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The Sustainment Brigade

February 2009

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Headquarters, Department of the Army

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THE SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

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Preface

This field manual interim (FMI) describes the organization, mission, and operations of the sustainment brigade and its subordinate functional and multifunctional units. These subordinate units are task organized to the sustainment brigade depending on the specific mission of the brigade. This manual also describes the relationships of the sustainment brigade and its subordinate units to each other and to the organizations they have command and support relationships with as well. This manual applies to the full spectrum of operations extending from stable peace to general war. Doctrine is not intended to cover garrison operation.

This manual provides guidance for Army commanders, geographic combatant commanders (GCCs), joint force commanders (JFCs), and logisticians throughout the Army. This field manual interim (FMI) serves as an authoritative reference for students and personnel who –

- Develop doctrine materiel (fundamental principles and TTP) and force structure.
- Develop institutional and unit training.
- Develop standing operating procedures (SOP) for unit operations.

This publication applies to the Active Army, the Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and the United States Reserve unless otherwise stated.

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Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns and pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

Chapter 1

THE ROLE OF THE SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE IN ARMY OPERATIONS

In response to the challenge of transforming into an expeditionary Army, the modular force was designed. To compliment the modular force, the Modular Force Logistics Concept was developed to provide commensurate increased operational flex and unity of command. For the logistician, this involved streamlining traditional systems for command and control (C2), theater opening, and theater distribution. Logisticians today must be prepared to conduct a wide-ranging array of concurrent operations to support deployment, employment, sustainment, redeployment, and reconstitution. This command structure is enabled by visibility of the distribution system, its contents, and theater infrastructure. This includes visibility of main supply routes (MSRs) in concert with multi-nodal and multi-modal operations that form the backbone of the system. Logistics planners are provided the capability to identify, prioritize, and modify routes for personnel, equipment, and supplies moving throughout the distribution network. Commanders combine visibility of the distribution system with clear lines of C2 to channel assets as they move throughout the operational environment.

SECTION I – THEATER OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

1-1. In the recent past, the nature of operational environments changed significantly. This section addresses these changes and how the Army has adapted to accommodate them. One key feature is a distribution system that relies on visibility and flexibility instead of mass. The sustainment brigade is a key element in providing support and services to warfighting units to ensure freedom of action, extended operational reach, and prolonged endurance.

CHANGES IN THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

1-2. Commanders must be prepared and able to conduct operations in permissive, uncertain, and hostile environments. These environments are likely to comprise difficult terrain, adverse climates, and adaptive enemies. Within the context of social, physical, and economic conditions characteristic of failed states and fractured societies, commanders may expect rampant crime with international linkages as well as religious and ethnic tension. This environment is further characterized by:

- A complex, noncontiguous battlefield, where boundaries will not be clearly defined.
- A threat scenario in which potential adversaries are not readily identifiable.
- Simultaneous, geographically dispersed operations that will result in extremely long and potentially unsecured lines of communications (LOCs).
- The prevalence of joint organizations at the operational level and single service organizations operating in a collaborative or interdependent joint environment at the tactical level.
- A significant degree of joint and single service interaction with other governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational forces, and contractors.

THEATER OF OPERATIONS

1-3. A theater of operations is a geographical area for which a Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) is assigned military responsibility. The command views a theater of operations from a strategic perspective and assesses the level of international military cooperation available with the degree of dedicated US military resources necessary. These factors influence prospective Army operations in each theater of operations or GCC area of responsibility (AOR).

DESIGNATION OF THE AREA OF OPERATIONS

1-4. To conduct operations within its geographic area of responsibility, the GCC may designate a specific area within the AOR as a theater of war, theater of operations, or a joint operations area (JOA). Commanders may use these terms independently or in conjunction with one another, depending on the needs of the operation. If used in conjunction, the theater of war would encompass the larger area with smaller theaters of operation and JOAs within it. Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 describes the criteria for each designation in more detail. This manual uses the more generic term area of operations (AO) to refer to any area where the commander may deploy a sustainment brigade to conduct operations. The GCC (or subordinate combatant commander) maintains responsibility for the operations of US forces in an AOR or designates a joint task force (JTF) to command forces in a designated area. The Army Service Component Commander (ASCC) provides Army forces to the joint force commander (JFC)/JTF to support those operations. JP 3-0 discusses theater organization.

