CHAPTER 1

MSB Organization and Functions

CONTENTS

ARMORED, MECHANIZED INFANTRY, INFANTRY, HEAVY/LIGHT DIVISIONS

Main support battalions exist in four types of divisions. They are the armored, mechanized infantry, infantry, and heavy/light divisions. In each case, the role of the MSB is to support customers in the division rear and provide designated reinforcing support to the forward support battalions. MSB commanders and staffs must understand the composition, employment, and missions of the supported force.

The division has varying numbers and types of combat, combat support, and combat service support units. It is a self-sustaining force capable of independent operations. The division's main focus is to defeat the enemy by conducting close and deep operations whale protecting its combat support, CSS, and command and control facilities with successful rear operations.

ARMORED AND MECHANIZED INFANTRY DIVISIONS

Armored and mechanized divisions close with and destroy the enemy by firepower, mobility, and shock effect. Heavy elements move, attack, and defend to defeat the enemy in close combat. Heavy divisions normally fight over wide areas against a threat with similar capabilities. The divisions operate best in basically open terrain. There they can use their mobility and long-range, direct-fire weapons to best advantage. The divisions need significant logistics support of tracked vehicles for long ground moves. The divisions consume supplies, especially class III and V, at high rates and require substantial maintenance support. The MSB will shift its support effort forward to the critical place and time to influence the battle.

INFANTRY DIVISION

The infantry division operates in virtually all terrain, weather conditions, and enemy situations. It is organized for responsive employment and immediate combat operations upon arrival in any environment. It is most effective in terrain favoring dismounted operations. This includes large urban areas, mountains, and jungles. The infantry division has limited mobility. Therefore, its fuel

and maintenance needs are much less than a heavy divisions. Further discussion of the infantry division is in FM 71-100.

HEAVY/LIGHT DIVISION

The threat to the heavy/light division (2d Infantry Division) relies on massive firepower, large numbers in multiple echelons, and high maneuverability. It may attack with very little warning. The US and its allies must defend against the initial attack, then seize the initiative while using the terrain to best advantage.

The US division designed to oppose the threat is a mix of heavy and light forces along with aviation assets. The heavy forces are to be used along roads and in open areas. Aviation assets will be used to insert infantry forces into overwatch positions. The division has only a limited capability of self-sustainment. It is designed to fight as part of a combined command, not a US corps.

EMPLOYMENT OF DIVISION ELEMENTS

The division has varying numbers of maneuver battalions to accomplish a specific mission. CS and CSS units are task organized to support the division. Though these units will vary, division elements which typically operate in the division rear and are customers of the MSB include:

- Combat engineer battalion elements.
- Chemical company elements.
- Division artillery elements.
- Aviation brigade.
- ADA battalion elements.
- Division band.
- DISCOM CP.
- Division main and rear CPs.
- Main support battalion.
- Signal battalion elements.
- Military intelligence battalion elements.
- Military police company headquarters.

ARMORED, MECHANIZED INFANTRY, INFANTRY, HEAVY/LIGHT DISCOMS

ARMORED, MECHANIZED INFANTRY, AND INFANTRY DISCOMS

The main support battalion is part of the division support command. The DISCOM commander provides logistics and medical support in the division by exercising control over his units and providing advice and planning for the division logistics community. The support battalion (MSB and FSB) commanders are the logistics operators for the division. They provide all classes of supply, maintenance support, transportation assets, medical support, and field services (MSB only) to division units in their areas. The DISCOM can, on a very limited basis, furnish CSS to nondivision units in the division area.

The division maintains only enough supplies to sustain operations until more supplies arrive. DISCOM operations enable the division commander to mass combat power at the critical point and to seize the initiative. The division CSS system is flexible. It can anticipate and quickly surge to resupply and support reorganized maneuver units. The thrust of the logistics system of the DISCOM is to push support as far forward as possible.

As depicted in Figure 1-1 the DISCOM consists of the following elements:

- HHC/MMC. The HHC supervises and controls all support operations. It also advises the division commander and staff on logistics throughout the division. The MMC provides materiel management for weapon systems, controls maintenance priorities, and coordinates supply functions. FM 63-22 discusses the responsibilities, organization, and operations of the HHC/MMC.

