

Strategy Research Project

Rotational Functional Support Brigades in United States Army Europe

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Abstract

The United States Army, Europe has at its disposal approximately one division worth of combat power on the continent. However, enabling capabilities, like those found in functional support brigades are almost completely absent. The United States Army should rotationally deploy functional support brigades, specifically engineers, artillery, and military police to Europe. These forces will augment existing mission command capability, assist in integrating their function across the alliance, conduct security cooperation activities with their functional counterparts, and assist in setting the theater. It proposes two deployment models to implement this recommendation.

Rotational Functional Support Brigades in United States Army Europe

Russia's seizure of portions of eastern Ukraine and illegal annexation of Crimea highlighted the strategic miscalculations of the United States and Europe in judging the intentions of their Cold War foe. Despite "resets" in relations and attempts at partnership, Russia has returned as a strategic antagonist to United States interests. After more than two decades of drawdown in Europe, the United States was suddenly confronted with a requirement to assure its Allies while building combat power to deter Russian aggression. Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) are the coin of the realm of the United States Army and the primary means by which it measures available combat power. What makes the Army unique from the Marine Corps, and its Allies in NATO, is the extent to which it is enabled by supporting arms outside the BCT structure to provide depth, continuity, and resilience for a prolonged period of conflict. These 191 functional support brigades, in the main, engineer brigades, military police brigades, and fires brigades, are elements of force structure not found within the NATO Allies.¹ Unfortunately, with the deactivation of the 18th Military Police Brigade in late 2017, they will not be found anywhere in Europe either. Indeed, "enablers" as they are commonly known, will be extinct on the continent. They must come back for a number of reasons.

This paper makes the argument that U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) requires forward stationed enablers. It begins with a brief discussion of the events that culminated in the Russian annexation of Crimea and seizure of Eastern Ukraine. It then traces the drawdown of U.S. Army forces in Europe following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and how those actions influenced the United States' and NATO's responses to Russian aggression. This paper also discusses the differences in capabilities between an Army Service Component Command (ASCC), specifically

USAREUR, and a Corps headquarters and how enabler presence complements USAREUR's capabilities. It highlights some reasons specific to Europe that necessitate enabler presence. Ultimately, this project proposes that the United States Army should regionally align and rotate functional support brigades in Europe.

Three points form the basis of the argument for enablers in Europe. First, the functional expertise resident in these units is not present in depth within USAREUR or its assigned BCTs, the 2nd Cavalry Regiment and 173rd Infantry BCT (Airborne) or the rotating, regionally aligned Armor Brigade Combat Team (ABCT). USAREUR is not a corps Headquarters, but is responsible for corps-like functions in contingencies. The Fourth Infantry Division Mission Command Element (MCE) currently supporting USAREUR, is not a division Headquarters, but must sometimes perform all of the functions of one. The small, resident expertise in these elements is, no doubt, capable, but there is a significant gap in capacity at echelons above brigade and no theater wide, functional focus. The staffs in functional support brigades can integrate effects across the operational area and maintain an operational level focus.

Second, the short distance between the Russian border and the capitals of the Baltic States and Poland means that the window to identify, decide, and react to Russian aggression is exceedingly small. Accordingly, forces not present in Europe will not be available for its defense, only a potential counterattack. The assumption that follow-on forces will arrive intact and in time to support an initial defense from the continental United States is overly optimistic.

Third, the United States, as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve, is developing maneuver skills at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. There is no

corresponding focus for engineer, fires, and military police skills. The presence of functional brigades remedies this. If relationships between Allies matter, and they do, then it is equally as important to build relationships between NATO combat arms formations and the maneuver support and fires branches to create combined arms effects.

The Run-Up to Now

The Russian use of force during the intervention and subsequent illegal annexation of Crimea redefined borders in Europe in a way not seen since World War II. Although an apparent surprise to the leaders of Western Europe and the United States, the Russian plan may have been formulated as early as 2008 and retained for an appropriate time.² The secession from Ukraine and annexation of Crimea by Russia proceeded with astonishing speed. In approximately three weeks, Russia changed international boundaries without firing a shot. In early 2014, a series of demonstrations in Kiev protesting a sudden reversion to an eastward (Russian) looking foreign and economic policy resulted in the resignation of President Yanukovich. A series of counter-demonstrations subsequently materialized in Crimea several days later. Russia then occupied strategic facilities in Ukraine on February 28, 2014, ostensibly to protect ethnic Russians. Soon thereafter, on March 6, 2014, the Crimean Oblast government voted to secede from Ukraine. Russia admitted Crimea into the Russian Federation on March 21, 2014.³ In the aftermath, Ukraine had lost nearly its entire Navy, many of its bases, and approximately 20% of its population.⁴

