

Logistics Planning and Collaboration in Complex Relief Operations

By STEVEN J. ROMANO

In the past several years, the Department of Defense (DOD) has increasingly participated in complex relief operations with other U.S. Government agencies and nongovernmental organizations in response to humanitarian crises. These operations pose significant challenges for military logisticians. Most humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) operations are characterized by rapidly changing circumstances and a lack of clear and accurate information; they are also distinguished by substantial pressure to quickly provide relief supplies and materiel to an affected area.

While DOD has the airlift capacity, disaster funding, critical supplies, and logistics systems to be an effective interagency partner in responding to these crises, additional efforts are needed to provide military logisticians with the appropriate capabilities, tools, and training to meet the varied challenges associated with complex HA/DR operations.

This article focuses on the U.S. European Command's (USEUCOM's) efforts to support disaster relief operations with logistics in the country of Georgia during August and September 2008. While admittedly a relatively small operation compared

to DOD's support to the Indonesian tsunami in 2004, the Pakistan earthquake in 2005, or the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the Georgia humanitarian assistance crisis (named Operation *Assured Delivery*, or OAD) nonetheless provides a microcosm of HA/DR logistics operations and challenges. Furthermore, it offers a useful framework for conducting analysis and developing recommendations for improving DOD's future response capabilities. The article shares my observations, insights, and lessons learned while supporting Georgia relief operations as Director of Logistics for USEUCOM

U.S. and Georgian forces unload humanitarian aid at Tbilisi International Airport for victims of Georgia-Russia conflict



U.S. Air Force (Scott Wagers)

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during OAD operations. While the team of USEUCOM and its component forces—U.S. Army Europe, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)—were collectively able to deliver significant relief supplies within 96 hours of the crisis, a more effective and coordinated approach to crisis logistics planning and HA/DR operations is still required.

As DOD continues to embrace complex and often large-scale HA/DR operations as a core mission during a period of declining resources, we cannot afford to conduct these types of missions in a repetitively ad hoc fashion. A more structured approach is needed that combines coordinated systems, procedures, and, perhaps most important, a common operating picture with a supporting framework for the whole-of-government crisis dialogue, planning, and information exchange.

Crisis Timeline

On August 8, 2008, Russia deployed combat troops in South Ossetia and launched bombing raids deep into Georgia in response to a large-scale Georgian military attack against South Ossetia the previous day. The conflict continued for the next several days and, by mid-August, *BBC News* was reporting that Moscow claimed a death toll of 2,000. According to USAID reports, an estimated 30,000 people were displaced within South Ossetia, and more than 135,000 were displaced in other parts of Georgia. An additional 35,000 South Ossetians were reported to have fled across the Russian border into North Ossetia. The United Nations

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High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that some 127,000 people were forced from their homes throughout Georgia by the conflict, adding to an already displaced population of some 223,000 uprooted by conflicts in the early 1990s in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

In response to the crisis, USEUCOM supported USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to assist these displaced people. Housed within USAID, the OFDA is designated as the lead U.S. Government (USG) office for providing coordinated humanitarian assistance in response to international emergencies and disasters. In cooperation with other USG offices and international humanitarian experts, OFDA continuously monitors global hazards, identifies potential areas of need, and stands ready to respond whenever and wherever disaster strikes.¹

To respond to the crisis, USAID committed an initial \$250,000 in emergency assistance funds on August 9. This funding was used to provide emergency relief supplies, with a capacity to assist up to 10,000 people. The U.S. Embassy, located in the Georgian capital city of Tbilisi, released pre-positioned disaster packages that included tents, blankets, bedding, hygiene items, clothing, beds, cots, and medical supplies. On August 10, the U.S. Embassy issued a Disaster Declaration in response to the crisis, and the government of Georgia (GoG) officially requested humanitarian assistance—specifically, medicines, medical supplies, emergency shelter items, and food. The Georgian Minister of Refugee and Accommodations indicated approximately 3,000 internally displaced persons were expected in Tbilisi and the immediate area, and also cited a need for emergency shelter items (tents, blankets, cots, bedding, hygiene items, and clothing).

