

TRANSFORMING FOR THE 21ST

By Angelika Lantz

On April 8, 2011, the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army announced that U.S. Army Europe will be comprised of three Brigade Combat Teams as well as V Corps, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, 5th Signal Command, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and other key enabling units.

This, and previous announcements, place the 21st Theater Sustainment Command on the list of enduring units. Yet, as the transformation process continues, it is evident that the 21st TSC as we know it today will change. As they say in the Army, change is one of the few constants in this world.

Between 1989 and 2003, the Army in Europe closed about 70 percent of its facilities and reduced nearly 70 percent of its Soldier population, from 213,000 to 40,500. By 2015 U.S. Army Europe will have transformed to approximately 37,000 Soldiers at six communities. Key theater support elements like the 21st TSC will be combined with

heavy, Stryker, and airborne brigade combat teams.

“We’re modernizing our force and consolidating onto Main Operating Bases to be more effective and more efficient,” said Brig. Gen. Allen Batschelet, USAREUR’s chief of operations. “These actions support the DOD global posture plan, the U.S. European Command theater posture plan, and the U.S. Army’s transformation, and are necessary to ensure USAREUR has the right force in the right place to meet mission requirements.”

As to what future structure and mission changes that entails for the 21st TSC depends on several factors. One aspect is which three BCTs remain in Europe and what USAREUR’s, and sub-sequentially the 21st TSC’s, footprint will look like. While the 21st TSC has a number of missions in addition to supporting the BCT, it is interconnected with USAREUR’s future mission and role, explained Lt. Col. Frank Gilbertson, the assistant chief of staff, G7 (Transformation).



THE 21ST TSC CENTURY



Future Tactical Truck System Utility Vehicle Demonstrator from Lockheed Martin. (Photo courtesy www.army.mil)



Gilbertson went on to say that during this time of economic downturn, the Army must maintain fiscal discipline over decreased resources and competing demand. Yet, transformation is not synonymous with reduction for reduction's sake. Rather it entails increasing efficiency, adapting to the new operating environment, and improving Soldier readiness. Consolidation is one way to prevent stovepipes, reduce redundancies and increase efficiency.

As examples, Gilbertson cited access points at installations to make the case for consolidating resources and sites. Each of these access points have a requirement for equipment, manning and control measures in place which can cost up to one million dollars per year. Gilbertson also cited costly maintenance for obsolete, cavernous, and inefficient warehouses as another reason for consolidation.

An extraordinary amount of planning and a comprehensive analysis of every mission, organization and installation has been conducted, and while USAREUR leads the transformation effort, Maj. Gen. Patricia McQuiston, the commanding general of the 21st TSC, has been very involved in the entire process.

"My job is to put the latest USAREUR proposal in front of her right away. She will pull in her brigade commanders and senior staff to trouble-shoot the proposal. She will review it very comprehensively, make adjustments based on the feedback of her subject matter experts then send it back to USAREUR for their review to ensure they have the best information to make the best decisions," Gilbertson said.

As a sustainment command, the 21st TSC's logistics footprint must be stationed to best support the Warfighter; to provide sustainment in support of multiple operations over long distances in USAREUR, EUCOM and AFRICOM's areas of operation. Gilbertson noted that while Gen. McQuiston is aware that the 21st TSC will not necessarily receive the optimum preferred locations, she will underscore the impact it will have on sustaining the Army in Europe.

Col. Sharon Duffy, the 21st TSC's deputy commanding officer, has been instrumental in managing and tracking the transformation process at the organization as well. She noted that the complex process is not finished anytime soon since numerous decisions remain to be made, and each one acts as a trigger point for other decisions to be considered and analyzed.

As USAREUR streamlined logistics support throughout Europe,

Staff Sgt. Adam Jones, 541st Sapper Co., 54th Engineer Battalion, 18th Engineer Brigade, provides security while his team bounds forward at Baraki Barak, Logar province, Afghanistan, during route clearance, July 06, 2011. (Photo by Spc. Mikel Peterson)

the 21st TSC has converted, inactivated, or re-stationed more than 200 units. On the other hand, the organization has added the 18th Military Police Brigade, the 405 Army Field Support Brigade, the 16th Sustainment Brigade, and the 18th Engineer Brigade along with the 266th Financial Management Center and the 1st Human Resource Sustainment Center.

