

CHAPTER 8

THE ARMY IN THE THEATER OF OPERATIONS

References

Joint Pub 0-2, Unified Action Armed Forces, 24 February 1995
Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, 1 February 1995
Joint Pub 4-0, Doctrine for Logistics Support of Joint Operations, 27 January 1995
FM 100-7, Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations, 31 May 1995
FM 100-16, Army Operational Support, 31 May 1995
FM 54-40, Area Support Group, 3 October 1995
FM 63-4, Combat Service Support – Theater Army Area Command, 24 September 1984¹
FM 63-4 (DRAFT), Theater Support Command, 1 June 1999

Objectives

- Understand the role of the ASCC in a theater of operations
- Identify the six major subordinate commands in the ASCC
- Identify the functional and multifunctional units within the ASCC
- Understand the relationship between the ASCC, TSC and ASG
- Relate the term OPCON to the ASCC's mission

Background

This chapter will familiarize you with the battlefield layout of army units in an operational theater. The Communications Zone (COMMZ) extends from the rear of the Combat Zone (CZ) in the theater of operations to the CONUS base. Its size may vary depending on the size of the theater of operations, number of forces required for operations and sustainment, need for depth, the number and direction of lines of communication (LOC), and the enemy's capability to interdict and disrupt sustainment operations, geography, and political boundaries. The COMMZ contains the LOC; the establishments within the theater logistics bases that provide supply, maintenance, field services, transportation, health services, personnel support, and evacuation; and other agencies required for the immediate support and sustainment of the field forces. The theater support structure in Figure 8-1, can be formed around Army organizations and can be augmented by the Army and other agencies required to support forces in the field. Within the COMMZ, the combatant commander (formerly known as the CINC) will normally establish a theater base, which encompasses a complex of capabilities.

The theater combatant commander, referred to as the combatant commander, is a strategic-level commander of a unified command, who provides strategic direction and operational focus to his subordinate commands. **Combatant commanders serve as**

¹ Exercise caution when reading this text as it is dated 1984.

the vital link between national military strategy and theater strategy. They provide the strategic and operational direction required for major unified and joint land, air, and maritime operations. Working for the combatant commander is a combination of commands (organized and aligned toward the combatant commander's mission) such as; Service Component Commands, Sub-Unified Commands, Joint Task Force Commands, and Functional Commands, etc., see Lesson 1. **For more read pages 2-10 to 2-11 in FM 100-7.**