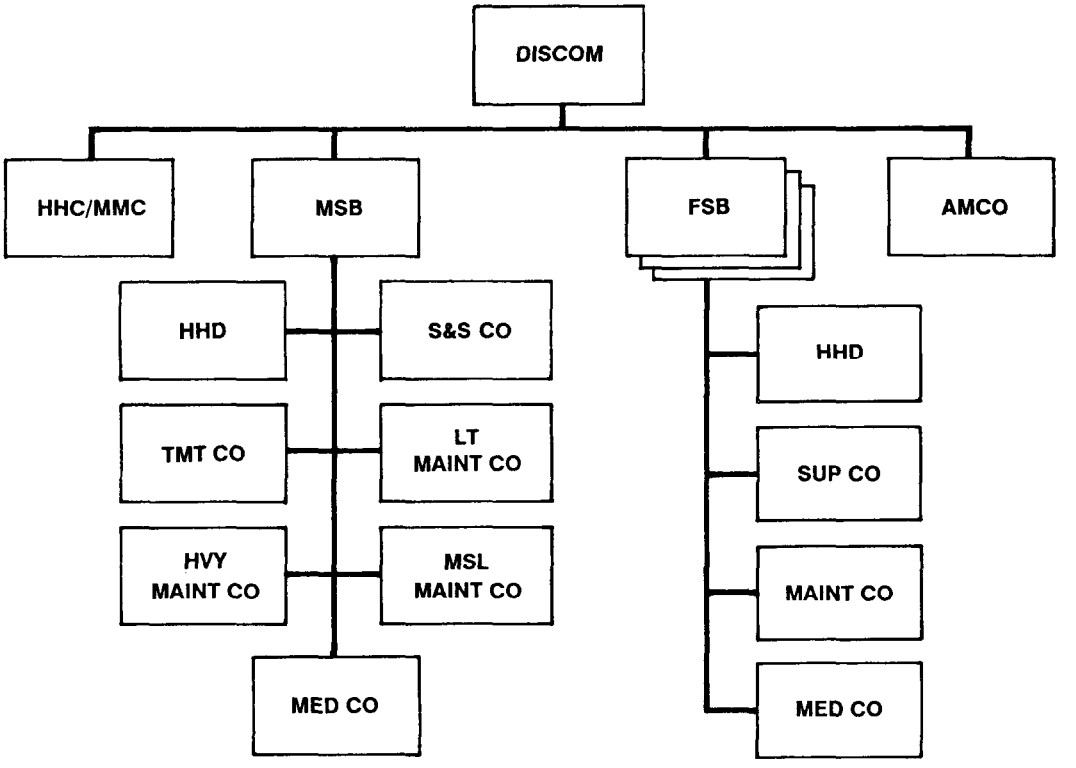

Figure 1-1 Heavy Division Support Command

- Main support battalion. The MSB is the division logistics and medical operator in the division rear. It provides direct support to division units in the division rear and designated and reinforcing support to the FSBs. Its base is in the DSA, though it provides support forward as required.
- Forward support battalions. The DISCOM has three FSBs– one to provide direct support to each division maneuver brigade and units in the brigade sector. Information on the FSBs is in FM 63-20.
- Aircraft maintenance company. This is a separate company under the DISCOM. It provides AVIM support to division units. It is the subject of Chapter 6 of FM 63-2-2. Other operational information appears in FM 1-500.

HEAVY/LIGHT DISCOM

The DISCOM structure for the heavy/light division supports a heavy/light mix without some support normally provided by a corps to a division. The DISCOM is a modified heavy DISCOM with attachments. The basic support concepts and

considerations employed by the MSB of the heavy/light division are the same as those for other MSBs. The support requirements, however, differ due to differences in terrain and mission, and the people and equipment of the supported force. The MSB has maintenance teams to provide or supplement repair capability for MLRS, Chapparal, tracked vehicles, artillery/turret/fire control systems, and radios. Supply and missile maintenance capabilities have also been adjusted to meet the force requirements.

The elements depicted in Figure 1-1 for the heavy division DISCOM are the same for the heavy/light division.

MSB ORGANIZATION AND MISSION

The main support battalion is the main logistics and medical operator in the division rear. It supports units in the division rear and provides designated and reinforcing support to the FSBs. The battalion provides direct support maintenance, supply, transportation, and medical support to units for a variety of missions. When the battalion is augmented, it also provides field services. The MSB is responsible for the effective management of subordinate units. It also directs and coordinates security for these units.

One MSB is organic to the DISCOM. The MSB is normally commanded by a lieutenant colonel. The command element is responsible for the supervision, direction, and coordination of assigned and attached units that run the support operations in and around the DSA. Figure 1-2 shows the MSB organization. As shown, it has a–

- Headquarters and headquarters detachment.
- Supply and service company.
- Transportation motor transport company.
- Light and heavy maintenance companies.
- Missile support company.
- Medical company.

Commanding, controlling, and coordinating the many MSB elements with their diverse missions present a challenge for the MSB commander and staff. They must perform sustainment tasks of arming, fueling, fining, moving, and sustaining the soldier. They must integrate these tasks into a comprehensive battle support plan. The thrust is to push CSS as far forward as possible. The MSB commander and staff. as well as CSS planners and operators at the corps and brigade levels and within the division units, must incorporate the sustainment imperatives in every action taken.

BATTLEFIELD LOCATIONS

When the MSB is tactically deployed, its companics establish locations within the DSA. METT-T determines each company location, but the companics are dispersed throughout the DSA.

