THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Introduction to Theater Distribution

Motivator

MOTIVATOR

In this lesson, you will learn about the basics of Theater Distribution.

Understanding Theater Distribution will prepare you to meet future challenges to include:

- Meeting increased demand for materiel
- Delivering materiel in dangerous or rapidly changing operating environments
- Managing joint operations
- Maintaining control of supply while in-transit

As a Senior Transportation Officer, you are responsible for monitoring and managing the rapid changes that may occur during distribution.

PER SCIENTIAM PROGREDIMUR

In this lesson, you will learn about the basics of Theater Distribution. Understanding Theater Distribution will prepare you to meet future challenges.

As a Senior Transportation Officer, your application of the concepts of principles of Theater Distribution will help you and others to accomplish transportation missions.

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Introduction to Theater Distribution

Lead-in

LEAD-IN

Since its inception, U.S. military forces have recorded a vast number of historical challenges in distributions efforts.

Post 9/11, changes in distribution have been essential to the supply and sustainment of forces deployed in various theaters worldwide.

Recent disasters such as the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and the Haiti Earthquake have exemplified the Army's necessity to rapidly deploy materiel to areas of operation.

Yet, with respect to large volumes of supply, efficiency of theater management and distribution still present a challenge.

Thus, improvements in Theater Distribution are always necessary and welcome.

In the post 9/11 era, the U.S. Army became a primarily continental U.S. based force with global responsibilities.

Current deployment rates create a large need for supplies and materiel to sustain theater operations.

To respond to the high volume of demand for materiel, improvements in Theater Distribution are required on a constant basis.

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Purpose and Processes of Theater Distribution

Theater Distribution (TD) is the flow of materiel, equipment, and personnel within the theater.

The main purpose of Theater Distribution is to effectively deliver critical supplies through a visible distribution pipeline to meet the requirements of the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC).

The three processes that affect Theater Distribution include:

- Theater Distribution management
- Command and control (C2)
- Physical distribution

Theater Distribution delivers critical supplies to support the combatant Commander who needs to know where supplies are within the distribution system.

Demands in supporting the Geographic Combatant Commander are facilitated by these processes: Theater Distribution management; command and control; and physical distribution.

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Theater Distribution Concepts

The Theater Distribution concept is based upon the idea of a single control and command element designed to ensure the following:

- Unity of effort within the distribution system
- Total situational awareness of what is being distributed
- Increased reliability and sustainment in delivery
- Rapid and precise delivery of materiel to the Area of Operation (AO)

To sustain operations, it is imperative that the proper materiel be shipped and delivered on time, every time.

As such, Theater Distribution incorporates the following concepts designed to allow for timely delivery.

Journal Narration:
In this passage, Lieutenant General Dail and Lieutenant Colonel Jones express how past terrorist attacks have heightened the need to deploy forces and distribute materiel more rapidly.

Lieutenant General Robert T. Dail
Lieutenant Colonel David E. Jones
Army Logistician (2007)

Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the need for a rapidly deployable force that could respond globally, in hours, to a wide range of missions became more than a goal - it became a necessity.

Today, the U.S. military is engaged on multiple fronts and at multiple levels across the full spectrum of the operational continuum.

As the U.S. has deployed and operated in different theaters in recent years, both the Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) and their respective service components have been confronted with the challenge of effectively synchronizing the deployment of forces and distribution of materiel.

The importance of being effective while maintaining economy of force has been underscored for the services, and especially the Army, as they have responded to multiple threats and rotations.

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Tenets of Theater Distribution

Delivering the right materiel to the right place at the right time in the right mode is critical to Theater Distribution.

Therefore, the tenets of Theater Distribution include:

- **Visibility**
- **Capacity**
- **Control**

Distribution support to the Soldier is greatly enhanced as each of these tenets are improved.

The tenets of Theater Distribution promote accountability and awareness throughout the distribution process.

In addition, they ensure successful distribution of personnel, equipment, materiel, and other resources.

Visibility

Visibility provides the means to determine and track the Who, What, When, Where, and How within the distribution process.

Timely, consistent, continuous, and accurate visibility of information provides logisticians with the necessary information to receive, transfer, and distribute assets on time.

Capacity

A Theater Distribution process infrastructure determines the capacity of a distribution system and logistics process flow.

Optimization of a theater's distribution capacity is accomplished by:

- Effective communication
- Review of information
- Anticipation of needs
- Allocation of resources
- Making necessary adjustments

Control

The main goal is to make the distribution system efficient and effective from source to Soldier.

In order to integrate, synchronize, and optimize the distribution process, the distribution manager can perform these shipment actions:

- Receive
- Reconstitute
- Direct or redirect
- Prioritize
- Cross-level
- Hold
- Allocate

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Principles of Distribution

Commanders, logistics planners, distribution managers, and support personnel should be informed continuously so that they can forecast requirements, maintain visibility, and control the distribution system.

