

Transforming Logistics For a New Era

By **LTG Raymond V. Mason**
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When the war in Afghanistan began more than 12 years ago, the Army was in the midst of a transformation. Then-Army Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki stated that the Army had to do two things well each and every day: train soldiers and develop leaders. For the past decade, our superbly trained logisticians have brilliantly sustained demanding combat operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq as well as many other missions worldwide in support of national security objectives.

Next year, as the nation completes its mission in Afghanistan, we once again will find ourselves in a period of transformation. Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh and Army Chief of Staff GEN Raymond T. Odierno are leading the



transformation to a more regionally aligned Army, moving from a force that has been primarily focused on counterinsurgency and stability operations to an Army that must execute missions effectively across the spectrum of conflict, through the triad of prevent-shape-win. Transformations require hands-on leadership and broad buy-in to new technologies and culture change. While learning from our past success, we must be willing to take calculated risks as we develop and implement new solutions to deal with new threats and exploit new opportunities.

Just as we have for 238 years, I am confident that we will meet these challenges and help Army leadership transform and prepare for whatever the nation asks of us next.

Our role in the G-4 is to develop and publish common-sense plans, programs and policies, and to justify sustainment funding, so logisticians Armywide can carry out the transformation. Last year on these pages, I outlined our supporting logistics road map. This year, I want to report on our progress in retrograding equipment from Afghanistan and resetting it to improve readiness; fielding the global combat support system; improving our property accountability; and implementing new readiness and force structure initiatives.

Retrograde and Reset

Our No. 1 job remains the support of the current fight as our soldiers advise and train the Afghan National Security Forces. While we have started drawing down and getting our equipment out, we clearly understand that operations drive the retrograde pace and our focus must continue to be “sustainment forward.”

Since December 2012, we have reduced the amount of equipment in Afghanistan from \$28 billion worth to \$23 billion worth. Our goal is to bring out another \$17 billion



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worth of equipment before the end of combat operations in December 2014. We published guidance to the team in Afghanistan detailing what we need back for the total Army; what can be divested either by selling it or transferring it to the Afghans or other allies; and what we can turn over to the Defense Logistics Agency's defense reutilization and marketing services because it is obsolete and beyond repair, and we don't want to invest, or can't afford, any more maintenance dollars. Today, there are about 1.2 million pieces of equipment in Afghanistan, of which we will bring back 702,000 pieces to be reset at our depots or home stations for return or redistribution to units by the Army's lead materiel integrator, executed by Army Materiel Command (AMC).

We have studied the retrograde lessons learned from Iraq and applied them as we developed the plan for the Afghanistan drawdown. Afghanistan, however, is not Iraq; it is several orders of magnitude more difficult. It is landlocked; it is more dispersed; there is no “catcher's mitt” as we enjoyed in Kuwait; and while there certainly was combat during the drawdown/retrograde in Iraq, there is a different, highly lethal enemy in Afghanistan—the forces are truly conducting retrograde operations while in contact.

Our challenge and task in G-4 are to provide clear and concise guidance on what to bring back. Much of the equipment in Afghanistan is our latest and most modern capability sets. It is the armored fleet and our Army's most modern communications, intelligence and counter-improvised explosive device (IED) equipment. We need it back to issue to units as we transition to a more versatile Army with operationally adaptable land forces that will take on a broad range of missions in support of the national defense strategy.

