

RELATIONAL APPROACHES REGARDING THE RECEPTION, STAGING, ONWARD MOVEMENT & INTEGRATION PROCESS WITHIN THE FORCE PROTECTION MECHANISMS IN THEATRES OF JOINT OPERATIONS

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Presently, the strategic security environment is characterized by uncertainty, complexity, rapid changes and persistent conflict. This environment is fluid, with continually changing alliances and partnerships, new national and transnational threats constantly appearing and disappearing. The global process of crisis and conflict management became more difficult to be handled because of the existing economic and military instability, the persistence of the economic crisis, and the development of extremism, revisionist, secessionist or separatist manifestations. The current article approaches the problem of Reception, Staging, Onward Movement & Integration Process as part of the complex force protection mechanism which takes place in theatres of joint operations. In this respect, we will briefly present the international security environment which influences the projection of NATO, United States and European Union's military forces, in accordance with strategic and operational requirements.

Key words: *international security environment, military force protection, force deployment, strategic movement, reception, staging, onward movement & integration process, force engagement, redeployment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current strategic context, the nations are preoccupied more than ever to avoid the tensions and antagonisms generated by ethnic conflicts, extreme nationalism and intra (inter)state political disputes, that generated crises which affect the world security and stability. In these conditions, the strategic security environment presents complex security challenges which may require in the future an extended usage of Joint Multinational Forces.

The mutations of the international security environment determine NATO and USA forces to carry out important actions in order to cope with the new challenges, which mainly envisage: the defence of the national territory of the Alliance member states; winning wars; enemy deterrence; cooperation in the field of security; support to

the civil authorities; this allows the necessary adjustment to the continually changing geopolitical and geostrategic climate.

The necessity to quickly respond to various forms of crises and conflicts in different parts of the world required that all US categories of forces be capable to carry out expeditionary operations in order to serve the interests of national security [1].

The new global challenges determined by the economic crisis on the one hand, and the secessionist tendencies of ethnic groups with the implication of great powers on the other hand, urged the Alliance to continue to prepare high technological, flexible, very well equipped and trained forces, such as the NATO Response Force (NRF), which possess a high capacity of deployment, is interoperable, self-sustainable (comprising land, sea and air structures) and capable to rapidly respond in case of emerging crises [1].

According to North-American military regulations, the force projection represents the US ability to apply any combination of economic, diplomatic, informational or military instruments. In this context, the military force projection is a critical component of power projection and it represents the capability to deploy the military instrument of national power from the continental locations of the USA (or of a theatre), as a response to the requirements of military operations carried out in a different geographical area. The process of force projection contains the mobilization and deployment of forces to theatres of operations and their re-deployment to the continental area of the United States of America [2].

The new types of deployable forces (rapid, complete, logistically self-sustained) are necessary for all types of operations expected to be primarily carried out by the Alliance in any situations of crisis or conflict. They are determined by the change that occurred in the philosophy of warfare and armed conflict, as well as by the mission of the Alliance to manage the crises and conflicts of the second decade of the XXI century [6].

The experience of the Alliance (beginning with the operations in Afghanistan in 2001) demonstrated a new operational vision which determined on the way changes and improvements in the use of forces and command structures, on the basis of planning, projecting, commanding and sustaining of operational forces in hostile crisis and conflict environments.

On the basis of NATO commitment in Afghanistan, the fundamental mission of the NRF and of the associated High Readiness Forces (that have projection capabilities to strategic distances in Europe and North America) is to ensure the protection of the fundamental interests of the Alliance and to prevent of the development of imminent conflicts or to their resolution and peace building [4].

Due to the convergence of Romania's security interests with those of the European and Euro-Atlantic community, our country continues its integration in the global security architecture, by taking active part in military actions dedicated to crises/conflict prevention and resolution, under the auspices of UNO, NATO, EU, and OSCE. The participation of military structures in multinational operations can be based on

a NATO requirement or on the decision to become part of the coalition forces and is carried out on the basis of the national legislation regarding these types of missions [5].

