and is at times treated as a staff section.”³³

New Structure under FMR: The Sustainment Brigade Financial Management Support Operations Section (SBDE FM SPO)

The Sustainment Brigade FM SPO’s mission is to coordinate and integrate all financial management operations within its brigade’s area of responsibility.³⁴ Since SBDEs have command and control over Financial Management Companies, this is logical. The problem is that financial management operations are distinct from logistics operations in many aspects. Finance officers often are US Treasury account holders, and have pecuniary liability for the funds under their control. The Army should not treat cash, funding, and financial management operations as just another class of supply. Senior financial management officers with the requisite knowledge, skills, experience, and *authority* are required in order to ensure the effective FM support of deployed forces. When there is a loss of funds, for example, there should be a clear line of

authority in the financial management channels, and the loss of funds should not serve as a distraction to logistics commanders. A recent example from current operations serves to highlight this issue. In 2008, one of the Financial Management Companies in OIF experienced a significant loss of funds. The incident had the potential to cause a great deal of embarrassment because of the likely fraud and potential criminal conduct involved in the case. Both Department of the Army and United States Central Command (CENTCOM) tasked Army Central (ARCENT)/Combined Land Forces Component Command (CFLCC) C8 to investigate and resolve the loss of funds incident;³⁵ these headquarters did not task the Theater Support Command and the responsible sustainment brigade. This tasking constituted a tacit acknowledgement that a loss of funds was a financial management issue, not a logistics issue. Logistics commanders have enough responsibility to move, arm, supply, and fix the force. They should not be also held responsible for all of the currency, vaults, and funding in their areas of responsibility while being allocated only company-sized elements to execute financial management support (Financial Management Companies are discussed below).

Referring to logistical command and control of financial management units, a recent FM Company Cdr said “unfortunately, it will take a massive loss or complete mission failure to get any traction here.”³⁶ Another finance officer who recently relinquished FM Company Command said of the brigade FM Support Operations cell “they have no interaction with the FM Company or the Financial Management Center”³⁷ and described how instead, the FM SPO was tasked only to execute the brigade’s budget. These reports from the field are not merely a selective sampling from some

disgruntled Army finance officers; rather, they point to some serious flaws in the post-FMR force structure.

New Structure under FMR: Financial Management Companies

FM Companies are poorly designed and inadequately structured. The mission of the legacy finance and soldier support battalions is now executed by financial management companies under the Financial Management Redesign construct. However, a company simply cannot provide the same capability for the Army and for Soldiers as a battalion. An illustrative example is the 10th Soldier Support Battalion's operations during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) 7. As the only finance/ soldier support battalion in the Combined Joint Operational Area (CJOA) during OEF 7, the 10th SSB executed *operational level FM missions*, including the complete reform of the Afghan National Police (ANP) pay system and the implementation of electronic funds transfer (EFT) technology throughout the CJOA.³⁸ The commander of the 10th SSB regularly interacted with the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) staff, and interfaced with the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) in order to reform the ANP pay system. After Financial Management Redesign, the 10th SSB's old mission is now the mission of a financial management *company*. A lesson learned from the 10th SSB's OEF 7 AAR stated:

... the finance battalion structure works. Especially in a theater like OEF, the senior finance officer on the ground should be a command select list battalion commander. With the new company structure, the senior finance officer on the ground could be a no-time-in-grade Major with 10 years in the Army. Strategic and operational missions require someone more senior, with the requisite knowledge, skills, and experience. Also helps in working with Division / Joint Task Force staff. Understand the new FM structure is already a done deal, but there could be a window to revisit, with the expanding Army and continuing GWOT.³⁹

Then-Major General Benjamin C. Freakley, commanding general of Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 76 in OEF 7, remarked on at least three separate occasions⁴⁰ that the 10th SSB's achievements in Afghan National Police pay reform significantly contributed to the accomplishment of the CJTF's strategic campaign objectives. The 10th SSB played a key role in synchronizing the efforts of local Afghan leaders, provincial governors, local police chiefs, Department of Treasury officials, and other officials in order to manage ANP pay reform. At present, there is no finance or soldier support battalion in OEF; the lone FM *company* currently serving in OEF plays no role in ANP pay reform⁴¹ – not because the mission is complete, but because it is simply too much to expect from a company sized element, especially one that is several layers removed from the combined joint task force. Another example of a legacy finance battalion performing an operational level mission is the 230th Finance Battalion's operations during OIF 2. The 230th FB had as part of its mission set the restoration of commerce, and the stabilization of the economy in the Salah Din Province of Iraq.⁴² Post-FMR, the Army no longer has finance battalions to execute missions such as these; restoration of commerce and stabilization of an economy are clearly not company level collective tasks.