The principles of distribution include:

- Centralize management
- Optimize infrastructure
- Maximize throughput
- Minimize forward stockpiling
- Maintain a seamless pipeline

Employ these principles properly so that you can act and react faster than the enemy.

Several principles are essential to the efficiency, effectiveness, and balance of distribution system operations.

These principles of distribution include: centralize management; optimize infrastructure; maximize throughput; minimize forward stockpiling; and maintain a seamless pipeline.

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Key Points

KEY POINTS

The following key points regarding the components of Theater Distribution (TD) were discussed:

- Concept of TD
- Processes of TD
- Tenets of TD
- Principles of distribution

The following key points were discussed: the concept of Theater Distribution; the three processes of Theater Distribution; the three tenets of Theater Distribution; and the four principles of distribution.

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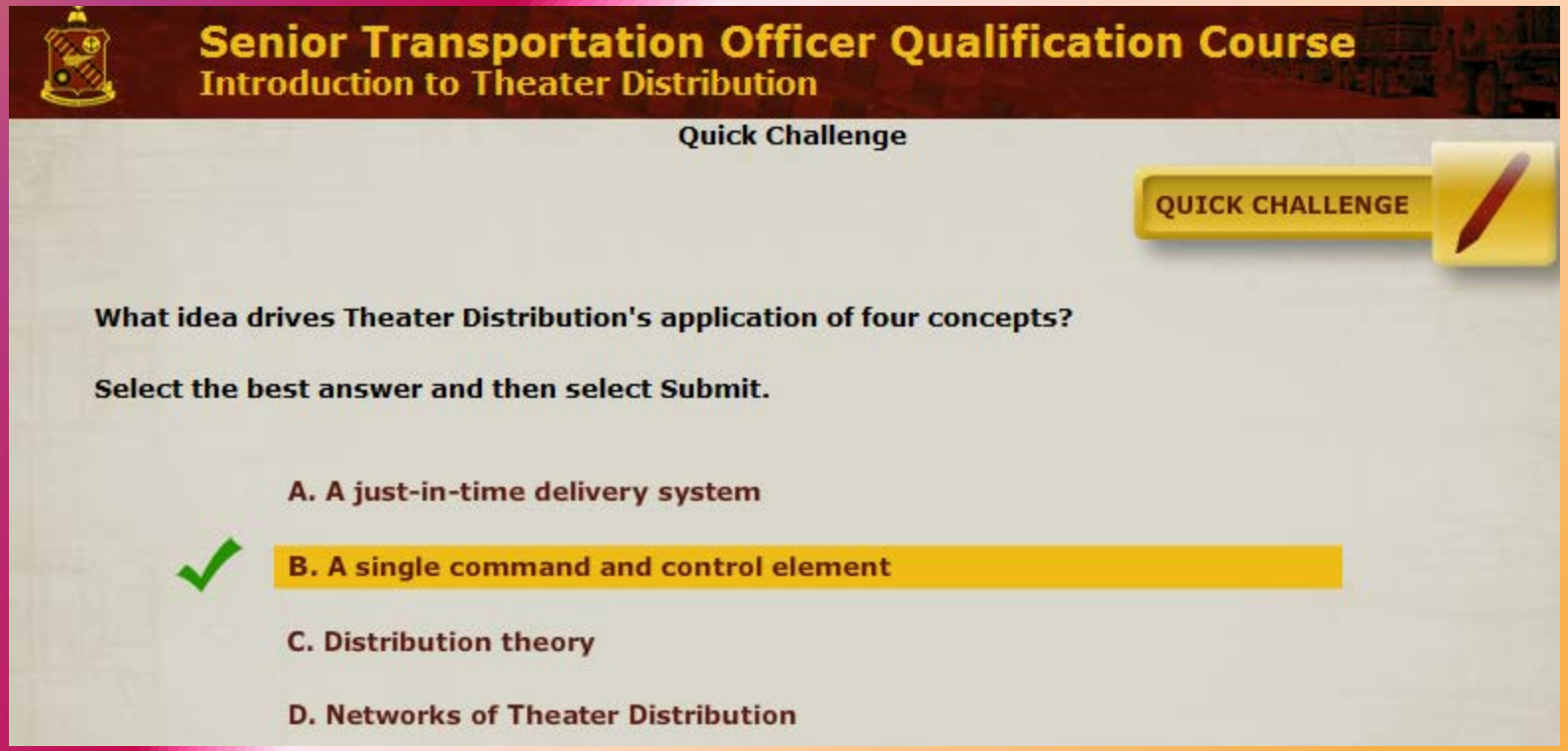

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Introduction to Theater Distribution