On August 13, 2008, the first shipments of U.S. humanitarian aid arrived in Georgia, with officials stressing the American government's commitment to its ally.² As the number of displaced personnel in Tbilisi increased, the UNHCR and the GoG began coordinating plans for international assistance. With each passing day, more people arrived in Tbilisi after fleeing their homes. Later that month, the GoG's coordinator for humanitarian affairs, Koba Subeliani, told *BBC News* that more than 230,000 people were believed to have been displaced.³ On August 14, there were growing concerns in Tbilisi about the extent of the crisis, as well as concerns

about the humanitarian situation deteriorating further as Russian troops remained in Georgia, impacting relief efforts.

Following media reports that Russian armed forces had damaged infrastructure at the port of Poti, staff from the World Food Program (WFP) conducted a site visit on August 15 and reported that commercial activity had resumed at the port despite some damage to military facilities there. WFP also noted that trucks weighing up to 5 to 7 tons could safely use the southern route between Tbilisi and the ports at Poti and Batumi.⁴

Also on August 15 (7 days after the start of the crisis), the USAID/OFDA Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) arrived in Tbilisi to conduct humanitarian needs assessments in coordination with the GoG and other relief agencies. Their efforts would help define USAID assistance priorities. While the arrival of the DART was certainly helpful, it would have been more beneficial had it deployed earlier in the crisis to augment DOD planning efforts and assist in the development of a disaster relief concept of logistics. USAID/OFDA continued to work closely with the U.S. Department of State (DOS), DOD,



Humanitarian supplies cover flight deck of USCGC *Dallas* bound for Georgia

USCG (Lauren Jorgensen)

and humanitarian agencies on the ground to coordinate relief activities. The DART noted that the reported destruction of the railway bridge between Gori and Tbilisi could impact the distribution of emergency relief food supplies to internally displaced persons (IDPs). Indeed, as of August 16, the damaged bridge was affecting the transport of 7,000 metric tons of wheat and other emergency food commodities.⁵

By September 4, the U.S. military, despite the challenges outlined above and in the following section, had delivered over 2 million pounds of emergency shelters, food, water, bedding, and medical supplies to displaced people as part of Operation Assured Delivery.⁶

Problems

Difficulty Identifying Initial Relief Requirements. With every crisis, there is always a sense of urgency to deliver relief supplies to the affected area as soon as possible. In the case of Operation Assured Delivery, USEUCOM logistics planners were under extraordinary time pressure to locate and deliver suitable supplies.

Conversely, in almost any crisis scenario, military planners are initially very limited in their ability not only to anticipate specific HA requirements, but also to develop solutions to problems on the ground. Typically, under normal operating conditions, military logisticians receive precisely defined materiel requirements with an appropriate lead-time to fill those requirements.

For OAD, USEUCOM logistics leadership was able to identify initial relief requirements by simply contacting the USAID Director at the Embassy in Tbilisi. This action was critical, as one of the key challenges in effectively supporting relief operations is obtaining an “authoritative requirement” vice what is “thought” to be needed. This initial coordination with the Embassy to determine actual requirements as expressed by the government of Georgia proved to be vital for quickly identifying, sourcing, and delivering appropriate supplies. A list of anticipated needs was generated by USAID’s director and provided to the USEUCOM logistics team to source from available supplies in the region. Despite the apparent simplicity of this approach—just pick up the phone and call—there was no formal structure in place during the crisis for DOD to engage with USAID. The USEUCOM team relied on the on-the-fly initiative of its people for interagency engagement to determine requirements and develop solutions.

Properly Sourcing Relief Supplies. The next challenge faced by USEUCOM logistics planners was to identify available resources to support relief efforts and to gain visibility over parallel NGO efforts as well. USEUCOM

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logistics planners were seeking answers to the following questions:

- What were the needs expressed by the government of Georgia?
- Who at the U.S. Embassy had visibility of these needs?
- If relief supplies were needed, who had the appropriate relief supplies and where were they located?
- How much HA/DR inventory did NGOs possess and where were those inventories located?
- What was the status of ongoing NGO relief supply shipments and when and how were they expected to arrive in Tbilisi?
- What specific DOD support was needed? What support would be redundant, duplicating a capability already being provided by another agency or NGO?

