Strategy Research Project

HOW A DECADE OF CONFLICT AFFECTED JUNIOR LOGISTICS OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

BY

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HOW A DECADE OF CONFLICT AFFECTED JUNIOR LOGISTICS OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

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Over the last decade, the Army experienced many changes while fighting two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The more transformative changes were demands placed on Soldiers and leaders to resource the war effort, introduction of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process and reorganizing operational units to a modular force structure. These changes created demands on personnel and leader development systems. As a shortage career field, junior logistics officers in Ordnance, Transportation and Quartermaster were particularly stressed as Army requirements outpaced its inventory of junior logistics officers. Challenges such as missed opportunities for broadening assignments, fragmented command relationships, disjointed unit deployments, multiple “in-lieu of” missions and filling MiTT requirements disrupted normal professional development timelines. As stewards of the Army, senior leaders should understand that junior officers had different developmental experiences. Although battle hardened, junior logistics officers may require guidance transitioning to garrison operations and expect senior leaders to balance opportunities for education, training and broadening experiences outside the Army to prepare them for senior leader positions in the future.

HOW A DECADE OF CONFLICT AFFECTED JUNIOR LOGISTICS OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

> If we don't get the people part of our business right, none of the other decisions will matter.[1]
>
> —Admiral Michael G. Mullen,
> Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Over the last decade the Army has experienced many changes while fighting two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Several of the more significant and transformative were the personnel demands placed on Soldiers and leaders to resource the war effort, the introduction of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process and reorganizing combat units to a modular force structure. This paper addresses how these changes affected the junior logistics officers' professional development which was particularly stressed as a shortage career field within the Army.

War Necessities – Junior Logistics Officer Personnel Management

For nearly a decade of persistent conflict, the United States Army was stretched to provide the forces necessary. Specifically the Army's populations of junior logistics officers (Ordnance, Transportation, and Quartermaster) in the ranks of Lieutenant and Captain experienced the requirements of supporting the nation's war effort while serving in a shortage career field. As a group, the personnel management situation for junior logistics officers experienced the "perfect storm" of limited supply (due to reduced accessions during the late 1990's drawdown) and high demand since 2001.[2] The Army caused the high demand by increasing its junior logistics officer requirements by more than 35% while reorganizing to a modular force structure.[3] At the same time new logistics officer accessions remained stagnant and the operational tempo steadily increased.[4] Although officer accessions gradually improved, the initial shortage

continues to have a lasting negative affect across the Army with units being filled between 50-80% of their required junior logistics officer requirements.[5]

To prioritize and distribute officers in the force, the Army's Human Resources Command (HRC) uses Army Manning Guidance (AMG) issued by the Army's Chief of Staff. The prioritization process becomes a critical tool when managing a shortage career field such as junior logistics officers. Under the 2008 guidance, deploying Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) received first priority for fill, but received only 80% of junior logistics officers due to the Army's limited inventory overall. Most other units were given lesser priority with non-deploying units at the lowest priority – sometimes being manned at 50% of their requirements.[6]

In addition to the struggle to meet wartime requirements the demand for junior logistics officers continued climbing when the Army created Military Transition Teams (MiTT) above existing documented manning requirements to train Iraqi security forces in 2007.[7] While logistics captains represented 17% of the Army's total captain authorizations from 2007-2009, they comprised 38% of the MiTT captain requirements.[8] This additional burden made filling deploying units more difficult and increased the heavy deployment load for logistics officers.

Also significant, the logistics captain's population was particularly stressed by serving multiple 12 month deployments. Over 97% of logistics captains deployed at least once, more than 40% deployed twice and many endured a third or fourth deployment in their short careers.[9] While the Army's high operations tempo requiring multiple deployments was not unique to logistics, it can cause second and third-order effects in a shortage career field such as the junior logistics officer population.