The sequence of events that lead to a diminished United States presence in Europe was predictable. In the spring of 1989, the then 23 NATO member nations began negotiations with the Warsaw Pact to reduce the level of conventional forces in

Europe. The Army end strength approved by U.S. European Command was 158,500. EUCOM believed this was the Army's staffing baseline to maintain a credible deterrent in Europe and to assure "stability in the region".⁵ Despite a disruption to the drawdown caused by the 1991 Gulf War, the Army redeployed one division's worth of equipment and 12,000 Soldiers directly to the United States following that conflict.⁶ The drawdown in Europe was part of a larger drawdown of the United States Army during the 1990's. The active Army dropped from 751,000 in 1991 to 451,000 in 1996.⁷ Budget outlays by the Army in that period followed a similar pattern, dropping from \$97.6 billion in 1990 to \$59.5 billion in 1999, adjusted to 1998 dollars.⁸ The Army continued to draw down personnel, facilities and equipment through the 1990's right up until 2014, when it further consolidated Europe based facilities. Today, the U.S. Army Europe is composed of approximately 28,000 permanently assigned personnel.

Keeping the prevailing sentiments of the period in mind, the assumption that Russia was finished as a security competitor in Europe appeared well founded. Germany and France combined had an economy five times larger than Russia, compounded by the fact that Russia was politically disorganized.⁹ Europe appeared so secure, that at a 2001 Center For Strategic Studies conference concerning European Security, the attendees could not even define what "European security" meant in the context of the emerging world order.¹⁰ Many Europeans believed Russia would become a partner in managing crises in hotspots and would no longer be a threat to its European neighbors.

European and United States Reactions to Aggression

Europe has generally been slow to acknowledge revanchist Russia as a security threat. With notable exceptions, chief among them the Baltic States and Poland,

defense investment in NATO has not markedly increased since the illegal annexation of Crimea. The alliance as a whole continued to reduce aggregate defense spending in 2014 by 1% and then began to slowly (almost begrudgingly) increase spending by 0.6% and 3% in 2015 and 2016 respectively.¹¹ NATO's defense spending guideline is for each member nation to spend at least two percent of their GDP on defense. As of July 2016, only five members of NATO currently met this guideline: the United States (3.61%), Great Britain (2.21%), Poland (2%), Greece (2.28%), and Estonia (2.16%).¹² The median for the alliance was 1.18% and the average was 1.43%. Nineteen of 28 members either sustained the defense budget at the 2015 levels, or increased it. Perhaps appropriately, given their proximity to Russia, Latvia and Lithuania had the greatest increases.¹³ The sheer magnitude of the U.S. defense expenditure pulls NATO, in the aggregate, over the 2% line. In this context of how the Western European military establishment arrived where it is now, what do the likely belligerents have to defend themselves? The answer, compared to Russia, is not much.

The Estonian Army consists of approximately 6,000 Soldiers at any given time. Estonia is a conscript Army, with inductees beginning training in June and becoming operationally employable in the March/April timeframe every year. Its chief ground component is the 1st Infantry Brigade. Composed of an all-professional scouts battalion, two infantry battalions (one of which is a basic training unit), an artillery battalion, a combat engineer battalion, a sustainment battalion, a signal company, and an anti-tank company. If it were to call up its reserves, Estonia can muster approximately 15,000 Soldiers on short notice.¹⁴

Latvia similarly has approximately 5,000 Soldiers in its land forces, the centerpiece being its Land Forces Infantry Brigade. This brigade consists of two battalions of mechanized infantry, and one battalion of mortars, engineers, and anti-tank guided missiles. All of its tube artillery resides in its reserve component.¹⁵

Lithuania's chief land force is the mechanized infantry "Iron Wolf" brigade, totaling a few thousand soldiers. It is composed of a brigade headquarters, reconnaissance, logistics, and signal companies and five battalions: two mechanized infantry battalions, two light infantry battalions, and one artillery battalion.¹⁶

Finally, Poland's primary ground combat formation approximates a pre-modularity U.S. corps. It has approximately 120,000 active duty Soldiers in three divisions: one cavalry, and two mechanized infantry. It also maintains one each of separate airborne, mechanized, and combat aviation brigades. It has three echelon-above-brigade engineer regiments. Each maneuver brigade has a direct support artillery battalion. Each division has a separate field artillery regiment.

