Overview, from a NATO perspective, of the importance of greater common efforts on logistics

The aim of this paper is to discuss NATO's commitment to implementing logistics as a collective responsibility among the member nations, and to show how it can be realized through multinational logistics.

There are many definitions of logistics and each places a different emphasis on the relationship of strategy, tactics, movement and production. One interesting way to view logistics would be to liken it to a bridge between deployed forces and the national industrial base that produces the weapons and materiel forces need to accomplish their mission. [1]

To set the stage, let's first begin by addressing the reasons why NATO must implement multinational logistics aggressively. This will be followed by a short discussion on current multinational logistics initiatives projects. We will wrap up with some examples of multinational logistics.

NATO, during its infancy, viewed Logistics as purely a national responsibility. But over time this has evolved. Actually this all started during the cold war. NATO Production and Logistics Organizations (NPLO) such as NATO Maintenance and Supply Organization (NAMSO), the Central European Pipeline Management Organization (CEPMO) and their associated agencies, were formed to facilitate co-operation in fleet level management of weapon systems for the former, and centralized management of the Central European Pipeline System for the latter. Production NPLOs such as NATO Airborne Early Warning & Control Program Management Agency (NAPMA) and others were established by nations to reduce the cost of acquiring capabilities required by the nations and NATO during the acquisition phase of the program and some continue today to manage the in-service management and operation of these weapon systems. Within the operational logistics domain, the ACE Mobile Force (L) used multinational logistics to support its combat forces.

NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept began to address the issues of cost, efficiency and effectiveness related to conducting and sustaining operations with this statement: "The fundamental guiding principle by which the Alliance works is that of common commitment and mutual co-operation among sovereign states in support of the indivisibility of security for all of its members. Solidarity and cohesion within the Alliance, through daily cooperation in both the political and military spheres, ensure that no single Ally is forced to rely upon its own national efforts alone in dealing with basic security challenges".

This is further articulated in NATO's current Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG). The CPG states that "the development of NATO capabilities will not be possible without the commitment of sufficient resources by the nations.

[1] Annex 1 provides the NATO agreed definition of logistics, production and consumer logistics, multinational logistics and armament co-operation.

Furthermore, it is critically important that the resources made available for defense, whether nationally, through multinational projects, or through NATO mechanisms, are used as effectively as possible and are focused on priority areas for investment".

The CPG also mentions that the type and nature of conflicts NATO forces could be required to engage in are numerous. They can range from Major Joint Operations to Small Joint Operations, including the NATO Response Force. The ability to conduct and support multinational joint expeditionary operations far from home territory, with little or no host nation support, and to sustain them for extended periods, requires forces that are fully deployable, sustainable and interoperable. This including the means to deploy them. It also requires a fully coordinated and, where appropriate, multinational approach to logistic support.

The most telling point on this is occurring right now. In ISAF, the size of the logistics support tail is as large as that of the combat forces mainly because each nation has deployed its own logistics support capabilities. This is currently being hotly debated in NATO.

From all of the above, we can extract some very important points:

- NATO operations can take place with no host nations support capabilities and infrastructure, far from home territory, at very long distances and for an indefinite period. This fact calls for additional logistics enablers.

- Few of the 26 NATO nations can deploy, sustain, redeploy and recuperate their forces by themselves.

- Size of logistics must be proportionate to the size of deployed forces.

- Over reliance on national logistics results in unnecessary duplication of logistics capabilities for the complete force.

- The bulk of anticipated NATO missions will likely be executed by nations that rely on peacetime budgets constraints and legislation.

- The increasing cost of modern weapons systems, coupled with the complexity associated with managing and supporting them, makes it unaffordable for many nations to procure and sustain these capabilities.

- The Cold War approach for most NATO nations to rely on mobilization of theatre level logistics capabilities to support their combat and combat support formations is incompatible with the requirements for expeditionary operations.

Taking all of these points into account, it goes without saying that increased investment exposure in key capabilities is requiring most nations to consider ways to reprioritize priorities along with finding better ways to allocate and use scarce resources. Therefore, to mitigate cost, improve effectiveness and efficiency, nations have begun to engage in pooling arrangements and are increasingly formulating bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements.