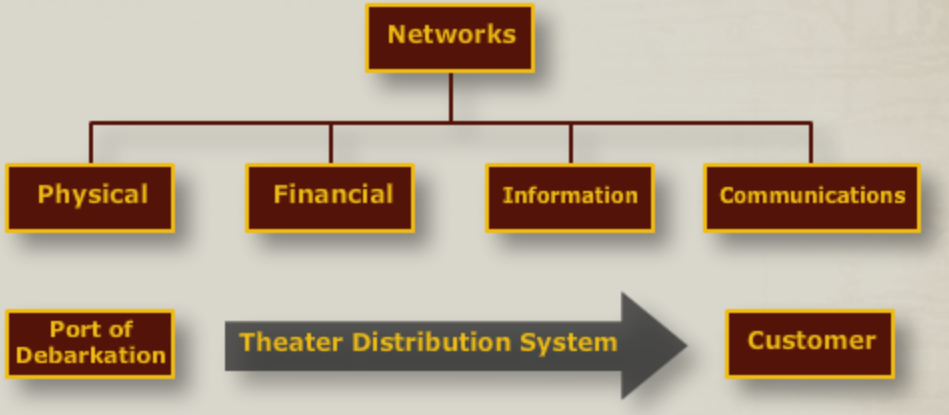
Distribution System

The Army Theater Distribution network consists of four main networks:

- Physical network
- Financial network
- Information network
- Communications network

These networks help to improve in-transit visibility and reduce customer wait time.

The efficiency of these support networks determines the overall effectiveness of the distribution system.



The following support networks of Theater Distribution will be discussed further: physical network, financial network, information network, and the communications network.

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Physical Network

The physical network of the distribution system consists of the quantity, capacity, and capability of the following elements that support distribution operations:

- Personnel
- Fixed structures
- Established facilities

This network utilizes various modes of transportation which are selected on the basis of the situation's urgency.

It also encompasses the intrinsic capabilities of military organizations, commercial partners, and multinational participants.

Success in distribution is predicated upon properly using the physical networks at hand to deliver required materiel across various theaters in an effective and efficient manner.

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Financial Network

The Army must obtain and allocate the fiscal resources needed to maintain distribution capabilities and execute distribution missions.

The financial network comprises:

- Policies
- Agreements
- Processes
- Decision systems

Distribution capacity is the sum of the physical and financial networks.

Theater Distribution must be supported financially in order for the Army to maintain distribution capabilities and execute distribution missions.

The financial network consists of the policies, agreements, processes, and decision systems associated with acquiring the appropriate amount of fiscal resources.

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Information Network

The information network ensures the lightening of deployment loads and helps pinpoint delivery systems.

This network supports Theater Distribution through the following technologies:

- Data collection devices
- Automatic Identification Technologies (AITs)
- Automated data and business systems
- Decision support tools
- Asset visibility capabilities

These technologies enhance airlift, sealift, and pre-positioning capabilities.

The information network supports Theater Distribution through various technologies.

Overall, these improvements promote the vision of a smaller, more deployable, and capable force with a smaller logistical footprint.

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Communications Network

The communications network links every facet of military operations affecting the ability of the Armed Forces to control and influence the outcome of war across the full Range of Military Operations (ROMO).

It also serves the following functions:

- Provides continuous information throughout the strategic, operational, and tactical levels
- Carries the data of the information network
- Enables total asset visibility and in-transit visibility

The communications network may also be referred to as the Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) network.

The capacity, reliability, and security of the communications network is vital, especially during the rapid transmission of Theater Distribution operations.

The communications network is essential to modernizing Theater Distribution through shared information and continuous contact.

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Key Points

The following key points regarding the support networks of Theater Distribution were discussed:

- Physical network
- Financial network
- Information network
- Communications network

KEY POINTS

The following key points were discussed: the physical network; the financial network; the information network; and the communications network.

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Introduction to Theater Distribution

Quick Challenge

QUICK CHALLENGE

Captain Allen has just received the ammunition shipment that he requested. Upon opening th cargo boxes, he discovers that the ammunition received is not what he requested.

This incident is caused by inefficiency in which support network? Select the best answer and t select Submit.

A. Physical network

B. Financial network

✓ C. Information network

D. Resource network

Feedback

Correct. The information received was not correct; therefore, this incident was caused by inefficiency in

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Introduction to Theater Distribution