Russia's forces in the vicinity of the Baltics and Poland are part of its "Western Military District." Headquartered in St. Petersburg, ground forces available for operations in the Baltics total 22 battalions, composed of four tank battalions, five mechanized infantry battalions, five motorized infantry battalions, and eight airborne battalions. There are an additional three naval infantry battalions in Kaliningrad proper. These ground forces are further coupled with 10 artillery battalions, five tactical ballistic missile battalions, and six attack helicopter battalions.¹⁷ The relative combat power arrayed in the Baltics is not to NATO's advantage. Russia's Western Military District forces are overwhelmingly armored, mechanized, or motorized and in possession of

dominant numbers of tube and rocket artillery as well as attack aviation. This is in contrast to Baltic light or M113 mounted infantry, with little artillery and no attack aviation.

The follow-on question to “how much do the Allies spend?” is, “how do they spend it?” Here again, NATO’s guidelines specify that each member nation spend at least 20% of its defense appropriation on equipment. In this category, 10 of 28 nations meet the guideline. However, expenditures on personnel ranged from 40-80% of each nation’s respective budget.¹⁸ Competing priorities, like social programs, and support for migrants result in reduced defense budgets.

From the perspective of the Commanding General of U.S. European Command, the actions of Russia to “rewrite the international rules and principles that have formed the foundation of stability in Europe for decades”¹⁹ creates a security imperative for the United States as the de facto guarantor of the world order and as a member of NATO. The first priority is the assurance of U.S. Allies, and the second is to support NATO’s efforts to deter future Russian aggression. The USAREUR areas of emphasis are the Baltic States, Poland, and NATO’s southern flank where “our presence has been episodic,”²⁰ particularly Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Macedonia, Romania, and Turkey.

Considering these objectives, Europe clearly requires more combat power, but restationing units in Europe is unlikely in the current political climate. Likewise, even with a 17,000 Soldier end strength increase in Fiscal Year 2017, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army has indicated that he will fully man existing units instead of activating new ones.²¹ An unwillingness to move units, and by extension jobs, from Congressional

Districts, and a declining defense budget are contributors. The most difficult point to overcome is the fact that forward deployed forces are expensive, and the European Allies have a demonstrated unwillingness to meet minimum NATO funding requirements. Like his predecessors, President Obama has echoed an “anti-free rider campaign...in order to prevent the Europeans and the Arab states from holding our coats while we did all the fighting” in Libya in 2011.²² Likewise, President Bush in 2011 signaled a potential Atlantic rift “between those willing and able to pay the price and bear the burden of commitments, and those who enjoy the benefits of NATO membership but don’t want to share the risks and costs.”²³ President Trump has openly questioned the value of NATO and intimated he would tie the United States’ willingness to meet its Article V obligations to the European Allies meeting NATO defense spending guidelines.

While unwilling to forward deploy more brigades to Europe, the Congress responded by establishing the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) in Fiscal Year 2015. Originally envisioned as a one-year, \$1 billion emergency response to Russian aggression, ERI was intended to “reassure Allies of the U.S. commitment to their security and territorial integrity as members of the NATO Alliance.”²⁴ The funding promoted increased investment in five areas: presence, training and exercises, infrastructure, prepositioned equipment, and building partner capacity. Since the original appropriation in 2015, Congress has funded ERI at \$789 million in FY 2016 and \$3.4 billion in FY 2017.²⁵ Funding is expected to continue for the foreseeable future as an acknowledgement that the Russian threat is not subsiding anytime soon.²⁶ This funding has enabled what USAREUR refers to as “heel to toe” rotations of an Armored Brigade

Combat Team (ABCT). “Heel to toe” referring to the lack of a temporal gap between the ABCT redeployment and arrival of a backfilling unit. With this ABCT addition USAREUR now has three BCTs at its disposal. What it does not have are mission command and enabler unit capabilities to complement the combat power these BCTs provide.

A discussion of the structure and mission of USAREUR vis-a-vis a corps headquarters makes the case for functional support brigades in Europe compelling. There is a shortage of functional expertise that a BCT commander and staff can provide. Army Service Component Commands (ASCC) set the conditions for the successful use of landpower in theater. USAREUR, as the EUCOM ASCC, is the theater strategic Army headquarters responsible for day-to-day Title 10 administration of assigned forces and forces under its operational control. In addition, USAREUR serves as the executive agent for numerous support functions and meets Army Support to Other Services (ASOS), and Common User Logistics (CUL) responsibilities.²⁷ While commanding Army forces supporting theater-wide engagement, the theater army commander matches Army capabilities to joint requirements, oversees the arrival of Army forces in the theater, and ensures that Soldiers across the Area of Responsibility (AOR) receive the support they require for as long as they are in the theater.²⁸

A corps is the principal headquarters for employing landpower as a component of a campaign. The corps commander translates campaign objectives into broad missions for ground forces and sets the conditions for the tactical use of Army and multinational ground forces to accomplish those missions. The corps commander “coordinates land forces with air maritime and special operations forces to dominate land portions of joint

operations areas.”²⁹ Corps may serve as core of a Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters as well.