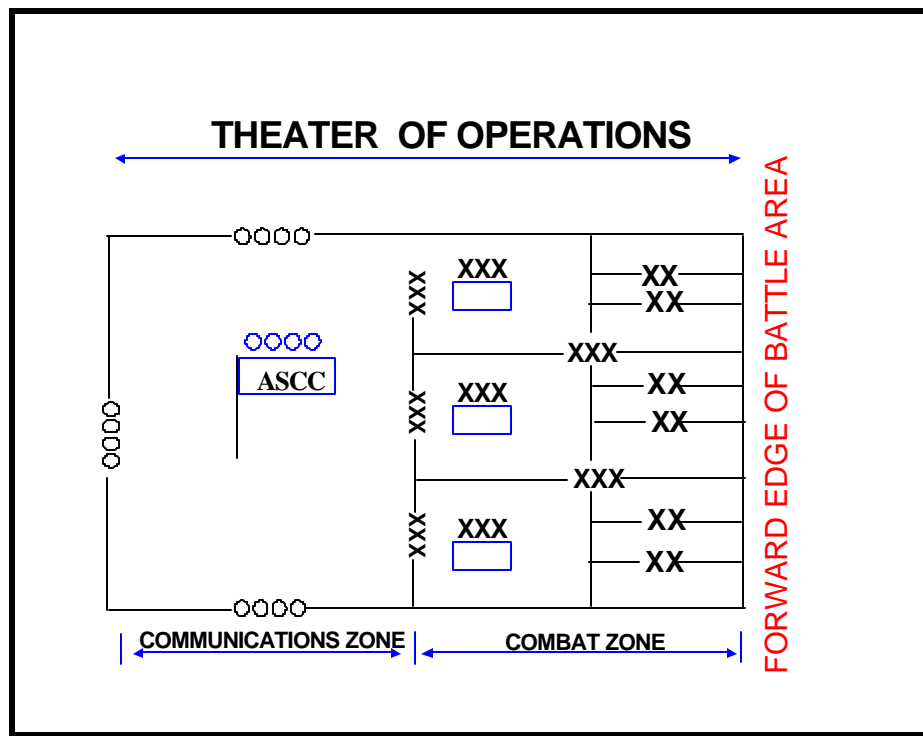


Figure 8-1. Theater of Operations

Service Component Command

A service component command consists of those individuals, units, detachments, organizations, and installations of a single military service assigned to the unified command. The Chief of Staff of the Army, with the CJCS and unified command authorities, configures the Army service component to the unified commands to meet theater requirements. Except for the combatant commander and members of the combatant commander's joint staff, the senior officer of the service component assigned to a unified command and qualified for command by the regulations of that service is designated the service component commander. His assignment is subject to the concurrence of the combatant commander. **The Service component commander is responsible for all command aspects of his force, to include logistics and administration, known as administrative control (ADCON) within the unified command.**

ADCON, Administrative Control. Direction or exercise of authority over subordinate or other organizations in respect to administration and support, including organization of Service forces, control of resources and equipment, personnel management, unit logistics, individual and unit training, readiness, mobilization, demobilization, discipline, and other matters not included in the operational missions of the subordinate or other organizations.

The **Army Service Component Commander (ASCC)** serves as the principal advisor to the combatant commander for supporting and employing Army Forces (ARFOR) in theater and ARFOR outside the theater tasked to support theater operations. The ASCC may delegate part of this responsibility as the theater becomes more complex, and it may become necessary to establish an intermediate headquarters, based on the complexity of the operational environment.

The ASCC performs three strategic and operational-level tasks--

- Establish linkages and coordinate with the joint force headquarters and other service component commanders.
- Conduct operations.
- Conduct support operations to sustain the ARFOR assigned to the theater.

For more read FM 100-7, pages 2-22 through 2-26.

In peacetime, the combatant commander normally exercises COCOM through the ASCC. The ASCC must have a strategic and operational perspective while executing his responsibilities. He serves as the principal advisor to the combatant commander for supporting and employing ARFOR in theater. The ASCC participates in mid-and long-range planning to support the combatant commander's theater strategy and campaign plan, conducts major operations that support the combatant commander's campaign plan, and provides sustainment and support of all ARFOR assigned or attached to the theater. The ASCC may exercise OPCON of selected forces. He may command forces executing combat operations or MOOTW/ Stability Operations and Support Operations.

The ASCC's strategic task in peacetime is to carry out the strategic CSS tasks and priorities for the combatant commander. The ASCC's operational role in peacetime is to plan and conduct operations and exercises to execute the combatant commander's theater strategy and plans. The ASCC is responsible for sustaining all forces in theater and maintaining the capability to expand to accommodate ARFOR required for theater operations plans.

As the theater transitions to conflict or war, the combatant commander may choose one of several options to exercise COCOM. Each of these options has different impacts on the employment of ARFOR. The combatant commander may choose to continue to exercise COCOM through the ASCC. The ASCC would then conduct major operations as the Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC), as well as continue to provide sustainment and support of all ARFOR assigned or attached to the theater. The combatant commander may assign the ASCC support-related tasks solely or a combination of both support and operational tasks.

COCOM, Combatant

Command: Nontransferable authority established by Title 10, United States Code, Section 134, exercised by combatant commanders; COCOM provides full authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the combatant commander considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions; the authority to perform those functions of command over assigned forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction over all

OPCON, Operational Control:

Transferable command authority that may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. Operational control may be delegated and is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. Operational control normally provides full authority to organize commands and forces and to employ those forces, as the commander in operational control considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions. Operational control does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for

As the theater transitions to conflict or war, the probability increases that the combatant commander will separate the ASCC's operational responsibilities from its support role. The combatant commander may designate another commander to focus on conducting combat operations, while the ASCC concentrates on conducting support operations.

US Army Levels of Command

While the US Army levels of command may be familiar to you, you may not be aware of the Numbered Army. This is the force that the ASCC may choose to organize to conduct operations as an intermediate headquarters between Corps and the combatant commander's Unified Command. The following are the levels of command **that may be** found in the theater of operations:

US Army levels of command include:

- Army Service Component Command (ASCC). (Theater Area)
- Numbered Field Army.
- Corps.
- Division.
- Brigade, Regiment, or Group.
- Battalion or Squadron.
- Company, Battery, or Troop.