For example, Army staff, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and AMC executed a study of the future requirements for MRAPs. Based on that study, we plan to retain a significant number, and they will be put in units such as transportation companies for convoy security; at posts, camps and home stations for training; in Army prepositioned sets around the world; and at Fort Bliss, Texas, as part of the Brigade Modernization Command to test in our premier combat laboratory. The decision to not

ARMY LOG BY THE NUMBERS

702,000 PIECES OF EQUIPMENT TO MOVE OUT OF AFGHANISTAN

HOW LONG NEEDED TO RESET ALL EQUIPMENT FROM AFGHANISTAN

3 years

GLOBAL USERS OF GCSS-ARMY BY 2017

160,000+

\$197,000,000,000

VALUE OF ARMY PROPERTY REALLOCATED SINCE 2010 THANKS TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF'S CAMPAIGN ON PROPERTY ACCOUNTABILITY



The Army has \$17 billion in equipment in Afghanistan that must be returned to the United States before the end of combat operations in December 2014. Much of the equipment in Afghanistan is the Army's latest and most modern.

retain all of the MRAPs is based on the fact that while they were effective in Iraq and Afghanistan and saved many soldiers' lives, that technology is likely not what we will need in the near future as our current and potential enemies continue to develop more lethal IEDs.

We have multiple ways to get equipment retrograded, but all have their challenges. Flying the equipment out is expensive, and there are geopolitical and physical issues with moving equipment through Pakistan and a northern route via several Central Asian countries. These fragile transportation networks make the mission unprecedented in complexity, which is why we have been so deliberate in analyzing what to bring home and what to divest.

Returning the remaining \$17 billion of equipment to the continental United States will cost \$2 billion to \$3 billion, assuming we experience no significant lines of communication degradation; if we do, the cost will most certainly be higher. We informed Congress that it will cost \$9.8 billion and take three years to reset our equipment. The Army's government-owned depots and arsenals will do much of the work; directorates of logistics and units will also execute a portion of the reset mission at their installations.

The most important purpose of the retrograde mission is to improve readiness across our Army. Right now, the Army's equipment on hand (EOH) rate is about 88 percent (for example, for every 100 items authorized in a unit, 88 pieces are on hand), which is below the Department of Army readiness goal of 90 percent EOH. Once the equipment from Afghanistan is reset and reissued to units, however, it will increase the total Army's EOH to approximately 92 percent—the highest level in decades.

To fully prepare our depots and arsenals for the reset, the G-4 partnered with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and

Technology and AMC to publish a 10-year strategic plan. It is the Army's guidebook to shaping both the workforce and capabilities of our organic industrial base. This plan also provides a framework to sustain our Army as we transform to a regionally aligned, primarily continental U.S.-based, expeditionary Army.

GCSS-Army

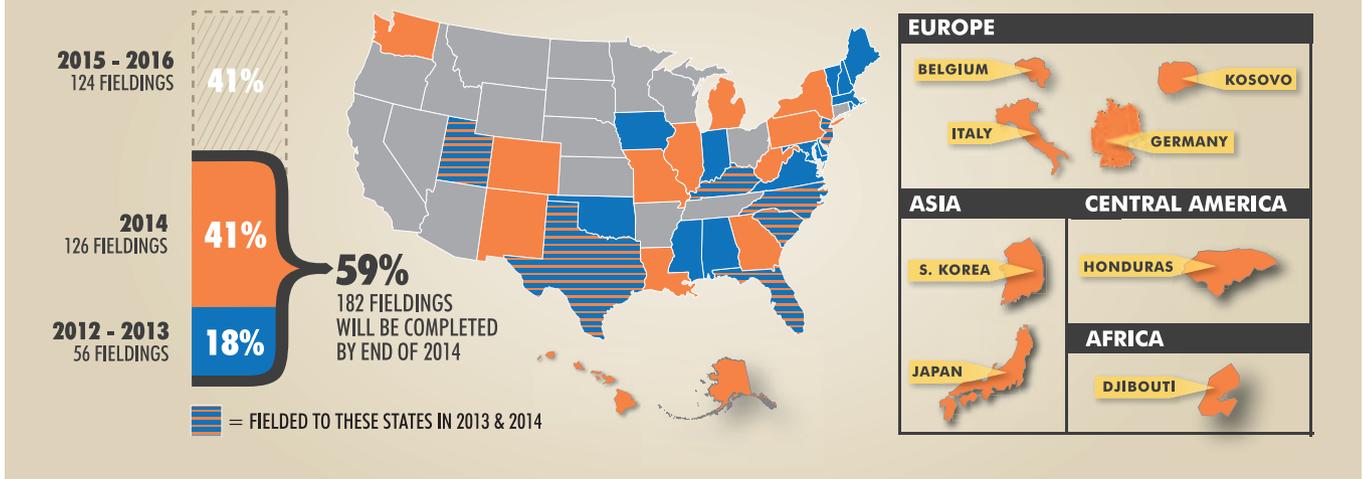
At the Department of the Army level, we eagerly watched as new logistics information technology, the Global Combat Support System (GCSS)-Army, was fielded in 2012. A \$4 billion investment and years in the making, GCSS-Army is the most significant positive change in Army logistics this decade. GCSS-Army will replace the Standard Army Retail Supply System during Wave 1, and Property Book Unit Supply Enhanced and Standard Army Maintenance System during Wave 2.

