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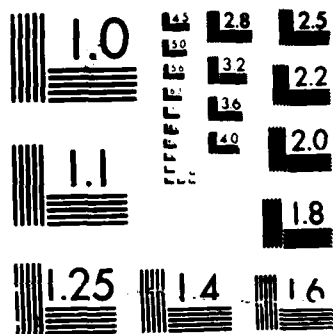
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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

LOGISTIC GENERALISTS IN THE ARMY

An Individual Essay

by

Lieutenant Colonel Paul W. Phillips

Colonel William A. Heizman, III.
Project Adviser

US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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ABSTRACT

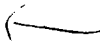
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Past studies concerning logistical officer development have all affirmed the requirement for logistic generalists. Recent changes to the Officer Personnel Management System preclude an officer from holding military occupational skills in more than one primary accession branch. Officers may hold additional skill qualifications in functional areas which are not associated with any one primary branch. Logistic generalists must have multiple branch experience to qualify them as logisticians and for positions of increased responsibility at the Colonel and General officer level. Since officers are now limited to accession branch and functional assignments, changes must be made in the education system to provide instruction in Army in the field, wholesale logistics, industrial base interface with the Department of Defense, and other than accession branch tasks. The Army has a Logistician Development Program that could be the catalyst for bringing together the requisite assignments and military schools to produce logistic generalists. By monitoring assignments and introducing mandatory logisticians courses into branch service school, Command and General Staff College, and Senior Service College curriculums for logistic branched officers, future requirements for competent senior logistic generalists will be fulfilled.



LOGISTIC GENERALISTS IN THE ARMY

The purpose of this paper is to provide an analysis of previous programs to develop logistics officers in the Army. Past studies conducted by the Army are examined and evaluated for their impact on the professional development of both logistic generalists and specialists, and the current logistics officer development program is discussed in relationship to more recent studies. This analysis results in recommendations to improve the developmental process for "growing" logistic generalists in the Army.

Since World War II, the business of logistics has become more demanding and infinitely more complex. Equipment has become more sophisticated, and support for this equipment has become more expensive in terms of both materiel and personnel. The individual soldier is provided increased and improved support in terms of food, recreation, and medical evacuation. All these factors affect the size and complexity of the logistics system. Other major influences are the requirements to provide adequate and timely support under varying operating conditions, in diverse environments, and under essentially peacetime constraints. Support requirements and limiting forces require a well-managed, well-functioning, economically responsive logistics system. The system must not be too complex, it must not be at odds with itself, and it must be manned and managed by a well trained body of dedicated logisticians at all levels.¹

Development of an officer, fully qualified as a logistician and capable of high level command and staff positions, requires an orderly combination of school training, applicatory experience, and diversified assignments. This orderly development of the logistics officer places

emphasis on school training in both military and civilian educational institutions to provide the formal grooming required for future career assignments. Duty assignments in a variety of field logistics system positions develop the individual's command, leadership, and management abilities, while interspersed assignments to AMC, CDC, DSA, MTMTS and sister services refine and develop his technical expertise. Progressive assignments provide the logistics system with fully contributing logisticians. Opportunities can be provided for personal preferences, individual talents, and special skills of the Logistics Corps Officer. Paramount to all other considerations is the Army requirement to develop a personnel structure capable of carrying out the logistics mission. While satisfaction of the personal desires of the individual must be a major consideration, Army requirements take precedence when conflict develops. Nevertheless, career management and progression should provide both functional specialists and weapons system/commodity specialists. Generalists can be developed who possess detailed knowledge in two or more functional or weapons system/commodity areas, and who possess the potential to command units and organizations of mixed logistics and tactical composition. Those officers advancing to the top of the logistics field will be eligible for and fully qualified to advance to General Officer rank and direct the overall mission of the armed forces.²