This brings us to the point on how is NATO addressing these issues. Shortly after the end of the Cold War, national defense budgets and force structures suffered significant reductions. To sustain combat force capabilities, nations started looking at ways to reduce their support requirements. In 1992 NATO realized that it had to address this emerging problem. In that year both the NATO Military Committee (MC) and the North Atlantic Council (NAC) approved a Senior NATO Logisticians' Conference (SNLC) recommendation that articulated the principle of viewing Logistics as a collective responsibility to be shared by all of the NATO nations. In other words, national and NATO authorities have the collective responsibility for logistic support for NATO's multinational operations.

This collective responsibility encouraged nations and NATO to cooperatively share in the responsibility to jointly provision and use those logistic capabilities and resources needed to effectively and efficiently support the force. The advent of standardisation, cooperation and multinationality in logistics became the basis for flexible and efficient use of logistic support thereby contributing to the operational success.

Since then, the SNLC has further clarified the definition of collective responsibility as:

> *"The set of NATO's and nations' individual and largely complementary responsibilities to cooperatively ensure the overall logistics support of NATO operations, taking into account one another's requirements and restrictions".*

NATO policies and doctrine have been developed and updated to instantiate the principle of logistics as a collective responsibility. This included the identification of responsibilities and authorities needed to realize NATO's level of ambition across all NATO logistics function[2]. The execution of multinational logistics brings the nations and NATO together, enhances their mutual trust, which is fundamental for multinational logistics to succeed. Furthermore, it is an integral part of nations and NATO transformation.

Multinational initiatives designed to improve logistics support for the NATO Reaction Force (NRF) are underway. The success of NATO's multinational Joint Logistics Support Group (JLSG) established to support the NRF was demonstrated during Exercise STEADFAST JAGUAR in June 2006, which also validated the NRF support concept. Some NATO nations (also European Union nations that are responsible to field the European Union Battle Group) are now openly stating that multinational logistics is not an option anymore, it is a must.

On the ground, NATO Allied Command Operations (ACO), working with the nations, has had considerable success in establishing practical multinational logistics support solutions for operations. The Lead Nation Concept for theatre fuel storage and distribution responsibilities within ISAF and KFOR; the ISAF Air Bridge; the Balkans Channel Flight system; along with examples of collaboration in the area of medical

[2] Supply, Materiel, Services, Logistic Information Management, Equipment Maintenance, Movement and Transportation, Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSOM), Petroleum Logistics, Contracting in Logistics, Third Party Logistic Support Services (TPLSS), Host Nation Support (HNS), Infrastructure Engineering for Logistics (IEL) and Medical Support

treatment and contractor support, all reflect the value of multinational cooperation across the full spectrum of NATO Logistics.

At the Riga Summit in November 2006, The Heads of State and Government supported further development of multinational logistics initiatives due to the success realised by those currently underway. These include: encouraging more balance in the development and commitment of military capabilities; identifying and reducing barriers to national contributions; developing and enabling multinational support capabilities; enhancing logistics and medical certification and training; enhancing the use of contractor support capabilities to augment but not replace military support capabilities; and, integrating the contributions of smaller nations into an optimised logistics support structure.

To make this a reality, these six broad initiatives just mentioned have been captured in NATO's Logistics Vision and Objectives, which is NATO's Logistics management process. Work on these initiatives is progressing along five lines of effort. Some are focused on the immediate or near-term, while the remainder are focused on the mid- to long-term. The lines of effort are: logistics support to operations which includes contractor support to operations and intra-theatre movement visibility; logistics support to the NRF; the integration Partner and newer NATO nations' contributions into operations; the establishment and use of Multinational Integrated Logistics Units (MILU); and logistics exercises.

Some practical examples of nations implementing multinational logistics are:

Two mission-specific Multinational Integrated Logistics Units (MILUs) have been partially established in KFOR. A MILU under the lead of Finland and with contributions from Czech Republic, Ireland, Latvia, Slovakia and Sweden provides transport, recovery, camp management and medical support to the Multinational Task Force (MNTF) Centre. Another MILU under the lead of Germany and with contributions from Austria and Switzerland provides transport, recovery and medical support to the MNTF South, ISAF. Additional efforts are underway to establish MILUs in support of MNTFs North, East and West. In the meantime, Italy is providing transportation services to MNTF West and the United States is making their contractor support capabilities available to MNTF East.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for pre-planned MILUs, which could be called upon by Allied Command Operations (ACO) as part of its force generation process, has been developed. The Joint Theatre Movements Staff (JTMS) MILU is under the lead of Canada, with contributions from Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia. ACO is discussing with Canada the possibility of focusing this MILU toward a movement control role, for which there is high demand. The Infrastructure Engineering for Logistics (IEL) MILU, under the lead of Romania and with contributions from Bulgaria, Croatia and Georgia, which the United Kingdom is serving as mentor nation for this endeavour.