Figure 1-3 gives a graphic depiction of the DSA. It shows the units normally found in the DSA. This circle has a diameter of about 7 to 10 kilometers.

The MSB commander plans and manages the security and movement of MSB elements in coordination with the DISCOM S2/3. The MSB locates as far forward as the tactical situation permits. All support areas should be near the main supply routes. However, they should not be astride the MSRs which may become high speed avenues of approach for enemy forces. For planning purposes, support sites should be 1 to 3 kilometers from MSRs. BSAs should be accessible from the DSA by ground in 2 hours or less. MSB activities should use built-up

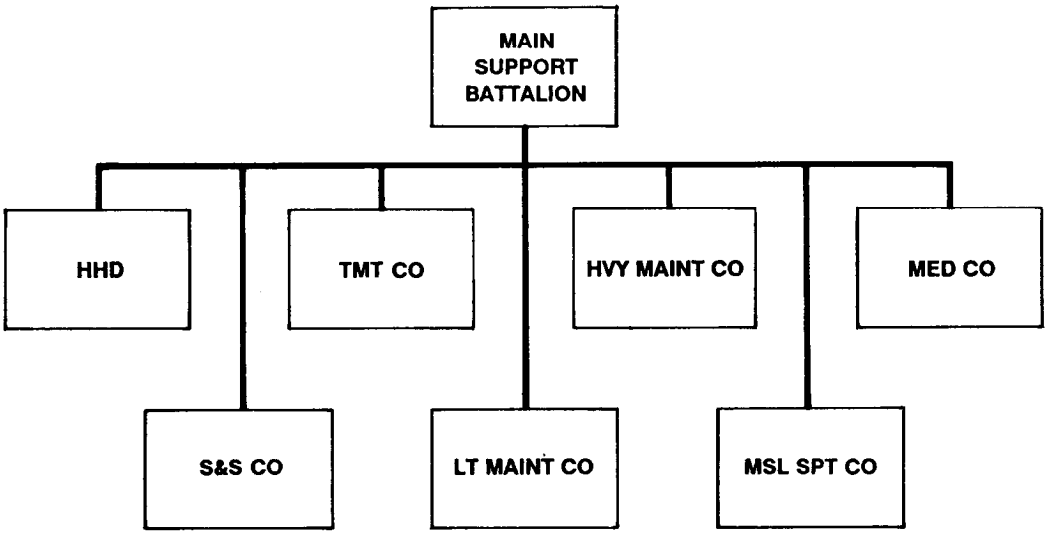

Figure 1-2 Main Support Battalion

areas as much as possible. Appendix A addresses additional terrain management factors.

Support units need to be as mobile as the units they support. Mobility and dispersion enhance the security of MSB elements. MSB units must be prepared to move once every three days or less. Supplies remain uploaded as much as possible. Receipt processing and issue points should also be mobile. Whenever possible, support units throughput personnel and ready-to-issue equipment to units in the BSA. The MSB must be capable of moving 50 percent of its personnel and equipment in a single lift. However, this factor does not include supply stocks or disabled equipment at maintenance sites. Also, mobility considerations for the MSB are complicated by the presence of the TMT company in the battalion. The assets of this company will not