These echelons of command provide a means for commanders to achieve operational and tactical level objectives. Each of these echelons has its own set of capabilities and considerations.

ASCC: Support And Operations Functions

The ASCC provides to the combatant commander a collection of capabilities, functions, and command and Control (C²) elements to accomplish the mission. With the initial deployment of forces, the ASCC, based on METT-TC, tailors his organization to provide the required support to conduct major operations, battles, and engagements. The ASCC's support function has a major impact on the design and conduct of campaigns and major operations. The ASCC must get the right ARFOR to the right place at the right time to enable the combatant commander to strategically concentrate forces and CSS to generate decisive combat power. Figure 8-2 illustrates the capabilities and functions of the ASCC.

The ASCC becomes intimately involved with decisions concerning competing demands for limited resources. He assists the theater combatant commander in the development of support priorities, particularly those affecting other services. To support the force-projection concept and in addition to projecting forces and support, the ASCC

must also coordinate the projection of additional required support from CONUS, another theater, or an intermediate support base, using air lines of communication (ALOCs) and sea lines of communication (SLOCs).

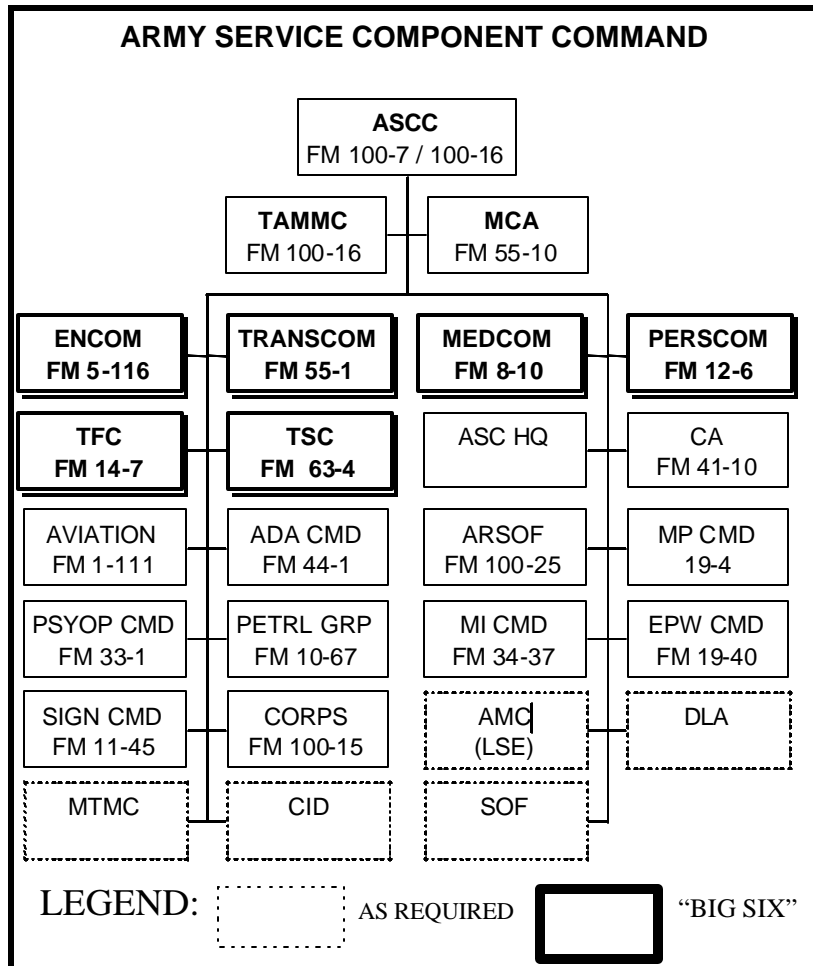


Figure 8-2. Army Service Component Command

The Army Service Component Commander (ASCC) is responsible for preparing, training, equipping, administering, and providing CSS to Army forces assigned to unified commands. There is no set structure for Army forces in a theater; the size and composition depend on the mission. The six major subordinate commands of the ASCC that are responsible for most CSS operations are known as the **BIG SIX**:

Theater Support Command²TSC

Engineer Command.....ENCOM

Transportation Command.....TRANSCOM

Medical Command.....MEDCOM

² The TSC is the only multifunctional command of "The Big Six."

Personnel Command.....PERSCOM

Theater Finance Command.....TFC

Of the six major commands, only the TSC is **multifunctional**; the other five are **functional** commands. Figure 8-2 not only shows the organization of the ASCC but also the corresponding field manuals that relate to the task organization.