Theater armies are also doctrinally capable of serving as Joint Task Force (JTF) or Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command (C/JFLCC) Headquarters for short periods of time. As there is no corps in Europe today, some headquarters must execute the corps headquarters functions outlined above. By definition, setting the theater, “includes the posture of Army forces and conducting security cooperation activities that shape the operational environment and prevent conflict”³⁰ and prepare for the conduct of Unified Action as the C/JFLCC. With only 316 military personnel currently assigned to the USAREUR Headquarters, accomplishing its ASCC and C/JFLCC functions is a tall order. Unity of effort in the headquarters is impossible while it tries to accomplish tasks at the theater strategic and operational levels of war.

The difficulties associated with this role duality highlight the need for functional support brigades. There are no functionally integrative subject matter experts for engineers, artillery, and military Police. In fact, there are 15 engineer, 2 artillery, and 13 military police coded Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) positions, augmented by civilian subject matter experts.³¹

At the tactical level, USAREUR has at its disposal the MCE consisting of a deployable command post from the 4th Infantry Division. It is responsible for mission command of assigned and deployed Army units operating in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. Operating out of Baumholder, it is optimized for the mission of managing unit rotations in and out of Eastern Europe, not the command post functions commensurate with a full division headquarters.³²

Thus, despite an influx of maneuver combat power in support of the eastern members of NATO, there has been no corresponding increase in enablers required to support maneuver. USAREUR does not have the capacity to synchronize and integrate maneuver support in a contingency operation. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have neither the headquarters capacity nor the units to support maneuver in combat operations. The U.S. however, does.

The Richly Enabled Army and Requirements in Europe

The Army derives its campaign endurance from its deep bench of enabler units in all components. Supporting units reside primarily in the Army Reserve and National Guard. The engineer regiment alone has 673 individual units (about 80% of all its force structure) in these two components, including thirteen brigade headquarters and 96 battalion headquarters. The field artillery branch has 76 individual units (48% of force structure), all in the Army Reserves, including seven brigade headquarters. The military police corps, has 54 battalions and eight brigades in the National Guard and Reserve. By comparison, the infantry and armor branches have approximately 40% of their force structure in the National Guard.³³ These units, particularly at the brigade level, are designed for use at the division level and above to integrate and synchronize activities in their functional area, something that the ASCC and MCE lack the capability to perform. They also have capabilities inherent in the ASCCs requirement to set the theater.

Engineer brigades, for example, plan, supervise, and coordinate for combat engineer support, construction, facility rehabilitation, unit allocation, resource management, river crossing, barrier placement, countermine, and counter-obstacle operations.³⁴ They can additionally supervise contract construction and labor. They

support activities at sea and airports of debarkation during reception, staging and onward movement.³⁵ All these activities are critical enabling activities for the movement and sustainment of NATO forces in Europe. As of now, this capability does not exist in either USAREUR or NATO Allies. Pessimistically, where this capability would be on the Time Phased Force Deployment Diagram (TPFFD) is unknown, but presumptively behind additional maneuver forces. Likewise, the engineer brigade headquarters has the ability to augment engineer planning and integration functions at higher levels.

Similarly, military police have an early, and critical role in setting the theater. The military police brigade headquarters specializes in critical site (e.g.- port) security, route security, traffic control, control of detainees and dislocated civilians, and synchronization and integration of operational efforts with host nations.³⁶ Again, these are capabilities that USAREUR will lose in early Fiscal Year 2018, leaving a functional integration and synchronization gap that cannot be filled by nations that only field forces at the maneuver brigade level and below.

Finally, another capability shortfall is the lack of any headquarters capable of integrating ground-based fires in the theater. Europe has an assigned Battlefield Coordination Detachment (BCD) to conduct liaison between ground forces and the air component. It also has an assigned Army Air and Missile Defense Command to coordinate air and missile defense. The lack of a similar capability in Europe for ground based fires forms the basis for the inclusion of a division artillery (DIVARTY)/fires brigade presence. Doctrinally, this unifying headquarters is called the force field artillery headquarters, and is normally the “senior field artillery headquarters organic, assigned, attached, or placed under the operational control of that command.”³⁷ This means, that

the current force field artillery headquarters is either the BCD, or the organic field artillery battalions in the BCTs. The responsibilities of this headquarters can range from simple mentoring and technical oversight to established command relationships with all artillery units organic, assigned, attached, or placed under the operational control (OPCON) of the command. Other multinational field artillery units that are attached or OPCON are given tactical missions and responsibilities in accordance with their national guidance. A fires brigade assigned, attached, or placed OPCON to a JFLCC or other command may serve as that command's force field artillery headquarters. The force field artillery headquarters functions include: serving as the single point of contact for recommending the fires organization for combat and positioning all units organic to, assigned to and supporting the maneuver force commander. Executing fires for close support of engaged forces, and in support of counterfire, decisive and shaping operations. Providing critical centralized mission command and integration for the full complement of Army and joint fires capabilities, provided in support of the command.³⁸