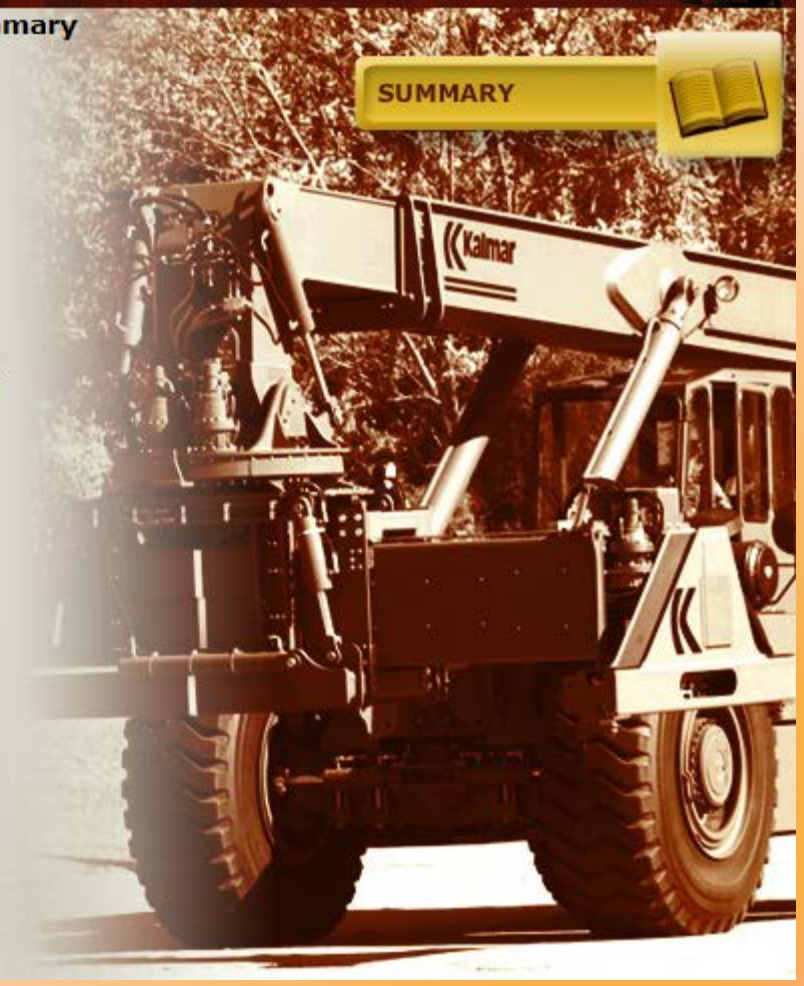
Summary

In this lesson, you have learned about Theater Distribution (TD).

The lesson has reviewed topics including:

- Components of TD
- Support Networks of TD

As a Senior Transportation Officer, you will need to be able to determine whether Theater Distribution is effective and efficient to meet the Geographic Combatant Commander's (GCC) requirements.



In this lesson, you have learned about Theater Distribution including: the Components of Theater Distribution; and the four support networks of Theater Distribution.

Distribution plays a major role in operations in various theaters across the world.

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Motivator

MOTIVATOR

In this lesson, you will learn about the various organizations, commands, and agencies involved in the execution of Theater Distribution.

Knowing how these elements pertain to Theater Distribution will prepare you to meet future challenges to include:

- Ensuring a seamless flow of materiel and personnel
- Monitoring theater movement
- Delivering cargo within a time definite schedule
- Performing field maintenance

As a Senior Transportation Officer, you are responsible for understanding the roles of these elements and how they will help you and others to accomplish transportation missions.

In this lesson, you will learn about the various organizations, commands, and agencies that play a unique role in executing Theater Distribution.

Your knowledge of how these elements relate to Theater Distribution will help you and the Soldiers you lead.

PER SCIENTIAM PROGREDIMUR

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Lead-in

LEAD-IN

In order to manage and maintain efficient and effective distribution operations, you must be aware of the various elements that support Theater Distribution.

These elements will ensure that our Soldiers are equipped with the appropriate materiels and equipment needed to succeed in missions.

In addition, they operate to enhance the visibility, capacity, and control of the distribution system, thus allowing our forces to respond quickly and accurately.

Your knowledge of how these organizations and commands integrate to sustain our forces is critical to future transportation missions.

Effective Theater Distribution management depends on various elements of the distribution infrastructure.

Together, these elements help to optimize the distribution system, thus equipping our forces with the personnel, equipment, and materiel needed to succeed in operations.

As a Senior Transportation Officer, it is important that you understand how these elements support Theater Distribution.