These are some of the excellent examples of how more experienced NATO nations can, as mentors, help Partner and newer NATO nations develop capabilities that meet NATO standards, which could be certified for use in the NRF. Other examples are listed below.

Use of contractor support, for multinational logistics support has been employed extensively. These contracts are executed through the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA), and are proving to be effective in providing a broad range of services. An important example is the service provided as integrator for the Kandahar Airfield in ISAF. Another example is that a contractor is now responsible for fuel provisioning and distribution in ISAF.

Additionally nations have taken action to improve their multinational logistics co-operation for strategic lift capabilities as mentioned below.

The Movement Co-ordination Centre Europe (MCCE) to improve the coordination of lift requirements and the better use of existing strategic lift capabilities for day-to-day use.

The formations of the Multinational Strategic Sealift Committee (MSSC) by 6 NATO nations (Canada, Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK) and NAMSA to help resolve the sealift deployability issue through the provision of an assured access to strategic sealift by offering 11,000 lane meters by means of 1 medium RoRo on an assured access contract from NAMSA, 2 medium RoRos on Full Time Charter from the Danish ARK Project, the residual capacity of 4 RoRos from the UK and 1 medium RoRo on a dormant national assured access contract from Norway.

The Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) by 16 NATO and 2 Partner/EU nations[3] and NAMSA to reduce the shortfall of strategic airlift capabilities pending the delivery of the A 400 M. They acquired 2000 fully paid AN-124 flying hours and a further 2800 non-flying hours per year giving access to up to 6 aircraft up to 2011.

The Strategic Airlift Capability project initiative with the commitment by 14 NATO and 2 Partner/EU nations[4] are finalizing the MOU to purchase 3 C-17 aircraft. An agency is being formed to manage the delivery of this capability and the intent is to have this MOU signed at the next Summit.

To wrap up, the aim of this paper was: first, explain how NATO meets its logistics requirements; second, advise how NATO continues to evolve over time to meet its commitments, and; third, demonstrate results through a set of examples.

At the end of the day, NATO is a political military alliance consisting of 26 member nations closely aligned with 23 partner nations. The type of operations NATO envisions range from disaster relief, peace keeping, to full scale military combat operations. Any of these missions could occur simultaneously, anywhere across the globe. To effectively meet its challenge, NATO has evolved and will continue to transform. This means that NATO's Logistic Support Concept has metamorphosed from one of individual national responsibility to that of full on alliance collective responsibility.

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[3] Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Finland and Sweden.

[4] Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, United States, Finland and Sweden.

In conclusion, greater common effort on logistics through multinational logistics solutions are being aggressively pursued by NATO and nations. This is being facilitated by lessons learned from current operations coupled with continually evolving policies and doctrine. All of this is designed to improve the fundamental required mutual trust among the nations and between the nations and NATO. This will allow the NATO Command Structure to effectively and efficiently deliver logistics to the right place, at the right time and in the right quantity and at an affordable price. This can only be accomplished through the personal involvement on the nation's senior logistics staff, their commanders, in co-operation with the NATO authorities and agencies, all focused on using multinational logistics solution in both current and future NATO operations.

DEFINITIONS

"**Logistics** is the science of planning and carrying out the movement and maintenance of forces. In its most comprehensive sense, the aspects of military operations which deal with:

(a) design and development, acquisition, storage, transport, distribution, maintenance, evacuation and disposition of materiel[5];
(b) transport of personnel;
(c) acquisition or construction, maintenance, operation and disposition of facilities;
(d) acquisition or furnishing of services; and
(e) medical and health service support."

This definition covers a wide range of responsibilities. If one considers that logistics comprises both the building up of stocks and capabilities and the sustainment of weapons and forces, then it is clear that a distinction is required between two important aspects of logistics: the first one dealing with production and the second one with consumption.

Production Logistics (also known as: **acquisition logistics**) is that part of logistics concerning research, design, development, manufacture and acceptance of materiel. (CNAD)

Consumer Logistics (also known as: **operational logistics**) is that part of logistics concerning reception of the initial product, storage, transport, maintenance (including repair and serviceability), operation and disposal of materiel. (SNLC)

Multinational logistics is understood to mean the different means to logistically support operations other than purely national. It is carried out by the Senior NATO Logisticians conference (SNLC).

[5] Materiel: equipment in its widest sense including vehicles, weapons, ammunition, fuel, etc.