Maneuver forces do not fight alone. They require an array of maneuver support forces throughout all phases of an operation to be successful. The United States' NATO Allies do not possess the capabilities to integrate maneuver support functions above battalion levels, or across multi-national units. The United States, uniquely, does, and possesses these units in such capacity to sustain a rotational commitment to Europe.

Time and Distance Realities

The short distance between the Russian border and the capitals of the Baltic States and Poland means that the window to identify, decide, and react is exceedingly small. Forces not present in Europe will not be available for its defense, only a potential

counterattack. Follow on forces arriving from the continental United States unscathed is optimistic.

The often cited RAND wargame and corresponding report, “Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO’s Eastern Flank” came to the conclusion that Russian forces would require approximately 60 hours to reach Tallinn, Estonia and Riga, Latvia. It similarly concluded that seven maneuver brigades “adequately supported by airpower, land-based fires, and other enablers on the ground and ready to fight at the onset of hostilities—might prevent such an outcome.”³⁹ The issue then, becomes one of forward presence and speed.

LTG Ben Hodges, the Commanding General of USAREUR, refers to three “speeds” required for successful defense of Europe: the speed of recognition, the speed of decision, and the speed of assembly.⁴⁰ Speed of recognition is primarily intelligence driven, generating information and warnings activity designed to divine Russian intentions by observing the information operations activities and movements of Russian forces, including paramilitary forces or Russian surrogates (aka- “little green men”).

Speed of decision refers to the ability of the Atlantic Council to resolve to take action to counter any pending Russian action, for individual member countries to grant approval to move their forces, and for other nations to grant permission to have Allied forces move through them. The Schengen Agreement, which permits the borderless movement of people and goods throughout Europe, does not apply to military forces. This complicates the movement of niche capabilities within Europe. As an example, currently, only the Germans and the United Kingdom armed forces retain bridging

assets on the continent. Thus, to bridge a river requires both German and British authority to begin movement, and then Polish and German permission for transit.

Speed of decision also applies to the United States as well. While Atlantic Resolve demonstrated the United States' commitment to honor its treaty obligations, its resolve to deploy formations to Europe is unknown under the current administration. In any case, only the Global Response Force maintains the agility to deploy in time to affect the initial aggressive moves by Russia.

Finally, speed of assembly refers to the capability to move forces within Europe and is the "ultimate key to deterrence."⁴¹ Because of the number and pace of exercises in Europe, over 50 in 2015,⁴² U.S. forces are disaggregated across Europe. A company-sized unit may find itself in four different countries at any given time. While reassuring to Allies, the lack of mass at the presumed point of attack does not advance deterrence. Two factors relating to speed of assembly support the argument for functional support brigade presence in Europe. First, to play any role in the defense of NATO territories, they need to be present at the outset of hostilities. The sum total of the three "speeds" must be less than the time it takes the Russians to mobilize, deploy and employ forces against NATO countries. It will be difficult to deploy credible engineer, fires, or military police assets from the United States, and integrate them into a multi-national setting in time to make a difference. And, as previously discussed, the capabilities don't exist on the continent. Therefore, if the C/JFLCC wants them for the defense, they have to be in Europe. Second, the functional brigades play a critical role in the theater setting activities to enable a successful defense or counter attack.

Relationships Matter

With respect to the time, it is important to address the time it takes to create trust. The modular Army assumes its units are “plug and play” similar to a computer’s USB port. Since humans are involved, this is not the case. The time it takes multi-component, joint, or multi-national units to coalesce into functional combat organizations is often glossed over, because it cannot be monetized or otherwise quantified. It is strategically important, however. General Breedlove, the former commander of U.S. European Command said, “Presence is important, because presence equals trust... You can’t surge trust.”⁴³ The critical nature of trust and the time it takes to develop trust is further found in doctrine and referred to as “mutual confidence” derived from actions and human factors related to liaisons, cultures, religions, customs, and languages.⁴⁴ Mutual confidence is best built through observed and learned cultural understanding and habitual professional relationships built through forward presence. Permanent forward presence is preferred, but in today’s climate, mutual confidence is achievable through rotational presence and practice. Cohesion is a force multiplier, based on trust and built over time. The rotational presence of functional support brigades enables that to occur.