While today’s military logisticians have access to a variety of asset visibility tools, these tools do not include assets held by other USG agencies, nor by NGOs. Therefore, planners are not aware of the type, quantity, condition, and location of all relief supplies that could be made available to support operations. Fortunately, in the case of OAD, the USEUCOM humanitarian assistance staff had established an ongoing relationship with the DOS Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia. This helped in the identification of initial sources of relief supplies located in Germany.

Disconnects Between DOD Approval Process and Reality. While USEUCOM efforts to find sources of supply were underway, a DOS request for DOD support to transport initial relief supplies to Tbilisi was being staffed in the Pentagon. When this came to the attention of USEUCOM planners, they immediately followed up to ensure the request was being processed expeditiously. DOD approval of such a request would allow USEUCOM to receive funding and proceed with relief operations. According to DSCA authorities, when a disaster occurs, DSCA, USAID/OFDA, Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, and the Joint Staff should begin an immediate dialogue, discerning the status of the event, what the affected country requires, and what the USG can provide. If DOD action is required, DSCA begins working with the appropriate Combatant Command (COCOM) in the impacted region to determine requirements and develop cost



General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, then-commander, U.S. European Command, meets Georgian soldiers assisting with delivery of humanitarian supplies

DOD (John Gay)

estimates. Additionally, they help secure Secretary of Defense approval.

Given the significant challenges and costs associated with moving large amounts of relief supplies by air, transportation planners are typically required to develop accurate transportation cost estimates *in advance of DOD approval* of these operations. However, in order to follow the sequential nature of the approval process just outlined, interagency dialogue is involved in identifying pertinent agency points of contact, determining and locating required assets and plans, and developing cost estimates for transportation from source to the point of crisis. This simply begins too late in the game to be effective after a crisis has occurred. The nature of many HA/DR scenarios is such that conditions on the ground can quickly deteriorate in the absence of needed supplies and materiel. To rapidly airlift large quantities of relief supplies from source to point of need, DOD logisticians require a capacity to conduct pre-crisis planning and coordination, along with negotiation with their interagency counterparts. However, these functional capacities may not be available at the beginning of a crisis and must be established before materiel can start flowing to the affected area. This is time-consuming and a cause of delays in the arrival of relief supplies (which often takes days). Pre-crisis logistics planning should be the norm, allowing the establishment of as many of these functional capacities as possible up front.

Lack of Logistics Planning and Coordination Enablers. Typically at the onset of a crisis, logistics coordinating cells are rapidly organized but lack the capacity to effectively conduct coordinated HA/DR logistics operations. During the Georgia crisis, the USEUCOM Deployment Distribution Operations Center (EDDOC) team assumed a coordination role with the U.S. Army's 21st Theater Sustainment Command and DOS to accelerate the ground movement of initial DOS supplies, which were stored at U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center, Europe, based in Pirmasens, Germany. These supplies were then moved to the airfield at Ramstein Air Base. On August 13, the first of two USG-carrying C-17 flights



Soldiers at Ramstein Air Base load pallets with sleeping bags and cots for delivery to Georgia

arrived in Tbilisi to provide emergency relief and medical supplies. The second flight arrived on August 14, carrying additional commodities, including antibiotics requested by the GoG Ministry of Health.⁷

USEUCOM was able to leverage an already in-place asset, the EDDOC, to enable the logistics planning and coordination necessary, thus quickly putting supplies on the ground. This begs the questions of whether all COCOMs have similar Deployment and Distribution Operations Center (DDOC) structures to enable the coordination of HA/DR operations and whether they are properly organized to support such operations. Does the DDOC structure (if one exists) support interagency coordination on a recurring basis? In the absence of such logistics planning/coordination enablers, should DOD consider establishing a deployable Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center capability—one that is manned, trained, and equipped to provide logistics coordination capabilities across the interagency to support HA/DR missions? Should COCOMs try to leverage the recently developed Operational Contract Support planner concept and request that DOD establish and fill COCOM staff billets

for foreign humanitarian assistance logistics planners in order to build an organic and enduring HA planning capacity?