The fielding is on track, and we are very encouraged by how well commanders and soldiers are embracing GCSS-



Workers reset MRAPs at Red River Army Depot in Texarkana, Texas.

GCSS-ARMY WAVE 1 FIELDING PROGRESS



Army's vast capabilities. By 2014, GCSS-Army will be operating at 182 locations, or almost 60 percent of our goal of 306 fieldings by 2016. The largest fielding so far was at Fort Bragg, N.C., with the XVIII Airborne Corps. We have also fielded the technology to numerous National Guard and Army Reserve units and directorates of supply. This fall, we are activating GCSS-Army at Fort Hood, Texas; and next year, we will field it for the first time in Europe, the Pacific, Africa and Central America as we transform to a more regionally aligned Army.

GCSS-Army is the largest Web-based enterprise resource planning in worldwide production. When it is fully fielded, it will replace 40,000 local databases with one common master logistics database and have more than 160,000 users. An embedded financial function connects to the general fund enterprise business systems, so for the first time, logistics and financial actions are fully linked. This is critical to achieving auditability, as mandated by Congress. Locations using GCSS-Army are experiencing dramatically improved customer metrics and supply discipline. Soldiers, especially the younger iPad generation, quickly adapt to the new technology and are accomplishing their logistics missions with greater accuracy and effectiveness.

We have great technology fielding teams, with the right people, focused on getting every unit up and running. Our brilliant program executive office and program manager leadership are spreading the word about how GCSS-Army will benefit units. They are making sure every unit is trained and its data "cleaned" before the system goes live; our magnificent warrant officers in the supply and property community are getting ahead of problems and developing best practice solutions; and as we resolve problems, we share the knowledge across the Army so the next fielding can go even more smoothly. As we continue to field GCSS-Army and retire our legacy systems, our logistics forces will be able to execute sustainment on the move, around the world and across all mission sets.

Property Accountability

One of the most successful examples of culture change is the Chief of Staff of the Army-directed campaign on property accountability. While the majority of our Army was committed to combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, it was imperative to rapidly field new equipment to the battlefield. As an unintended consequence, we lost focus on property accountability. In 2010, then-Chief of Staff of the Army GEN George W. Casey Jr. said it was time to reinvigorate a culture of supply discipline. It is clear that the Army has committed to getting back to property accountability basics. Across active, reserve and National Guard components, leaders and soldiers are using the power and tools of the campaign to re-account, redistribute and turn in excess property with incredible results—and most importantly, increased visibility of unit- and Department of the Army-level combat readiness status.

In the last three years, the total Army has executed \$197 billion in property transactions. Of that, \$37 billion in property went to fill Armywide shortages, \$153 billion was redistributed internally to fill internal unit shortages and \$7 billion was found on installations—it had not previously been accounted for on a system of record.