SECTION II – COMMAND AND SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

THEATER SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (TSC)

1-5. The TSC is the central Army logistics C2 headquarters (HQ) in a theater of operations and the senior Army logistics HQ for the Theater Army (for example, USAREUR-7th Army, United States Army, Pacific Command--8th Army) or a JFC. The TSC consolidates many of the functions previously performed by Corps Support Commands and Theater Support Commands into a central operational echelon that is responsible for C2 of theater opening (TO), theater distribution (TD), and sustainment operations conducted in support of Army and, on order, joint, interagency, and multinational forces. The TSC is regionally focused and globally employable. Its modular design provides the TSC commander with the operational flexibility to adapt C2 as requirements develop; including deploying an Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) to provide an additional measure of responsiveness, agility, and flexibility for employment. Figure 1-1 shows a notional TSC with multiple ESCs available to deploy to separate JOAs and multiple sustainment brigades to provide support to multiple AOs as required. See FM 4-93.4 for more information on the TSC.

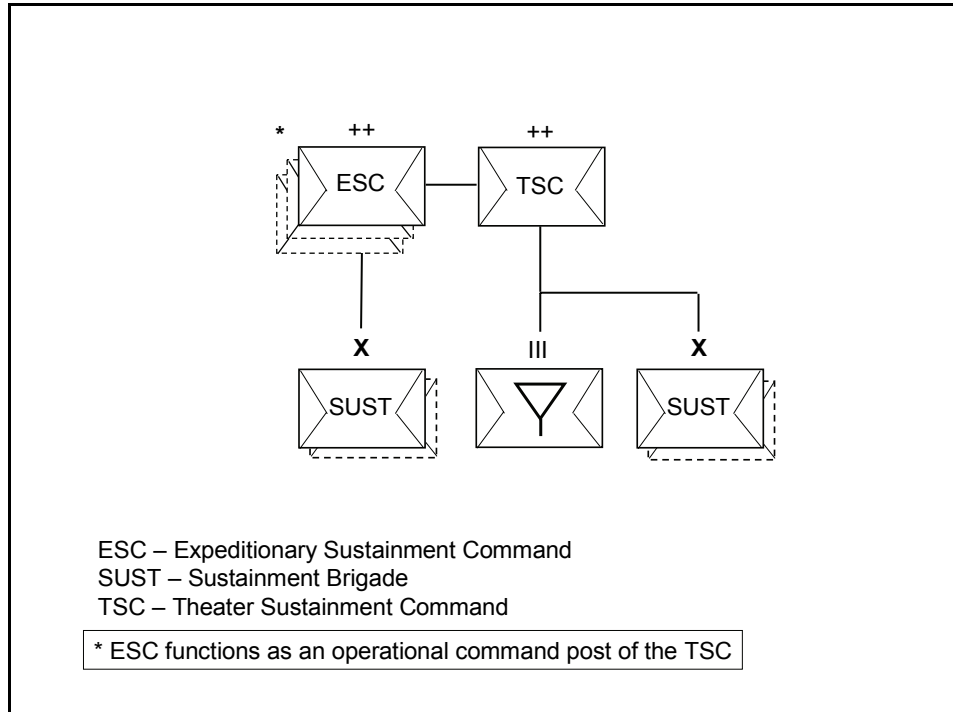


Figure 1-1. Notional TSC Organization

Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC)

1-6. The Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC), attached to a Theater Sustainment Command (TSC), provides command and control (C2) for attached units in an area of operation as defined by the TSC. As a deployable command post for the TSC, the ESC provides operational reach and span of control. The ESC plans and executes sustainment, distribution, theater opening and reception, staging, and onward movement for Army forces in full spectrum operations. It may serve as the basis for an expeditionary joint sustainment command when directed by the Combatant Commander or his designated Coalition/Joint Task Force Commander. The TSC establishes C2 of operational level theater opening, sustainment, distribution, and redistribution in specific areas of operation by employing one or more ESC. Each ESC provides a rapidly deployable, regionally focused, control and synchronization capability, mirroring, on a smaller scale, the organizational structure of the TSC. By design, the ESC provides C2 for operations that are limited in scale and scope; employing reach capabilities to provide augmented support where practical. The ESC also oversees TO, TD, and sustainment operations in accordance with TSC plans, policies, programs, and mission guidance.