Following the review of past officer studies conducted in 1970 by an Army board, there was ensuing discussion as to whether the Army needed logistics generalists, specialists, or both to accomplish the objectives of the logistics corps. In 1978 the question was resolved as a result of

a further study into officer matters. The Study Group reviewed the sometimes voiced issue of the relative importance of either "specialists or generalists" to the Army. This issue recurs in several of the areas studied. The Study Group concluded that whether to have logistic specialists or generalists is a false issue. It is not an "either-or" issue. The Army needs both logistic specialists and generalists. As increasing technology places demands that more and more of an officer's available time be devoted to development and maintenance of his specialty related skills, he becomes more and more a specialist. The Army cannot function without the services of the specialist. Yet, regardless of the level of technology achieved, the Army will also require adequate expertise in various fields to be able to integrate and direct the efforts of the specialists. There is a place and need in the Army for both specialists and generalists.³

The terms "specialists" and "generalists" connote many different things to various individuals, and this leads to confusion in discussions on the subject. Such confusion might be minimized if one accepts that both terms are relative. An officer can be more or less a "specialist" or a "generalist". In fact, the largest number of Army requirements are for officers somewhere between true specialists and true generalists.⁴

A specialist is an officer whose training, education, and utilization are geared to the need for applying a narrowly definable body of subject matter expertise in the performance of his duties to the exclusion of much other information previously required of Army officers.

A true specialist is an officer whose training, education, and demonstrated performance identify him or her as an in-depth expert in the subject matter of that specialty field.⁵

In order to develop the necessary degree of technical competence, most officers must become specialized early in their careers. The need for in-depth expertise in some specialists makes it necessary for a substantial number of officers to be trained, educated and repetitively assigned within relatively narrow specialty fields. By all indications, the number of new specialists and true specialists should increase in the Army of the future, as that Army becomes increasingly complex.⁶

Officer generalists are needed, as they always have been, to command combined arms units and to manage staff organizations or specialty fields. There are varying levels of management, however, so not all generalists need to be equally "generalized".⁷

A generalist is an officer whose primary efforts are involved in the management of more than one specialty field. For example, a manager of logistics, intelligence, and personnel administration is a generalist. An installation manager is a generalist. Most commanders, at least above company level are generalists. DA staff members may be specialists, functional generalists, or generalists. One might even say that a True generalist is an officer whose training, education, experience, and demonstrated performance in positions of wide ranging responsibilities identifying him or her as an expert in the planning and integration of all arms and services. The very highest positions in the Army call for true generalists.⁸

In the final analysis, more intensive specialization of the Officer Corps will prove beneficial to the Army as long as provisions are made to develop a large number of functional generalists and a small number of true

generalists. Specialization is necessary if the Officer Corps is to achieve and maintain technical competence in a world which is technologically complex and overloaded with information. Specialization in the Army mirrors specialization in civilian society which increases the prospects for a wide cross-section of American youth to combine rewarding careers with service of their country in the Profession of Arms.⁹

Over the years, officers all through the ranks have referred to themselves and their peers as logisticians. However, company grade and indeed some field grade officers have never held positions outside their initial accession primary speciality. The impetus for believing themselves to be logisticians stems from the decade of the 70's when it was unpalatable to disagree with juniors or to make mentoring corrections. To make us (I was in that group of young officers) feel better about ourselves and perhaps because the field grade officers did not understand what or who was a logistician, all grades were referred to by that professional title. For the record, logistician qualifications were stipulated in AR 614-132 dated 11 May 1971, an AR which is now obsolete but the definition remains operative among the masses. The requirements to achieve logistician certification were well articulated and achievable by participating officers.

Logistic officers are officers who, through participation in the Logistic Officer Program, have broadened the scope of their careers beyond that of any one particular branch of service and whose career development is oriented towards progressive advancement in the field of logistics management.