The capacity to project (deploy) forces in the theatre of operations has always implied its capability of self-sustainment. Thus, the projection of military power is achieved through expeditionary operations, as well as its sustainment for the entire duration of the expedition (through the creation of forward logistic bases and the necessary logistic support system) [6].

In the vision of the North-Atlantic Alliance the projection of military power, as an expeditionary operation, is achieved "beyond the extended lines of communication, in a remote operational area, for accomplishing a specific objective" [7]. In this framework, the projection of the joint multinational force in the theatre of operations strategically determines the informational superiority, NATO's network centric warfare, efficient engagement, joint manoeuvre, stronger civil-military cooperation and integrated logistics [10]. All these will lead to the accomplishment of three fundamental objectives: coherent effects, joint deployment and support, decisional superiority.

2. ELEMENTS OF RECEPTION, STAGING, ONWARD MOVEMENT & INTEGRATION ACCOMPLISHMENT WITHIN THE MECHANISM OF JOINT FORCE PROTECTION

In order to put in practice the military projection (at strategic and operative levels) an adequate planning is carried out, which consists of actions conducted by the designated planning structures (groups) and the commanders/commands of the joint forces in order to solve the emergency and crisis situations. This transforms the national strategic objectives of NATO and EU in adequate activities specific to the projection of the forces that will be involved in the development of operational products, which include planning for mobilization, deployment, engagement, support, redeployment and demobilization of the joint forces [8].

Within the mechanism of joint forces' projection, the specific operation deployment

process is projected. Its component stages are mentioned below.

2.1. The process specific to deployment

The joint processes of deployment/redeployment to/from the theatre (area) of operations comprise the following phases: planning; pre-deployment; strategic movement; joint reception, staging, onward movement and integration (JRSO&I); redeployment [9] (Figure 1).

The force deployment operation requires the distinction between the strategic deployment of forces from the permanent location of the Joint Operations Area (JOA) and the deployment within this area. The first is considered as deployment between theatres of operations, while the second is considered as deployment within the theatre of operations. Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration represent the deployment within the theatre.

2.1.1. Planning and preparation of deployment

Thus, strategic deployment represents “... the process of projection of national and Alliance capabilities to a Joint Operations Area in support of a NATO operation according to the requirements and priorities established by the Joint Force Command”[10]. At the same time, the strategic deployment represents the mission to transport the forces comprising personnel, equipment and materials from the Port of Embarkation to the Forward Movement Base or to the Port of Debarkation [11].

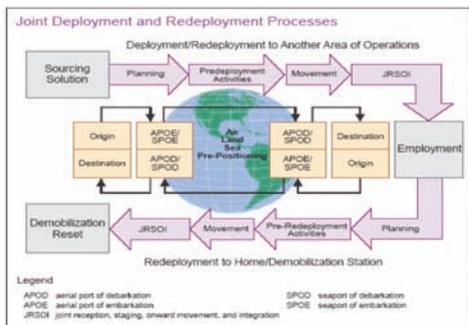


Figure 1. Joint Deployment and Redeployment Processes [9]

The process of joint deployment has numerous participants and many phases resulting from the multitude of organizations and functional processes involved in the

planning and execution of the deployment. The deployment operations comprise the ensemble of activities specific to the planning, preparation and movement of forces and materials from a base to the theatre of operations, in order to accomplish the use of an operational capability necessary to execute the mission.

Thus, the deployment planning represents the first phase of the previously mentioned process and it takes place during the deliberate planning and crisis action planning (CAP). It is carried out at all command levels both by the supporting commanders and also by the supported ones.

The participants in the deployment process include the commanders who are supported and those who support the categories of forces in their subordination, as well as the entire joint planning and execution body. The phases of the process may appear within the functional or organizational frameworks when the physical resources or the information are transferred (Figure 2). According to empirical evaluations, the frictions between the participants in the process determine the reduction of the operational efficiency of the deployment process [9].