Difficulty Coordinating and Deconflicting Airlift. In addition to the air delivery of initial DOD/DOS supplies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) established an air bridge from its logistics center in Amman, Jordan, to Tbilisi, Georgia. On August 13, the first of five scheduled ICRC flights arrived in Tbilisi, delivering food and nonfood commodities. ICRC was preparing to ship an additional 35 tons of emergency relief supplies (including blankets, plastic sheeting, water cans, and hygiene supplies) in the coming days.⁸ At this time, the USEUCOM team not only lacked visibility of ICRC efforts, but also the authority to interact with the ICRC logistics center in Amman to coordinate operations. These two initial transportation deliveries, one from DOD and one from ICRC, arriving in Tbilisi on the same day, were not synchronized and could have caused delays in the offload and distribution of relief supplies due to capacity limitations at the airfield. Fortunately, there was sufficient space and cargo-handling equipment to accommodate both the ICRC and DOD/DOS initial shipments.

Once on the ground in Tbilisi, the supplies were to be distributed by five different NGOs: Counterpart International, A Call to Serve—Georgia, International Relief and Development, Hellenicare, and the United

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Methodist Committee on Relief. Unfortunately, USEUCOM planners had no previous experience interacting with these NGOs and had very little understanding of their materiel distribution plans. As a result, USEUCOM logistics planners could not measure how quickly relief supplies could be moved off the airfield in order to plan and schedule future airlift missions and prevent potential bottlenecks that would delay the distribution of relief supplies.

Limitations in Airfield Offload and Throughput Capacity. Offload capacity at an airfield receiving relief supplies is often a principal cause of delayed airlift flights. New flights either cannot get the necessary airfield space or must sit idle while the necessary materiel handling equipment (MHE) is being used elsewhere. Initially, USEUCOM relied on an NGO capability to offload the first loads of relief supplies at Tbilisi. As the operation size increased, they determined that additional offload capacity was needed and requested U.S. Air Force Crisis Response Group support. This action improved the offload and throughput capacity at the airfield.

Military logisticians need to better understand the organic and NGO-provided offload capabilities available at airfields in advance of a crisis. In addition, DOD