Systemically, an action taken to fill units can result in a reaction which adversely affects the entire population. For instance, filling MiTTs and BCTs limited officers available for other units, staff assignments, attendance at professional education courses, as well as officer professional development opportunities as defined by DA PAM 600-3, the Commissioned Officer Professional Development pamphlet.[10]

Timing becomes a key factor driving junior officer assignments dictated by the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process. The ARFORGEN process is a progression of management actions that builds unit readiness over time resulting in recurring periods where units are trained, ready and available for worldwide operational deployment and employment.[11] The three ARFORGEN operational readiness cycles, or force pools, are: Reset, Train/Ready and Available. Ideally, units should move from one force pool to the next on event driven timelines based on Army requirements. Since implementing ARFORGEN's in 2006, the majority of Brigade Combat Teams and support units rotated through three cycles within a year, experiencing only a 12-month unit dwell time before deploying again. The Army's goal is to extend ARFORGEN into a 36 month process to achieve a 1:2 ratio of deployment to dwell time – deploying for one year with two years in the Reset, Train and Ready cycles.[12]

However, an ARFORGEN weakness is the lack of alignment with the Army's personnel system. While the ARFORGEN process dictates timing adjustments for most Army institutional systems by prioritizing training and equipping of units, it is not fully aligned with personnel management processes. For example, currently six logistics Captains Career Courses (CCC) graduate officers at six different times who are then assigned across the Army – with the largest portion going to deploying units. These

graduations do not align with deploying unit timelines, Mission Readiness Exercises (MRE) or redeploying units entering reset as determined by ARFORGEN. Ideally, when the "bus" pulls up to a unit returning from deployment to deliver officers for assignments to other units or to the Captains Career Course, another "bus" should pull up behind that bus and discharge a like number of replacements.[13] Unfortunately, the Army does not have enough CCC graduating captains, or the correct timing, to make the “busses” line up properly.

Due to this misalignment between the Army’s leader development system and ARFORGEN, the prescribed professional timelines for logistics captains became untenable as HRC attempted to fill more junior logistics officer requirements than the inventory could support. To manage this imbalance, HRC focused on filling deploying units and MiTT positions which were the priority over officers’ assignment desires, their attendance to CCC, professionally enhancing programs, or remaining in non-deploying units. To meet the manning requirements of combat units, HRC often reassigned the limited pool of junior logistics officers sooner than the two-year time on station goal – on average, moving them every 18 months to a new duty station.[14] Conversely, other junior logistics officers remained at operational units longer than preferred as senior commanders leveraged HRC to retain officers after redeploying to provide continuity and overcome projected shortages. While this approach supported the unit, it often forced officers to execute another deployment and delayed their professional development opportunities for broadening assignments such as advanced civil schooling or serving on higher headquarters staffs.

Due to operational requirements many junior logistics officers did not attend the Logistics Captains Career Course (CCC) on time disadvantaging them when Brigade Commanders required CCC completion before placing officers into company command. For logistics officers, this results in commanders placing non-logistics trained officers, such as Infantry, Armor or Artillery, into logistics specific company commands. While such actions are a commander's prerogative, they do not account for the non-standard career timelines junior logistics officers must confront. As a result, the number of junior logistics officers who require attendance at the Logistics CCC has caused a significant backlog and further assignment delays as officers wait for class openings.[15]

While adjustments and delays to professional development timelines are challenges many officers confront, during the recent years of conflict junior logistics officers were pressed to keep up with their peers. They often missed opportunities for company command or were placed into command too soon with over 30% of the logistics company commands being commanded by pre-CCC officers as logistics officers with CCC were not available.[16] In addition, junior logistics officers experienced decreased opportunities for advanced civil schooling, special programs such as Training with Industry (TWI) and other professionally broadening positions. They often had less time to develop important relationships with their peers and leaders because they spent less time in assignments.

The Function and Dysfunction of the Modular Army Structure

> …we're certainly a different Army than we were in 2001, and we remain an Army in transition – always working to learn, always seeking to adapt to meet the needs of the Nation. We have become a modular force, and we've aligned ourselves to the force management process called ARFORGEN.[17]
>
> Martin E. Dempsey, Commander, TRADOC

In 2003 the Army began reorganizing into a modular structure to better support the needs of combatant commanders.[18] Under this structure the Army developed the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) as its basic deployable maneuver unit to become the building blocks for Divisions and Corps depending on a combatant commander's requirements. The Army created 43 active duty BCTs and 38 active duty Multifunctional Support Brigades to include Sustainment Brigades where many junior logistics officers served.[19] The Sustainment Brigades have a standard headquarters and various subordinate units. While the Brigade is able to deploy as a whole, operations in the Iraqi and Afghan theaters required separate deployments of the Sustainment Brigade Headquarters and its subordinate battalions, companies, platoons, all the way down to team level. This piecemeal deployment sent the Brigade's subordinate units into theater under a new headquarters and chain of command.[20] Units then quickly integrated into a another parent headquarters and overcame the built-in challenges of not training together by learning new operational procedures, mission sets, command communications as well as the personalities in the organization while under combat conditions. Although, the Army has always task organized forces, the modular organizational structure is more fluid and easier to manipulate within the ARFORGEN force management process. For the Army, modular units are now easier to deploy separately from their habitual headquarters with little consideration for training and deploying together.

