

# Example of military logistics and supply chain management report

[Government](#), [Army](#)



Source: After Kavadias (2004)

A Supply Chain is the related activities that deal with ensuring availability and provision of raw materials for production up to the finished product consumed by an end user or customer. Supply logistics on the other hand is the science of planning in order to achieve efficiency and cost effectiveness in any process. Military logistics refers to the exercises that involve planning and executing the movement and maintenance from one stage to another of the military forces and their weaponry. Comprehensively, military logistics are the aspects that involve designing, creation; acquisition, distribution, maintenance & storage of weaponry. This is conducted parallel with the transportation of military personnel that involves provision of health and medical service support. It involves combining the right resources and procedures to reduce the cost of maintaining a supply chain while at the same time maximizing benefits from the available and scarce resources. Therefore, military supply chain management is an inter-functional effort to effectively control and account for the acquisition, inventory control, production, storage, maintenance, transportation, and delivery of military goods and services.

U. S military Supply chain management and logistics requires adequate planning and accuracy due to the crucial nature of military missions and operations. Without proper planning and logistics to ensure availability of weaponry, medical, food, uniform, equipment, and machinery supply, missions will fail and soldiers will end up dead in the battlefield.

The U. S military supply chain management requires sufficient and timely information on supply plans and procedures so that it is able to cater for any contingencies and disruptions in the supply chain. While in wars such as the Iraq, Afghan, and the Gulf War, a steady supply chain for the army with disruptions in the enemies supply chain is a necessary strategy that differentiates a winner from a loser. In order to achieve this stability in supply, the army decides on whether to produce its own goods or procure/acquire from outside suppliers. The acquisition can occur through wholesale or retail procurement depending on the nature and urgency of the supplies. The army however prefers wholesale acquisition for stability in supply as opposed to retail acquisition in which subcontracting and sub-subcontracting can disrupt the supply chain process with far reaching consequences.

The most important characteristic of the military supply chain should include the possession of the ability to respond rapidly to changes and the flexibility to cater adequately for unexpected surges in military demands. Military missions will at times require a change in strategy requiring an immediate evacuation of many troops to another location. The supply chain should be in a position to respond immediately to this location change through relocation of its supply outlets. On the other hand, it should also be able to handle a sudden increase in demand for military supplies such as food, clothing and medical supplies for wounded officers through maintaining buffer stocks and diversifying the suppliers. Diversification of suppliers reduces the

dependency on a single supplier whose disruption in supply can cause a serious shortage.

For these reasons, the military supply chain has three distinct chains each handling different types of supply needs. The first chain deals with fast but low volume moving goods. Such goods include uniforms, food, and medicines that require constant supplies. The second deals with arsenal movement and supply, which requires heavy transportation and low frequency supplies. The last chain is one that deals with sudden and mass evacuation and transportation. It occurs less frequently but needs good and timely response.

The last important feature of the military supply chain system is that it handles reverse logistics. In addition to the forward logistics it handles through acquisition, storage, transport, and delivery, it has to handle reverse logistics that involve the collection of used items, maintenance, and repair. Most weapons and equipments that the army uses require constant servicing and maintenance for proper working. Without mechanisms to monitor, pullback and replace the defective supplies, the soldiers will idle in the name of waiting for replacements. This might even lead to suffering of missions in case it is essential equipment.

In conclusion, the military supply chain system needs responsiveness and flexibility in meeting unexpected contingencies. A task force should be in place to implement and monitor efficiency in procurement, production, distribution, disposal, and reversal logistics is crucial for the proper

functioning of the supply chain system. Process automation through adoption of supply chain ERP systems will aid in achieving efficiency in the process. Lastly, system visibility and understanding of the nature of the military supply chain will enable managers to adopt suitable and tailored policies for the army.

## **References**

Kavadias, P. S., & et al. ( 2004). Military Logistics Cargo. Georgia: Georgia Institute of Technology.