



THOUGHTS ON SPECIFIC SUPPLY IN *RESOLUTE SUPPORT OPERATION*

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Abstract: *Considering the lessons learned from the theater of operations in Afghanistan, it appears that there has been progress in creating a stable security environment to provide the reconstruction support, the mission Resolute Support contributing specifically to its realization, but the process is far from completion. Providing efficient and effective logistical support to the contingents taking part in specific actions of this mission requires sometimes the adoption of multinational solutions, making it one of the main issues that the planners of the operation consider in planning the logistical support, and more regarding the supply, this representing an extremely important functional domain of the logistic support considering the specific of this operation*

Keywords: *Logistic Support; Resolute Support operation; Life Support Services; Contractors.*

Introduction

Since 2003 ISAF has been taken over by NATO, moment from which the operations experience has been growing, following the installation of a secure environment to support economic development under a legitimate Afghan government throughout the country. But “*the last NATO summit adopted - The Roadmap - regarding the post-2014 Afghan prospective ... according to the document, the mission of NATO / ISAF ended on December 31st, 2014, with the takeover by the Afghan authorities, in full, of the security responsibilities within the national territory. After completion of ISAF mission, the Alliance’s commitment in Afghanistan consists of deploying the Resolute Support Mission until the end of 2016*”¹

The effort of the Romanian Armed Forces to participate in such military action was and is strictly conditioned by the existence of an adequate logistics, specific to each of the theater of operations and contingent participant, mainly influenced by geography, terrain, climate and not least by the material possibilities existing in the dislocation area.

The participation in such operations supposed that the logistic support given to the fighting troops be far away from the national territory, aspect which has been a quite complex problem, but we appreciate that the logistics, by its vital character for the successful completion of the mission, had to constantly adapt the capabilities to the goals and objectives contained in the military strategy, by prioritization needed to provide an adequate, dynamic and appropriate support for the forces.

Supply in post – conflict operations

Each of the functional areas of the logistic support, approached from the point of view of the consumption logistics (basic and operational) and the levels of the military art, are influenced by the specific of the multinational framework, which generates substantial changes in projection and development of logistic support structures.

In terms of *supply*, we want to mention that *it is a component / part / field of the logistics of troops and includes all the activities that are conducted in order to establish the demand, to launch the application, to deploy the procurement procedures, the reception, the management, the storage, the distribution and the removal from operation of the material goods needed to equip and support forces*”², during the conduct of operations.

From a doctrinaire point of view, the supply

¹ Raport activitate MAPN pentru anul 2014, publicat în Monitorul Oficial (partea a III-a) la 19 mai 2015.

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² L-1, Regulamentul logisticii operațiilor întrunite, Bucharest, 2008, p. 11.



is quantified according to the sources of materials, to the material stocks and to the consumption rates and covers all goods and materials used for providing logistic support of the forces participating in operations, it being executed on classes and subclasses of supply with products and materials.

Regardless the organization leading of the post-conflict operation, it is recommended that at the beginning of the mission, the stocks of materials held by the national structures participating in the operation be completed in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (Mou), signed by the *Troops Contributing Nations / TCN* with the organization that is at the head of the operation. After constituting the initial stocks at the level of the Multinational Force/MF, in order to ensure a balance between supply and insurance costs, as well as to avoid the occurrence of redundant materials a continuous replenishment, is established thus streamlining the whole supply process.

Furthermore, in order to eliminate any risk in terms of providing necessary goods and materials for equipping and supporting the forces, at a given time, especially in the period immediately following the deployment of troops in the JOA, the organization that is at the head of the operation may require the national contingents to deploy in the area of operations supplementary materials stocks, from all types of materials.

In post-conflict operations, the supply / resupply of goods and materials necessary to MF, draws TCNs responsibility to ensure the necessary goods for the quality logistical support for the forces participating in the operations is carried out. In terms of shared responsibilities of the organizations in leading positions we highlight the fact that the one commanding the MF since the entry of forces in the theater of operations, assumes the control of the available resources and means by authority transfer.

