



News Release

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LOGCAP: A flexible alternative for supporting the force

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JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Thirty-three Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) practitioners met for a two-day conference at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in early September to put names and faces together and share tips and tricks of the trade to make their jobs easier.

The group was a mix of newcomers to LOGCAP and seasoned personnel. The newcomers are with recently deployed sustainment battalions and the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Fort Hood, Texas, and the seasoned personnel, or pros as they have come to be known, are nearing the end of their deployments. The presenters were staff from the LOGCAP Logistics Support Unit at Joint Base Balad and LOGCAP Forward at Victory Base Complex in Baghdad.

“This is the first conference of its type for customer and supported units,” said Col. Robert Thompson, deputy program director, LOGCAP-Iraq. Noting that LOGCAP will be involved with responsible drawdown, he said, “The take-away is how processes are turned on and off. Logistics is a big piece of getting the equipment out [of the theater].”

Thompson explained that LOGCAP augments units on the ground and is a resource for them. LOGCAP is externally driven by unit requirements and meets unit needs that cannot be met by their internal resources or by Joint Contracting Command-Iraq capabilities.

“LOGCAP provides a diverse range of services,” said Col. Herbert Jones Jr., Corps Logistics Support Services/Theater Transportation Mission LOGCAP support officer. “Bottled water, non-tactical vehicle maintenance, central issue facilities, MWR (morale, welfare, and

recreation), the majority of postal services, laundry, food services, shuttle bus, and air terminal services are among the services LOGCAP provides. LOGCAP provides something for everyone in-theater.”

Conference attendees work in LOGCAP cells in the sustainment brigades that fall under the 13th SCE and are the link between their downrange units and higher headquarters.

“We make sure Soldiers get what they need in the least amount of time and make sure it’s what they need to complete their warfighting mission,” said Master Sgt. Madeline Allison, 10th Sustainment Brigade contract office. Allison said her goal is to be as effective and as quick as possible with minimum cost to the government.

“LOGCAP is here for the Soldiers,” said Lee Davis, a logistics management specialist for LOGCAP also assigned to the 10th. “I’m the continuity piece.”

Davis said when the unit comes to him with a need, he writes it up in language the contractor understands and when the contractor responds he can “translate their response to language the Army understands.”

“The 10th Sustainment Brigade is responsible for the theater transportation mission piece of support to the Iraq railroad,” said Davis. “They have to provide material handling equipment to load and unload cargo from the train at Camp Taji and they store and ship containers.”

Davis said that the mission will continue after the brigade redeploys and he will be there to ensure there is no disruption of service when the 96th Sustainment Brigade falls in behind the 10th.

Marine Maj. Stephen Jones, LOGCAP Multi National Force – West officer-in-charge, said LOGCAP has helped the Marines of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force because they can turn to LOGCAP for quality-of-life services such as dining and living facilities and allow the Marines to focus on their core missions.

Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Rodriguez is the Corps Logistics Support Services and Iraqi Postal Mission manager for the 13th SCE.

“Units take requests to their sustainment brigade and the sustainment brigade comes to me. With the drawdown, requirements are shifting,”

Rodriquez said. "Contractors will match the green suiters – if we drawdown a FOB (Forward Operating Base), they will match."

Maj. Gina Garabedian, 304th Sustainment Brigade LOGCAP OIC, attended the conference within days of her unit's re-deployment. "It did so much for our TOA (transfer of authority). We gave the incoming unit two days of training and getting their hands dirty."

Garabedian said the handouts gathered at the meeting will be good reference material for the 90th Sustainment Brigade that is the follow-on unit for the 304th. "I wish I had the intro to LOGCAP that they got," she said.

"The conference was better than I had any idea of," said Jones. "Participation from the 13th SCE, my primary customer, and the sustainment brigades, my secondary customers, and my headquarters in Victory Base Complex gave us a chance for networking, bringing all of my logistics management specialists together and the timing was good with upcoming RIPTOAs (relief in place, transfer of authority)."

Jones said he hopes to have conferences more frequently and is already planning one for January 2010. The focus of the next conference will be the transition from LOGCAP III to LOGCAP IV, but he said the overarching principle will still be that "we're here to support the troops on the ground in the most cost-effective and efficient way possible."

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