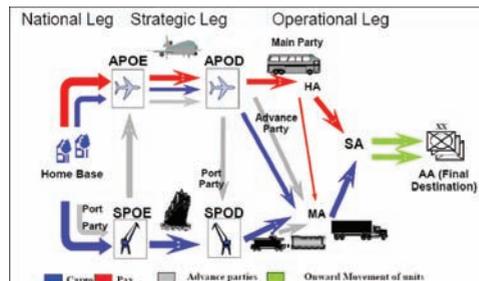


Figure 2. The mechanism of force deployment for the accomplishment of operational objectives [12]

The force deployment plans represent the product of this planning process according to the specific needs which determine the preparations for execution and the movement charts. Thus, according to the regulations in force, the deployment operations make available to the commander the necessary joint forces that are prepared to execute his orders and to accomplish the missions at the designated tie and place in the theatre/area of operations. It also results that the deployment plans align with the operations plans/orders and support the

necessities of movement of associated forces, which allows for the preparation actions in view of the deployment to be carried out. The supplying processes (adequate forces involved, emergency support and execution support) connect the requirements with the forces that will eventually receive the deployment order [9].

The pre-deployment activities are actions carried out by the joint planning and execution bodies, before the movement itself, in view of the preparation and execution of the deployment operation. These include the training, organization and equipping of the force so that it is capable to accomplish its mission according to the requirements.

Under the operational aspect, the pre-deployment activities mainly envisage the accomplishment of the following objectives: deciding the structures that will participate in the mission (units, large units); training; supplying the necessary logistic support. The specific actions (objectives) require an adequate synchronization, so that, within the required reaction time, the forces designated to multinational joint operations might reach the necessary operational capacity. To this end, the superior structures involved will provide the opportune support in order to: execute reconnaissance in the area/theatre of operations; carry out medical checks and the immunization of the personnel; create the stockpiles and means of self-sustainment; coordinate the movement and transport; provide the data regarding the points of embarkation and the points of debarkation (POEs and PODs); provide the land, sea and air transport means; integrate the own system of communication in that of the joint multinational force [13].

At the same time, the attributions of the forces (units or large units) are complex and mainly envisage as objectives to: accomplish the operational planning and its specific products; accomplish the actions necessary to the protection of the force; adequately train the personnel according to the mission requirements; check and ensure the full functioning of the equipment; achieve the packing and palleting of the materials to be transported; embark the equipment; move on the national territory (according to a previously drafted detailed plan); embark on the means of strategic transport; deployment of the forward detachment.

2.1.2. Strategic movement

In the process of strategic planning of movement of a joint multinational structure, the responsible bodies are obliged to know the details specific to the organization, equipment, capabilities and limitations specific to the composing forces. To this end, the structures responsible with the operational planning will require the efficient movement within the theatre of the combat structures in accordance with the operational plan of the commander of the joint multinational force. The movement should be complementary with the operations and phases of the force deployment. To this end, the planners will consider all the transportation means (joint, allied, host nation or of a third country) and types (air, land or sea). During the execution of these operations, the personnel who control the force movement must be placed in a point from where it can validate the movement of personnel and equipment [9; 14].

The strategic movement includes the activities of physical movement of the joint forces from the departure point to their destination. This includes three segments: from the point of departure to the port of embarkation, activities at the point of embarkation and from the point of embarkation to the point of debarkation, including the movement and transit through intermediary places according to the needs. However, in view of a complex and unitary process of deployment, attention must be given to the JRSO&I [9; 14].

The necessity to accomplish the strategic and operational objectives determines that the movement of forces and means of units and large units be achieved through adequate transport means (road; rail; sea; air), meant to ensure the adequate reactions to the requirements established for deployments. To this end, the officers responsible with movement and transport draft the necessary documents and agreements (so that they are fully and efficiently applicable), knowing the own transport capacities as well as the locations of and the distances between the ports of embarkation (POEs) and the ports of debarkation (PODs).

Thus, the means of transport are conducted as follows: the road transport on the national territory or in the theatres of operations is carried out with own means or with military or civilian means received in

support; the rail transport is used for great distances as well as for the transport of a large quantity of equipment and materials; the sea transport as main means for the transport of the majority of equipment and materials belonging to the unit or large unit for deployment, support and redeployment; the air transport permits the movement of the entire personnel and of the entire or part of the equipment and materials with which the forces designated to joint multinational operations are endowed.