In terms of supply, both troops contributing nations and the leading organizations of post-conflict operations have full freedom in searching for suitable solutions with multinational specific, for the logistical support of subordinated troops. Regarding NATO, the gained experience demonstrates that the dealings, the multinational agreements concern, in particular, materials of Classes I, III and IV - providing food, water (bulk or bottled), bulk fuel, oils and lubricants, building materials etc. It is obvious that the material goods

needed to be ensured by multinational logistics contribution is determined, in agreement with the participating countries, before the commencement of the operation and depend on the level of standardization and interoperability within the force structure³.

The need to create stocks of materials, within the JOA, in accordance with the provisions of plans and operations orders is evident, such as clear as it becomes the responsibility of the leading structures of the logistic support to avoid their redundant accumulation, by organizing a parallel and continuous replenishment flow, in order to avoid accumulation of material in transport organization points and thus, material losses.⁴

With the purpose of avoiding the accumulation of large material stocks and also the increasing the logistic footprint in the field, a coordinated in the activity in needed field of travel and movement of goods. While the movement of material goods proper to the contingents remains a national responsibility, the attribute of coordination and prioritization of ensuring the materials requests, except the materials of NSE, constitute the responsibility of the Multinational Force commander.

Another aspect to be considered regarding the supply in post-conflict operations is the fact that the structures of forces participating in operation give great importance to the exchange or, in other words, to the trading of goods and services between the participating forces. At the level of MF are established a series of *Standard Operating Procedures / SoP* regarding *the exchange and trading of goods and services*. Such transactions may take the form of a planned logistical support, of the emergency logistical assistance, of the multinational logistic support or redeployments, on the grounds of the decision of the MF commander, where he has the authority to command and control in this domain⁵.

In terms of redistribution of logistic resources, on the line of standard operating procedures, one of the most important documents elaborated in this respect is embodied in *NATO Standardized*

³ *Allied Joint Doctrine for Logistics AJP-4 (B)*, ratification draft, NATO, HQ SACT, Logistics Branch, 7857 Blandy Road, Suite 100, Norfolk, Virginia, p. 4-1.

⁴ *L-1, Doctrina logisticii operațiilor intrunite*, Bucharest, 2008, art.47, aln.1.

⁵ *MC 319/3 NATO, Principii și politici logistice*, Bruselles, Dispoziția Comitetului Militar NATO, 2012, p. 6.



*Agreement STANAG 2034*⁶. Precisely for this reason, we consider necessary to implement the provisions of this agreement in the doctrines and procedures of each NATO member state, in order to increase the efficiency of granting mutual support.

The specific supply in Afghanistan theater of operations

Regarding how the supply is performed in the theater of operations in Afghanistan, where a post-conflict operation is carried out, we initiate by specifying that 95% of total assets received by the Romanian structures belongs to the American partner. When specifying about supplies, some aspects should be considered. Thus, we refer to the supply of materials, spare parts and other goods sent from the country (based on the requests of the structures deployed towards NSE, then towards the structures from the county); requests submitted towards the American partner for the material goods belonging to classes I, II, III and IV (consumables, respectively materials contained in the *Property book* - materials that will be returned at the end of the operation in full state of functionality); reception of the equipment received through Property Book; organization and supply of FOBs where Romanian structures are deployed. Materials that do not fall under the category of property book (according to ACSA provisions), remain in use of the Romanian troops (being then transferred to the next contingent, during rotation, if applicable) until exhaustion / performance of use time, being registered in the accounting book at the section *Non Property Book*.

The supply of the Romanian structures deployed in the Afghan theater of operations is performed according to the model of the US military logistics system. Thus, for a Romanian structure with more than 50 people (egg.: NSEs, maneuver battalion that ensures the security of the international airport in Kandahar within the mission Resolute Support), is assigned an address code (*Department of Defense Activity Address Code/DODAAC*) that allows the easy identification within the system as beneficiary entity. If there is a structure with up to 50 people, it is allocated to a structure that has the right of the DODAAC, so in the requests submitted to the American partner⁷. For the requests of materials

falling under the material classes I and III, these are addressed to the American partner on the ground using a code form 3161. Instead, in the case of the requests of materials submitted in the country, the documents circuit is regulated according to national regulations specific to the field.