Beyond building soldier-to-soldier interpersonal trust, NATO has its own standards; standards that CONUS based forces are rarely exposed to. Interoperability between US and multinational forces becomes an issue when standards are not understood or practiced. U.S. forces should expect to integrate with Allied units as fluidly as they do with other U.S. units. In the author’s experience, interoperability occurs on three levels: doctrinal, technical, and cultural.

NATO has doctrine and standards. Most US Army formations don’t know or practice them and default to US doctrine and standards. This frustrates NATO Allies

and erodes trust. Standardization Agreements (STANAGS) form the basis for the NATO alliance standards. As of this writing, there are 233 standards establishing alliance procedure from topics ranging from standardized distributed learning to electromagnetic compatibility and minefield recording.⁴⁵ The Allies know them and expect the United States forces employed in NATO operations to know them. Rotational support brigades would be in a unique position to learn and apply NATO doctrine throughout their deployment. The NATO school, in Oberammergau, Germany has the mission to indoctrinate officers and non-commissioned officers in NATO vocabulary, planning processes, procedures and standards. NATO also has 24 functional, accredited centers of excellence, including centers in military engineering and military police. Interestingly, NATO does not have a fires center of excellence, further exacerbating the need for a force field artillery headquarters.

Technical interoperability is the ability of allied force's equipment to function with each other. In most cases, allied units encounter great friction working with each other for the first time because of small differences in equipment. Clausewitzian friction is alive and well during refueling operations when fuel nozzles require adapters, or during vehicle recovery operations when an U.S. wrecker cannot safely shackle itself to a Romanian BRDM. Perhaps more serious at the tactical level, is the discovery learning that takes place when allied units want to communicate with each other. NATO has communications encryption, but units tend to operate unencrypted because of the frustration encountered in communications rehearsals. Finally, there is the issue of foreign disclosure of U.S. classified information and access to electronic systems. All of

these are issues that should, indeed must, be worked through prior to any contingency operation involving Russia and its sophisticated array of electronic warfare capabilities.

The last level of interoperability is cultural, and is primarily a leadership function. Drawing again from FM 3-26, the factors of rapport, respect, and knowledge of Allies can be determined through study, but are best realized through personal interaction. A conversation with a Polish officer will quickly reveal the lens through which they view the Russian inaction during the Warsaw uprising, the subsequent deception of and liquidation of its leaders, and the ensuing 44 years of subjugation. Similarly, Estonians never viewed themselves as part of the Soviet Union, but as a nation occupied by the Soviets. The reminders of recent history weigh heavily into the culture of NATO's eastern European Allies and shape how they view contemporary Soviet actions. Knowledge of U.S.'s Allies' military culture also provides insight into how they view leadership. Do they value initiative or wait for direction? What role do Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers play in their army? Cultural interoperability is more than just, "getting to know you," it is an imperative that enables U.S forces to exercise mission command commensurate with Allied customs and norms.

Security Cooperation Activities and Enabler Skill Development

Third, the United States, as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve, is developing maneuver skills at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. There is no corresponding focus for engineer, fires, and military police skills. Rotational functional support brigades easily remedy this. If, in the near term, the Allies will not acquire maneuver support capabilities, then combined training during security cooperation exercises should improve the combined arms effectiveness of individual nations. Furthermore, security cooperation supports an Army Service Component Command's

function to set the theater by “establishing favorable conditions through exercises and support.”⁴⁶

Security cooperation activities are shaping activities that occur in Phase 0 and are designed to promote United States interests, develop allied and capabilities, and provide United States forces with access.⁴⁷ The equipment, training, and financial assistance the United States provides to partner nations improves their abilities to secure themselves. This assistance often improves access. Security cooperation activities are inherent in Operation Atlantic Resolve. The pace and physical expanse of operations often precludes engineers and field artillery battalions organic to assigned and aligned BCTs from performing functional security cooperation activities. As an example, the 2nd Cavalry Regiment’s Engineer Squadron served as the regiment’s economy of effort force in Moldova, Romania, and Hungary in the summer of 2016 as an assurance function instead of conducting engineer specific security force assistance with these Allies and partners.⁴⁸ Likewise, the artillery and engineer battalions in the 173rd BCT (Airborne) often perform generic mission command functions at the expense of functional training. These examples do not represent a “wrong” employment of these units, but the deployment of rotational functional support brigades would increase the security cooperation opportunities. Security cooperation activities in the Baltics are focused on company team level offensive and defensive operations, culminating in live fire exercises. Combined arms integration with enablers is the next logical step in their progression. The lack of capacity to train and mentor engineer, artillery and military police elements in their formations will retard the development of host nation forces if not attended to.

