



A Soldier with the 838th Transportation Battalion, 598th Transportation Brigade ground guides a Bradley Fighting Vehicle from the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division off the Green Ridge cargo ship at Vlissingen, Netherlands, Oct. 11, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jesse Pilgrim)

Installation Management Command

Supporting Operations in the Strategic Support Area

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In late December 2018, I had the opportunity to interview for the sergeant major position of operations, plans, and training at the Installation Management Command (IMCOM) Headquarters. As a Soldier who has deployed on numerous occasions, and as a brigade command sergeant major, I did not realize IMCOM played such a vital role in all areas associated with operational readiness and Soldier lethality. The subsequent

onboarding briefs and deep dives into how IMCOM "integrates and delivers base support to enable readiness for a globally responsive Army" quickly showed the vast amount of support IMCOM provides to meet our priority: *Readiness* ("Our mission," 2018, para. 1). IMCOM affects more Soldiers and Families every day than any other command in the Army.



U.S. Army Soldiers with the 1st Squadron, 102nd Cavalry Regiment, New Jersey Army National Guard, reunite with family and friends after a welcome home ceremony at the National Guard Armory in Westfield, N.J., Dec. 12, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Mark C. Olsen)

“IMCOM’s global workforce of over 50,000 civilian professionals and 1,700 active-duty Soldiers operate 75 installations across 17 time zones, delivering 58 services to Soldiers, civilians, and families. IMCOM honors the sacrifice and service of military families while enabling readiness for a self-reliant and globally responsive Army. (Department of the Army, 2019b, p. 64)”

IMCOM’s support to installations begins with its garrison commanders and command sergeants major who synchronize the multitude of services to support the senior commanders’ missions within the strategic support area (SSA). According to *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1: The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028*, the SSA is where the Army and the joint force build, sustain, and project combat power to the operational support, close, and deep areas. IMCOM operations in the SSA provide the ability to execute force protection, generation, and deployment operations in support of steady state and surge operations (Training and Doctrine Command, 2018).

IMCOM provides the infrastructure and services required to allow the Army to assemble, train, and deploy in support of combat operations. Its priorities, delineated across garrison Soldier/Family programs, training support, and protection services, provide the foundation for three of Army Materiel Command’s strategic focus areas: *Installation readiness*, *Soldier/Family readiness*, and *strategic power projection* (Department of the Army, n.d.).

Soldier and Family Programs

“Winning matters, and people are my number one priority.”

—Gen. James C. McConville, 40th Chief of Staff of the Army (Department of the Army, 2019a, para. 1).

Readiness is often thought of by Soldiers as conducting individual and collective training events to increase lethality such as field training exercises, ranges, and airborne operations. But readiness comes in a variety of forms to ensure the health of the force.

IMCOM’s Soldier and Family Morale, Welfare, and Recreation program enables Army *Readiness* by providing a wide range of programs and services that support the mental, physical, emotional, and behavioral well-being of Soldiers and Families. These programs build Soldier and Family self-reliance and mitigate the challenges of the military lifestyle especially during periods

of operational deployment. Programs such as Army Community Services, Child Youth Services, Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers, as well as fitness and recreational centers provide life skills, support to reintegration, childcare options, and physical fitness training. Through these programs, Soldiers and Families are able to build and sustain strong communities to meet the demands of military life (“Family and Morale,” 2018).

Spiritual fitness is also a priority for the resilience program. Garrison religious support teams (RST) integrate and facilitate religious services to enable spiritually ready and resilient Soldiers and Families. The RSTs annually conduct over 24,000 worship services with 2.5 million attendees, 52,000 religious education events with 832,000 participants, manage 14,000 volunteers, and maintain 316 facilities (Department of the Army, 2015). The RSTs’ goal is to provide guidance on all matters pertaining to religion, morals, and morale for garrison and tenant units.

Infrastructure

IMCOM oversees over 6,000 barracks and 95,000 houses, as well as ranges, railheads, airfields, motor pools, and roadways. Its responsibilities also include more than 300,000 facilities, 1,900 training ranges, 55,000 miles of paved and unpaved roadway, and more than half the Army’s airfields (Department of the Army, 2008). These facilities enable IMCOM to support commanders in the SSA.

Training

IMCOM has a vast number of live and virtual ranges to simulate conditions found on present and future

battlefields. These ranges support a multitude of training to include mechanized, small arms, crew served, recoilless/grenade, artillery, and aviation. IMCOM teams work together with the supported unit and installation senior commander to support the Gunnery Standardization Program, Range Complex Master Plan, and supervise the Integrated Training Area Management.

The Army has established virtual simulators and training centers such as mission training complexes (MTC), warrior skills training centers, and medical simulation training centers. These centers afford commanders and non-commissioned officers the ability to conduct mission training to evaluate and refine their tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), tactical standard operating procedures, and other mission criteria to prepare for combat operations (Robitzki, 2019; “Synthetic Training Environment,” n.d.).

In 2017, while assigned to the 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, we used the MTC’s simulation-driven training tools to not only allow our leaders to test varying processes, but also link our units in the field through the MTC’s Live-Virtual-Constructive Integrated Training Environment (LVC-ITE). The LVC-ITE enabled us to certify our battalion and brigade staffs by providing a training environment and evaluation process for our mission command fundamentals training. The lessons learned and TTPs certified leading up to our deployment



U.S. Army Pvt. Isaiah Montes, assigned to Field Artillery Squadron (Steel), secures chains to a rail cart before attaching it to a M1126 Stryker vehicle during railhead operations, Oct. 7, 2019 at Fort Hood, Texas as part of preparation for the 3rd Cavalry Regiment’s rotation to the National Training Center. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Justin Geiger, 3rd Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs)

enabled our intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance task force to support Operation Resolute Support and Operation Freedom’s Sentinel.

Protection

To ensure commanders have the freedom of maneuver to build, sustain, and train Soldiers, security must be provided to the SSA. This is accomplished through the provost marshal’s prevent, protect, mitigate, respond, and recover (P2MR2) program (Department of the Army, 2018). This program assures commanders can execute secure and uninterrupted training events during all phases of deployment operations.

The P2MR2 framework focuses on critical asset identification, threat and hazard assessment, and risk management regarding crisis containment. IMCOM tests the P2MR2 by conducting higher headquarters assessments and evaluating full-scale exercises. These assessments focus on risk management, physical security plans, police actions, and emergency services supporting infrastructure and force-health protection readiness. P2MR2 allows commanders to focus on training for combat while defending the SSA from adversaries.



Soldiers from various brigades of the 4th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary, engage virtual targets on an Engagement Skills Trainer (EST) II during the 4th ESC’s Best Warrior Competition at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, March 1, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Ruth Medinavillanueva)

Conclusion

Installations are where the Army lives, trains, and projects power to support our nation's global response mission. IMCOM works directly with sustainment facilities and mobility commands to help shape actions within the SSA as it moves Soldiers and materiel to the

operational support, deep, and close areas.

I encourage all leaders to meet with their installation command team to learn what they can provide in order to meet infrastructure, protection, training, and Soldier and Family program needs. IMCOM supports and enables the warfighter. ■

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