For the supply of spare parts, maintenance materials or even aggregates, assemblies and subassemblies necessary to maintain the state of readiness of the equipment received through the Property Book, we use the stock code numbers (*National Stock Number / NSN*) corresponding to each component, or the number of subassembly (*Part number / Part No.*), aspects that are specified in each technical book of each type of equipment.

As a way to streamline the supply of spare parts as well as to perform maintenance in a short time, and implicitly, the maintenance of the state of readiness of the equipment received from the American partner, we introduce data (a code formed by letters and numbers assigned to each category of technique and equipment) on this issue in the standard maintenance system of the US army (*Standard Army Maintenance- System Box/SAM-S Box*).

According to the *Logistic guidelines for operation theaters, 2016*, each request on spare parts sent from the Romanian logistic structures is assigned a priority code, given by the technical condition of the equipment: 02-means urgent, the equipment being unavailable; 06-the equipment is operational, being able to perform missions; 12-pending, the equipment being operational, but not assigned for the execution of missions.

When receiving the equipment contained in the Property Book, the procedure regarding the performance of the activities on this issue is not much different than the one governed by national regulations. Thus, at the notification of the American partner, a joint committee made up of staff of the beneficiary unit (usually specialists) and specialized personnel of NSE, go to the equipment storage place, identify their series, check the functionality of the systems, inventorize the lots of board (*Basic Issue Items/BII*), and address any faults or shortcomings ascertained.

Class III materials supply, is usually achieved on the basis of fuel cards issued by the company (Supreme Fuels GmbH & Co.) which, according

⁶ *Allied Joint Doctrine for Logistics AJP-4 (B)*, ratification draft, NATO, HQ SACT, Logistics Branch, 7857 Blandy Road, Suite 100, Norfolk, Virginia, p. 4-1.

⁷ B. Mocanu, S. Pinzariu, *Ghidul de logistică pentru*

teatrele de operații, Bucharest, "Carol I" National Defence University Publishing House, 2016, p. 19.



to the ACSA agreement, has the task of supplying Level I FOBs, KAF (*Kandahar Air Field*) respectively HKIA (*Hamid Karzai International Airport*). After fuelling the equipment, they are issued a ticket/receipt, specifying the following information: fuel type (egg.: F 54 Diesel, F 34 Avtur fsii, Gasoline F 64), the amount fed, the power station (KAF Retail BFI), the date and the time of feeding, the series of the card ensuring the feeding, as well as the structure owning the card. The registration of the feedings is generally made weekly by the management coordinator, upon receipt of the related invoice from contractors.

Class III materials supply of the other FOBs is performed by NSE, the regularity of supply depending on their storage capacity (especially the capacity of the fuel tanks), the transport of materials being made with armored fuel tanks or armored fuel trucks belonging to the own structures, or with contractors' fuel tanks, as the case may be. AT the level of each FOB, depending on the storage capacity of each, a reserve is constituted. The monitoring and coordination on this issue are based on the reports (*Situation Report / SITREP*), transmitted daily.

Conclusions

In conclusion, referring to this functional field of logistics, we can notice that in post-conflict operations is mostly felt the interference of the logistic military system with the one of the economic environment, where international economic operators (but also the local ones) contribute more and more in ensuring the logistic support necessary for the forces.

As indicated above, a considerably high percentage of the total campaign services provided at the level of ISAF operation, and also afterwards, in the operation Resolute Support, belongs to the American partner. Thus, at the level of the area of operations, in order to support the requests for materials, spare parts, campaign services, maintenance of installations from dislocation bases, etc. submitted by Romanian subunits, from

within establishments belonging to the US army, units (subunits) have been designated, to solve the respective requests. Those structures were named "sponsor" and were established to create a logical and coherent logistics system, providing the first link in the supply – delivery chain, unanswered requests being submitted to the Romanian NSE website, as well as to the American top echelon.

Finally, considering the involvement and the unconditional support of the American partner in the field and the way Romanian NSE manages to complete the deficiencies ascertained by the deputization and implication of own effectives in ensuring this functional field of the logistic support, we may conclude that the Romanian structures deployed in Afghanistan, are provided with all campaign services, necessary for the good performance of their missions.

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