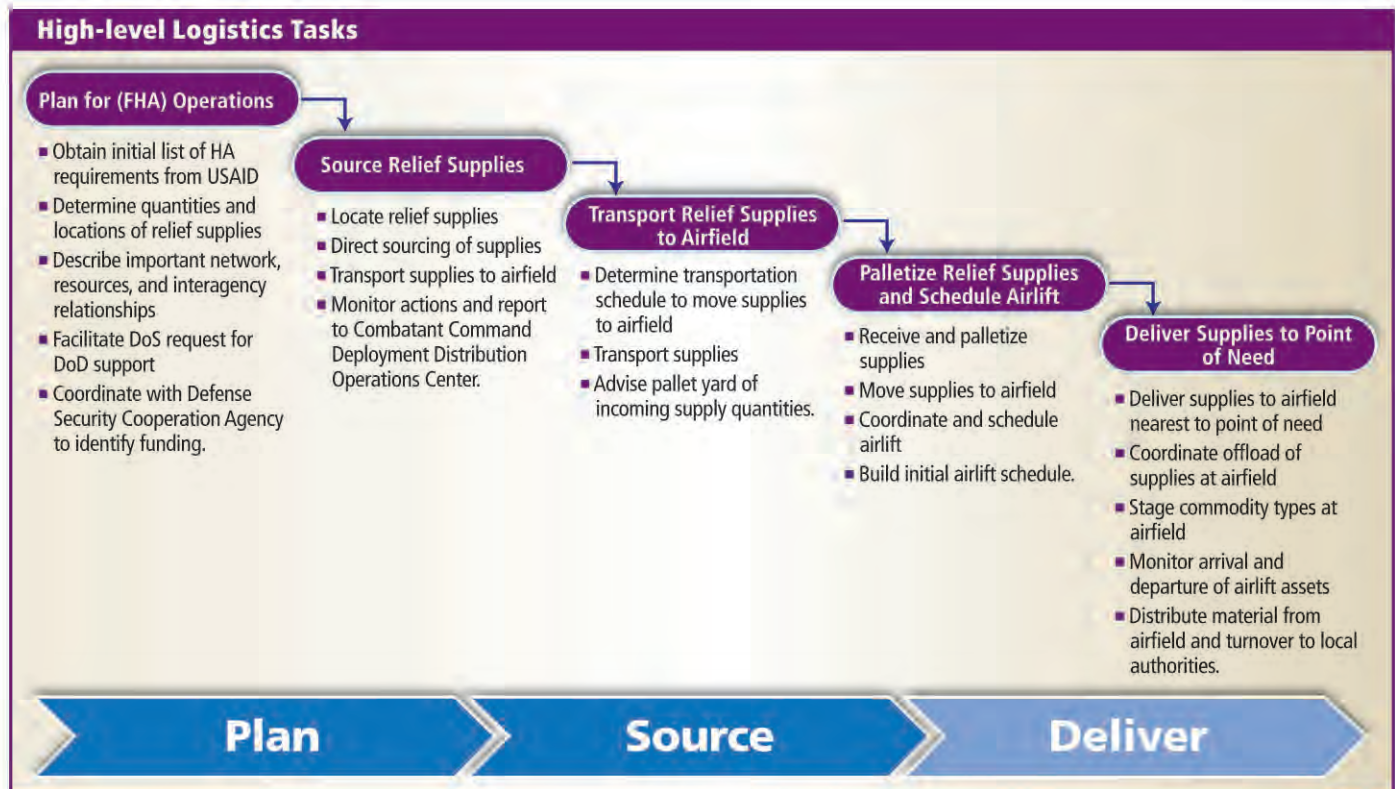
planners must be able to provide USAID and pertinent NGOs with accurate forecasts of incoming DOD airlift so offload capacity is optimized but not overtaxed. USEUCOM planners were not able to provide these forecasts and, as a result, relief supplies began to build up at the airfield. A better, more complete common operating picture (COP) of airfield relief operations was needed so USEUCOM logisticians could precisely sequence the delivery of the right amount of DOD supplies. Among the answers they needed were which aircraft had already been offloaded and which were awaiting offload, what items and quantities were arriving on incoming aircraft and the source of those aircraft (DOD assets or NGO-contracted), and where existing airfield MHE assets were and what their status was. All this information was critical to efforts to optimally coordinate the flow of relief materiel on the ground.

Properly Sustaining the Flow of Logistics. During the sustainment phase of HA/DR operations, additional logistical challenges can occur. For example, DOD often begins to lose visibility of the types and quantities of relief supplies moving through the supply chain. As previously mentioned, this usually results in relief supplies accumulating at the airfield because there is no COP that includes

incoming material, available airfield MHE capability, and the capacity of NGOs to move supplies from an airfield to the affected area. A tool for measuring the cargo capacity of the entire supply chain from source to point of need would greatly help COCOM logistics planners. Such a tool would help “meter the flow” of HA/DR resources and allow for more consistent sustainment efforts.

Many researchers have used the Supply Chain Operations Reference (SCOR) model to assist in the analysis of supply chain processes and outcomes. Figure 1 represents a high-level summary, following the SCOR framework of “Plan, Source, Make, Deliver,” and Return of HA processes used by USEUCOM logistics planners during the crisis; this may serve as a useful reference tool for future operations. To more effectively coordinate sourcing and sustain delivery of relief supplies, existing automatic identification technology (AIT) media should be used to capture shipment data. This data can then be communicated to a COP where it would become visible to all authorized users.

As Operation Assured Delivery progressed, there was an increasing desire by USEUCOM to develop a sustained flow of logistics to satisfy emerging requirements established by the GoG and USAID. The



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goal was to leverage all the capabilities of its components to either source or deliver materiel. Following requests from the GoG for tents, blankets, and additional commodities, USEUCOM planned to dispatch two C-130 flights per day from August 15 through 21, with each flight carrying emergency relief supplies. Again, without prior knowledge of interagency capabilities, USEUCOM planners tried to find sources for tents, blankets, and additional supplies within DOD inventories. This reliance on DOD-only assets could have resulted in the shipment of some inappropriate supplies as well as excess quantities. Fortunately, USAID had deployed a liaison officer to USEUCOM by mid-August. This individual was able to advise USEUCOM planners of the availability of blankets and hygiene kits at the USAID warehouse in Pisa, Italy. Once these assets were known, USEUCOM planners requested theater-assigned U.S. Navy aircraft to pick up and deliver thousands of blankets and hygiene kits. A U.S. Navy C-9 jet carrying humanitarian assistance arrived in Tbilisi on August 18, marking the Navy's first humanitarian assistance mission to the region.

