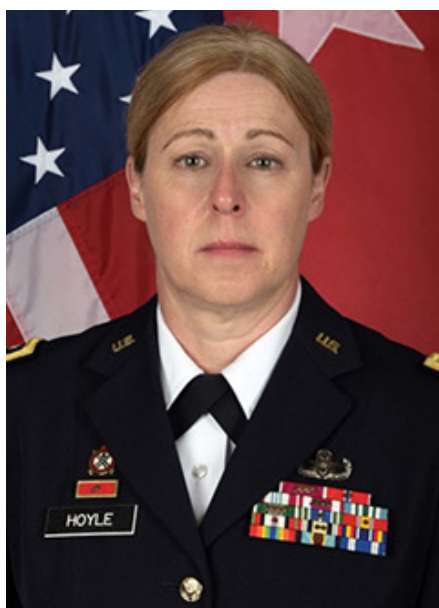


Sustainment in USINDOPACOM and the Maritime Environment



■ By Lt. Gen. Heidi Hoyle

In March of this year, I had the opportunity to visit the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) area of responsibility (AOR) with senior logistics leaders from across the DoD. Our contingent included the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment, the Hon. Christopher Lowman; the Director for Logistics, Joint Staff, J-4, Lt. Gen. Leonard Kosinski; the Defense Logistics Agency Director, Lt. Gen.

Mark Simerly; and the Service 4s. Over the course of 10 days, the group met with our military and with national government representatives from Japan, the Republic of the Philippines, and the Commonwealth of Australia.

This trip was a great opportunity to gain a first-hand look at operations in this important theater. Moreover, it was well timed because we take a closer look at the USINDOPACOM AOR and the maritime environment in this issue of the *Army Sustainment Professional Bulletin*. I imagine many of you reading this edition have already delved into this theater to some degree. I will share a few of my observations about the trip and the AOR that I think you may find interesting as you unpack this edition.

Allies and Partners

It should come as no surprise that as we look at USINDOPACOM, we do so through the lens of allies and partners. America has a long history of allying with and befriending

like-minded nations who value democracy. In fact, our nation has never engaged in war in its history without allies by our side. Current operations in USINDOPACOM are no different. We saw firsthand how our partnerships in Japan, the Philippines, and Australia help maintain peace and security in the region. Whether it is through security cooperation, combined exercises, or simply access, basing, and overflight capabilities, our efforts with our allies and partners are paying off in the region.

Campaigning

Closely linked with allies and partners is the joint force's work being done in the Pacific with campaigning. A key part of the National Defense Strategy, the work that our sustainment Soldiers are doing to enable joint force and Army campaigning activities is tremendous. Last year, as a part of U.S. Army Pacific Command's (USARPAC's) Operation Pathways, the U.S. conducted over 40 exercises with more than a dozen allies and partners in the

region. These exercises serve to assure our allies and partners while deterring potential threats from our adversaries. Continued training between U.S. Soldiers, our sister Services, and allied armies will allow us to retain our joint interior lines in the region and to strengthen our positions against threats. For decades, China has been practicing anti-access/area denial in response to our efforts to campaign. It is vital we continue our efforts to demonstrate integrated deterrence to counter Chinese influence in the Pacific. As the linchpin of the joint force, the Army remains a cornerstone piece of integrated deterrence.

Fighting in the Maritime Domain

Across the Indo-Pacific, partner nations' armies make up anywhere from 60% to 80% of national defense forces, from India to Indonesia and from Australia to Japan. Since governments have a fundamental duty to guarantee national sovereignty and territorial integrity, they must invest substantially in armies. That puts the U.S. Army in a critical position of serving as an essential connection for training, equipping, and developing relationships with leaders across the region. In addition, the Army is the Service responsible for operational-level (intra-theater) sustainment. These facts make it clear that our role in the Indo-Pacific is the cornerstone of the sustainment warfighting function for allies, partners, and the joint force. The 8th Theater Sustainment Command,

Army Materiel Command, and USARPAC are doing a tremendous job enabling the joint force in the western Pacific and are demonstrating how the Army can function and thrive in marine environments. I encourage you to read their articles in the winter 2024 edition of *Army Sustainment Professional Bulletin*.

Posturing and Force Projection

As we traveled the region, I was reminded of the vastness of the AOR. While all AORs have their challenges, distance is certainly near the top of USINDOPACOM's list. Additionally, with most of our Army based in the continental U.S. (CONUS), it is apparent that we must become experts in deploying from the homeland with our personnel and equipment. This is a change from what we experienced over the last two decades in the war on terrorism, where we largely fell in on pre-positioned equipment. I encourage you to learn all you can about deployment operations and reception, staging, onward movement, and integration, and to incorporate them into your unit training.

Although most of our Army is CONUS based, we have made great strides in posturing ourselves in the theater through the Army pre-positioned stock (APS) program. In some cases, we are leveraging APS as activity sets as we conduct some of the previously mentioned exercises. We are also posturing APS in places that will allow us to assist our allies

and partners with humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, which are common requirements in the region.

Think tanks, scholars, and news outlets are all paying close attention to the Pacific. It is important we as an Army stay vigilant in this region. Conflicts in Europe and the Middle East may seek to divert our attention, but it is imperative we remain cognizant of potential challenges in all corners of the globe. We can rely on resolute support from our allies in the region. I am proud of the work our sustainers are doing every day in the Pacific and around the world.

Be all you can be.

This we will defend.

Lt. Gen. Heidi J. Hoyle currently serves as Headquarters, Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4, and oversees policies and procedures used by Army logisticians. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, she has a Master of Science degree in systems engineering from the University of Virginia and a Master of Science degree in national resource strategy from the National Defense University. She is a graduate of the Chemical Officer Basic Course, Combined Logistics Officer Advanced Course, United States Army Command and General Staff College, and the Eisenhower School of National Security and Resource Strategy.