Basing Options for Rotational Functional Support Brigades

As previously mentioned, the United States has significantly drawn down its presence in Europe and correspondingly reduced its real estate footprint. In Europe today, the U.S. military maintains 28 communities consisting of main operating bases (like Ramstein Airbase), forward operating sites (like Camp Bondsteel), and cooperative security locations.⁴⁹ The Army maintains 15 of these sites as major bases, although only a small portion of these sites support large numbers of Soldiers. These installations are Grafenwöhr, Baumholder, Ansbach, and Kaiserslautern in Germany, and Vicenza, Italy. Wiesbaden and Stuttgart are the homes of operational and theater strategic level headquarters. On the continent, EUCOM maintains forward operating sites in Bosnia, Kosovo, Bulgaria, and four sites in Romania. Although more austere than major locations, these sites are “light switch” operations that allow for fast occupation by inbound US forces.⁵⁰

In 2006 testimony to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, John Shimkus, a U.S. delegate to the assembly and Congressman from the Illinois 15th District reported that the United States planned to spend between \$300-500 million in Bulgaria alone on operations and maintenance of the US facilities, with most work being completed by local contractors.⁵¹ This is a significant investment in a small nation with a GDP of just over \$47 billion in 2015 dollars.⁵² The presence of a rotational enabler brigade numbering between 1,000 and 2,500 Soldiers brings with it not only continuous access but significant economic opportunity as well, ranging into the potential of hundreds of thousands of dollars per month in the local economies. Coincidentally, these countries have the lowest monthly wages in the European Union, at 420 Euros per month in Bulgaria.⁵³

Perhaps the most compelling reason to use Forward Operating Sites as bases for rotational enablers is because these sites are located in the younger members of NATO. The populations of both Romania and Bulgaria, unlike their Baltic and Polish brethren, still retain some sentimental attachment to the “good old days” of Communism.⁵⁴ This appeal comes not only from the capacity of the human mind to forget discomfort but also from the shared Slavic identities between Russia and these nations. Shared religion and the role of Russia as the protector of the Slavs pull at heartstrings, remembering that Russia entered World War I putatively to protect its Slavic brothers, the Serbs.⁵⁵ Closer to home, Russia went to war with the Ottoman Empire to create a free Bulgaria, a fact that Russia is quick to remind them of. Despite an affinity for the European Union, only 63% would join it again, and support for sanctions against Russia was only at 10% as of early 2015.⁵⁶ There certainly is an opportunity to strengthen southern European nations through strategic presence.

While originally foreseen as a means to move U.S. forces closer to the “arc of instability” in the Middle East and as a tacit swipe at “old Europe,” the Forward Operating sites present newfound opportunity for dynamic, strategic presence in the newer members of NATO. They serve as a counter to Russian presence and influence. They are a relative value vis-à-vis stationing in Germany, and are ready for use now.

Rotational Models

This project assumes that due to funding constraints and lack of political will to reassign forces to the EUCOM AOR, rotational presence is the best way to provide the maneuver support capabilities required to counter Russian aggression and conduct security cooperation activities with Allies. This next section proposes two ways to increase enabler presence in Europe. The first model consists of a permanent, active

component brigade headquarters, with rotational active, reserve, or National Guard subordinate units, hereafter known as “assigned-rotational” model. The second model is a rotational brigade with supporting rotational subordinate units from any component, the “rotational-rotational” model.

Given the ability to supplement the ASCC Contingency Command Post or the Mission Command Element with subject matter expertise and the attractiveness of establishing longer term leader relations, and the cost of only permanently stationing a headquarters, the “assigned-rotational” model is preferred for effectiveness. Additionally, rotating units every nine to twelve months would provide basing flexibility to put functional support units where they best support the theater campaign plan. The advantages and disadvantages of each will be described in coming sections.

The “Assigned-Rotational” Model

The assigned-rotational model requires the permanent stationing of a brigade level headquarters in Europe. Depending upon the type of headquarters, this amounts to approximately 150 additional personnel and their dependents. Permanent, forward, stationing of units is a sign of the United States’ resolve to assure Allies and deter aggression in support of its values and interests. This model assumes the brigade headquarters would be based in Germany, presumably in Wiesbaden or Baumholder, where capacity exists, and subordinate units would be based at Forward Operating Sites or co-located at Allied facilities.