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course

Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

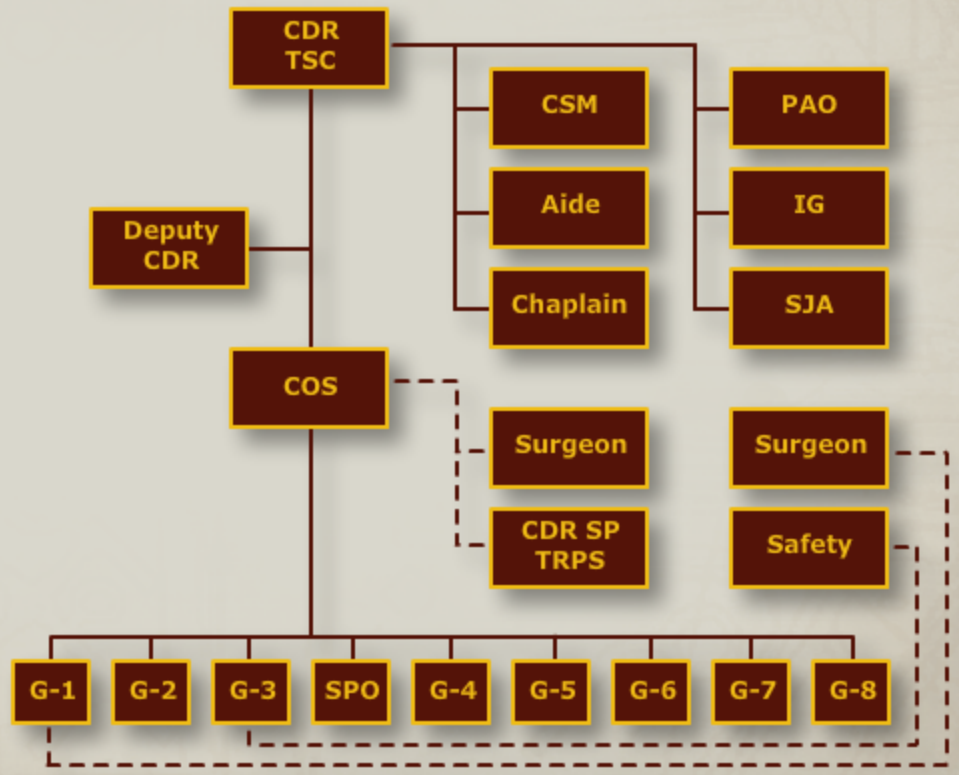
The Theater Sustainment Command's (TSC) primary role in distribution management is a seamless flow of supplies, personnel, and equipment through the intratheater segment of the distribution system.

The TSC executes this role through coordination with the Joint Deployment Distribution Operations Center (JDDOC) and effective use of in-transit visibility.

The TSC also performs the following functions:

- Serves as the Theater Distribution manager
- Employs sustainment brigades to execute Theater Opening, Theater Sustainment, and Theater Distribution operations
- Operates as a joint command for logistics
- Provides a Distribution Management Center (DMC)

Theater Sustainment Command



The Theater Sustainment Command serves as the Theater Distribution manager. Its primary role is to ensure smooth and continuous delivery of personnel and materiel within the theater.

Additional information about the Theater Sustainment Command was discussed in the Modular Force Structure lesson.

Captain Jose Emperador
AR News

The 377th Theater Sustainment Command will staff and operate the Joint Logistics Command headquarters, manage the acquisition, transportation and distribution of supplies and commodities, in addition to moving units out of Haiti when their missions are accomplished.

The 377th TSC will also provide sustainment to service members. Establishing a baseline for the quality of life and raising that bar through logistical support is where the 377th TSC excels.

With their motto 'Can Do, Anytime, Anywhere;' proven on countless missions here at home and around the globe, the 377th TSC stands prepared to assist in the recovery of Haiti and its people.

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course

Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

The Distribution Management Center (DMC) functions under the Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) Support Operations (SPO) to combine distribution, materiel management, and movement control.

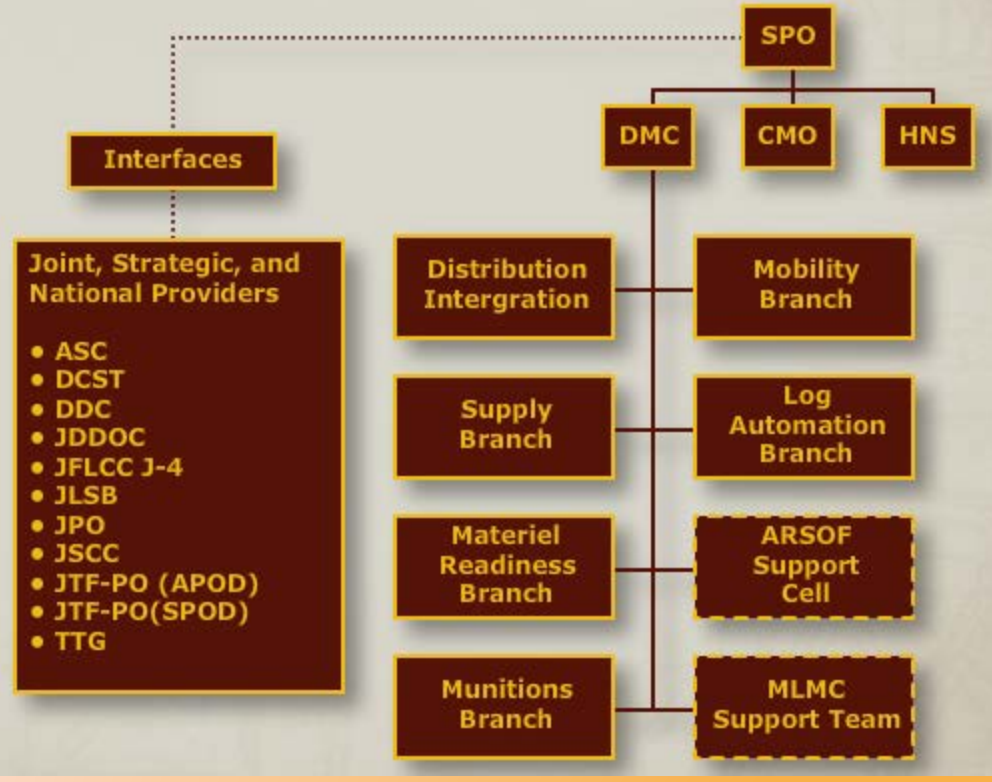
The DMC is comprised of six subordinate branches to include:

- **Distribution Integration**
- **Supply**
- **Materiel Readiness**
- **Munitions**
- **Mobility**
- **Log Automation**

In addition to the six branches, the DMC also has a **civil-military operations section** and a **host nation support section**.