Describing the experiences of the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB) deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF 07-09) from 2007-2008 demonstrates the turbulent and dynamic characteristics of a modularly designed unit.[21]

The 17th CSSB deployed with its headquarters company and none of its organic home station companies which were transferred to an ad-hoc battalion headquarters to complete their deployment training and preparations. The deployed 17th CSSB headquarters initially assumed command responsibility of a diverse mix of five companies - Infantry, Military Police, Engineer and two Transportation companies conducting supply distribution operations across northern Iraq. Within three weeks of the 17th CSSB headquarters completing its Relief-in-Place/Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) in Iraq, three of the subordinate companies began their RIP/TOA transition with inbound replacement companies from the Continental United States (CONUS). Continuous unit transitions became the norm as 19 units (Companies and Detachments) and over 2,300 soldiers rotated through the 17th CSSB during its 15-month deployment.[22] These units included 8 Maneuver, Fires and Effects units and 11 Sustainment units, of which 10 were Active Duty, 2 Reserve and 7 National Guard from locations across the United States to include Puerto Rico, Alaska and Texas. Even more drastic was the 20 Battalion Headquarters and 169 Company and Detachment transitions the 17th's higher Sustainment Brigade Headquarters (the 3d SB) managed during its 15 month deployment.[23] This demonstrated the dynamic complexity common for modular deployed units.

As a result, determining the number of junior logistics officers who experienced the complexities of modularity depicted by the 17th CSSB OIF rotation is difficult. For example, the active duty sustainment structure in the Army reveals that just over 50% resides in Brigade Support Battalions (BSB) assigned to BCTs and BSBs where their subordinate companies do not deploy separately from their parent BCT. However, the

remaining Army active duty sustainment units are non-BCT organizations supporting echelons above brigade operations and usually deploy as separate Brigade Headquarters, subordinate battalions, companies and detachments. The Army's non-BCT sustainment structure includes 13 active-duty modular Sustainment Brigades (SB) and other modularly designed organizations representing approximately 49% of the Army's active duty sustainment capability.[24] With nearly half the Army's logistics structure in non-BCT units, potentially half of the junior logistics officers may have experienced the challenges of split deployments common to modular units.

However, the ARFORGEN rotation process reveals both positive and negative aspects of training, deploying and employing units under a modular structure. While the modular structure and ARFORGEN were successfully implemented during the Iraqi and Afghan operations – there are still many unknown affects. Of specific concern was the scatter-shot approach of designating logistics units from across different headquarters, stations, locations and components to piece together larger units to support combat operations. This could be called a "jigsaw puzzle" approach where each smaller piece fits together to create the whole. In most cases the whole was a Sustainment Brigade and the puzzle pieces were battalions, companies, detachments and teams that never worked together until arriving in a combat theater. While this jigsaw structural framework can benefit an officer's professional development by providing a diverse set of missions, units, and leadership styles to sample from, it can also provide disjointed development as junior officers move from one leader to the next without benefiting fully from the experience. These junior officers potentially miss out on establishing relationships built on positive rapport of mutual trust with a senior leader who can

provide professional growth counseling and help create an individual development plan as prescribed in the Army's manual on leadership (FM 6-22, Army Leadership).[25] Such relationships take time to develop - identifying strengths and weaknesses, goals and perspectives of the subordinate that enables effective teaching, coaching and mentoring by the senior leader.

Consider that junior logistics officers assigned to a Sustainment Brigade or Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB) may experience three or four different battalion commanders and multiple brigade commanders during a 24 month command period while moving though the phases of the ARFORGEN cycle. One company commander in the 17th CSSB activated a new modular logistics company, trained the company under one battalion commander, operated under two others while deployed, then redeployed to find a different commander in charge at home station – a fourth battalion commander, in addition to as many different brigade commanders. This scenario was not uncommon, where often, even competent logistics Captains would experience varying degrees of success building relationships with new staffs and battalion commanders as they operated in this turbulent environment.

Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) – Added Turbulence in a Modular Army

There is a notion proffered by many Army leaders that the Army remains under-manned and over-missioned. ARFORGEN is a way to right size the force for the mission – but a relevant question becomes at what price to the professional development of junior logistics officers? The fragmented experiences of officers assigned to modular logistics units where units are routinely reassigned from one higher headquarters to another is compounded by the way the Army trains and deploys units through the ARFORGEN process. Non-BCT modular logistics units, specifically

Sustainment Brigades and Combat Sustainment Support Battalions, often prepare and deploy their subordinate units along ARFORGEN dictated timelines separate from their own. This frequently results in a shuffle of units, normally at battalion and company level, moving from one headquarters to another at home station. Transferring to another headquarters for command and control (C2) creates normal transition frictions associated with operating in a new environment under new leadership. This friction is worsened as many higher level battalion headquarters were under-staffed, pieced together organizations comprised of non-deploying manpower from other units and the garrison. Additionally, it was not unusual for a deployed Sustainment Brigade or Combat Sustainment Support Battalion headquarters to continue its habitual relationship with its home station by attempting to manage home station units from its forward deployed location at the expense of focusing on theater operations. The irony was the reduced ability of the parent headquarters to focus on its subordinate units pre-deployment actions in contrast to ARFORGEN's intended goal of providing priority for manning and equipping of these same units from the highest Army levels.

Junior logistics officers experienced another challenge caused by the specific capabilities and missions needed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many units trained and deployed to execute missions they normally would not conduct. The ARFORGEN process identifies units projected to provide specific "in-lieu-of" missions and capabilities to a combatant commander. Some in-lieu-of missions, such as an Infantry Company assigned a convoy security escort mission, were appropriate, but others such as a Transportation Company assuming the same escort mission, presented a greater risk to mission success and Soldier survivability. Likewise, the Army's modular structure and

ARFORGEN process provided limited linkage between units preparing to deploy and their in-theater higher headquarters, resulting in Battalion and Brigade Commanders having limited or no involvement with the training conducted prior to receiving units in combat, potentially increasing the risk to mission accomplishment and force protection. The potential for increased risk was even more acute with units executing "in lieu of" missions.

Junior logistics officers encountered a variety of circumstances while assigned to a modular logistics unit deploying in the ARFORGEN process. Three specific examples experienced by units of the 17th CSSB included conducting deployment training under an ad-hoc higher headquarters because the battalion headquarters was deployed, training and deploying a transportation unit to execute convoy security missions, and training a Maintenance Company to perform base defense and convoy escort duties at three separate deployed locations under three different higher headquarters while contractors conducted maintenance operations. In these and other instances, logistics units deployed and performed missions other than their core mission. Therefore, given the value placed on deployment experiences, there could be positive and negative professional development consequences for junior logistics officers who experienced "in-lieu-of" mission deployments. While they may gain combat and leader experiences, they may also miss out on expanding their logistics technical expertise.

Gaps in Officer Professional Development – the Price of Being Over-Extended

> If we include accidental death, which frequently is the result of high risk behavior, we find that less young men and women die in combat than die by their own actions.[26]
>
> Army HP/RR/SP Report 2010

The cohort of leaders developed in combat over the last decade have become proficient at operating within a fast paced and rapidly changing tactical environment. They are adept at troop leading procedures but less familiar with how to use their skills in the more regimented, policy driven and regulated environments while on their posts in Army Garrisons. Junior logistics officers are no exception.

In response to an increasing number of suicides, sexual offenses and criminal offenses by Soldiers, the Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN George Casey, directed a study which was released in July 2010. The Army's Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention Report (HP/RR/SP) identified that a gap in leadership contributed to high risk behavior of Soldiers.[27] The study described "the lost art of leadership" in garrison and indicated that a rigid and regulated environment required in garrison to ensure good order and discipline is deemed less important by Soldiers and young Army leaders in comparison to deployed combat environments. The report indicated leaders were prone to look the other way when Soldiers have problems with drugs and alcohol or marital issues. All too often leadership requirements in garrison were viewed as unnecessary intrusions to block leave, "reset", and personal time emphasized after re-deploying.