Logisticians are officers of any branch, in the grade of Colonel or Lieutenant Colonel, selected for promotion to Colonel who have been awarded a Department of the Army Logistician's certificate based on program membership, prerequisites include a diversified logistics background and exceptional performance of duty in a key logistical position for at least one year.¹⁰

The Army Regulation cited above established the Logistics Officer Program (LOP). The program was later described and promulgated in Army Regulations 600-1, 611-1, and 611-101. Participation in the program was through individual officer application and acceptance based on past qualifications gained through assignments, experience, and school attendance. The LOP had merit in that officers, in conjunction with their assignments officer, could influence their assignment to positions with upward progression in generalist or specialist fields. Theoretically, MTOE/TDA positions were coded with Specialty Code (SC) 70, which indicated that particular skills were required for that position. The idea was that LOP participants would be assigned against all requisitions for SC 70 (LOP Officer) positions. However, in retrospect this was not always the case. I was in the LOP and all the Logistical Corps officers I have know who were in the LOP were never assigned based on career progression in SC 70. Too frequently, the fact that they were in the LOP was not a consideration discussed with their assignments officer when assignments were made. This failure to consider LOP participating officers for these positions was in my opinion, caused by lack of information concerning the merits of the LOP and because positions requiring SC 70 job skills were never coded. It is

also possible that professional development officer was not consulted prior to assigning a LOP participating officer. It is also likely that the system utilized to process assignments was never adjusted to accept the SC 70 data. Consequently, visibility was lost.

In the 1960's combat service support branch schools included wholesale logistics and other branch (QM, OD, TC) subjects in their officer career (advanced) course core curriculum which insured that officers educated during that period of time received logistic generalist orientation. Consequently, officers currently serving in the grades of major through Colonel have been schooled in the various logistic disciplines. Horizontal (branch) and vertical (wholesale/retail) logistical progression was possible because of the service school instruction and assignment latitude afforded under previous regulations and by commanders permitting individuals to be assigned outside their career specialty fields.

In 1983 the Army Chief of Staff tasked Colonel Ward M. LeHardy to conduct a systematic review of the Officers Personnel Management System (OPMS) to determine if it was currently doing what it was intended to do and to recommend any adjustments needed to meet future Army requirements.¹¹

The Study Group formed under Colonel LeHardy found that the framers of OPMS were challenged to design an officer management system to accommodate an Army structure where some branches and career fields had inverted authorization pyramids. There was a dichotomy between Lieutenant and Colonel authorization which resulted in the Army accessing 57% combat arms Lieutenants to ultimately fill 23% of jobs coded combat arms at the grade

of Colonel, thus building very broadbased pyramids. The inversions were either in field grade skills and functions or in branch-related jobs in the combat support and combat service support branches, both of which were unsupported by adequate lieutenant authorizations. The original OPMS solution was to require all officers to have two specialties; a primary, branch-related accession specialty and a secondary non-accession specialty which met field grade requirements (i.e., Comptroller, Foreign Area Officer). The logistics field contained the bulk of the branch-related authorization inversions. Therefore, to avoid requiring an officer to acquire and maintain proficiency in two branches, functions (i.e., Supply, Maintenance, Transportation) which had previously been part of the logistics branches were extracted and made non-accession specialties open to officers of any branch. Professional development patterns were intended to permit officers to become qualified in their branch-related primary (accession) specialty before designation of a secondary (non-accession) specialty. Officers would then "dual-track" by alternating assignments between specialties to fulfill Army requirements. It was recognized initially that both specialties would not be equal. Consequently, primacy of one over the other was formalized. While alternating assignments were considered ideal, it was expected that field grade officers would serve more frequently in one of their specialties and provide flexibility to meet changing Army requirements.

The Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) was organized to manage field grade officers by grade and specialty rather than by branch. Each officer generally had two assignment officers and a professional develop-