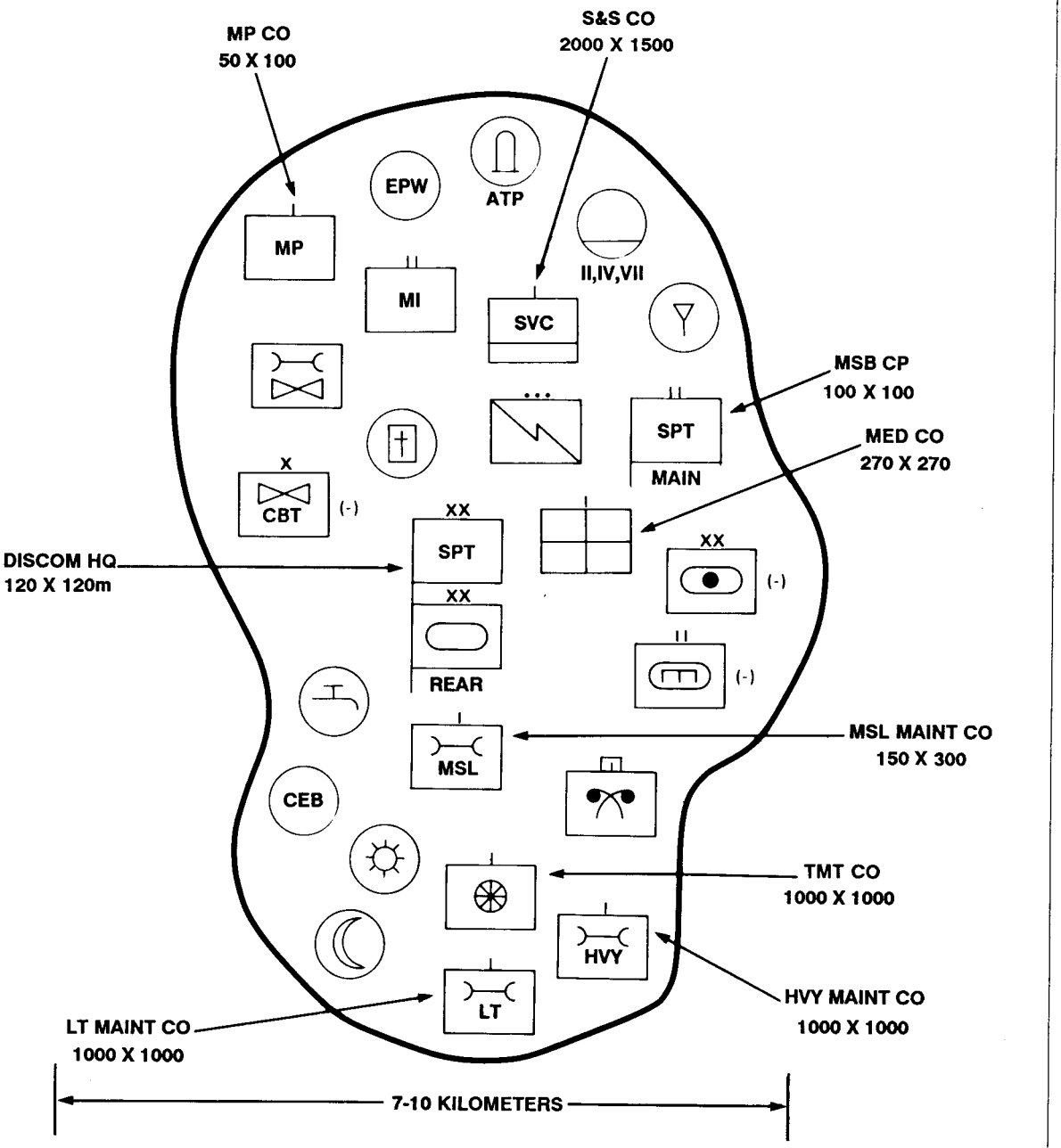

Figure 1-3 Typical Division Units Deployed Throughout the DSA

be available solely to move MSB elements. In addition to performing its routine CSS movement functions, the company also has the mission to move reserve stocks and to assist planning the movement of DSA elements. Movement planners must take all of these considerations into account.

SUSTAINMENT IMPERATIVES

The division logistics system is flexible and capable of anticipating and quickly surging to support division units. Sustaining the division fight requires all MSB elements to adhere to the sustainment imperatives.

- Anticipation. MSB operators and planners must anticipate future operations as accurately as possible and accumulate assets to accommodate any likely contingency. MSB elements must clearly understand the MSB commander's intent. The MSB projects support needs. It also must project unexpected changes in current and future operations by coordinating with DISCOM planners. The MSB ensures that the support structure constantly remains flexible to respond quickly to change.
- Integration. Tactical and operational plans must have fully integrated CSS. The MSB commander's support plan must have supplies and services available at the right time and place for supported units to do their mission. Integration of sustainment operations with the other operations of the division is crucial.
- Continuity. Committed forces must receive continuous supplies and services to maintain their fighting strength. The division commander requires continuous support to maintain the initiative and to ensure breaks in support do not inhibit the depth of operations. Pauses for rebuilding impede momentum and rob the commander of the initiative. Continuity ensures a lapse in support or unforeseen events do not affect an operation.
- Responsiveness. The MSB must react rapidly to crises or fleeting opportunities. It must meet needs that change with little notice. For example, MSB personnel must keep pace with the changes in priorities of supported units. They must be ready to respond quickly so that supported units retain momentum.
- Improvisation. No matter how carefully MSB planners and operators try to anticipate events, unforeseen contingencies arise in every conflict. This manual suggests several support techniques for the MSB. However, leaders and staffs must not interpret a guideline or technique as an absolute requirement. If it is not effective in maintaining combat power and momentum, MSB personnel must not be afraid to discard it. The MSB must improvise to meet unforeseen emergencies. It must seek innovative solutions to problems.

MSB SUPPORT

Logistics and medical elements of the division are integrated into the command and control system of the division. This allows the division to shift its support effort to the critical place and time to influence the battle. For example, MSB elements can and do routinely operate outside of the DSA. Some elements habitually support specific division units. Others may bead hoc formations to reinforce a main effort sector or an FSB. The DISCOM headquarters coordinates support, organizes for combat, assigns locations, and specifies command relationships after thorough consultation with the MSB, DMMC, FSBs, and supported units.

