

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

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Preface

Since America's first major deployment of combat forces during the Spanish-American War, United States forces have faced constant and consistent patterns of combat service support challenges. Ports of embarkation and debarkation become overwhelmed, shipments are sidetracked, units lose visibility of their in-transit equipment, and deliveries of critically needed supplies are delayed.

The Army is now primarily a continental United States (CONUS)-based force, but with global responsibilities. As a result, the centerpiece of current Army doctrine is force projection. Recent operations in the Mideast, Somalia, Bosnia, and elsewhere, demonstrated that Army forces can rapidly deploy units and materiel to an area of operations. However, these operations also demonstrated that in-theater management and distribution of large volumes of combat service support resources was still challenging. Maintaining in-transit visibility and accountability of cargo and efficiently delivering it from ports to units proved difficult.

The purpose of this manual is to provide authoritative doctrine by which the Army theater distribution system supports the conduct of operations at all echelons and across the full range of military operations. This manual also provides the basis for theater distribution system training, organizational, and materiel development. The target audience is the units and commands that provide in-theater combat service support (CSS) and units supported by those organizations.

This manual focuses on CONUS-based force projection. It is designed to assist Army service component commanders, Army force commanders, theater support command commanders, logistics support element commanders, and other Army CSS personnel and their staffs in translating requirements and needs into combat service support in joint, multinational, and interagency environments. This manual implements relevant joint doctrine, incorporates lessons learned from recent operations, and conforms with Army capstone doctrine. Additionally, it links Field Manuals 100-5, 100-7, 100-10, 100-15, 100-16, and 100-17 series manuals with joint and other Army capstone manuals. This manual is focused on Army distribution operations in the near-term, although it also provides some information on developments which will affect distribution in the future. Though the theater support command discussed in this manual is an approved concept, actual organizations may not yet exist. Until then, echelons above corps support commands should adapt the principles in this manual to fit existing structures.

The proponent of this publication is Headquarters, United States (US) Army Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM). Send comments and recommendations on Department of the Army (DA) Form 2028 to Commander, US Army Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee, ATTN: ATCL-C, Fort Lee, Virginia, 23801.

Throughout this publication the term "combat service support" is used in the context of the definition found in FMs 100-5 and 100-10.

Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns and pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.