

CHAPTER 7

Combat Service Support**Section I. General****7-1. Assets.**

- a. This chapter explains how combat service support assets enhance tactical operations and assist the unit in accomplishing its overall mission.
- b. These assets include medical, supply, transportation, maintenance, and personnel and administration. They normally operate from bases that support unit tactical operations. Depending on the size of the unit, these assets may be organic or attached.

7-2. Essential elements.

Combat service support units include those elements essential to the tactical mission and those elements that are not essential but are necessary to the normal functioning of the battalion and brigade.' Usually, only essential combat service support assets are located at the battalion operational support base. Both essential and nonessential tactical support elements can be found in the brigade's support base.

Section II. Bases**7-3. Operational support.**

- a. Operational support bases are usually established by battalions. In consolidation operations, these bases are usually semipermanent. In strike operations, they operate only as long as required by the unit mission. The primary function of the battalion operational support base is to support tactical operations. It may provide a staging area for operations; a command, control, and communication center; a limited logistics base (battalion combat trains); a fire support base; or a combination of all these functions. The specific support functions it provides are determined by availability and necessity. These bases have the minimum personnel necessary to operate and provide security. All nonessential personnel — those not crucial to the tactical mission — are positioned in the brigade support base.
- b. Battalion operational support bases provide certain advantages. They:
 - (1) Establish a government presence in the area of operations.

- (2) Aid in limiting guerrilla mobility in the immediate vicinity.
- (3) Provide a measure of security to populated areas close by.
- c. These advantages are secondary and do not take precedence over the primary function — to support tactical operations.

7-4. OSB location.

- a. When selecting a location for the operational support base, several factors are considered. The location includes an area large enough to meet the unit's requirements, and it is on defensible terrain. If the unit is going to use the base for fire support, it provides the maximum possible coverage for indirect fire weapons.
- b. The operational support base is located far enough away from population centers to preclude civilian interference with operations and to minimize the possibility of the population center becoming a collateral target.
- c. The OSB is located so that it has, as a minimum, two methods for resupply. For example, if the primary means for resupply is by air, it should also have a secondary means, such as a road, in case weather precludes the use of aircraft.
- d. The brigade support base provides deployed battalions with command, control and communications facilities; logistics support (brigade support area, BSA); staging areas; and intelligence activities. The support base is usually in a secured area within a government-controlled area. It is larger than a battalion operational support base. The brigade support base provides essential tactical and necessary operational support to deployed battalions, and also provides a rear location for nondeployed elements of the deployed battalions (battalion field trains).
- e. All combat service support elements, whether operating from battalion or brigade bases, ensure that their activities support the overall national objective. Since these operations usually involve more interaction with the civilian populace than tactical operations, it is necessary that personnel involved understand the host country's culture. Such understanding will preclude any action that might be detrimental to the accomplishment of the overall national objective.
- f. The combat service support assets that normally operate from the battalion operational base are medical and supply. These same assets can also operate from the brigade support base. The additional assets of transportation, maintenance, and personnel and administration usually operate from the brigade support

base. The size of the element at each base depends on the situation. A nonessential element (operational or tactical) should not be deployed from the home station. It is important that deployed elements consist only of those assets critical to the tactical or operational functioning of the unit.

Section III. Use of Assets

7-5. Support levels.

Most of the combat service support assets are found at division or higher level and are attached to brigades as needed. In some cases, the brigade may receive a larger portion of the division assets than normal if the situation requires it.

7-6. Medical.

- a. The mission of medical units is to conserve the fighting strength of the counter guerrilla force by preventive medical and sanitary measures and by appropriate medical and surgical treatment. In support of the IDAD effort, medical units and personnel may provide medical assistance, advice, and training to host country medical personnel. These units may also provide limited medical support to the local populace on a temporary basis. However, such support is conducted under the auspices of the host country and to the credit of that government.
- b. Aidmen are at company level and give emergency medical treatment within their capabilities. They also ensure that patients who need to be evacuated are properly prepared and promptly moved.
- c. An aid station is usually at battalion level. In counter guerrilla situations, the station is within the battalion operational support base. Aid station functions include:
 - (1) Receiving, recording, examining, and sorting patients and returning the physically fit to duty.
 - (2) Giving emergency medical treatment and preparing patients for evacuation.
 - (3) Providing limited medical support through military civic action programs, as designated.
- d. The battalion aid station is normally supervised by a physician or physician's assistant.
- e. Depending on the seriousness of the wound, the patient maybe moved directly to a division treatment station in the brigade support base, or to a corps level hospital. Evacuation to medical

support facilities may be by ground, but aeromedical evacuation is the preferred means in counter guerrilla operations because of the speed and security of aerial transport.