Under the supervision of support operations, the Distribution Management Center develops the Theater Distribution plan and monitors distribution performance in coordination with strategic distribution process owners and the support operations staffs in Sustainment Brigades and Brigade Support Battalions.

Distribution Management Center



THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Civil-Military Operations Section

Plans, coordinates, and supervises civil military operations in support of TSC mission objectives.

Host Nation Support Section

Develops plans, programs, policies, and procedures involving host nation support, as well as recommends allocation of host nation resources to support mission requirements.

Distribution Integration Branch

Plans, establishes, and maintains the Army portion of the Theater Distribution system to include visibility, capacity management, and control of system operations.

This branch also maintains situational awareness and oversees operation of the in-transit visibility (ITV) system, among other duties.

Supply Branch

Provides direction for receiving, storing, and issuing theater stocks in accordance with Army Service Component Commanders/Geographic Combatant Commander's support priorities.

This branch performs as the expediter and problem solver on issues involving the commodities it manages.

Munitions Branch

Maintains stock control on all Class V supplies in theater and coordinates special transportation and airdrop requirements for munitions, among other duties.

This branch is responsible for coordinating munitions action on both available and in-transit stock.

Materiel Readiness Branch

Performs integrated materiel management for automotive equipment, tactical wheeled vehicles, general-purpose vehicles, construction equipment, materiel handling equipment, electronic maintenance, and aviation maintenance.

This branch makes maintenance recommendations to Commanders.

Mobility Branch

Provides guidance, plans, policies, and staff supervision for movements.

This branch gives primary input to the theater movement plan and is responsible for provision of theater level liaison to host nations(s) for contracted assets, among many other duties.

Log Automation Branch

Works in conjunction with the assistant chief of staff and G6 to establish standard Army management information system automation policy and provides guidance for all subordinate unit combat service support automation management offices.

This branch also provides services of a technical/functional nature common to all elements of the TSC and its customers to establish and maintain automation connectivity, data transmission accuracy, and software management, among other duties.

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

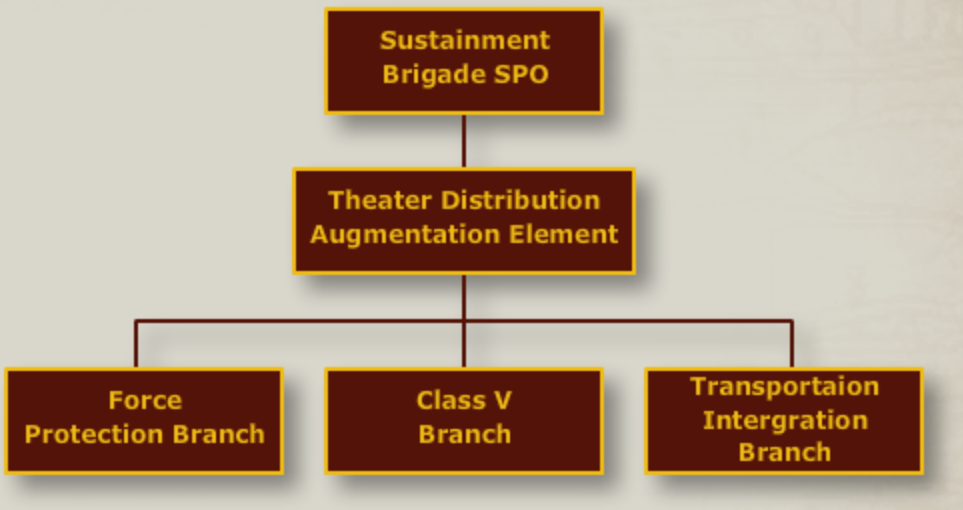
Theater Distribution Augmentation Element

The Theater Distribution Augmentation Element (TDAE) is a subordinate element of the theater opening element.

The Theater Opening Element has been discussed in detail in the Army Transportation Units: Terminal Operations lesson.

The TDAE augments the sustainment brigade support operations conducting Theater Distribution operations by performing functions that include:

- Coordinating for force protection
- Providing increased munitions distribution management
- Implementing and monitoring theater movement programs



The Theater Distribution Augmentation Element provides the sustainment brigade with additional manpower and expertise to command and control theater opening functions, to conduct transportation planning, and provides additional staff management capability for oversight of reception, staging, onward movement, and integration operations; port operations; node and mode management; intermodal operations; and movement control.