1-7. The TSC may operate from a command center located in sanctuary, employing one or multiple ESC to establish a forward presence to control and direct deployed units. Mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available - time available and civil (METT-TC) considerations such as operational pace, span of control, conflict escalation, or operational environment may result in the deployment of the TSC to a forward area. When this occurs, the ESC may redeploy or it may be assigned another mission within the theater of operations. See FM 4-93.4 for more information on the ESC.

Sustainment Brigades

1-8. The sustainment brigades consolidate selected functions previously performed by corps and division support commands and area support groups into a central operational echelon and provide C2 of TO, TD, and sustainment operations. Greater detail on these missions and organization of the sustainment brigade is provided in the remainder of this manual. Combat Sustainment Support Battalions (CSSB) are the building blocks of the sustainment brigades. Their designs are standardized and can consist of up to eight

companies. CSSBs are modular and task organized to support TO, TD, area sustainment, or life support missions. Figure 1-2 depicts the support relationships that might exist in a developed theater of operations.

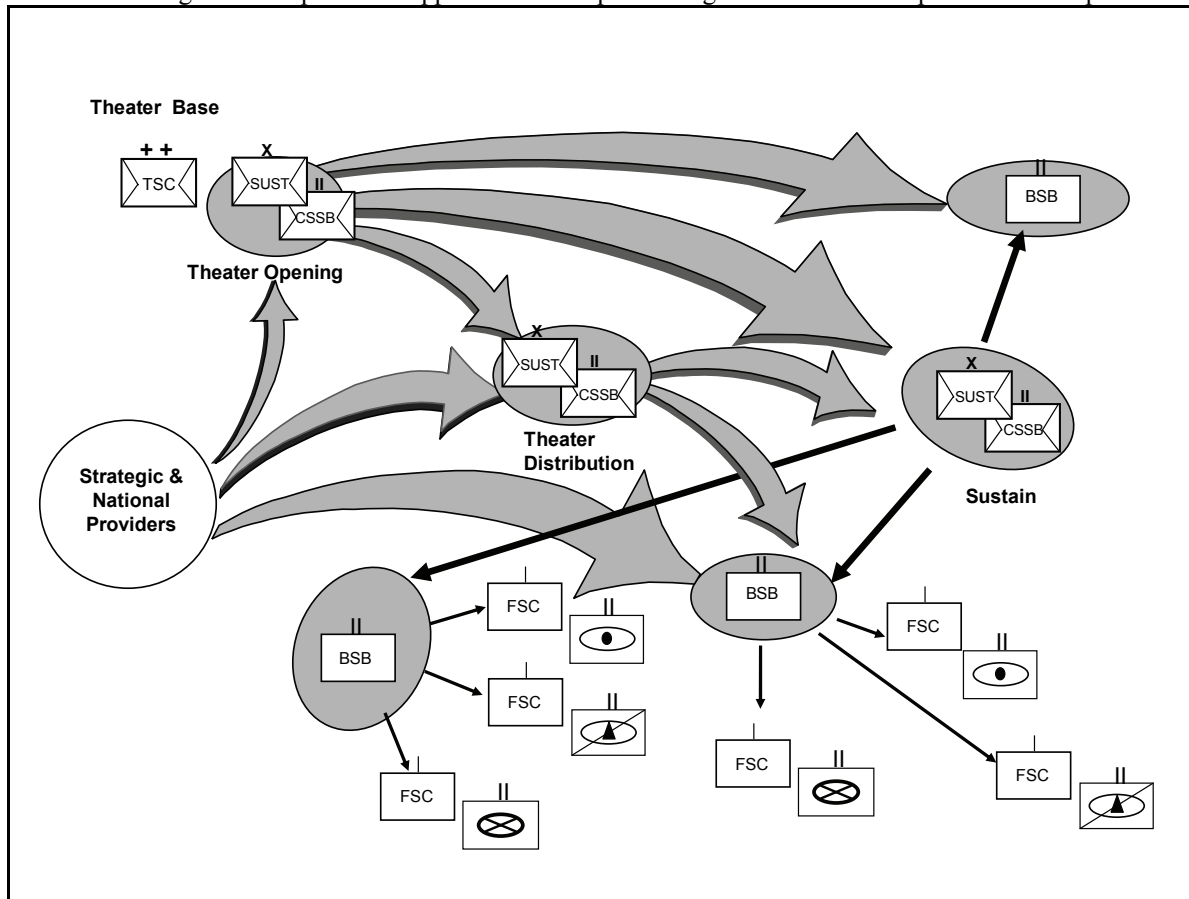


Figure 1-2. Notional Support Operations in a Developed Theater of Operations

SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

1-9. Per FM 3-0, in the Army, support is a specified relationship whereas in JP 3-0 support is a joint command relationship. Support is the action of a force that aids, protects, complements, or sustains another force in accordance with a directive requiring such action. The primary purpose of the support relationship is to indicate which commanders are providing support to a designated command/organization. Designation of a support relationship does not provide authority to organize and employ commands and forces, nor does it include authoritative direction for administrative and logistics support. Table B-3 in FM 3-0 demonstrates inherent responsibilities for support relationships.

1-10. Commanders establish support relationships when subordination of one unit to another is inappropriate. They assign a support relationship when—

- The support is more effective when the supporting unit is controlled by a commander with the requisite technical and tactical expertise.
- The echelon of the supporting unit is the same as or higher than that of the supported unit. For example, the supporting unit may be a brigade and the supported unit may be a battalion. It would be inappropriate for the brigade to be subordinated to the battalion, hence the use of an Army support relationship.