As the need for food continued to grow during the crisis, USEUCOM's next major planning challenge was to develop a sourcing and distribution plan for hundreds of thousands of humanitarian daily rations (HDRs). These rations needed to be moved from Albany, Georgia (in the United States), to Tbilisi. These HDRs were required for the purpose of providing additional emergency food until larger NGO efforts could be established. EDDOC engagement with USTRANSCOM resulted in the scheduling of dozens of C-17 flights, together with the two daily C-130 flights, to deliver HDRs to Tbilisi, thereby creating a sustained flow of logistics. The importance of USEUCOM's EDDOC as an ad hoc HA/DR logistics enabler—and the need to replicate this capability in all regions—should be obvious by now.

Need for Unclassified Information-sharing and Collaboration Tools. Infor-



U.S. Air Force (Ricky A. Bloom)

USEUCOM Joint Humanitarian Assistance Assessment Team members arrive in Tbilisi to work with U.S. and international governments and nongovernmental aid organizations

mation-sharing and the use of shared tools are essential to logistics planners' ability to organize, source, and deliver relief supplies. At the beginning of the Georgia crisis, USEUCOM EDDOC planners hosted daily collaboration sessions to synchronize and share information with the USTRANSCOM, the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, various USEUCOM components, and DLA. As a result, USEUCOM was able to quickly locate thousands of in-theater cots from Marine Corps stocks and ship them to the point of need. However, since the participants were all DOD entities, the bulk of this collaboration took place in a classified forum, thereby excluding several key interagency representatives who could have helped in the development of logistics solutions.

Need for More Humanitarian Assistance Exercises. Given the inherent complexity of HA/DR operations, and the intense effectiveness requirement for detailed coordination across the interagency and NGOs, DOD logistics planners should have opportunities to establish and develop these skills in an exercise environment. While USEUCOM had not sponsored any HA/DR exercises in advance of the Georgia crisis, the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) had. In order to improve the collective ability of the United States and its partner nations to respond effectively and expeditiously to disasters, USSOUTHCOM, beginning as early as 2002, sponsored disaster preparedness exercises, seminars, and conferences on the issue. The command is currently averaging three

HA/DR exercises or HA/DR planning-related events per year. USSOUTHCOM has also supported the construction or improvement of several Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) and Disaster Relief Warehouses (DRWs) and has provided and stocked pre-positioned relief supplies across the region. Construction and refurbishment of additional EOCs and DRWs are ongoing. This type of multinational disaster preparedness has increased the ability of USSOUTHCOM to work with partner nations in HA/DR operations.⁹ Furthermore, this was played out in Operation *Unified Response* in Haiti, where coalition, interagency, and NGO coordination and collaboration were at an all-time high in terms of quantity—truly a “unified” response.

These types of events would be beneficial for all COCOM logistics planners. Practicing HA/DR planning, coordination, and collaboration *pre-crisis*, in a series of exercises designed to include coalition forces, the interagency, and NGOs, would be invaluable and would significantly improve COCOM's ability to plan and execute future HA/DR operations.

Solutions

The above problems are reflective of those I experienced at USEUCOM during the Georgia crisis. We have lived through other HA/DR crises since then and there are others that could be enumerated. Likewise, some problem areas I have cited have seen improvement. For example, there is very encouraging progress in the area of developing web-based, unclassified collaboration tools that are

inclusive enough to bring the interagency and NGOs under the logistics planning and coordination umbrella.

Another positive development was a November 22, 2010, *American Free Press* article in which Secretary of Defense Robert Gates expresses support for a proposal to establish crisis cells specifically to aid Latin America in disasters. The proposal was discussed at the ninth Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Secretary Gates told representatives from some 30 countries that the proposal followed “honest assessments of what worked and what didn’t in Haiti” in the aftermath of that country’s catastrophic earthquake that killed 250,000 people. The proposal involves creating a series of Military Assistance Collaboration Cells, or MACCs, which would share information and technology with all HA/DR partners. More of this is what is needed and will surely benefit future HA/DR planning, coordination, and response efforts.