2.1.3. The RSO&I process

After carrying out the strategic movement, the next step is the deployment of the unit or large unit to the area/theatre of operations, meaning the reception, staging, onward movement and integration (Figure 3). Thus, for the accomplishment and joining of the phases specific to RSO&I in the process of deployment, the plan for the projection of force in the theatre/area of joint operations is put into practice.

Reception, Staging, Onward Movement & Integration – RSO&I represents an essential process because it ensures the transition of the deploying forces, meaning troops, equipment and materials that arrive to the theatre toward joint forces capable of accomplishing the operational requirements of the designated commander (of the joint multinational force) or which end the redeployment of forces to their bases of origin or to the demobilization bases as a result of the end of the mission or rotation.

For the achievement of the necessary logistic support within the RSO&I, the responsibility is collective and national, because it belongs both to the allied authorities and also to the National Support Element (NSE), being absolutely necessary to the cooperation with the Host Nation Support structures.

The process of reception, staging, onward movement and integration of forces includes both the management of specific logistic support actions and also the command by J3/JFC of the adequate activities of integration in the area/theatre of operations (Figure 3).

The actions specific to the RSO&I are led at national level by a body that has precise tasks. At the same time, the RSO&I process represents a joint type activity which involves all the components, but which

is usually led by the logistic component (JFLogC) in order to avoid redundancy and to ensure that the support priorities are established in accordance with the order of the commander of the joint force and depending on the moment of arrival of the forces.

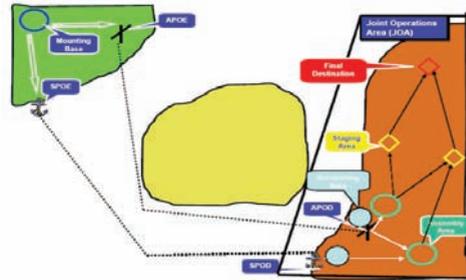


Figure 3. The mechanism of the RSO&I process within the strategic deployment [15]

Reception represents the process of reception, off-loading, organization, sorting, recording and transportation of personnel, equipment and materials arriving from the strategic deployment phase inside the theatre (point of strategic transport) at the sea, air or land points of debarkation (PODs) in the organization area and their guidance toward the Marshalling Area where the following activities are carried out: regrouping the personnel with the equipment; assurance of supplies and support services in order to achieve the conditions for the continuation of movement (if these activities are not carried out in the staging phase) [18].

The reception begins with the arrival of forces and equipment deployed in an area of operations and is concentrated on the elements of land, air and naval forces which cannot be deployed by their own means.

This phase requires the preparation of facilities, the initial force protection, the management/administration, information of the personnel and later on the transport of the personnel from the ports of debarkation to the locations of destination. An area of operations of considerable dimensions, with components scattered on great distances, can constitute a significant challenge for the reception process. This usually requires large time consuming preliminary activities like building camps, medical installations, theatre reception centres (TRCs) and storing spaces before the deployment of the main forces [17].

The Joint Force Logistic Component (JFLogC) will be deployed sufficiently

early, having the necessary administrative and logistic systems prepared to sustain the reception activity, which include logistic information subsystems (IS), the processes of the joint supply chain (JSC), including the reverse supply chain (RSC), personnel, equipment and materials of goods monitoring and aeromedical evacuation. Once the deployment begins, the flux of personnel and materials must be homogenous and continuous, so that it will not obstruct the following arrivals.

The key elements of reception mainly envisage:

- The activation of the points of embarkation/debarkation, according to the operational requirement, for the air route (APOD), the sea route (SPOD) or rail route (RPOD). The number and type of the points of debarkation will complicate the reception activities; for this reason the synchronization of activities at each point represents a key element (Figure 4).

- The reception begins the moment when the forces deploy, the equipment and materials arrive at the points of debarkation/deployment.

- The reception activities continue until the point when the movement of forces, equipment and materials toward the area of operational deployment begins. This can be done through a staging area, if it is necessary [17].