The MSB performs its mission if it supports the division's course of action and meets the DISCOM commander's guidance. Specifically, it supports the division rear and reinforces units by providing or coordinating to provide all classes of supply, as well

as maintenance, medical, field services, and transportation support in the amounts and at the times specified in the MSB SOP. It must replenish its supported units' basic loads of all supplies including repair parts. It must also replenish prescribed loads of maintenance-significant class II and IV items. It must maintain equipment to meet prescribed operational levels. It distributes class VII items in accordance with the division commander's priorities. The MSB coordinates transportation requirements with the movement control officer to meet the needs identified by the division. Finally, it coordinates medical evacuation and treatment operations and field services activities with the DISCOM support operations branch to meet division rear needs. Chapters 5 to 10 have specific information on the elements of the MSB. The following are the types of support the MSB provides.

SUPPLY

Sustaining support includes resupply actions that are constantly in progress to maintain a unit at a desired level of combat effectiveness. The key supply operator in the DSA is the MSB S&S company. This unit is responsible for the operation of the main distribution points in the DSA. Supported units in the DSA draw class I, II, III, IV, VI, and VII supplies and water from these points. The light maintenance company provides class IX common items. The medical company supplies class VIII items, and the AMCO is responsible for JP-4 and class IXA supplies.

MAINTENANCE

MSB maintenance units provide DSM, limited reinforcing unit maintenance support, and repair parts supply for all equipment. Maintenance preserves the availability of weapon systems and equipment. The thrust of the maintenance system in the division is toward repairing damaged equipment as far forward as possible. This maximizes system availability and minimizes recovery and evacuation time. The MSB forms maintenance support teams which perform repair on major weapon systems. Items that cannot be fixed on site must be moved to the MSB's maintenance collection point to await repair.

TRANSPORTATION

The organic ground transportation capability at division level is the MSB TMT company. Transportation support consists not only of the actual movement of people and materiel but also the management function. This involves efforts to use resources, including road networks, most efficiently. The MSB must work closely with the MCO who is responsible for the management function.

HEALTH SERVICE SUPPORT

MSB medical support is characterized by patient evacuation from unit-level medical facilities in the division rear, emergency medical care at the clearing station, limited amounts of other medical care, and provision of medical supplies. The MSB provides evacuation support from the BSAs and reinforces the FSB medical companies. It provides support throughout the division area. Medical support seeks to return the soldier to duty as soon as possible.

FIELD SERVICES

At division level, the amount and types of field services available depends mostly on how much corps support is available. When augmented, the MSB provides CEB and laundry and GRREG services.

SUSTAINMENT PLANNING

Success on future battlefields will depend on how well logistics commanders and planners support the AirLand Battle. They must be able to meet the needs generated from close, deep, and rear operations. To ensure unity of effort and success in combat, they must consider all three as interrelated parts to the same battle.

CLOSE OPERATIONS-OFFENSE

Characteristics of offensive operations include momentum, initiative on the part of commanders, ability to make rapid shifts in the main effort to take advantage of opportunities, and rapid penetration. Units may launch an offensive operation at any time and with little notice. The goal of the MSB is to sustain maneuver and support units engaged in the division.

The concept of support for offensive operations is to have MSB units well forward to sustain the attacking units, with priority of support to the main effort. The MSB locates to best support the FSBs and weight the main effort. MSB elements move forward as required to shorten the support lines as the tactical situation dictates. They must provide continuous, adequate support to forces during the offense while conserving assets and planning for future operations. Figure 1-4 shows a sample MSB employment during offensive operations.

Supply

Consumption of supplies (especially fuel and ammunition) is greatest during offensive operations. High use of supplies will dictate that the MSB takes steps to build up forward stocks. A significant problem will be maintaining this support over extended supply lines. Also, planners should consider use of preplanned push packages of essential items. These may include water, fuel, ammunition and MOPP gear. Needs for obstacle-breaching and bridging materiel may also be high.

Maintenance

Maintaining momentum also requires keeping in or returning to the current battle as many weapon systems as possible. Emphasis is on battle damage assessment and quick return of equipment to the forward area. The MSB may send MSTs forward to integrate into the FSB shops, or they may perform on-site maintenance. Managers must carefully organize an MST to ensure the right people go with the required transportation, communications assets, tools, TMDE, repair parts, and components. Besides extending support forward, the MSB accepts unserviceable items from the FSB.

Transportation

TMT company assets will be heavily taxed in the offense. As the attack escalates, long lines of communications and high requirements for selected supplies and personnel replacements will stress the system. Planners must ensure adequate security for unescorted convoys. Coordination is essential between the support operations section of the MSB and the DISCOM MCO. They must ensure delivery to the right location and ensure movement of retrograde equipment and deceased personnel.

Medical

The MSB will participate in evacuation planning to support an offensive action. The type of offensive maneuvers, as well as the enemy capability, influences the character of patient evacuation work load. The MSB must push class VIII forward. It must also be ready to provide prompt evacuation in fast-moving situations. Prompt evacuation of patients from forward treatment facilities requires the MSB to have available ambulances well forward from the outset of the offensive operation.