When asked about the lasting impact of the Georgia relief operations during a USEUCOM logistics lessons learned session, I responded that the keys to our success in the future are to:

- develop pre-crisis integrated logistics planning with the interagency
- gain visibility of all relief supplies within the affected theater
- define desired HA/DR processes and outcomes
- develop an interagency framework for collaboration in advance of HA/DR situations
- practice and refine HA/DR response frequently through exercises and other pre-crisis events and forums.

There are many HA/DR logistics actions that DOD needs to perform better in the future. Doing all, or even some, of these things will lead to improved HA/DR responses. Solutions extensive enough to include not only DOD and the interagency but also key NGOs—many of which have extensive yet

“untapped” experience in HA/DR missions—are preferred. The Department of Defense, together with other USG agencies, should consider a number of possible actions.

Logisticians must gain full visibility of interagency relief supplies and a complete understanding of the processes to source and transport supplies during a crisis. By their nature, HA/DR operations offer very compressed timelines for identifying appropriate supplies and seeking solutions to move them. Military logisticians need to gain visibility of all NGO HA/DR activities and inventories in order to assist with managing and deconflicting the flow of logistics into the affected area. This should include a framework for controlling and sequencing relief flights to ensure the affected country’s priorities are being met and logistics bottlenecks do not impede the flow of relief supplies. It should also include processes to identify HA/DR materiel that transits via the Defense Transportation System, regardless of source. DOD has extensively used AIT media to capture shipment and content data for in-transit visibility. However, during OAD, several HA/DR shipments arrived in Tbilisi without proper radio frequency identification (RFID) tags, which hampered the expeditious distribution of supplies to IDPs. COCOM staffs should update and implement RFID policies, test them during humanitarian relief exercises, and ensure they are rigidly applied during actual HA/DR operations.

All COCOMs need an integrated logistics planning construct with the interagency in advance of HA/DR crises. To promote integrated logistics planning, we should identify gaps in processes and knowledge within DOD and interagency partners and build a strategy to address these shortcomings. The initial delivery of relief supplies to Tbilisi took approximately 96 hours and could have been delivered more effectively if DOD and the interagency had developed an integrated logistics planning capability and documented and tested a concept of logistics support plan in advance of the crisis. Connecting with relevant NGOs and having an understanding of key local participants and authorities is critical to complex HA/DR operations. Success depends on early engagement and planning and is enabled by open communications networks with maximum sharing of information in unclassified forums to the extent possible. We should develop an interagency framework supporting continuous dialogue between logistics departments in advance

Sailors aboard USS *McFaul* guide crane cable to transfer pallets of humanitarian aid to barge



U.S. Navy (Eddie Harrison)

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of a crisis as well as ongoing education and training to provide the ability for planners to better understand processes associated with HA/DR operations and interagency and NGO collaboration. Joint and interagency doctrine should be updated for these types of complex operations to better identify processes, roles, responsibilities, and structured organizational interactions.

DOD needs a standing coordination cell, established to provide continuous planning and coordination with the interagency and NGOs. DOD should consider development of a deployable Foreign Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center and/or MACC capability to synchronize and coordinate logistics requirements and capabilities in advance of a crisis. The MACC could serve as the principal Department of Defense HA/DR planning cell for logistics, provide an entry point for USAID-generated requests for DOD support, facilitate the sourcing of DOD and other USG-owned relief supplies, interface with NGOs to determine their assets and distribution processes, and begin to develop a badly needed common operating picture.

DOD should continue to develop and deploy collaborative tools to facilitate HA/DR information sharing and coordination. These tools must reside in or migrate to an unclassified forum as much as possible to allow participation by other government agencies and key NGOs. We need to expand their use during HA/DR exercises and operations and ensure our interagency and NGO partners have access to and training in such systems. In order to develop a complete set of response options, DOD logistics planners likewise should have access to and be trained in the use of systems and processes used by other U.S. Government agencies and NGOs to manage relief supply inventories and to better understand their logistics capabilities, activities, and priorities during a crisis. DOD logistics planners should have a broad familiarity with NGO and other relevant organizations (i.e., commercial and academic partners) operating in their area.

