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The People Part of Enabling Logistics

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From the E-Ring

THE PEOPLE PART OF ENABLING LOGISTICS



Lt Gen Loren M. Reno

The theme of this edition of the ER is Logistics: Enabling the Warfighter. We'll be talking about this at the LOA National Conference in Orlando, and I hope you'll be able to join us for that, too. I look forward to the opportunity to see and thank so many of you for your service. In case we don't connect there, let me share some abbreviated thoughts here on this important topic.

It's easy to think of maintenance as synonymous with logistics. I think of it as a subset. To be sure, maintenance is logistics, but logistics is more than just maintenance. (Not trying to make your head hurt!)

You know the other logistics subsets, so let me just affirm you, and the part you contribute, are as critical to that upon which the Warfighter depends. And don't confuse geography with value.

While we need what our deployed logisticians do, we also need the contributions of all the rest. I'm talking about civilians at ALCs, maintainers supporting other combatant commanders, aerial porters and those at en route locations, headquarters staffs, and folks in Joint jobs and Defense Agencies...to name a few.

Let me say a few words about the people part of logistics. Some of our tours of duty to the AOR have grown to 179 days, and more than a few to 365. Great is the service you offer, and great is the sacrifice of your family. I thank you and them. Together, you are Enabling the Warfighter because of the importance of what you do and the confidence you have in the support they send.

Some of you who have heard me speak won't be surprised to hear me quote two great warfighting generals. Alexander the Great said, "My logisticians are a humorless lot; they know that if the campaign fails, they are the first ones I will slay." And Gen Eisenhower said, "It's not difficult to prove that most battles, campaigns and even wars are won or lost primarily because of logistics." I find neither an exaggeration. More than a year ago, I heard Gen North, now the COMPAFAF, say that the war in which we are engaged is a logistics war. I believe he is right, too.

It won't surprise you, either, to know that even here on the E-ring of the Pentagon, our preoccupation is with the Warfighters and what they need. It manifests itself in fuel, basing, parts, engines, logistics readiness officers, transportation, TCTOs, resiliency, weapons, ammunition, MICAPS, force shaping, reset, surge, vehicle, funding, and maintenance experience issues...to name a few. Rightly, it's an AF priority to "support the Joint and coalition team to win today's fight."

One day in June, I decorated and promoted a logistics major whose 4th grade son just learned he had Type 1 diabetes, and the father was within days of deploying for a year with the family relocating to his wife's hometown. Another example of Service before Self. Thank you all for enabling the Warfighter!

— LT GEN LOREN RENO

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