The Theater Distribution Augmentation Element is responsible for coordinating for force protection; providing increased munitions distribution management; and implementing and monitoring theater movement programs.

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course

Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Distribution Terminal Operations

Distribution Terminals (DT) are transshipment points focused on receiving, sorting, documenting, and shipping cargo.

DT operations include:

- Segregating and delivering cargo to customers over established routes according to a time definite delivery schedule
- Preparing Automated Manifest System (AMS) cards and Radio Frequency (RF) tags for cargo to ensure visibility from DT to the ultimate consignee
- Receiving, repackaging, redistributing, and retrograding cargo
- Reading source data automation of cargo arriving and departing the DT
- Staging and marshaling trailer loads for delivery

The DT consists of a transportation cargo transfer element and a servicing Movement Control Team (MCT).

Distribution terminals receive, sort, and unload containers for rapid distribution. They also redirect cargo as required.

Distribution terminal operations may include delivering cargo to customers according to a time definite delivery schedule or marshaling trailer loads for delivery.

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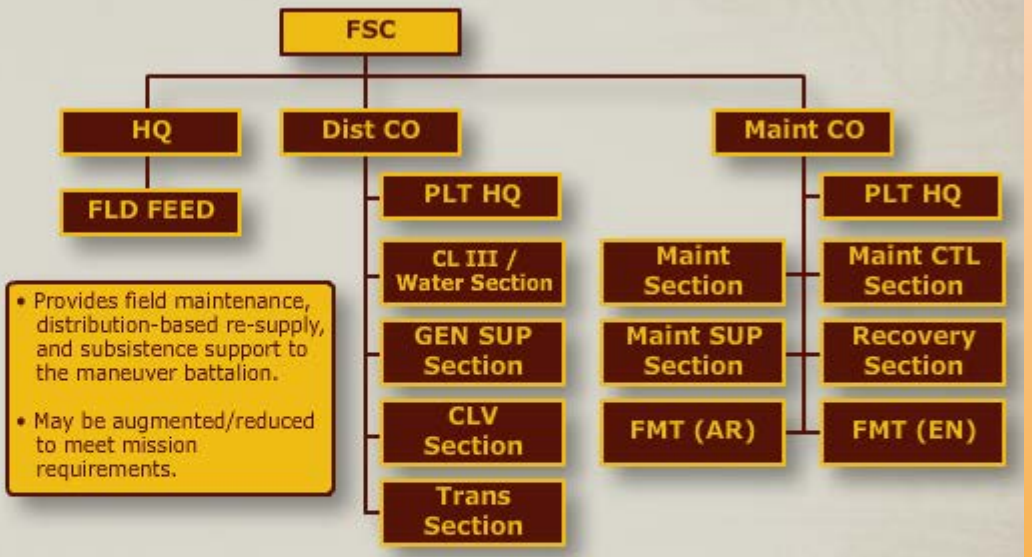
Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Forward Support Companies (FSCs) are assigned to the Brigade Support Battalions (BSBs) and can be in direct support, operational control, attached, or assigned to the supported battalions.

Each FSC has a maintenance platoon that provides the battalion with the following:

- Recovery support
- Automotive and tracked vehicle repair
- Ground support equipment repair

Forward Support Company



Each maneuver battalion has a Forward Support Company that performs field maintenance.

The company's maintenance platoon provides the battalion with: recovery support, automotive and tracked vehicle repair, and ground support equipment repair.

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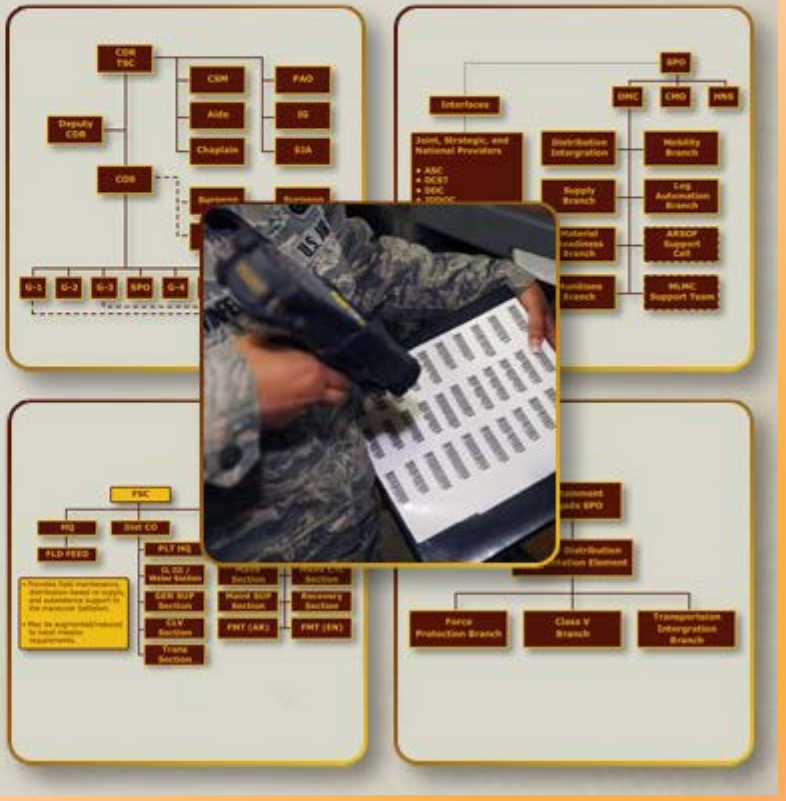
Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Key Points