While the HP/RR/SP Report makes many recommendations – one of the most important revolves around leadership. The report calls for increased leader intervention to prevent high risk behavior and suicides within the ranks.[28] Senior leaders adept at leading in garrison must impart to their junior officers leadership principles critical for caring about soldiers in a non-deployed environment.

Adding to the concern about the "lost art of leadership" is the speed that junior officers advanced in rank, necessitated by wartime personnel requirements. Officers saw promotion timelines accelerated from lieutenant to captain at just over 36 months, reducing the overall time to achieving the rank by as much as 18 months compared to more senior year groups.[29] Additionally, the Army's junior officer population enjoyed a promotion rate in the high 90 percentiles as well as the introduction of double below the zone promotion selections from Captain to Major.[30] While there may be no doubt junior officers are talented, capable and hardened by combat, many could have gaps in experience due to quicker promotion timelines.

The Army's challenge now is to identify and close the gaps in officer development highlighted by the Army's Chief of Staff. Senior leaders should focus this combat experienced cohort of young officers toward home station requirements such as becoming proficient in training, discipline and garrison operations to prepare for the future.[31] One could argue the potential of this generation of officers exceeds that of previous generations because their deployed experiences provide them an excellent foundation for developing additional leadership attributes. Ultimately officers should develop traits required by senior leadership positions described by GEN David H. Petraeus as "officers who have the added dimensions of brains, judgment, and the ability to communicate… to the entry-level qualities of physical and mental toughness, discipline, serious about mastering their profession, and being responsible to their troopers."[32]

Continue to Evolve – a Holistic View

The scope of effects of modularity and ARFORGEN on the professional development of junior logistics officers are not yet fully realized or understood. The

Army initiated the modular structure and ARFORGEN process to provide more efficient, prioritized resources, and tailored capabilities to the war fighter. However, in determining the success of modularity and ARFORGEN, Army strategic leaders should assess the affects the structure and process have had on the tactical level units of the Army and its leaders. Junior logistics officers specifically experienced the negative consequences of added turbulence, unstable tour lengths, less exposure to core logistics tasks, and shorter "leader to led" relationships due to these changes. On the other hand positive experiences emerged as junior logistics officers may have benefited from successfully dealing with turbulent and dynamic situations, exposure to diverse styles of leadership, and the development of self reliance. Over time it should become evident what impact modularity and ARFORGEN had on leader development. Taking a systems approach to evaluating these processes could help determine their effects.

Organization theorist and systems thinking pioneer, Russell Ackoff, presented the perspective of organizations as human enterprises with people as the integral components of organizations and systems.[33] Ackoff encourages leaders to view their organizations holistically and use a systems thinking approach to decision making by realizing that initiatives and actions are dynamic, nonlinear, and create second and third-order effects and unintended consequences.[34] Similarly, the dynamics of the Army's modular logistics structure and ARFORGEN process created intangible affects which are hard to quantify; these include individual motivation, unit cohesion, command climate, and leadership, which have either supported or detracted from the development of junior logistics officers. Understanding the affects and inter-connections of the

modular structure and ARFORGEN initiatives on officers' development over the last nine years is yet to be realized but should continue to be studied.

One danger senior officers should guard against is allowing junior logistics officers to see themselves as part of a bureaucratic system that places more emphasis on moving them through the ARFORGEN process on repeated deployments under multiple leaders instead of serving in an organization that emphasizes the value of education, professional relationships, leadership, and institutional support of their development. Throughout the continuing transition and adaptation of ARFORGEN and modularity, senior leaders should evaluate ARFORGEN in terms of the entire Army, and identify changes that could improve officers' professional development while having negligible impacts in other areas.

Perhaps becoming less modular may benefit the Army's leader development environment as well as increase unit cohesion and reduce operational risk. In addition, enacting policies into the force management system that ensure units deploy together with units they habitually train and work with or limit deployments to battalion level through better force sourcing could reduce the disjointed deployments of modular logistics units. For example, when units must deploy as pieces to be joined in theater, replicate the conditions by using the "train as you fight" concept and bringing Reserve, National Guard and Active units from dispersed locations during a major exercise to train transition tasks in a condensed timeframe similar to RIP/TOA operations. If this is not feasible then linking dispersed units together via teleconferencing or with temporary duty prior to deployment could foster a degree of collaboration.