- The supporting unit may provide support to several units simultaneously. Prioritization of requirements is an essential function of command, as assigning support relationships is an aspect of mission command.

RELATIONSHIPS OF ECHELONS ABOVE BRIGADE (EAB) SUSTAINMENT UNITS

1-11. The parent organization of the TSC is the Theater Army. The ESC is intended to be an operational command post of the TSC, but may be employed as a separate echelon of command. When employed as a separate command, the ESC may need augmentation from the TSC as determined through mission analysis. The sustainment brigade is assigned to the TSC, or the ESC when employed as a separate command. Any of these EAB support units may be placed under tactical control (TACON) of a combined arms HQ for a specific purpose such as protection or METT-TC. CSSBs and functional battalions are assigned to the sustainment brigade. The TSC is assigned to support a particular theater of operations. Sustainment brigades and their CSSBs provide support on an area basis and may also be assigned specific units to support. In a small operation and in the absence of an ESC, a sustainment brigade may be the senior logistical C2 HQ in a JOA and may be TACON to the senior maneuver HQ. During theater opening operations, the sustainment brigade may also provide C2 for all units in their AO (such as MPs, engineer, or chemical) as directed by an OPORD and in the absence of their brigade HQ. The TSC, ESC, sustainment brigade, and CSSB are in a general support relationship to the ARFOR, Corps as JTF, Division, brigade combat teams (BCT), and functional Brigades (see also JP 3-0 and FM 3-0). Figure 1-3 contains a table depicting these relationships in graphical form.

Unit ⁹	Parent Org	ARFOR ₁ in JOA	Corps as JTF	Division	BCT & Support BDE
TSC ²	Theater Army	GS ^{2/3}	GS	GS	GS
TSC/TSC (-) ⁴	Theater Army	GS ^{4/5}	GS ⁶	GS	GS
ESC ^{6/7}	TSC	GS	GS	GS	GS
SUST	TSC	GS	GS	GS ⁸	GS
CSSB / Functional Bn	SUS BDE	GS	GS	GS	GS

All of the logistics units listed here are assigned to the TSC. This chart describes the support relationships that typically exist within a theater of operations.

1 – Level of command designated as ARFOR is irrelevant (i.e. Corps, Division, etc.).
 2 – TSC operating from home station or in sanctuary at theater level.
 3 – "GS" is a specified relationship, see JP 3-0 and FM 3-0.
 4 – TSC deployed in part or whole.
 5 – Listed in OPORD Annex A as TSC(-).
 6 – Army units are assigned to the ARFOR, not to the JTF.
 7 – Acting as forward command post of TSC.
 8 – GSs DIV(s) and non-DIV elements on an area basis as assigned.
 9 – Any of these EAB GS units may be TACON for a specific purpose such as force protection, METT-TC.