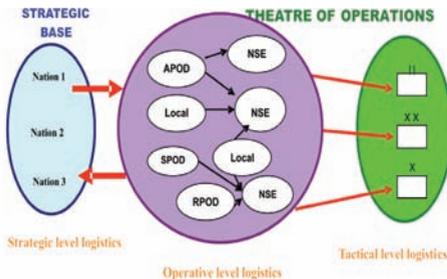


Figure 4. Logistics within the RSO&I process

Within the RSO&I process, *staging* represents the process of gathering, organizing and temporary hosting of arrived personnel, equipment and materials (in units, force structures etc) and their preparation before they continue their movement for their insertion in the area of operations and their use by the commander of the joint multinational force. For functional purposes, in this phase the commander usually designated precise locations in order to offer adequate spaces and resources. The

locations designated for staging offer the facilities necessary for staging, as well as other support elements destined for units or large units in order for them to obtain the complete capability required by the future missions [18].

At the same time, the staging area implies specialized units and subunits, as well as individuals who through their actions have the role to maintain the vital functions with reference, in the most simple of cases, to the feeding and accommodation of the personnel who arrive gradually in a protected and welcoming environment.

Staging can be a significant managerial task, because it includes the forces arrived at the points of debarkation from several directions, the possibility existing for them to need to be accommodated in the waiting areas for longer periods of time. Staging is not always necessary; ideally, the force elements will move directly to their areas of deployment/operational integration. The requirements may depend on the size of the force, the need for integration, the speed of deployment and the availability of accommodation spaces, usually envisaging:

- to ensure the vital functions for the period during which the forces arrive and are organized, reconfigured and trained and their equipment is completed according to the urgent operational requirements (UORs);
- to preserve reinforcements for as long as it is necessary;
- to carefully carry out the activity of integration in order to produce the flux of forces necessary to the area of joint operations (AO) [18].

The *onward movement* represents the process of movement of units or large units, personnel, equipment and materials from the area of reception to the staging area, as it is necessary, toward the area of deployment / operational integration (area of operations). The onward movement can be executed by any component, including maritime ships, military means of transport belonging to the host nation or means contracted from the local area. The onward movement cannot often take place in a favourable environment and for this reason it requires a significant support from J3, which the JFLogC may not be able to provide [18].

The onward movement has the following requirements:

- Coordinated control of the movement and efficiency of the transport network.
- The coordinated control of the movement. The personnel in charge with the movement needs total visibility over the operational situation of all the components in order to ensure the transport of personnel, equipment and materials to the indicated operational area.
- The efficiency of the transport network. The onward movement must be carried out along protected routes, where possible, having convoy support centres (CSCs), disposed in the necessary locations, although this thing will become more and more difficult as the battlefield is more and more spread. Logistic and medical support must be available, together with an adequate force protection, which may self-generate from within the logistic support units. The transport network can use all the means of transport including air, sea or rail routes inside the theatre/area of operations [18].

Integration (in the area of joint operations) is the synchronized transfer of the available operational units/large units toward the joint multinational Force. It represents the process by which the structure/organization of the unit or large unit is achieved, as it was designed for the mission, capable of being deployed in the area of deployment/operational build-up and engaged as a whole, because it is operationally ready. This is where the transfer of authority, training and operational awareness take place.

The operations specific to integration are considered complete the moment when the commander of the joint force exerts operational control over the arriving unit/large unit, appreciating at the same time that it is capable of accomplishing the entrusted mission and transmitting to it the mission order. In accordance with the concrete situation in the area/theatre of operations, the declaration of the Ready Operational state and the transfer of authority can be made in one of the areas previously mentioned (Reception; Staging), after which the unit or large unit can prepare for the mission in the area of operational build-up.

At the same time, integration is considered complete when the commander decides that the joint force completed the deployment movement to the destination designated in the area of operations, has sufficient resources and is prepared to execute effectively and efficiently the entrusted mission. In redeployment operations, integration is complete when the commander in charge or the respective service decides that the redeployed forces returned to base or arrived at the next destination [11].