Recent history indicates the Army values units that train and deploy together as exemplified by the deployment of the entire 101st Airborne Division to Afghanistan in 2010, which contrasted how most units rotated into Iraq and Afghanistan as brigade or smaller units since 2004.[35] During this recent deployment, the 101st Airborne Division's Commander, MG John F. Campbell, enjoyed the chance to focus his entire training effort on deploying his four brigade combat teams and aviation brigade to Afghanistan. This dynamic gave the 101st Division a level of "campaign continuity" and cohesion MG Campbell said was proving invaluable. Most important, he said, were the relationships he had an opportunity to build, that could prove critical in Afghanistan.[36] The value of training together and deploying together is not only critical at division level with habitual BCTs but, also at lower levels, within logistics formations. Wherever possible senior leaders should keep teams together and extend the 101st Division's experience to smaller formations.

Importance of "Leader to Led" Relationships in Junior Officer Development

Training and deploying modular logistics units together, such as Sustainment Brigades and Combat Sustainment Support Battalions (CSSB), develops coherent teams and relationships that, as the commander of the 101st Airborne Division stated, are invaluable. Specifically, training and deploying entire units fosters critical "leader to led" relationships between senior and junior logistics officers. Unlike logistics officers assigned to Brigade Support Battalions in BCTs who generally enjoy a longer association with their units and BCT senior leaders, those assigned to Sustainment Brigades and CSSBs over the last nine years often have not. Senior logistics leaders must remain in contact with junior officers they served with, even if only briefly. They should ensure institutional dynamics and assignment turbulence does not leave junior

logistics leaders feeling abandoned. Also, they should continue to provide guidance and mentoring across unit boundaries throughout a subordinate officer's career. As leadership expert John Gardner asserts

> …the hierarchical position of leaders within their own system is of limited value, because some of the most critically important tasks require lateral leadership – boundary-crossing leadership – involving groups over whom they have no control. They must exercise leader like influence beyond the system over which they preside.[37]

If the Army continues to deploy logistics units disjointed from logistics officers' parent units, then senior leaders should embrace those who pass briefly through logistics organizations and continue to communicate and provide professional guidance and advice for the long term.

As senior leaders provide mentoring, professional advice and assistance they must recall that Lieutenants and Captains have specific requirements for their stage of professional development that demands more from their senior leaders, to ensure they become grounded, and develop expertise that serves as the basis for their future careers. They should also realize the current generation of officers is different by having developed operational expertise honed in combat that senior officers likely did not have at the same stage of development. Senior officers should remain current and understand that professional timelines, assignment options and the "good" jobs may be different from the pre-9/11 Army. Understanding the changed Army requires senior officers to seek out the newest officer development policies and options from Human Resources Command and the Combined Arms Center and provide career advice that does not mirror their personal career experiences. Ultimately, confidence and competence is what leaders should engender; the professional confidence that will produce the attribute of candor, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates espoused as

critical to the Army's future by saying, "One thing will remain the same. We will still need men and women in uniform to call things as they see them and tell their subordinates and superiors alike what they need to hear, not what they want to hear."[38] Acting on Secretary Gate's guidance is tougher when no "leader to led" relationship exists because mentoring relationships are instrumental to the professional development of junior officers. Feeling comfortable enough to provide candid feedback is more apt to occur when officers have solid professional relationships with their senior leaders.

Conclusion – While Senior Leadership is Clearly Key – Questions Remain

> First and most important, the young Soldiers and leaders in our formations will emulate what they see, not what they hear…discussing the effects of modularity on leader development. We've changed the way leaders interact with each other. The traditional mentoring, coaching, and teaching two levels down have been somewhat disrupted by modularity.[39]
>
> GEN Martin E. Dempsey

The Army strives to develop officers with strong moral and ethical character, who are physically and mentally tough and are competent in their fields. Emulating these attributes as GEN Dempsey suggests is critical. But for some junior logistics officers this may be difficult due to the modular Army structure and ARFORGEN process which fragments the operational experiences of many officers as they move from one leadership team to another. This lack of continuity can disrupt the critical "leader to led" relationships junior logistics officers should develop with senior officers.