ment advisor to assist in managing his career and to ensure that Army requirements were met. As OPMS matured, officers perceived that they frequently received conflicting advice from this "branchless" organization. Many expressed a desire to return to the continuity and single voice of branch management. Concurrently, MILPERCEN found it necessary to assign many officers in their secondary specialty more often than assigning them in their primary (usually branch-related) specialty in order to meet Army needs. Officers became alarmed that they were becoming unqualified in their branch and vulnerable to career damage. In the late 1970's, two decisions were made to resolve these problems. The first was to abolish specialty primary by declaring an officer's specialties equal. The second was to restore branch management by abolishing Majors and Lieutenant Colonels Divisions. The late 1970's and early 1980's also saw many former non-accession specialists consolidated into branch-related accession specialists. Twenty-four percent of the Army's majors suddenly found themselves with two branches. The Infantry Officer who previously had a secondary specialty of Supply Management (11/92), was now responsible to the equally competent in two branches: Infantry and Quartermaster. Unfortunately, officers with a branch function for an additional specialty (as they were now called) forfeited an 8-year technical "headstart" to the branch officer who began as a Second Lieutenant. This was something the framers had never intended. However, in order to meet Army requirements, OPMS evolved into a contradictory system in which specialists were theoretically equal and those officers with two branches were required to meet the virtually insurmountable challenge to acquire and maintain technical competence and proficiency in two different branches.¹²

The dichotomy of being managed by two different branches and being required to maintain proficiency in two branches produced logistic generalists especially in the instance where a combat service support officer was "dual tracked" in two logistics branches such as Quartermaster and Transportation. Additionally, the combat arms officer with a logistic branch secondary specialty often served in more generalist positions than did his pure logistic branch counter-part. Therefore, some of the officers who were considered to be at an eight year education and experience disadvantage were in fact more advanced in generalist skills than the logistics purist. Generalist skills are why combat arms units preferred an officer of their own branch with a logistics secondary specialty for the challenging positions in their combat arms organizations. Such officers spoke combat arms language, understood mission requirements, and knew more about multiple logistic disciplines than their logistic branch specialist peers. Prior to centrally selected battalion, brigade, division support command, depot, and installation commanders, the combat arms officer with a logistics secondary specialty could compete successfully for commands that should have been reserved for qualified logistic branched officers. Consequently, at the lieutenant colonel and colonel grades combat arms officers with logistic secondary specialties got referred assignments which indicates that they were not as disadvantaged in logistics as they were believed to be. They were logisticians and true generalists.

The 1983 OPMS Study Group made recommendations for changing the system to meet officer requirements between the years 1985-2000. The changes were in areas of structure and management of the Officers Corps. One of the

most important areas examined was the structure of the Officer Corps. The study group recognized that authorization documents change so rapidly that the Army cannot develop the proper inventory of officers or requirements. The group also noted that the Branch School Commandants (branch proponents), who are responsible for determining the professional development needs of officers in their respective branches, have not played a role in MTOE or TDA changes. Currently, flexibility is limited since every position in the Army is required to be coded for a specific branch and/or specialty. The study group recognized that changes to MTOE and TDA documents should have the branch/functional area proponents concurrence/nonconcurrence prior to HQDA approval. Changes will now be submitted prior to the POM cycle, and only for the first program year or later. To add flexibility to the system, three immaterial position codes have been established; branch immaterial to identify positions that can be filled by any officer, combat arms immaterial to identify positions that can be filled by any combat arms officer (IN, AR, FA, AD, AV, EN), and logistics immaterial to identify positions that can be filled by and logistics officer (OD, QM, TC). If there is not a requirement for an officer to have experience in a particular branch or functional area, then one of these codes will be used.

The Commissioned Officer Classification System has been revised to support changes to the way the Army will manage, develop, and promote officers. New terms replace the current branch and specialty definitions that are used to identify both positions and officers filling those positions. All branches with multiple specialties have had these specialties

consolidated into the branch with sub-specialties identified by an alpha character after the primary MOS numerical identifier. The current OPMS requires every officer to have two specialties NLT the 8th year of service, even though many officers never receive training or serve in their additional specialty. Also, many officers serve in their additional specialty for the remainder of their career and never return to serve in their branch. Flexibility will be added to the dual specialty system by allowing multiple career patterns; single, dual, and sequential. Some officers will single track in their initial branch, to include assignments in branch immaterial positions. Many officers will dual track by serving in both their branch and a functional area. Some officers, after service in their branch, will sequentially track by serving only a functional area. A key point is that no officer will serve in two branches. All officers will be eligible and most required to serve in immaterial positions. Emphasis will return to primacy of branch or functional area where officers commit themselves to the one which is primary. Officers will be managed, developed, and promoted by branch and/or functional area, and will not be required to be equally qualified in two fields. The timing for functional area designation will vary for combat arms (CA), combat support arms (CS), and combat service support (CSS) officers to meet group needs and Army requirements.¹³