The following key points were discussed:

- Theater Sustainment Command (TSC)
- Distribution Management Center (DMC)
- Theater Distribution Augmentation Element (TDAE)
- Distribution Terminal (DT) Operations
- Forward Support Company (FSC)

The following key points of the roles and functions in Theater Distribution were discussed: Theater Sustainment Command; Distribution Management Center; Theater Distribution Augmentation Element; Distribution Terminal Operations; and the Forward Support Company.



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Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Quick Challenge

QUICK CHALLENGE

Which of the following operates as a joint command for logistics and serves as the Theater Distribution manager?

Select the best answer then select Submit.

A. Forward Support Company (FSC)

B. Theater Distribution Augmentation Element (TDAE)

✓ C. Theater Sustainment Command (TSC)

D. Joint Deployment Distribution Operations Center (JDDOC)

THEATER DISTRIBUTION

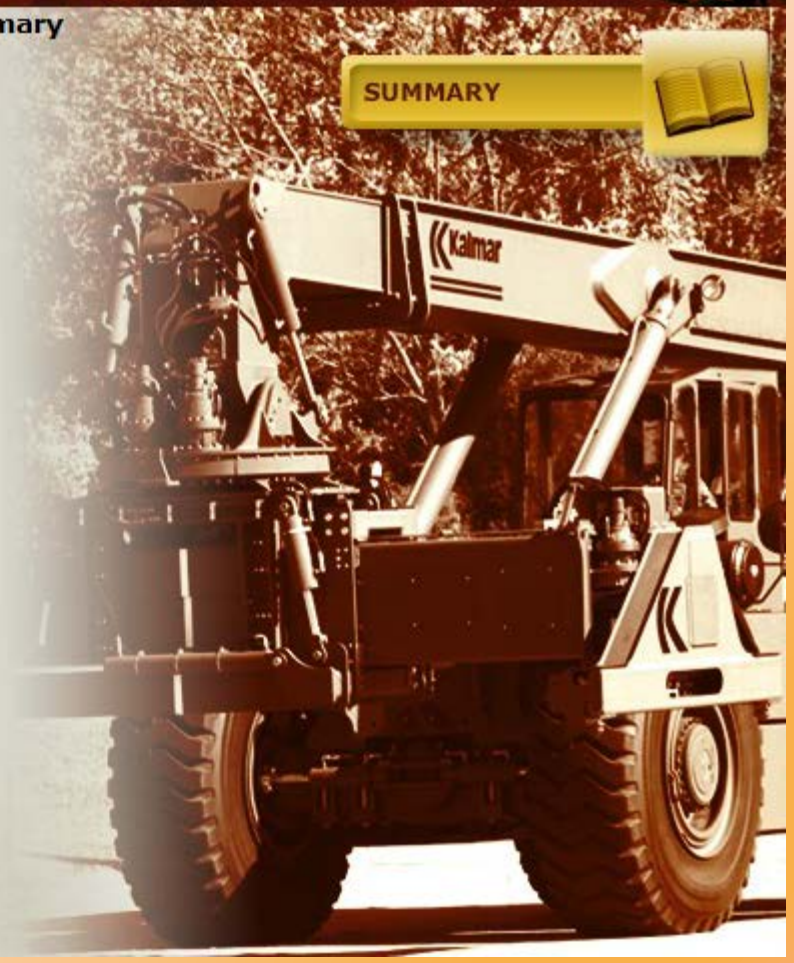
Senior Transportation Officer Qualification Course
Roles and Functions in Theater Distribution

Summary

In this lesson, you have learned about the roles and functions in Theater Distribution including:

- Theater Sustainment Command (TSC)
- Theater Distribution Augmentation Element (TDAE)
- Forward Support Company (FSC)

As a Senior Transportation Officer, it is important to understand the various organizations, commands, and agencies at your disposal to assist in theater distribution.



In this lesson, you have learned about the roles and functions that assist in Theater Distribution.

This lesson covered many topics including: Theater Sustainment Command, Theater Distribution Augmentation Element, and the Forward Support Company, among others.

Good luck on the assessment