Additionally, the 21st TSC temporarily assumed command and control of the 3d Support Command and the 7th Army Reserve Command with nearly 1000 Reserve Soldiers.

The addition of the Cold War structured 7th ARCOM into the 21st TSC footprint involved extensive planning for the unit's relocation from Schwetzingen to Kaiserslautern's Daenner Kaserne. Along with that came the organization's transformation into a consequence-management and civil-affairs-focused organization – the 7th Civil Support Command. The 7th CSC officially activated in September of 2008.

The General Support Center-Europe with its local national workforce and industrial base infrastructure, was reconfigured into a stand-alone brigade equivalent and renamed the Theater Logistics Support Center-Europe. Besides adding ammunition management and truck operations to its existing supply and maintenance mission, the TLSC-E also began conducting more out-of-country mission support of theater forces, Duffy said.

Most recently, the 21st TSC has streamlined and consolidated all its Italy elements under the command and control of the 21st TSC headquarters, as the 21st TSC-Italy. Furthermore, the 18th Military Police Brigade is in the process of moving from Mannheim to Sembach.

Now, the largest forward-stationed logistical command in the U.S. Army, the 21st TSC provides combat service and combat service support to all units in USA-

REUR, to three combatant commands --EUCOM, AFRICOM and CENTCOM -- and multiple inter-agency organizations in Europe and beyond.

McQuiston has developed a concept for a future sustainment center, which incorporates the key aspects of transformation as part of USA-REUR's efforts.

The intent of the FSC is to transform the sustainment footprint, improve warfighter support at reduced operational costs, as part of DOD transformation in Europe. Energy-positive (green) construction will provide a significant return on investment and dramatically decrease the operational costs of the FSC. The FSC will be designed holistically and collocate like activities into functional campuses to reduce overhead (supply, maintenance, distribution/air hub, rail and road networks).

The FSC will be reconfigurable/scalable and able to adjust to ever-changing missions and align with future transformation efforts. The FSC will potentially include up to 25 stakeholders, from 11 different locations across USAREUR, allowing significant savings in operational costs and eliminating unnecessary redundancies in the USAREUR footprint. Planning and project development will be synchronized with all stakeholders to ensure optimal use of limited funding and materiel resources.

Part of the mental transition for a more agile, flexible and innovative sustainment command has been to instill a cost-conscious culture. The Lean Six Sigma program has figured prominently at the 21st TSC. LSS is a systematic approach to identify waste, focus activities on eliminating it, and maximize (or make available) resources to satisfy other requirements. During the past two years, the 21st TSC trained 30 Black Belts, more than 200 Green Belts and created a Yellow Belt program for personnel who serve as subject matter

experts on projects. There are currently three Master Black Belts, 18 Black Belts, 156 Green Belts and 450 Yellow Belts in the 21st TSC due to permanent changes in duty stations. The 81 projects that were started or completed are projected to generate over 64 million dollars in cost saving or cost avoidance across the command over the next five years.

Intellectual transformation from 'steady state' sustainment to an expeditionary, fluid mindset resulted in the establishment of the Combined Operations and Integration Cell, which streamlines the staff processes and the commander's decision cycle within the command. The regional 'face to the customer' initiative; consolidation of left behind equipment sites from 10 to two; and the reduction of theater logistics reliance on contracted workers are other examples.

Realizing that well-trained Soldiers continue to be a unit's best and most versatile resource, the 21st TSC will continue to be a key player in USAREUR, EUCOM and NATO exercises. 21st TSC Soldiers have participated in numerous Command Post Exercises/Field Training Exercises, including more than 50 named events like Unified Endeavor, Guardian Shield, Combined Endeavor, Immediate Response, Sharp Focus and Austere Challenge series of exercises between 2009 and 2011. Thus, the command is also positioned to document its relevancy, in an environment in which USA-REUR focuses on training events, strengthening alliances and building partnership capacity with land forces across Europe as a key tenet.

A USAREUR fact sheet details 25 multinational training events on the 2011 schedule for USAREUR's Joint Multinational Training Command, and JMTC personnel participate in 350 theater security cooperation events in 42 countries each year.