Field Services

To sustain the fighting forces, field services are provided as permitted by the tactical situation. Corps augmentations to the MSB provide most field services to the division. Due to the mobility of offensive operations, commanders may temporarily suspend some field services (CEB and laundry). However, GRREG operations are vital and may intensify during offensive operations. The MSB must prepare for heavier usage of GRREG supplies and long lines of evacuation.

CLOSE OPERATIONS-DEFENSE

The immediate purpose of division defensive operations is to defeat the attack. Preparation for defense entails stockpiling critical supplies at forward support points and at successive defensive positions. The MSB must anticipate support needs for forward areas.

The division G4 and DISCOM staff must develop a concept of support and recommend priorities for support to the division commander. At the same

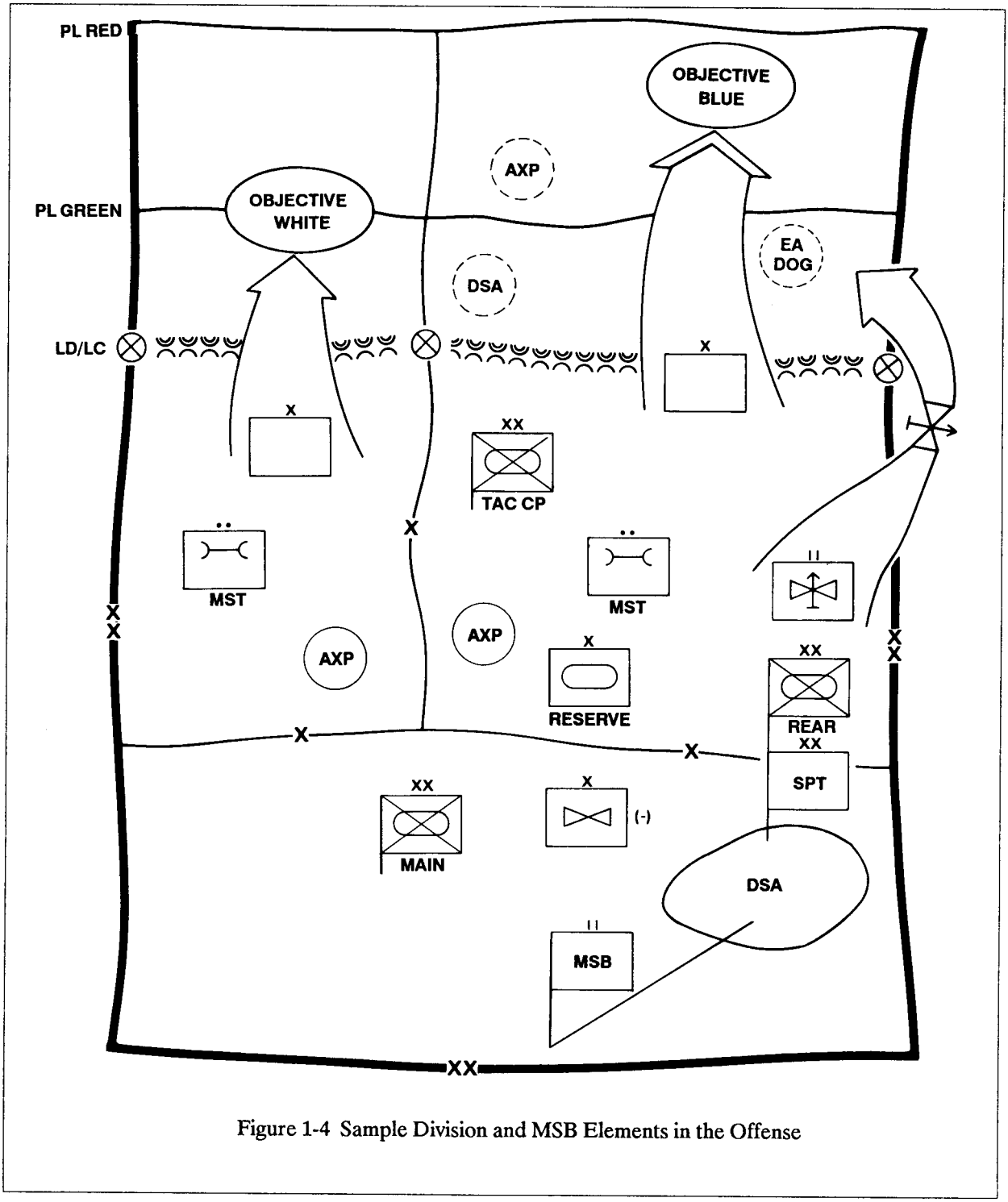

Figure 1-4 Sample Division and MSB Elements in the Offense

time, the DISCOM must support defensive operations while anticipating support requirements as the division shifts to the offense. Figure 1-5 shows a sample MSB employment during defensive operations.

