



429TH BS  
**PION**  
MULTI  
**CONCEPT**  
ARMY'S FUT



SB  
**PEERS**  
FUNCTIONAL LOGISTICS  
TO SUPPORT  
FUTURE FORCE

■ *By CPT(P) Alec B. Hulbert*

**A**s the Army prepares for large-scale combat operations (LSCO) in contested, multi-domain environments, it must revolutionize sustainment to match the agility and dispersion of its maneuver forces. Nowhere is that effort more evident than in the 429th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), aligned under the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), which is the first Army National Guard unit selected to convert to a mobile brigade combat team. In parallel, the 429th BSB is transforming into a light support battalion (LSB), designed for mobility, survivability, and responsiveness under fire.

At the heart of this evolution is the battalion's innovation of the multifunctional logistics company (MFLC), a modular formation that integrates distribution, maintenance, recovery, and supply support activities into a single unit. The MFLC was first employed during their Exportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) 25-04 rotation at Fort Pickett, Virginia. It represents a significant shift away from functionally aligned sustainment companies and toward clustered, mission-tailored nodes designed for modern warfare.

### **Meeting the Demands of LSCO: Dispersed, Resilient, and Modular**

The traditional brigade support area (BSA), a centralized sustainment hub, has long been a cornerstone of tactical logistics. But its size and

static nature make it a single point of failure in the modern battlespace, where long-range fires, drones, and electronic warfare increase the vulnerability of massed formations. The MFLC model, by contrast, enables LSBs to deploy multiple smaller, self-contained sustainment nodes across the battlefield, each capable of independently supporting maneuver forces while maintaining cohesion and command integrity.

During XCTC 25-04, the 429th BSB fielded two MFLCs across an 11-kilometer (6.8-mile) battlespace, supporting 116th IBCT operations on multiple fronts. The A MFLC in the southern cluster sustained 1st Battalion (BN), 116th Infantry Regiment (IR), and 1st BN, 111th Field Artillery, alongside the Role 2 medical company, while the B MFLC in the northern cluster supported 1st BN, 149th IR, and 3rd BN, 116th IR. This dispersed posture ensured uninterrupted sustainment while enhancing survivability, enabling the BSB to dynamically reposition and reallocate resources across shifting lines of effort.

Despite operating at only 62% strength across the battalion, 429th BSB successfully executed mission command, sustained maneuver, and preserved combat power throughout the rotation. Their results affirm the viability of the MFLC concept under realistic, resource-constrained conditions.

### **Principles of Sustainment Realized**

The MFLC construct directly

advances several of the Army's principles of sustainment outlined in Field Manual 4-0, Sustainment Operations:

- **Responsiveness:** MFLCs enable faster delivery of critical supplies by reducing the distance and coordination required to reach supported units.
- **Continuity:** When one node becomes degraded or compromised, others continue to sustain operations without interruption.
- **Survivability:** By dispersing sustainment assets, MFLCs eliminate single points of failure and reduce the unit's targeting signature.
- **Flexibility:** MFLCs scale capabilities up or down based on mission requirements, which enables lean, tailored logistics support.

By applying these principles through an integrated task organization, the 429th BSB demonstrates how doctrine drives innovation and how formations execute it under realistic battlefield conditions.

### **Institutional Lessons: Cross-Training, Security, and Communication**

The success of the MFLC model at XCTC 25-04 highlighted several systemic challenges and corresponding recommendations for the Army sustainment community at large.

### **Tactical Logistics Proficiency**

With personnel shortages

across key military occupational specialties (MOSs), Soldiers cross-trained in various functions (e.g., mechanics operated load-handling systems; truck drivers pumped fuel; and water purification specialists trained others on Hippo systems). This adaptability was critical to mission success. The 429th BSB now recommends the establishment of a dedicated tactical logistics additional skill identifier (ASI) and standardized cross-MOS training for 88M Motor Transport Operator, 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic, 92A Automated Logistical Specialist, 92F Petroleum Supply Specialist, and 92W Water Treatment Specialist Soldiers in brigade (BDE) and below sustainment formations.

## Dedicated Security Assets

As BSA clusters multiply, so does the demand for perimeter defense and convoy security. During XCTC 25-04, the 429th BSB successfully integrated military police support to harden the BSA and enabled sustainers to focus on logistics. This validated the need for either an organic D Company in the LSB or the regular assignment of external security elements.

## Modernized Mission Command Systems

Operating two MFLCs across the battlespace exposed critical gaps in the battalion's communication systems. Frequency modulation radios, joint battle command platforms, and limited satellite communications could not maintain continuous mission command. The

unit relied on nonstandard solutions to stay connected, including limited BDE networks, to stay connected. To close this gap, the 429th BSB advocates for rapidly fielding C2 Fix and other beyond-line-of-sight platforms to support decentralized sustainment operations.

## A Model for the Future Force

The MFLC structure does not just reorganize logistics: it represents a new sustainment philosophy, one that is agile, modular, and tailored for distributed operations in a high-threat environment. While doctrinal revisions are still pending, the 429th BSB's findings offer actionable recommendations across doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy:

- Institutionalize MFLCs as the standard A and B companies within LSBs.
- Retain the four-company structure: headquarters and headquarters company, A MFLC, B MFLC, and C medical company.
- Include MFLC sustainment planning and mission command in professional military education at the Basic Officer Leader Course, intermediate-level education, and the Senior Leader Course.
- Cross-train logistics Soldiers and implement a tactical logistics ASI.
- Equip LSBs with scalable communications and modular, mobile sustainment platforms tailored for dispersion and mobility.

## Shaping the Future Fight

The battalion's success during XCTC 25-04 shows that distributed, multifunctional sustainment is not just possible but necessary. The Army must now move with urgency to update doctrine, field the right equipment, and train leaders to execute this model at echelon. As the 429th BSB has demonstrated, the MFLC enables sustainers to do more than keep pace with maneuver forces — it allows them to shape tempo, mitigate risk, and win in the decisive fight.

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### Featured Photos:

*Left: Soldiers of India Company, 429th Brigade Support Battalion, 75th Troop Command, pose for a photo in their containerized kitchen during the Regional Philip A. Connelly Field Feeding Competition at the Harlold L. Disney Training Center in Artemus, Kentucky, on June 14, 2023. (Photo by Andy Dickson)*

*Right: SPC Adam Bwesi Ntedika from I. Co. 429th Brigade Support Battalion, Kentucky Army National Guard, cooks meals during annual training, Fort Knox, Kentucky, July 19th, 2024. (Photo by SFC Ryan Wilhoit)*