Theater Support Command (TSC)³

The TSC (Figure 8-3) is responsible for maximizing the throughput and follow-on sustainment of ARFOR, and other forces as assigned, in a theater of operations. This includes supply, maintenance, services and rear area operations general support in the COMMZ (the traditional TAACOM mission), as well as direct support of operational level formations such as the ASCC's subordinate corps. The TSC is a **multifunctional** organization, and is **not fixed** in structure. The structure is tailored to meet the demands of the mission, and may include both functional and multifunctional organizations. It may also include any or all of the "stovepiped" functional commands (ENCOM, TRANSCOM, PERSCOM, FINCOM, and MEDCOM) as directed by the ASCC. The ASCC can also determine the command relationship between the TSC and the functional commands.

Functional Units

Aviation Maintenance Bn (AVIM)

Petroleum Supply Bn

Ammunition Group

Personnel Group

Finance Group

Multifunctional Units

Area Support Group (ASG)

Special Task Units⁴

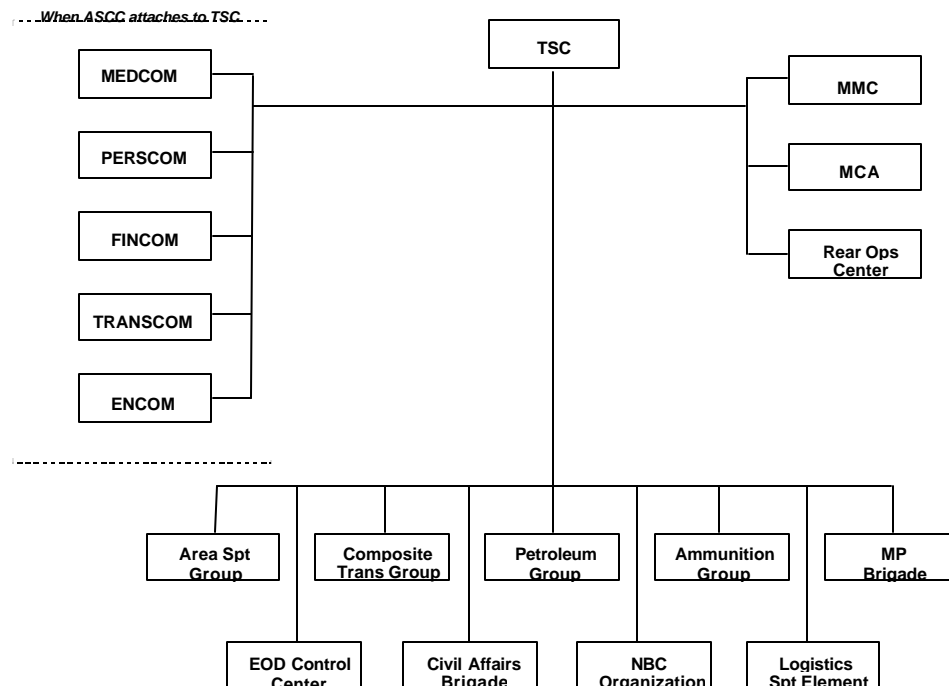
The TSC offers distinct capabilities to the ASCC which the former TAACOM and stove-piped structure did not have. These are:

- Unity of command for CSS and selected CS functions at the operational level, as well as unity of command over COMMZ management and operational support.
- Modular deployability, thus reducing the overall logistics footprint in theater while moving necessary operational capabilities in earlier.

³ Some field manuals have this unit described as a Logistics Support Command, a Theater Army Area Support Command, or a TAACOM. The current term for the command is Theater Support Command (TSC). As this course will point out, the TSC doctrine is still evolving. Over the next year or so, a new TSC is likely to emerge which may include requirements such as joint staffing.

⁴ Special to task units may be formed in accordance with METT-TC when and if required. These units are rare and would only be formed under exceptional circumstances.

- Distribution Management Center (DMC) at the theater level. The TSC forms the operational level node for the distribution-based logistics system.



Actual types and sizes of organizations will depend on the support requirements, the resources available in theater, and commander decisions on how to organize the force.