Supply

Operations will be most intensive during the preparation stage. The MSB will push critical supplies forward. The MSB will plan to stockpile supplies (particularly fuel and barrier materiel) far forward and in successive defensive positions. As soon as the MSB knows a defense is planned, it must begin coordination to have barrier materiel throughput by corps assets as close to the emplacement sites as possible.

Maintenance

The MSB must execute maintenance support with the same attention to supported units needs as for offensive operations. The maintenance companies' emphasis in the defense is to maximize the number of weapon systems available at the start of the operation. The MSB maintenance companies must concentrate on exchange versus repair and maximize cannibalization. There is increased emphasis on evacuation of unserviceable equipment. Repair operations in forward areas consist of component replacement, adjustment, and servicing.

Transportation

As implied in the discussion on supply, transportation is most critical while preparing for a defense. Stockpiling supplies and shifting personnel and equipment before the operation will tax the system. Transportation may also be required to shift personnel, weapon systems, and supplies laterally or in depth to meet the probable points of enemy attack. The MSB's major role in this area is to coordinate transportation needs for support operations.

Medical

Though casualty rates are likely to be lower than in an attack, priorities for evacuating patients must be set on the basis of the location of the probable enemy main effort. Planners should designate predetermined ambulance exchange points. The medical company commander and MSB support operations section should also coordinate increased use of helicopters for evacuation.

Field Services

The field service functions of CEB and GRREG operate routinely where the tactical situation permits. GRREG units should evacuate the dead quickly. If laundry and CEB facilities are located in the DSA, the MSB staff should ensure they are far enough in the rear and out of the way of tactical units.

RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

A retrograde operation is a movement to the rear or away from the enemy. Retrograde operations gain time, preserve forces, avoid combat under undesirable conditions, or draw the enemy into an unfavorable position. Maneuver elements at a given time may be defending, delaying, attacking, or withdrawing.

To ensure uninterrupted support in any retrograde, support sites should be well to the rear. The MSB displaces early and when possible at night. Echeloning MSB elements allows them to continue to provide support at old sites until new sites are operational. Any MSB assets not essential to supporting forward elements should move as soon as possible.

Supply

To avoid the unnecessary destruction, loss, or hauling of supplies, managers control the flow of supplies forward. Push resupply is used with a priority towards fuel and ammunition. Operators place supplies along routes of withdrawal to simplify resupply, reduce road congestion, and permit early withdrawal of supply units. Transportation assets moving to the rear move any supplies which are already forward but not required by the delay force.

Maintenance

Maintenance planning emphasizes support forward while moving most of the maintenance companies rearward. Forward elements should concentrate on exchange versus repair and maximize