Even though the U.S. has drawn down significantly, there is still capacity at critical locations in Germany for assigned or rotational units. Despite V Corps’ deactivation, the facilities still exist for an operational level headquarters co-located with USAREUR. Given the lack of a force field artillery headquarters, and the requirement for

USAREUR to serve as a Contingency JTF or CJFLCC for a short period of time, co-locating a fires brigade headquarters, permanently, makes sense.

The Army staff partially agrees. In testimony to the House Armed Services Committee on July 13, 2016, Mr. Thomas Tyra, the Global Force Chief in the Army G-3/5/7 announced the Army's intent to rotationally deploy a "division level artillery brigade"⁵⁷ accompanied by an ABCT and Division Headquarters equipment set. This is a significant acknowledgement of the mission command and fires integration requirements commensurate with a defense of Europe. Mr. Tyra also mentioned the desire to deploy additional "enablers,"⁵⁸ specifically, "...engineering battalions moved over there. Possibly the ground elements of an army aviation brigade....[and] more satellite communications, more logistics, and whatever is required to speed the delivery of a fighting force."⁵⁹

The assigned brigade headquarters with rotational battalions provides USAREUR with the benefits of a standing headquarters and the flexibility to tailor its subordinate battalions through the sourcing process. For example, should the Allies ever field an artillery force that does not require U.S. augmentation, the requirement for an integrating headquarters is enduring, even if only for the Division plus of U.S. combat power on the continent plus war-traced forces. However, until that time, engaged and prudent force management and sourcing can tailor the mix of tube and rocket artillery required to support either an anticipated contingency operation or the security cooperation plan in the coming years. Further, USAREUR can place the battalions wherever requested or needed to support deterrence or security cooperation goals. With nine months of time to develop host nation forces, and learn that ways of NATO

themselves, this is an attractive option. This same advantage applies to engineers, and military police.

The “Rotational-Rotational” Model

The rotational-rotational model is the deployment of a rotational brigade headquarters with rotational subordinate units. This is the least cost, easily reversible, and most flexible option. It is particularly well suited for branches like the engineers, whose capabilities are highly modularized, and reside mostly in the Army Reserve and National Guard. This model assumes forward stationing of both the brigade headquarters and its subordinate units.

As with the assigned-rotational model, this model relies on engaged force managers to maximize its utility. Using engineers as an example, geopolitics and the Theater Security Cooperation Plan can dictate the composition of the rotational brigade. An increasingly bellicose Russia would require a greater mix of combat engineer forces to augment requirements in BCTs and integrate and cooperate with Allied counterparts. A relatively stable environment would allow for an increased allocation of construction units to enhance host nation training capability, improve strategic infrastructure, and set the theater. The agility gained through thoughtful sourcing and mixing of capabilities allows for the further operationalizing of the National Guard and Reserve in real world scenarios. Again, using the engineers as an example, the Army can continue to source active and reserve component engineers against any European requirement indefinitely, and not break 1:2 or 1:5 deployed/dwell ratios so long as funding and the mission endures. Smart sourcing of the rotational-rotational model strengthens the National Guard State Partnership Program, where National Guard forces partner with the armed

forces of a European Nation. Also attractive is the fact that the rotational-rotational model is scalable and reversible.

Conclusion

In the next five years, USAREUR will have at its disposal two assigned BCTs, a rotational ABCT, and significant materiel to accommodate an influx of U.S. forces. This constitutes at least one division's worth of combat power. As powerful as this force is, the U.S. Army draws its resiliency and campaign endurance from the rich suite of enabling forces at its disposal across the components. These resources are unmatched by the United States' NATO Allies, particularly those most threatened by Russian aggression. It is time for the United States to fully enable this ad hoc division by provisioning it with the maneuver support enablers it requires to win.

The engineer, fires, and military police capacity in USAREUR headquarters is insufficient to allow them to fully meet their responsibilities as a theater setting ASCC and operational level headquarters in a contingency operation. The Mission Command Element currently deployed is sufficient only to manage the ongoing security cooperation activities. Although not ideal, the staff capacity in functional support brigades can bear some of this burden on the tactical level.

The tyranny of time and distance argues for the presence of rotational functional support brigades. The short distance, and hence short time, from the Russian border to Tallinn and Riga coupled with the time requirements to detect, decide, and assemble friendly forces makes forward deploying these brigades essential.

This time factor, coupled with the challenges of understanding culture, creating interoperability, and establishing trust require a solution. The solution is rotational functional support brigade presence in Europe. Whether by the assigned-rotational

model or the rotational-rotational model, the benefits to the USAREUR commander's mission to set the theater, enable deterrence, and be available in a contingency make their presence required.

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