All Combatant Commands should have a robust series of logistics exercises to refine

their HA/DR planning skills. At a minimum, tabletop exercises specifically focused on the logistics aspects of HA/DR operations should be scheduled on a frequent basis and attended by representatives of both DOD and the interagency. Logistics planners should also consider developing regularly scheduled seminars, workshops, roundtables, and panel discussions designed to engage all HA/DR partner organizations. In addition, mechanisms to capture the lessons learned in these evolutions should be created that will influence the development of interagency doctrine. USEUCOM recently planned and conducted Flexible Response '10, a command post exercise focusing on Foreign Consequence Management and Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief planning and operations. This exercise was designed to strengthen a whole-of-government approach through engagement with various U.S. agencies as well as partner nations and nongovernmental organizations. The exercise helped USEUCOM identify gaps in its logistics capabilities and allowed it to become more familiar with the crisis response capabilities of component organizations.

Military leaders at the COCOM level need a strengthened understanding of the interagency and their HA/DR crisis response roles and responsibilities. What does each element of the interagency bring to this type of crisis? What is the best approach for harnessing and mobilizing their capabilities? Who is in charge and why (i.e., who is the lead Federal agency and what are its specific roles and responsibilities)? Many U.S. Government agencies have the capacity for HA/DR support. Efforts should be taken to develop a catalog or matrix of their respective capabilities that would help logistics planners develop more comprehensive and inclusive HA/DR solutions.

DOD needs a capability to assess the overall effectiveness of relief supplies provided. Did they get to the affected population or were they stored in country for a future crisis? Were the quantity, type, and quality of materiel appropriate to the need? Were there gaps? Was there expensive and wasteful duplication of some capabilities? Did relief supplies result in the achievement of one or more of USAID's stated effects during the crisis? USAID should refine and share its existing measurement tools and processes to assist DOD in assessing the overall effectiveness of HA/DR efforts.

Despite many challenges and faced by complex problems as described above, DOD

was able to provide \$17.5 million of the \$39 million in relief activities imparted by the U.S. Government during OAD. Between August 13 and September 4, USEUCOM conducted 59 humanitarian missions, delivering a total of 356,380 humanitarian daily rations, 154,368 meals-ready-to-eat, 10,432 cots, 19,184 sleeping bags, 26,422 hygiene kits provided by USAID/OFDA, 9,254 blankets, 6,040 sheets, 3,431 mattresses, 653 boxes of medical supplies, and other relief commodities from DOS and DOD warehouses in Germany and USAID stockpiles in Italy.¹⁰ All told, DOD delivered over 2 million pounds of relief supplies and materiel during the 23-day period of crisis relief operations.

We are a nation that recognizes human suffering and will take action to help. As noted in an article on the 2005 Pakistan relief operation, "Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief remain a powerful strategic way to achieve political ends. In an ideological struggle, HA/DR campaigns project the best of American values abroad."¹¹ Accordingly, it is vitally important to get the logistics aspects of the operation right in order to deliver a timely and effective U.S. Government response, since failing to do so could cause strain in international relations as well as tension within the interagency. **JFQ**

NOTES

¹ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), *Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2009*.

² Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), OFDA, *Georgia—Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #1*, August 14, 2008.

³ Helen Fawkes, "Despair Among Georgia's Displaced," available at <<http://newsbbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7572736.stm>>.

⁴ DCHA, OFDA, *Georgia—Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #3*, August 16, 2008.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Cynthia Bauer, U.S. Transportation Command Public Affairs, "U.S. Defense Transportation, Distribution Expertise Aids Georgian Refugees," September 2, 2008.

⁷ DCHA, *Fact Sheet #1*.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ U.S. Southern Command official Web site, accessed September 28, 2010, at <www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/pages/humanitarianAssistance.php>.

¹⁰ DCHA, OFDA, *Georgia—Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #19*, September 30, 2008.

¹¹ William J. Bowers, "Pakistan Earthquake Relief Operations: Leveraging Humanitarian Missions for Strategic Success," *PRISM 2*, no. 1 (December 2010), 132.