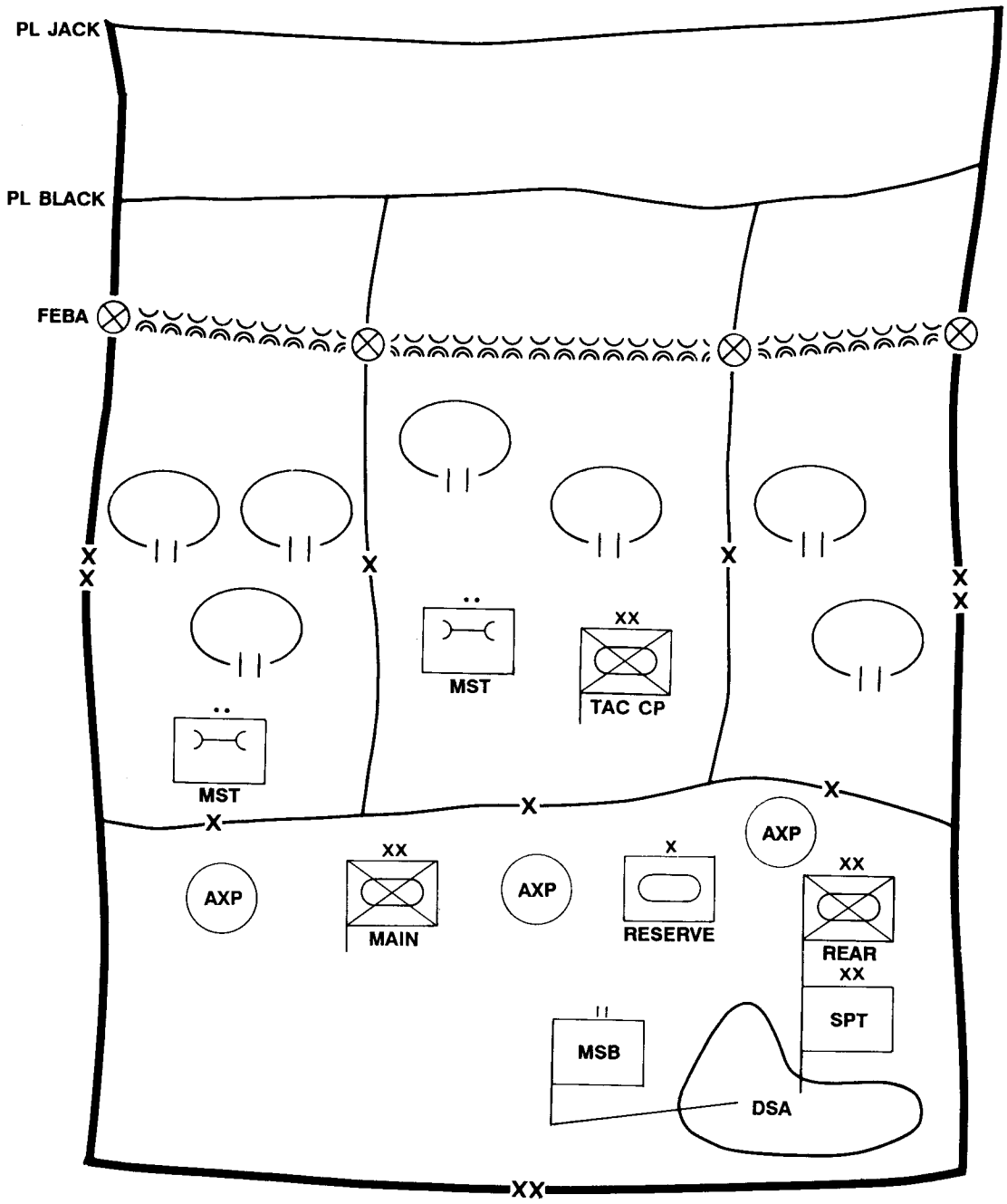

Figure 1-5 Sample Division and MSB Elements in the Defense

cannibalization. Transportation assets are scarce so forward repair is essential.

Transportation

Retrograde operations stress transportation resources. The MSB continues to move assets to the FSB and evacuate supplies, materiel, and personnel rearward. All MSB transportation assets must be carefully managed and used. There must be continuous management by the MCO and close coordination with the MMC for movement needs.

Medical

Patient evacuation is complicated by several factors. Evacuation routes may be congested with withdrawing forces. Evacuation assets are required to move patients that would normally be treated in the clearing station. Nonmedical transportation assets may not be available to assist. Medical company assets should move back by echelon as early as possible. This requires prompt patient sorting and evacuation. Planners must predetermine locations of successive treatment sites. More information on medical support in retrogrades is in Chapter 10.

Field Services

Any laundry and CEB units in the division also move to the rear as soon as possible. Commanders may temporarily suspend nonessential services. Deception planners may integrate facilities of suspended activities into their plans.

DEEP OPERATIONS

Deep maneuver is a high-speed, short-duration, audacious operation. Planners may reorganize maneuver forces to meet specific objectives. These forces can either carry all resources needed during the operation (self-sustainment) or be sustained via a surface or an air LOC (sustainment over a LOC).

Sustainment of deep maneuver must be carefully planned. Early in the planning phase, the MSB commander provides information to the DISCOM commander on logistics and medical assets. Once the attack is started, innovative thinking and rapid decision making are key elements the MSB commander must use to ensure that the momentum is maintained.

Support of deep operations depends on the availability of transportation assets. With ground LOCs, MSRs need to be open and secure. Ground transportation must move supplies in support of units moving to the line of departure as well as support those units once they move forward. The forward support units that move early into the deep operations area should be able to sustain fuel, ammunition, food, medical, and maintenance support until support from the MSB and other sources arrives.

REAR OPERATIONS

The primary purposes for conducting rear operations are to secure the force, neutralize or defeat enemy operations in the rear, and ensure freedom of action in close and deep operations. Rear operations protect necessary CS and CSS from disruption. MSB facilities and supplies must be safe from ground, air, and missile attack while continuing to support projected operations without decreasing the support to currently engaged units. Effective planning requires open communication lines and quick reactions on the part of the MSB commander. Further information on rear operations is in Appendix A.

LOGISTICS SUPPORT TO CORPS UNITS

The forward corps support group provides logistics support to corps units operating in the division rear. The forward CSG or logistics battalion task force operating in the DSA provides a liaison element to the DISCOM headquarters. The LO, DISCOM support operations branch, and MSB support operations officer coordinate to work out the most efficient and effective way to support these units. There may be separate corps support points in the DSA to support the corps units.

The LO from the CSG or logistics task force coordinates the movement of COSCOM units in the DSA with the DISCOM and division rear CP. Corps

logistics units operating in the division are under the command and control of the CSG.

Though these units will vary, corps elements which may operate in the division area include

- Field artillery battalion.
- Air defense artillery battery.
- MLRS battery.
- Engineer elements.
- Military police company.
- Attack helicopter battalion.
- TOW light antitank company.
- Smoke company.
- Signal company.
- Girder bridge company.
- Ribbon bridge company.
- Decontamination company.
- Civil affairs company.
- PSYOPS company.
- Surveillance detachment.
- Electronic warfare company.
- Public affairs, chaplain support, CID, and history teams.