Figure 8-3. Theater Support Command

Area Support Groups (ASG)

The TSC area of responsibility is divided into several smaller areas. An Area Support Group (ASG) (Figure 8-4) is assigned to each area to provide maintenance and supply support to units operating within or passing through that area. ASGs, like the TSC, are **multifunctional** organizations. They are **not fixed** in structure; each ASG consists of those units necessary to perform the support mission assigned to it. The ASG provides DS level support to theater units on an area basis as well as GS and back up GS support to all units in the theater. The subordinate units in an ASG are **functional** battalions, and they usually include S&S battalions, maintenance battalions, and petroleum supply battalions.

Note:

- **An ASG could possibly be assigned transportation assets.** However, the Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) in the theater controls the units that provide **common user** theater transportation support.
- Doctrinally, the ASG is also the **first source of GS Maintenance above Corps.**

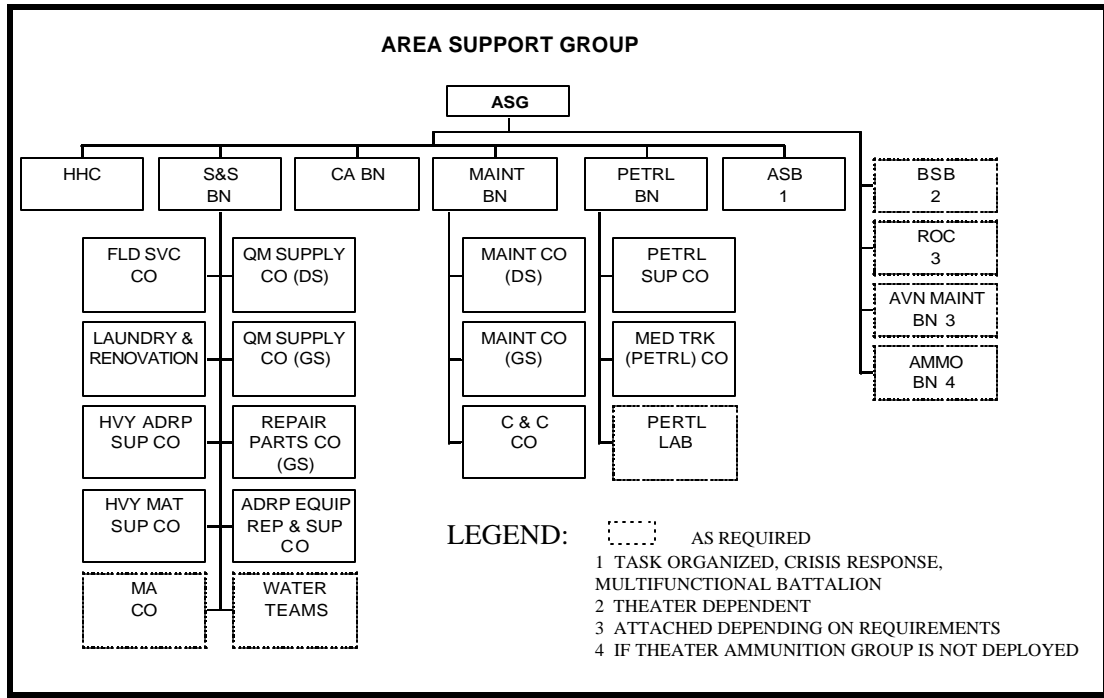


Figure 8-4. Area Support Group Command

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HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Manuals Required to Complete Homework: Theater Logistics Handbook, Chapter 8, FM 100-7, FM 100-16, and FM 54-40.

1. The Communications Zone. The COMMZ extends from _____
_____. Ref. FM 100-16.

2. The ASCC performs three peacetime strategic and operational-level tasks: Ref. FM 100-7.

- _____

- _____

- _____

3. The ASCC has six major logistics subordinate commands responsible for CSS: Ref. FM 100-7.

4. Based on the METT-TC and ASCC directives, the Theater Support Command (TSC) may have functional units and multifunctional units assigned to it, they are: Ref. FM 100-7.

Commands	Functional Groups/BNs	Multifunctional Units
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

5. Area Support Groups are considered to be _____ organizations and are _____ in structure. Ref. FM 54-40

6. Area Support Groups do not usually have _____ transportation assets assigned to it. Common user transportation assets are normally assigned to the Army _____. However, an ASG may have transportation assets assigned to it that support functional CSS areas such as fuel and ammunition operations. Ref. FM 54-40

7. A typical ASG commands and controls functional and multifunctional units, list them: Ref.FM 54-40.

Functional

Multifunctional

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