

Modular Reorganization of the Aviation Support Battalion

By MAJ Bryan J. Welch

The future of Army Aviation sustainment hinges on adaptability, scalability, and mission-focused alignment. The current structure of Company Bravo, 96th Aviation Support Battalion (ASB), although historically effective, now strains under the weight of emerging operational demands, modernization imperatives, and contractor-dependent operations. The solution is a forward-thinking reorganization that increases output, is threat-driven, executes within the existing budget, and informs future total Army analysis.

Dividing a battalion-sized aviation support company (ASC) into modular, platform-centric companies—with the flexibility to form multifunctional units capable of meeting operational demands—is not just timely; it is essential. This transformation directly supports Army structure prototyping force design updates (FDU) and the Army's Transformation in Contact (TiC) priorities, offering a blueprint for how sustainment units can evolve to meet the challenges of multidomain operations (MDO) and large-scale combat operations (LSCO).

Identifying Gaps in the Legacy Model

Company Bravo, 96th ASB, is an ASC charged with sustaining all rotary-wing aircraft of the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), part of the 101st Airborne Division "Air Assault!" As the largest ASC in the Army, Company Bravo's modified table of organization and equipment was recently expanded by 104 Soldiers, bringing its total authorized strength to 421 personnel across a single company. This force structure is more expansive than other battalions within the CAB and supports three distinct rotary-wing platforms (AH-64 Apaches, UH-60 Black Hawks, and CH-47 Chinooks) dispersed across multiple hangars and airfields in

the Fort Campbell, Kentucky, area. While the scope of this company's mission set is impressive, it has also resulted in an overly broad span of control for the echelon of company leadership, diminished platform-specific accountability, and reduced agility in supporting modular task organizations. Consequently, the current structure, though substantial, lacks the flexibility and alignment necessary to fully meet the Army's FDU criteria for effectiveness, efficiency, and scalability.

A Modular Blueprint for Aviation Sustainment

The solution is to reorganize the ASB using a modular blueprint for aviation sustainment. This reorganization divides the current Company Bravo into four distinct maintenance companies aligned by platform. Each is comprised of autonomous phase maintenance teams that can be reconfigured into multifunctional units to meet operational requirements:

- Company Alpha (Lifeblood)—an AH-64 Apache support company, primarily consisting of 15Rs (AH-64 Helicopter Repairer) and 15Ys (AH-64 Armament/

Electrical/Avionics Systems Repairer), and capable of conducting two phase maintenance lanes at full strength.

- Company Bravo (Bandits)—a UH-60 Black Hawk support company, primarily consisting of 15Ts (UH-60 Helicopter Repairer) and capable of conducting three phase maintenance lanes at full strength.

- Company Charlie (Airedale)—a CH-47 Chinook support company primarily consisting of 15Us (CH-47 Helicopter Repairer) and capable of conducting four phase maintenance lanes at full strength.

- Company Delta (Big Ugly)—a company providing production control, quality control, aviation support equipment, tool room, and tech supply to the three aircraft-specific support companies. Company Delta will absorb component repair and avionics platoons but provide rotational backshops and avionics attachments to the aircraft-specific support companies. This rotational design cycles the component repair and avionics attachments between the three companies every 4 months, promotes cross-platform proficiency, and aligns sustainment practices with emerging doctrine. Company D will also command and control Downed Aircraft Recovery Teams and expeditionary deployment operations (Port Ops).

The new ASB will be comprised of seven total companies. The four new companies (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta) will be named after retired historic 101st companies (8-101 Aviation Intermediate Maintenance) to establish an immediate identity. The new companies will eventually report under unique unit identification codes (UICs) to preserve clear command lines and tailored support responsibilities. The legacy Company Alpha (Distribution) will be reflagged to Company Echo, and legacy Company Charlie (Sig-



CH-47 Chinook phase. U.S. Army photo provided by the author.

nal) will be reflagged to Company Fox. There will be no change to Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

Force Design and Prototyping in Action

This reorganization model enables specialized focus, greater technical proficiency, and enhanced operational readiness. It is not theoretical. It is designed to be piloted within the 96th ASB, and our current Central Command (CENTCOM) deployment is being exploited to test this innovative approach, providing data-informed feedback to influence broader force design. By aligning with the FDU objectives of enhanced effectiveness, increased efficiency, and modular scalability, the proposed model supports Army transformation without expanding the current infrastructure footprint. Moreover, it positions future ASBs Army-wide to support LSCO and MDO with scalable, multifunctional unit-formation potential tailored to mission requirements and operational needs.

Enabling Army Modernization Through Doctrine

Doctrine underpins this transformation. Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, calls for modularity in formations, while the force generation process, Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model, or ReARMM, emphasizes aligning readiness cycles with modernization (Department of the Army, 2025; Suits, 2020). Army Structure enables this as a live prototyping



Downed Aircraft Recovery Team exercise. U.S. Army photo provided by the author.

tool, and tactical logistics and financial information systems, such as the Global Combat Support System-Army, will benefit from improved data fidelity when organized around single-platform units. This structure also enhances alignment with sustainment warfighting functions (enabling freedom of action, extending operational reach, prolonging endurance) and ensures seamless integration into joint and divisional operations, which can be further validated in future brigade and division-level training densities.

From Vision to Execution

Execution began with a single ASB pilot (96th ASB) during a CENTCOM rotation. Future coordination with G3 and Army Forces Command elements will enable synchronized UIC and personnel changes. Lessons from previous reflagging efforts, such as the transformation of 8-101 and 9-101 into the 96th and 563D ASBs, provide a historical roadmap. Performance metrics and leader feedback will be captured and disseminated via Microsoft Power BI (Business

Intelligence) dashboards, after-action reviews, and TiC learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The modular reorganization of the ASB is a low-cost, high-impact initiative that meets the Army's urgent need for scalable, effective, and efficient aviation sustainment formations. It supports TiC experimentation, advances FDU implementation, and ensures Army Aviation remains capable and lethal in the next fight. This reorganization is not merely a restructuring—it is a deliberate modernization effort that prepares the 101st Airborne Division "Air Assault" for tomorrow's battlefield.

Biography:

MAJ Bryan Welch is the Company Bravo, ASC Commander serving in the 101st CAB. He recently served as an operations officer and executive officer at 2-17 Air Cavalry Squadron at the 101st CAB and previously served as the aide-de-camp to the Commanding General at the Combat Readiness Center, Fort Rucker, Alabama. His education includes a BA in Political Science from the University of Iowa and a Masters of Operational Studies from the Command and General Staff College.



Company B, 96th ASB, supports critical port operations at the Jacksonville Port Authority in Jacksonville, Florida. U.S. Army photo provided by the author.

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