

FM 55-80

ARMY CONTAINER OPERATIONS

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HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

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PREFACE

PURPOSE

This manual has been prepared by the USACASCOM as a consolidated container reference incorporating policy, doctrine, and procedures needed to conduct container operations across the range of military operations. Existing Army policies and doctrine relating to intermodal containerization date back to 1975. Publications are being revised in view of lessons learned from operations in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and other conflicts. The transition from a forward deployed Army to a CONUS-stationed force demands new approaches to operations. Improving force projection depends on maximizing strategic lift, improving force closure, and updating doctrine which incorporates new ways of doing business.

Army units should consult this FM when conducting intermodal container operations. This FM does not preclude the need to consult other regulatory publications to ensure compliance with federal directives and standards when transporting commodities through the DTS.

SCOPE

This manual provides guidance for container users who ship commodities within the DOD intermodal container system. The DOD system includes intermodal containers and container services, either DOD-owned or leased, or commercially provided. It also includes other ANSI/ISO configured equipment held by DOD activities before, during, and after intermodal shipment in the DTS.

The Army's environmental strategy into the 21st century defines our philosophy and commitment in protecting and preserving the environment and natural resources for present and future generations. Sound environmental practices and considerations must be integrated into all Army documents, missions, and operations. In keeping with the Army's vision to be a national leader in environmental stewardship, commanders and leaders must ensure that all local, state, federal, and HN laws and regulations pertaining to the environment are included in the planning process and strictly followed.

The proponent of this publication is HQ TRADOC. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commander, USACASCOM, Directorate of Combat Development for Transportation, ATTN: ATCL-T, 3901 A Avenue, Suite 240, Fort Lee, VA 23801-1809.

Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns and pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO INTERMODALISM

This chapter outlines responsibilities within the DTS for implementing containerization policy and procedures. A paragraph on container procurement is included in this chapter. This chapter includes an overview of intermodalism.

1-1. BACKGROUND. The DOD relies on commercial sealift to move 85 percent of cargo during contingency operations. The US and world merchant fleets are dominated by large, fast containerships with supporting corporate infrastructure (for example, CHE, terminals, information systems, tractors/chassis, and experienced personnel). Experience in ODS revealed that DOD was unprepared to use effectively, containers and containerships to move UE and ammunition. This contributed, in conjunction with port saturation and lack of ITV, to the slow deployment of CS/CSS forces and resulted in significant delays in moving Class V resupply. Also, large numbers of small, slow breakbulk vessels were used instead of containerships which resulted in significant costs in time and money.

The transition to a CONUS-based, power projection force increases the need for the Army to be able to rapidly deploy anywhere, anytime. Strategic lift must be maximized to rapidly project power to meet our force projection goals. Strategic lift is supplied by either ocean-going vessels or air transport. Both are limited resources. Having the largest requirement for strategic lift demands that the Army maximize its use of containerization. Containerization increases the types of ships available to support strategic deployment as well as increasing the cargo capacity of other available ships. It also streamlines handling requirements within the distribution system. Other added bonuses of containerization are increased protection against shipping damage and safeguards against pilferage.

1-2. RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE DEFENSE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM. The trend in container operations is towards the establishment of an intermodal container-oriented distribution system. This system will meet DOD-wide transportation requirements and result in a fleet of containers designed for common-use among the Services. The information in this manual conforms to guidance contained in Joint Publication 4-01.7 (Draft) and DOD Regulation 4500.9-R-1.

The Army's goal is to increase the use of containers to improve the use of strategic lift and improve force closure for UE and sustainment supplies. The Army's effective use of containers improves both materiel distribution throughout the battlefield and field warehousing.

As DOD transitions from a Service-unique container system to a DOD-wide common-use container system, the Army system must have sufficient capability to meet DOD-established required delivery dates for mobilization, deployment, employment, sustainment, and redeployment. The resulting container system must be interoperable among Service components and commercial industry. The DOD container system includes intermodal containers, infrastructure, and information systems. The CJCS, through an assigned lead agent, provides oversight on all the Services' programs in relation to their interoperability within the DTS.