An FM company is commanded by a major, has a company first sergeant, and also has a staff sergeant major. This paper contends that this is an inherently unhealthy and problematic structure. One FM Company commander said that this structure was so confusing that it led to constant tension between his sergeant major and his first sergeant, despite the commander's best leadership efforts.⁴³ One FM Company is assigned per SBDE. Sustainment Brigade commanders, as is their prerogative, have

moved the FM Co underneath the SBDE Special Troops Battalion (SBTB), which puts the *Major* FM Company Cdr on a par with the SBTB's *other company commanders*, all of whom are captains. The FM Co's detachment commanders (captains) are subsequently put on par with the *lieutenant* platoon leaders throughout the SBTB. Under FMR, it can be daunting for an FM Company Cdr to execute his/her mission under this structure. One FM Company Commander recently stated "...the current structure has tied our hands and created unrest..."⁴⁴ She also reported that "...the entire structure has greatly hindered our ability to operate across the board and is not in the best interest of the mission or Soldiers."⁴⁵

An additional problem is the lack of mentorship and professional development for the officers in a financial management company. As the senior FM officer in the brigade, the major company commander can provide some guidance and career advice to his or her junior officers, but there are limits to a major's experience and perspective. A major can only advise senior captains to a certain extent. For mentorship of the major, there are not many good answers. Battalion and brigade commanders, regardless of branch, quite obviously can mentor the FM company commander in many areas, but there is a void at the senior FM officer level.

When the Army implemented FMR, it did so without much regard to history. The superb financial management support provided to warfighters during the last twenty years of deployments was enabled in part by a definitive command and control architecture – CSL selected battalion and brigade commanders directing financial management support in their respective areas of responsibility, and being held accountable for all FM operations. In defense of the Army having finance battalion and

brigade level commands, Chief of the Finance Corps Colonel Jerry Heard described how the 1990 Army learned a lesson from the 1975 Army: “When Vietnam got larger, I saw finance units activated and, before they could deploy, had to be reorganized, restaffed, and retrained before deployment. I refer specifically to the 64th Finance Unit...which went from a small unit under a Captain to a full-sized unit led by a LTC.”⁴⁶ He then described how during ODS/ODS, the financial management community was able to call on its Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) units and deploy them immediately without having to restructure.⁴⁷ In 1995, Brigadier General Neil Snyder, Commanding General of the Soldier Support Institute, observed how critical the Finance Corps’ command structure was to providing effective financial management support to Soldiers and units. CPT Mark Davis reported that BG Snyder “...had words of praise for our command structure ... that mirrored the structure and professional development of the other branches of the Army.”⁴⁸

Recommendations to Improve FM Support to the Army

To address the problems outlined in this paper, the Army could take two major actions, both of which are explained below: create a command and control architecture within the financial management community, and transform the United States Army Finance Command. These actions could significantly improve financial management support to the Army and its Soldiers.

Recommendation: Create a Financial Management Command and Control Architecture

Create a command and control architecture that puts the responsibility and accountability for financial management operations into the hands of board selected FM battalion and brigade commanders. These are the senior financial management leaders who would have operational responsibilities in theater. Deactivate the dysfunctional

financial management centers that were created under Financial Management Redesign, and in their stead activate financial management groups (FMG) with CSL-selected colonel commanders. Activate financial management battalions (FMB) with CSL-selected lieutenant colonel commanders. This recommendation is not about building empires or fiefdoms; rather, the goal is to improve financial management support to our Army. The best way to do that is by holding finance commanders accountable – the Army way.