These recommendations shifted the focus for officer development from specialist/generalist back to specialist with experience or expertise in a functional area. The result is that an officer cannot now serve in two logistics disciplines - that is in two logistics branches, i.e., Quarter-

master cannot serve in an ordnance or transportation position. In the past, logisticians were required to have experience in two branches to qualify for the Department of the Army Logistician certificate. From a combat service support point of view, these recommendations have virtually eliminated true logistic generalists because the current regulatory assignment restrictions preclude officers gaining true generalist credentials. The recommendations will however, create logistical branch specialists since most CSS officers will single track within their branch, i.e., Quartermaster officers will serve in more than one 92 specialty.

The changes recommended by the 1983 LeHardy PDOS Study Group were adopted, implemented, and are in effect today. In addition, there is a Logistician Development Program (Skill 7Z) which replaced the old Logistical Officer Development Program (Skill 70). The 7Z skill identifier is awarded to officers who have completed the advanced course, hold the rank of Major through Colonel, possess branch code 91 (Ordnance), 92 (Quartermaster), or 95 (Transportation), or areas of concentration 15T (Aviation Logistics), or 25F (Communications - Electronics Material Integration), possess broad knowledge, and have at least 12 months experience in each of two or more logistic functions (maintenance, supply, transportation, services, and procurement), have demonstrated outstanding potential for development as a logistician, and indicate a desire to participate in the LOP.¹⁴

The logistics branches must look at Colonel and General officer job and promotion requirements in order to gear the assignment pattern and schoolhouse curriculum to grow qualified logisticians - true generalists.

From the previous definition of a logistician and the understanding that only promotable Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels could be logisticians, the Logistician Development Program (Skill 7Z) will not produce logisticians. In fact, officers are prohibited from holding specialty codes in more than one accession branch which eliminates all but services and procurement as the functional area for generalist experience. In addition, they should not be assigned against a requirement outside their branch. I use the term generalist because at the Colonel level the job requirements are such that the Colonel must be a generalist to be fully qualified for most jobs. He must be a retail/wholesale and multi-logistic branch generalist. The new system does not provide for this horizontal and vertical career progression in all aspects of logistics, i.e., retail, wholesale, supply, maintenance, transportation, services, and procurement areas. On promotion to Colonel and achievement of logistician status, most officers find themselves inadequately prepared both academically and in experience to hold true generalist positions.

I suspect the old logistician definition has been disregarded just as the logistical generalist definition has been ignored. DA Pamphlet 600-3 indicates that a broad spectrum of opportunities exist within the Quartermaster Corps, wherein an officer may choose to progress as either a generalist or specialist provided the needs of the Army are met by that choice. Every officer, however, must be able to perform the generalist functions inherent in his/her role as an Army officer and, in particular, as a Quartermaster officer. Every officer, likewise, must maintain the capability and flexibility to function within whatever area of concentration may be required

by the Quartermaster Corps.¹⁵ The Quartermaster Corps requirements are used merely to illustrate the point that logisticians are not generalists in the same sense that they once were. I believe the system in effect today will not produce true generalist. It will, however, produce true specialists.

The most recent Officer Professional Development System (OPDS) handout titled, "Fast Facts For Your Career" indicates that all officers are expected to have six fundamental principles of leadership and officer development taught to them in service schools. These principles are that all officers: are professional, have a warrior spirit, progressively master the art and science of war, are leaders, are action-oriented in their thought process, and develop a broad base of general knowledge. Adding these six requirements to service school curriculums will undoubtedly add some time to already crowded schedules.

In addition to the OPDS handout, there is another Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) handout with the same title "Facts For Your Career". This handout has a promotion and selection opportunity chart which indicates that only 10 percent of the officer accession strength will be promoted to Colonel. The question of importance at this juncture is how should the Army assign and educate these officers so that they are generalist-logisticians and fully functional in all aspects of logistics.