The commander of the joint forces is responsible with guiding the activity of integration. For this reason, the responsibilities of the JFLogC will be limited to the integration of his own structures and to providing the logistic support necessary for the entire force, such as ensuring spaces in the areas of Reception and Staging and giving briefings for theatre orientation. Thus, Integration can be conducted as part of the process of reception or in the Staging area. The larger the force and the higher the number of nations involved, the more difficult the efficient integration [18].

In view of the activities specific to deployment and RSO&I, in the area / theatre of joint operations the reconnaissance team together with the representatives of other echelons (national and multinational) carry out a series of activities that will allow for: the rapid awareness of the mission; the contact with the command elements and with those with whom it will cooperate during the mission, with the movement coordination elements of the Multinational Force; recognizing the points of debarkation (PODs) and the locations specific to reception, staging and onward movement; the evaluation of the operational situation; checking the existing logistic facilities; taking over the standard operating procedures (SOPs) specific to the mission and the characteristics of the communication and informatics systems of the Multinational Force [13].

The vanguard detachment uses the fastest means of strategic transport, a specialized aircraft respectively. It carried the minimum quantity of equipment and materials necessary for the accomplishment of its tasks in the theatre of operations. The attributions of this detachment mainly envisage: to establish contact with the higher echelon, with the element of movement logistics and

coordination in the theatre of operations, to recognize and monitor the areas of reception, organization, staging and constitution of units or large units, to integrate its own system of communication in the one already existing in the theatre of operations [13].

The structures specialized in the coordination of movement and transport (the officer/compartment in charge with this activity at the level of the unit/large unit and the representatives of the superior echelons) envisage through the planning of movement and transport to ensure the arrival of the main forces at the same time both by sea and by air.

2.2. Force engagement

Engagement represents precisely the participation of the unit or large unit in the operation with all the forces and means at its disposal under the operational control of the commander of the joint multinational force in accordance with the signed memorandum of understanding.

The objectives of the operational strategy condition the correlation between the centre of gravity of the force and the critical moment of the action through the prism of the concrete means and possibilities to carry out the operation. Success will favour the side which holds strategic, operational and informational supremacy and which disposes of an extremely precise and large enough system of weapons and which enjoys a certain degree of support in the international arena.

From the point of view of most powers, the main characteristic of engagement no longer is or will be that to ensure the conditions for the destruction of the enemy or the infliction of as many losses as possible, but to determine it to accept the constraints or solutions imposed to him [19]. This fact gives a new dimension to the centre of gravity of the force as a critical moment in the military action, from here resulting in the necessity that the force be capable of protecting the population and its belongings, to interpose and, at the same time, win a confrontation.

At the same time, the decision regarding the engagement of the force and its means may have implication in the respective area in the centre of gravity of the own force in order not to create challenges, fears, uncertainties or other complex problems. The decision maker must know precisely

what happens in the theatre or area that requires the engagement, what kind of actions are advisable, with which forces and means they can be carried out. To this end, operations are planned according to several versions and all the measures are taken to create the favourable conditions for them to be carried out. Without coherence, lucidity and clarity in establishing the actions adequate to operations and all the deriving consequences, the engagement is senseless and it becomes risky and useless [19].

If the success of the operation is ensured in a time shorter than the estimated period of participation of the unit/large unit at the operation, after the decisive operations have been carried out the withdrawal of the forces obviously ensues, the transit operations and redeployment.

2.3. Redeployment

Redeployment is the transfer of the deployed forces and their materials from one area of operations in order to support the operational necessities in another area of operations or toward the demobilization bases as a result of the end of the mission or rotation [9].

The process specific to redeployment requires a number of specific phases (in opposite order as in the case of deployment): planning; re-building of forces and carrying out the activities of pre-deployment; movement to and activities at the points of embarkation (POEs); strategic/operational movement toward the points of debarkation (PODs) and reception; movement toward the peace time deployment garrison.

The redeployment operations are the sum of the activities necessary for the planning, preparation and movement of forces and their materials from origin to their destination in a new area of operations or toward a base in order to reach the operational level necessary for executing a mission or for demobilization [9].