Figure 1-3. Modular Logistics Relationship Chart for EAB Units

RELATIONSHIPS FOR BRIGADES AND BELOW

1-12. The heavy BCT, infantry BCT, and the fires brigade have organic Brigade Support Battalions (BSBs) and Forward Support Companies (FSCs). The FSCs are assigned to the BSB and can be in direct support, operational control (OPCON), attached, or assigned to the supported battalions. Combat aviation brigades also have organic BSBs and FSCs, but the FSCs are assigned to the supported aviation battalions. The Striker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) has an organic BSB, but no FSCs. The SBCT task organizes

support packages into forward logistics elements to provide support similar to that of an FSC. The Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB) has organic BSBs and FSCs. Within the MEB, engineer battalions have FSCs, but military police (MP) and chemical battalions do not. The engineer battalions are the parent of the FSCs. Support to the Battlefield Surveillance Brigade (BFSB) comes from a brigade support company assigned directly to the BFSB. The sustainment brigades have neither BSBs nor FSCs. Figure 1-4 contains a table depicting these relationships in graphical form.

Bde Type	organic BSB ¹	organic FSC ¹	FSC'S Parent ²	FSC to BSB Relationship ³	FSC to SPT'd BN Relationship ⁴
H/IBCT	Yes	Yes	BSB	Assigned	DS/OPCON/Attached
SBCT	Yes	No ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A
SUST	No	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
FIRES	Yes	Yes	BSB	Assigned	DS/OPCON/Attached
AVN Bde	Yes	Yes	AV Bn	DS ⁶	Assigned
MEB	Yes	Yes ⁷	EN Bn	DS ⁶	Assigned
BFSB	No	BSC	N/A ⁸	N/A ⁸	N/A

1- These 2 columns address which BDEs have BSBs and FSCs
 2- Addresses what unit the FSC is assigned to.
 3 - Addresses the relationship between the FSC and the BSB.
 4 - Defines the likely command or support relationship that may exist between the FSC and the unit it supports.
 5 - The SBCT task organizes support packages into forward logistics elements (FLEs).
 6 - 'DS' means that the BSB provides replenishment to the FSC, but no formal relationship exists.
 7 - Engineers battalions have FSCs, but MP and chemical battalions do not.
 8 - Support to BFSB comes from a Bde Support Company assigned directly to BFSB; there is no BSB or FSC.

Figure 1-4. Modular Logistics Relationship Chart for Brigades and Below

PRIORITIES OF SUPPORT AND UNITY OF EFFORT

1-13. From the President, Secretary of Defense, and GCCs, on down to divisions; commanders communicate their requirements and priorities for support through commander's intent, orders, the planning process, and briefings/conferences (see FM 3-0 for in-depth discussion). While doing so, they also ensure that coordination occurs not only with subordinate units, but also with their higher HQ and laterally to units which may be called upon to perform in a supporting role. Commanders at all levels continually ensure cohesiveness and unity of effort. Under the concept of centralized logistics C2, the TSC/ESC supports the GCC or JTF commander by ensuring that all actions throughout the theater of operations or JOA, for which the TSC/ESC is responsible, continually support unified action and reinforce the commander's intent. Commanders at all levels must ensure that the supported commander has confidence in the concept of support and that supporting plans enable the objectives of the supported commanders. They do this by continuous coordination, to include attending battlefield update briefings and commanders' conferences of both the supported commander and their own higher HQ (or sending appropriate command representation). Additionally, assigning liaison officers to the supported commander's planning staff provides unity of effort and ensures that the supporting commander is knowledgeable of future operations and of the supported commander's intent throughout the planning cycle.

We have learned in OEF (*Operation Enduring Freedom*) and OIF (*Operation Iraqi Freedom*) that the support command relationship is probably the most powerful command relationship in terms of gaining access to additional capabilities. It provides the authority and basis for interdependence, and may be the most appropriate in today's operational environment. This support relationship in essence makes the supporting commanders responsible for the success of the supported commander. They can't simply provide some forces and walk away from the challenge. Rather, it requires them to stay involved with the supported commander and continue to aid and assist him as he conducts operations.

This support relationship allows for the horizontal integration discussed upfront in this section. The support command authority is increasingly being used to provide a supported commander access to capabilities that he doesn't own. The flexibility of this support command relationship is one of its greatest advantages. It supports decentralized execution within mission type orders and commander's intent.