Growing logistics generalist logisticians obviously does not in any way negate the need for specialists. Specialists are required to perform functions in each of the logistic branches. These officers through the

grade of Captain must be assigned just like all other officers. They require Army in the field experience and exposure to the six officer qualities mandated by the Army Chief of Staff. Promotion to Major is the point at which the officer must decide whether to become a generalist or specialist. Specialists would then be sequentially assigned in one functional area. Consideration must now be given to how the specialist will achieve Military Education Level (MEL) 4 and be eligible for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

Military Education Level 4 is awarded as a result of either resident or non-resident completion of the Command and General Staff College (CGSC). Some have proposed that logistic branched officers should be permitted to substitute the Logistic Executive Development Course (LEDC) for CGSC and subsequent award of MEL 4. I do not believe this will be acceptable to promotion boards or to the affected officers. Unless provision is made to duplicate CGSC instruction, the officers attending LEDC will be deficient in Army field subjects.

Training with Industry (TWI) is another possible substitution for CGSC and award of MEL 4. Training with Industry does not further the officer's professional military development nor does TWI materially contribute to enhancing skills useful to the military. Additionally, civilianization has taken away the requirement for military officers where in the past TWI may have proved beneficial. I would not want to be awarded MEL 4 as a result of TWI. Promotion opportunity in my estimation would be near non-existent.

There is one more vital consideration that has not been addressed in any study up to this point in time. Currently, an officer must have served

32 months in a joint assignment in order to be promoted to General. Jointness requires generalists because there will be very few positions and the incumbents will of necessity have to be knowledgeable across the logistics spectrum. Quite possibly most, if not all, of these officer positions will be for military education level-one qualified officers. The requirements for these officer spaces have not been released at this writing. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has new authority, additional staff, and a requirement for generalists. If the General Staff concept is approved, this will make generalists qualifications more appealing and more in demand.

Solving these seemingly complex logistics officer career progression dilemmas is not as difficult as it may appear. The OPMS and OPDS systems presently in force provide a more than adequate framework for assigning and training officers to meet future requirements. Position coding (MTOE/TDA) of authorization documents (with the concurrence of the proponent branch chiefs) will ensure assigning qualified officers to jobs requiring their specific qualifications.

The one major action necessary to produce generalist officers is that since officers cannot be assigned to another branch position, they must be trained in other branch functions while attending their respective service schools. Each logistic branch career course should import modules of instruction from the other branches. Training time should be taken from the specialty-electives phase of each career course, and generalist training should be mandatory. Secondly, the same methodology must be applied at the Command and General Staff College in that the logistic branched officer

should not have electives. Instead, he or she should have mandatory logistics training. Lastly, the Senior Service Colleges must develop and teach mandatory logistics courses for combat service support officers. These three recommendations will not add to the TTHS account (training, transient, holding and student), and they will provide the opportunity to gain generalist qualifications in wholesale, retail, and multi-logistic branch skills.

The Logistic Executive Development Course should be a follow-on course upon graduation from CGSC and should lead to acceptance into the LOP and award of the 7Z skill qualifier. While LEDC attendance will add to the TTHS account, the professionally trained officer graduates will more than compensate for the temporary shortage of officers in the field. In the past some officers in logistics career fields and special programs have felt that they had little influence on their career progression. LEDC attendance upon initial acceptance into the LOP indicates good faith on behalf of the Army. This motivational carrot enhances the LOP and makes it a desirable career field.

From the preceding discussion of past, present, and future logistic officer generalist requirements, it is obvious that the Army is not in a "you cannot get there from here" position. The LOP program, if utilized as the vehicle for producing competent, professional logisticians, is a viable solution to the logistic generalist problem. Senior logisticians will be capable of performing at the tactical, operational, and strategic level of logistics. The Army cannot sustain itself in defense of our nation without

logistics and logisticians. Let us resolve to provide the very best logistics support and the very best logisticians to the best Army in the world, The United States Army.

ENDNOTES

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