This paper does not contend that the Army's sustainment brigade commanders are unable to command and control the financial management units in their organizations. Army officers have grown up in, and continually promulgate, a "can do" culture, and will always make whatever structure that currently exists work as best they can. That is what our logistics commanders are doing every day in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in the rest of the Army. Since the implementation of FMR, the FM community has conducted training for incoming logistics commanders. The FM School Commandant from Fort Jackson and the Chief of the FM Branch from Human Resources Command in particular have conducted briefings for students at logistics pre-command courses. Current and future sustainment brigade commanders will do their utmost to accomplish their assigned missions. This recommendation of a command and control FM structure, though, is about improving the way the Army conducts its financial management operations and putting field grade expertise into the FM support construct. Logistics commanders have tremendous responsibility to move, arm, supply, and fix the force. In addition to all of those critical functions, they should not also be held responsible for all

of the currency, vaults, and funding in their areas of responsibility, especially since they have only company-sized financial management units to execute these FM missions.

Recommendation: Transform the US Army Finance Command (USAFINCOM)

The Army should transform the United States Army Finance Command (USAFINCOM) into an organization that can actually fulfill its doctrinal mission. At present, it cannot. Army financial management doctrine states that USAFINCOM's mission is to be the "link for tactical units to HQDA, US Treasury, Federal Reserve Banks, and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service for all finance operations. USAFINCOM is the HQDA finance strategic management arm performing oversight and policy for Army finance operations..."⁴⁹ The reality is that USAFINCOM is unable to fully execute these missions. USAFINCOM has no real authority, does not command anything, and has so few people (fifty)⁵⁰ that it can only serve effectively as a Washington DC-based staff agency subordinate to the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Operations. USAFINCOM is far removed from the field; it has to exert tremendous efforts just to have any influence at all in operational level financial management operations. This lack of operational effectiveness is not the fault of the officers, civilians, and noncommissioned officers assigned to USAFINCOM (they are some of the very best the financial management community has to offer); rather, it is a reflection of the current force structure and its resultant constraints.

The Army could transform USAFINCOM into a viable, effective organization, capable of becoming the key link for tactical financial management units to HQDA, US Treasury, Federal Reserve Banks, and DFAS. USAFINCOM could also provide the theater commander a single point of contact for financial management operations. Specific recommendations follow:

- Rename it the US Army Financial Management Command (USAFMCOM).
- Move USAFINCOM out of Washington DC, perhaps putting it under Forces Command (FORSCOM). The void left in the Pentagon by removing USAFINCOM should be filled with staff financial management experts (civilian and military) who could advise and assist the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Operations).
- Make it a deployable entity, with early-entry capability.
- Give it responsibility to synchronize a financial management “patch chart” with the Army’s patch chart; it could then represent the FM community at sourcing conferences, manage FM deployments, and oversee FM unit predeployment training.
- Enable it to command and control all financial management forces in theater, if the scale of the operation so required.
- Source with a Brigadier General Commander.

In a large theater of operations, USAFMCOM could serve as the single point of entry for all financial management operations in theater, and could be deployed in lieu of a financial management group, or could be deployed if there are already two or more FMGs in theater, depending on the scale of the operation. In a smaller contingency operation (for example, a Brigade Combat Team (BCT) deployment), USAFMCOM could deploy a slice element (early entry team) to execute the strategic and operational level financial management missions that are always required whenever Army forces are deployed. Let us examine this scenario a little further. A BCT deploys, and its task organization includes a Finance Detachment (commanded by a captain). Under the

transformed USAFMCOM recommended above, this deployed BCT could be supported by an early entry team from USAFMCOM, whose mission would be to execute those operational-level financial management functions that are not typically expected or required from a captain and his tactical-level finance detachment. In a case such as this, the USAFMCOM early entry team could execute the following missions:

- ensure accurate accounting for the combat operation (the US Congress and the Department of Defense will always be interested in capturing and reporting costs)
- provide a link from the BCT to the Financial Management National Providers such as the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller (ASA FMC), the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), Department of Treasury, and the Army G1
- establish central funding operations in advance of follow on forces
- execute FM policy functions (for example, entitlement determination)
- synchronize efforts with the Army Service Component Command (ASCC) G8

Conclusion

The US Army Finance Corps remains relevant because of its proven value to an Army at war, and because of its consistent support of commanders, units, and warriors of all Services. However, significant shortfalls exist, especially after the problematic implementation of Financial Management Redesign (FMR). This paper has explained why DIMHRS does not foretell the death of the Army Finance Corps, has illustrated how Financial Management Redesign (FMR) has been a failure, and has provided

recommendations on how to reform financial management operations in order to improve financial management support to the Army and our Soldiers.

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Financial Management Operations*, Field Manual 1-06 (Washington, DC, 21 September 2006), 1-1.

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