GEN (Ret) Gary Luck
"Insights on Joint Operations: The Art and Science"
September 2006

1-14. Supporting and supported commanders must develop a collaborative environment. Although the value of face-to-face interaction is undisputed, capabilities that improve long-distance collaboration among dispersed forces can enhance both planning and execution of operations. A collaborative environment is one in which participants share data, information, knowledge, perceptions, and ideas. Collaboration provides planners with a view of the whole plan while working on various portions of a plan, which facilitates identifying and resolving conflicts early. The following are some leadership practices of supported and supporting commanders that have proven to be highly effective in the field.

Some supported commander best practices:

- Identify needs to supporting commanders. This is a continuing, not a one time, activity.
- Request liaison from supporting commanders to help coherently integrate supporting capabilities in the operation.
- When there are issues with the quality of support, bring it to the attention of the supporting commander first and to the next higher HQ only if the issue is not resolved.

Some supporting commander best practices:

- Recognize the supporting unit's role in ensuring the success of the supported commander.
- Believe and follow through on the 'one team/one fight' vision to set the conditions for success.
- Understand and respect the authority of the supported commander.
- Recognize that, at times, support to another supported commander may have an even higher priority than the direct support mission (as directed by the TSC/ARFOR).
- Take time in ascertaining supported commanders' requirements and understanding the overall priorities in apportioning of forces to accomplish both assigned tasks and those of other supported commanders.
- Send liaisons to supported commanders to assist them in planning and in ascertaining their requirements.
- Develop appropriate command relationships with subordinate units to ensure all responsibilities are fulfilled. Just as close proximity is important with supported commanders; ensure subordinate commanders are kept apprised of the whole operation and the role of their unit in the theater operation.
- Mentor subordinate commanders.

1-15. Because the AO of the sustainment brigades are no longer along divisional boundaries, but rather are METT-TC, one sustainment brigade may provide support to more than one division (or major combat force) and also more than one sustainment brigade may provide support to forces belonging to a single

division. If more than one division is supported by one sustainment brigade, the TSC, in concert with the ASCC plan, will clarify which division has the priority of effort and will ensure that the sustainment brigade is updated as priorities change. In the instance of more than one sustainment brigade providing support to forces belonging to a single division, the division commander should have to coordinate and request support from only one sustainment brigade with courtesy copy to the TSC/ESC. The two sustainment brigades then coordinate their actions for support. This is to ensure optimum and continuing support and instill confidence in the division commander. It should be transparent to the division commander that more than one sustainment brigade is providing support. Normally the sustainment brigade assigned to provide direct support to the division will also be performing the Manager Review File (MRF) and Routing Identifier Code-Geographic (RIC-GEO) management for the entire division, while the other sustainment brigade delivers the supplies. During RSOI, the sustainment brigade performing theater opening will provide life support and C2 to any unit undergoing the RSOI process, especially if the unit is without its HQ. Likewise the sustainment brigade operating a major hub in the theater distribution role will provide distribution direct to the ultimate consignee where possible.

SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

Unlike previous Army operations where one DISCOM was assigned per division, in OIF, sustainment brigades were assigned to provide support on an area basis to all units present in the area. The sustainment brigade commanders had to ensure that needed support was provided and the division or other supported commanders had confidence in the quality of support.

Due to terrain and other considerations, sustainment brigade commanders found themselves providing support across divisional boundaries with one brigade providing all the support to division A except for one BCT which was physically closer to a second sustainment brigade. The second sustainment brigade provided support to the BCT of division A while being in direct support of division B. Figure 1-5 depicts this concept that sustainment brigades' AOs may not coincide with divisional boundaries, but may, in fact, overlap divisional boundaries with two sustainment brigades providing support to units subordinate to one division.

The sustainment brigade commanders decided that the unit which was providing support should be completely transparent to the division commanders. The sustainment brigade commander providing the majority of support to the division was responsible for division BUB attendance and for briefing the division commander of the plan of support. The sustainment brigade commanders kept each other apprised of overlapping responsibilities. The BCT's BSB provided requirements directly to the second sustainment brigade with copy furnished to the first sustainment brigade.