Additionally, the Army's modular structure and ARFORGEN process, combined with junior logistics officers being in a shortage career field during a time of high operational tempo caused turbulence and imbalanced their professional development paths. Institutional processes and pressures often resulted in junior logistics officers

experiencing repeated deployments, shorter times between assignments, delays in attending the Captains Career Course, commanding companies too early or very late, and missing opportunities for professionally broadening positions creating gaps in their professional knowledge. Studies such as The Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention Report described one area of experience gap as the lost art of leadership in garrison where young officers lack the knowledge to conduct home station training or ensure good order and discipline in a non-combat environment.

Stretched by the war effort and the turbulence of the modular logistics structure, junior logistics officers can feel disconnected and non-affiliated with a team. Similar to the concern about BCTs being disconnected from a Division HQ and General Officer leadership, Sustainment Brigades and Combat Sustainment Support Battalions are disconnected from each other as well as their companies, platoons and teams. The desire to train and deploy together and build cohesive and consistent relationships valued by the Division HQ to the BCT level also applies to the Sustainment Brigade and lower echelons within the modular logistics structure.

Because senior Army leaders are stewards of the Army's core values, expert knowledge, and selfless service, they must learn that junior officers experienced a developmental environment vastly different than their own. Junior officers are battle-hardened, confident, shaped by over nine years of combat and tactically competent but sometimes one-dimensional but may lack specific experiences senior leaders may take for granted. For example, senior leaders should consider including knowledge about standards and traditions in mentoring and counseling programs for junior officers who may not possess this basic information. They should also realize that while operational

time is highly valued officers should have a balance in assignments and experiences. While the Army's personnel system needs to be better synchronized with the ARFORGEN process to improve balance – the Army has yet to achieve this. In the meantime, the Army's senior leaders and proponents should be involved in ensuring the Army provides junior officers balance in operational and institutional assignments, training, and educational opportunities by assisting officers to obtain broadening experiences outside the operational Army.

Difficult but important questions for the Army remain concerning the effects of modularity and ARFORGEN related to officer professional development. For example, will concerns about officer professional development evolve into assessments critical enough to force adjustments to the Army's structure and force generation model? How are the Army's modular units impacting professional development? How can the Army change ARFORGEN to accommodate the human dimension? How far do the stresses junior logistics officers' experience in modular units extend to other officers assigned to modular support units such as Military Police or Engineers? Is a lasting relationship between "leader to led" paramount to establishing a culture and climate the Army desires? What is the best professional development model for future officers? And, how should the Army adjust and balance its leader development components of Professional Military Education (PME) and training, operational experience and self development to best cultivate skills required for a complex, uncertain and competitive security environment of the future?[40]

Institutional changes as comprehensive as modularity and the ARFORGEN process are hard to measure. Particularly when evaluating the intangible effects of

professional development which is contingent on multiple factors and influences that often do not immediately materialize and require long lead times to understand. Research, analysis, collaboration and compromise are needed to implement the best possible solutions – a systems thinking approach would consider potential unintended consequences of the changes undertaken. The Army should invest in better metrics, modeling capabilities and analytics to gather, sort and assess the potential impact of proposed policy changes with continuous evaluation after implementation. As an initial step, GEN Dempsey ordered studies and interviews with senior leaders to increase awareness about leader development issues driven by modularity and ARFORGEN and about the subject of "The Army Profession" in general.[41]

Lastly, as DOD moves toward reducing active duty end-strength, the Army must guard against cutting enabling forces at the cost of continuing the negative dynamics junior logistics officers encountered during the last decade. The Army should take a guarded approach to structural redesign realizing the limitations of an all-volunteer force to regenerate its officer corps because unlike the civilian labor force the Army cannot laterally recruit experienced officers to fill gaps. Also, the Army must approach proposed cuts, retention incentives and accession programs deliberately to ensure mistakes experienced as a result of the last major draw-down are not repeated.[42]

However, the Army should confidently move forward knowing that while stretched for nearly a decade of war, Soldiers and the junior officers who led them, perform magnificently. With the current emphasis on The Army Profession and filling existing experience gaps the Army can benefit by leveraging the combat experiences of its junior officers. It appears they will develop into an experienced group of multi-

dimensional senior leaders who are capable, adaptable, and competent – prepared to lead the Army against the uncertain and ambiguous threats of the future.

Endnotes

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