- f. Any medical facility maybe bypassed, and the patient evacuated to a higher level when his condition warrants it and the means of evacuation permit. Evacuation of wounded personnel does not take precedence over mission accomplishment.

7-7. Supply.

- a. Supply units in counter guerrilla operations, as in conventional operations, provide all necessary classes of supplies to units involved in tactical operations. Since the battalion operational support base is as small as possible and provides only a limited logistics base, the supply element at battalion is small.
- b. A majority of the combat trains are collocated with field trains in the brigade support base, so it is essential that supply lines to battalions be maintained. Both aerial and ground resupply are considered to ensure a backup system in case one method is disrupted.
- c. The brigade usually receives its portion of divisional assets, but it may be augmented with additional assets as required.
- d. Resupplying tactical units must not set a pattern. Resupply should not occur on a regular basis, but only as requested by tactical units.
- e. Unit messes normally do not operate from battalion operational support bases. Unit mess teams may move to (and operate from) battalion bases for short periods to improve morale, or prepare hot meals in the brigade base and transport them to the battalion base. In some cases, local procurement of foodstuffs maybe authorized to help bolster the local economy.
- f. Currently prescribed supply systems and procedures can adequately support counter guerrilla operations with minor variations.

(For further information on supply operations and procedures, see FM 29-51.)

7-8. Transportation.

- a. Transportation requirements are classified as tactical and nontactical. Tactical transportation deals with the repositioning of men and materiel in the battle area, and is directly associated with combat. Nontactical transportation deals with the movement of men and materiel in a noncombat action.

- b. There are two major types of transportation means available to counter guerrilla forces: ground and air transport. Less common means of transportation are railroads, watercraft, and pack animals.
- c. Tactical transportation by aviation assets is preferred because of their speed and flexibility. On occasions when aviation assets are not suitable, ground transportation is utilized. Ground transportation requires increased security. Once the unit is repositioned, soldiers move on foot to accomplish their mission.
- d. Aviation units are located at division level and above. Aircraft for brigade operations, or below, are attached or placed in support of the using unit(s).
- e. Nontactical transportation is accomplished by either aviation or ground transportation assets. Generally, nontactical transportation is used to move supplies and equipment, and for medical evacuation. Ground transportation assets may be organic to units at company and above. The use of ground transport is dependent upon distance, security, terrain, and availability of routes, among other factors.
- f. Ground transportation requests are made through S4 channels, consolidated at brigade S4, and forwarded to the division transportation officer. He assigns priorities and missions to the division's track assets or requests additional assets from corps.
- g. Requests for Army aviation are made through S3 channels and forwarded to the assistant division aviation officer. He assigns priorities and missions to the division's combat aviation brigade or requests additional assets from corps.

(For further information on transportation assets and operations, see FM 55-2.)

7-9. Maintenance.

Maintenance involves all actions to keep equipment operationally ready or to restore it to that status. Battalion maintenance elements are located at the OSB (combat trains) and the brigade support base (field trains). In addition, maintenance contact teams from the maintenance unit supporting the brigade (forward support maintenance company or forward support battalion) will also be located with the OSB. Maintenance doctrine (fix as far forward as possible) is modified slightly in an effort to keep the OSB as small as possible. As a result, most maintenance, other than minor repair or replacement of parts, will take place at the brigade support base in a relatively secure area. (For further information on maintenance operations, see FM 29-2, FM 29-23, and FM 29-30-1.)

7-10. Personnel and administration.

- a. To remain an effective fighting force, the counter guerrilla unit requires personnel and administrative support. Most, if not all, of this support function occurs in the field trains at the brigade support base.
- b. The adjutant (S1) is at the battalion operational support base with the supply officer (S4). The S1 is responsible for headquarters management of the battalion base as well as S1 functions and liaison with brigade. The headquarters commandant is with the field trains of the battalion in the brigade base. This arrangement keeps the battalion base as small as possible.
- c. Personnel and administrative support for counter guerrilla operations is essentially the same as in conventional operations. Administrative operations remain relatively the same and flexible to support the situation.

(For further information on personnel and administrative support functions, see FM 7-20 and FM 71-2.)