Similarly to deployment operations, the decisions regarding the redeployment planning are based in the operational elements in the area of operations at the time of the redeployment.

The commander who is to be supported is responsible with the planning of the redeployment in his area of responsibility. This planning must be taken into consideration at the beginning of the operation and must be continually improved at the redeployment

action progresses. The individual activities within each phase of redeployment are similar to the ones described within the process of deployment; however, there are major differences within the JRSO&I phase. These differences become clear when the force is redeployed to a new area of operations or to a demobilization base [9].

According to the planning drafted for this purpose, after the completion of the mission, the forces move toward the assembly areas (AAs) or directly toward the redeployment assembly areas (RAAs). Here they carry out the transfer of authority (TOA) to the military body from their country of origin. The activities in these assembly areas prepare the unit / large unit for movement (within the redeployment process). The re-building of forces includes a wide range of activities for the re-establishment of the military capabilities able to ensure the embarkation and movement with naval and air transport means: packing and containerization of equipment and materials; preparation of customs documents; preparation of the data necessary to the coordination of the movement [13].

The movement within the theatre of operations (for redeployment) can be done directly from the redeployment assembly area toward the marshalling areas corresponding to the points of embarkation or by crossing certain staging areas, depending on the distance to be covered, the level of force build-up or the conditions in the theatre of operations. In the points of embarkation, a major role is played again by the national support element, the movement coordination structures and the cooperation with the host nation support elements. The activities at the points of embarkation mainly refer to: the embarkation of containers; customs inspections; embarkation of the personnel; checking the lists of passengers and materials [13].

Within the redeployment process, the strategic movement can be done with air or naval transport means and lasts from the departure/take off of the first ship/plane until the arrival at destination of the last naval or air shipment of the unit or large unit.

After arrival at the points of debarkation, the unit/large unit resumes its reception process, followed by the movement toward the peace time deployment garrison, depending on the arrival of the transport

echelons and the means at the disposal of each of them.

At destination, reception represents the process of debarkation of personnel and equipment from the means of strategic or local transport and the assurance of the support necessary to the personnel: feeding, medical care, accommodation etc. After the arrival of all the personnel and equipment the structure of the unit / large unit is reconstituted and the transfer of authority is done toward the representatives of the category of forces.

At the same time, a series of administrative activities are carried out, with reference to: forwarding mission reports; parking of vehicles and storing of equipment and materials; medical check and psychological evaluation of the personnel; distribution of the financial rewards following the participation of the personnel in the mission; the return from mission ceremony.

Finally, the regeneration of forces phase takes place, which implies activities with regard to deciding the recovery period, retaking the usual training schedule or through the military education system, completion of stockpiles, maintenance of the equipment etc. Also, the personnel are demobilized, if it is the case.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Carrying out the movement or transport over strategic distances and the power of ensuing projection toward the final destination within the RSO&I process is limited by the capacity of the logistic leading nation to apply the elements that are relevant to RSO&I, depending on the national resources or the ability to share the responsibility with other force contributors or the sources of the host nation. The initial process depends on the ability to obtain relevant information, on the capacity to use the local resources and to adequately monitor all the units capable of achieving each phase of the RSO&I in the designated areas. The capacity to rapidly deploy RSO&I units, operational forces and to ensure the necessary combat support should be based on the management of the flux of information, followed by the flux of materials and ended by the deployment of combat forces.

The commander of the joint multinational force that benefits from the support decides the policy, procedures, priorities and line of communication (LOC) of the support activities. Normally, the commander will immediately begin to forward support requests based on the needs of the “pull” type addressed to the categories of forces in order to resupply his forces in the theatre/area of operations. In the absence of the commander’s precise requirements, each category of forces will support its units and large units using adequate methodologies, which can initially include providing support to their own structures. The support shipments do not always follow the same routes used by the deployed forces because some of these (such as those carrying ammunition) require special infrastructure to be manoeuvred and can cause significant disruptions to port activities. The optimization of the port functioning represents a major factor in balancing the procedures of the “pull” or “push” types.

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