All sustainment brigade commanders reported that they operated across the JOA when necessary with positive results. The ESC approved DIRLAUTH for the sustainment brigades which the commanders used to full advantage providing support to each others' customers and operations as conditions changed and forces surged.

Source: Oral History of Various Sustainment Brigade Commanders

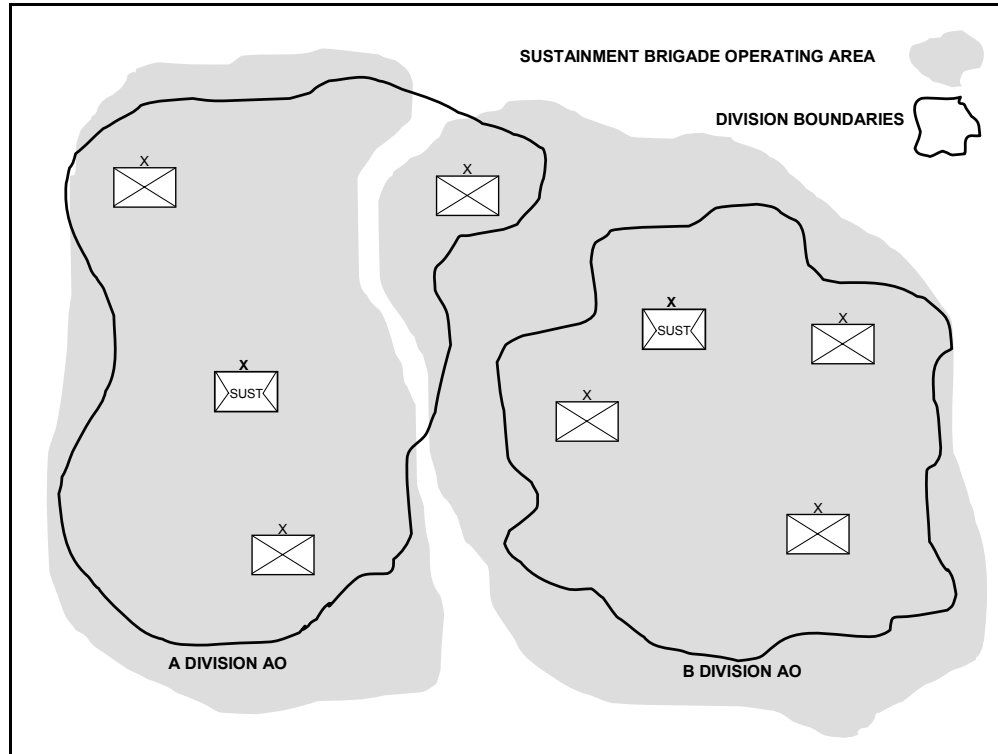


Figure 1-5. Sustainment Brigade and Divisional Boundaries

SECTION III – STRATEGIC LEVEL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

1-16. Strategic level support embraces national level sustainment base capabilities that support the broad goals and objectives that the President and Secretary of Defense establish in national security policies. At the theater level the TSC/ESC coordinate with elements of strategic level organizations to ensure a smooth flow of support into and throughout the theater of operations. In almost all operations, elements of the national strategic organizations deploy to the theater of operations to enhance this coordination. Sustainment brigades, in particular when performing theater opening operations, will work together with the subordinate units of these strategic organizations. Also when the sustainment brigade is the senior Army LOG C2 HQ in an AOR, the brigade will be coordinating directly with deployed elements from these strategic providers. Some of these elements, from strategic partners such as the United States Army Materiel Command (USAMC) and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) work closely with, and in some cases have deployed subordinate elements which have a command or support relationship with the TSC/ESC and sustainment brigades as described below. The US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) and subordinate elements also work closely with the Sustainment Brigade in its execution of theater opening operations, described in detail in Chapter 2.

US TRANSPORTATION COMMAND (USTRANSCOM)

1-17. USTRANSCOM provides air, land, and sea transportation for the Department of Defense (DOD), both in time of peace and in time of war through its component commands: the Air Force's Air Mobility Command, the Army's Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, and the Navy's Military Sealift Command. The command maintains the capability to rapidly open and manage common-use aerial ports and seaports for the GCC. The contributions of USTRANSCOM's component commands are discussed below.

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