

CHAPTER 8

General Logistics Considerations

INTRODUCTION

Airdrop resupply support is essential to sustain the soldier. This chapter addresses several areas that impact on the commander's ability to provide this support.

REAR AREA SECURITY OPERATIONS

Rear area security operations are actions taken to reduce or avoid the effects of enemy actions. Their proper use will ensure that airdrop resupply operations can be conducted continuously. Operations can be categorized as before attack, during attack, and after attack. Airdrop support units in the corps operate as prescribed by the CSS cell of the rear CP. In the COMMZ, rear area security is normally delegated to the ASG commanders through the TAACOM commander. Elements of the TAACOM MP brigade respond to threats that exceed the self-defense capabilities of bases. The TAACOM MP elements function under the OPCON of the ASG commander during the response force operation. Airdrop support units in the TAACOM operate as prescribed by the ASG commander. The organizational structure of airdrop support units permits operations from multiple locations. This is the best passive defense measure available to the commander.

MISSION KILL OPERATIONS

Airdrop support units must be familiar with the effects mission kill operations could have on their mission. Mission kill operations keep the unit from performing its job. Some examples of mission kill effects are blast, biological, directed energy, chemical, ballistic, sonic, psychological, and nuclear. Of these, the most likely to occur to airdrop support units are blast and chemical. Blast effects could collapse buildings or other structures resulting in damage to air delivery equipment. Placing the storage facilities in various locations can limit the effects of blast damage. Airdrop support units must protect air delivery equipment, especially nylon and other fabrics, from contamination by chemical agents. Effects of various chemical agents and decontamination chemicals on these items are unknown. Even if decontaminated, air items could suffer damage which may not show up until the

item is actually used. Airdrop support units must whenever possible, reduce exposure of air delivery equipment to chemical agents. More information on NBC effects is provided later in this chapter. See FM 3-4 for examples of protective measures to reduce the hazard of chemical contamination. See FM 3-5 for a listing of field expedient covers. Defensive measures against other mission kill effects should be taken as needed.

RECONSTITUTION

Normally, only combat forces are concerned with reconstitution operations. However, because of the lethality and range of modern weapons, a high loss rate for combat service support personnel and equipment can also be expected. Threat force doctrine states that NBC munitions will be used, if needed, throughout the battlefield. Decontamination procedures are not now available for airdrop equipment, especially nylon components. Because of these problems, reconstitution must be considered for the airdrop support units. There are two ways to reconstitute airdrop support units. In-place reconstitution involves a one-for-one replacement of people and equipment, resupply of basic and prescribed loads, and repair of essential items. Airdrop equipment is unique; it cannot be replaced easily in allied countries. Temporarily, local national personnel can be used if appropriate supervisory and interpreter personnel are available. Unit replacement involves a one-for-one replacement of the unit. This alternative cannot be used effectively during the early stages of hostilities due to the traditional limited resourcing for airdrop support units. Once mobilization has been declared and enough train-up time has elapsed, this becomes a better alternative.

HOST-NATION SUPPORT

Host-nation support can provide the airdrop support system with facilities and labor. Buildings for use in parachute packing, air delivery equipment maintenance, air delivery equipment storage, and airdrop rigging will be used when available. Civilian labor can be used in rigging line operations, cargo parachute packing, air

delivery equipment maintenance, and operation of forklifts and trucks. As training will be required, this support must be planned and coordinated well in advance. Wartime availability of such support is a prime concern.

NBC ENVIRONMENT

An NBC environment will greatly affect the airdrop support unit mission. First, wearing of MOPP 4 gear reduces mission capability by at least 50 percent. The detailed work required in parachute packing, maintenance, and airdrop

rigging is very difficult to perform while wearing the protective mask and gloves. Temperatures generated inside the protective clothing further reduce the time that can be effectively applied to the mission. Second, decontamination procedures have not been developed for airdrop equipment. Effects of various chemical agents and decontamination chemicals on the strength of the various nylon components have yet to be determined. Use of these items, once contaminated, is questionable. Airdrop support units must take every precaution to protect air items from exposure.