We approach this accountability campaign not as a one-time sprint but as a deliberate marathon. If everyone in the Army is a better steward of our property, we can help the Secretary and the Chief of Staff transform the Army faster and for much lower costs. With that in mind, last year we established the online Command Supply Discipline Program & Property Accountability Knowledge Center to make it easier to find information on property accountability. Thousands have already visited the website at Army Knowledge Online. We also created online courses so soldiers and leaders who sign for equipment fully understand their responsibilities. We encourage civilians and contractors to take the new courses as well. We must all be good stewards of the equipment our American citizens entrust to us.



Soldiers assigned to 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, inventory their military gear during retrograde operations at their forward operating base in eastern Afghanistan's Kapisa Province in May.

Readiness and Force Structure Initiatives

Over the past decade, the Army has been excellent at executing deliberately planned rotational deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. The assumption is that we know how to deploy. Deployments over the past 10 years, however, have been quite predictable and administrative in nature; they have not been rapid deployments to unknown locations to execute ill-defined contingency operations.

Our less-than-sterling deployment to Haiti after the 2010 earthquake highlighted the Army's need to strengthen training, equipment and infrastructure to support rapid deployment operations. Partnering with the Department of the Army G-3, we developed and funded the rapid expeditionary deployment initiative (REDI) to refocus the Army to quickly provide forces to meet global combatant commander requirements for the full range of military operations on short notice. REDI involves deployment exercises, infrastructure readiness assessments, and working with the U.S. Air Force and Navy on strategic mobility enablers.

In addition, in line with imminent force structure changes in our Army, the logistics community has taken initiatives to more effectively support Army forces as part of the joint team. We are activating our fourth active duty expeditionary sustainment command (ESC) at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. Converting the 593rd Sustainment Brigade to the 593rd ESC will provide greater rotational depth to support global contingency missions ranging from combat operations to humanitarian missions. The Army will now have an ESC aligned to each of our three corps and an ESC theater committed in Korea. This alignment enables corps staff to have a broad operational focus while the ESC focuses on logistics planning for its aligned corps.

We will also transform the 7th Sustainment Brigade into a transportation brigade (expeditionary), or TBX, which will command and control port-opening missions in support of expeditionary operations. This TBX will provide Mission Command of assigned ports, terminals and watercraft units conducting intermodal operations. In peace-

time, the TBX will provide direct oversight of watercraft crew training, certification and vessel maintenance.

The total Army analysis change with the greatest impact on the way sustainment is executed in the conversion of our brigades is the stand-up of 10 divisionally aligned and three corps-aligned combat sustainment support battalions (CSSB). Each aligned CSSB

is designed with the same core capabilities (supply, maintenance and distribution) to support units located in their supported division or corps area of operation. Static fuel storage, water production, some distribution truck changes and troop transportation capabilities previously within our brigade combat teams and brigade support battalions will be moved back to these aligned CSSBs. We are also standing up forward support companies within the Stryker brigade combat teams. This stand-up is a necessary step as we have transitioned to soldier maintainers of Stryker vehicles.

We still have more work to do. Force structure working actions include developing a rapidly deployable petroleum, oils and lubricants capability to replace the aging inland petroleum distribution system, rightsizing the number of supply room personnel, documenting correct maintenance positions and championing additional training resources to our reserve units for critical capabilities needed early in the warfight.

A Successful Transformation

While transformations are never easy, this current Army transformation is particularly challenging as defense budgets tighten and we downsize the force. We have solid plans in place to complete our mission in Afghanistan, to reset the equipment, to field GCSS-Army, to be good stewards through ever improving property accountability and command supply discipline, and to restructure the force. Most importantly, we will capitalize on our finely honed combat experiences gained over the past decade, continually assess and refine how we operate, and increase our combat sustainment capabilities.

The collective ability to exploit our incredible global advantages in the sustainment warfighting function will ensure our Army remains an indispensable partner and provider of a full range of capabilities to combatant commanders in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational environment—guaranteeing the agility, versatility and depth to prevent, shape and win. ★