

Field Manual
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MAIN SUPPORT BATTALION

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*This publication supersedes FM 63-21, 18 February 1986.

PREFACE

This manual provides information on the structure and operations of the main support battalion. It is directed toward the commander and staff of the MSBs of divisions organized and operating under-L series TOEs as modified by the Force Design Initiatives for an Army of Excellence Study. It is also designed to be used by personnel concerned with providing or receiving support in the division support area.

The manual outlines the functions and operations of each section within the MSB; how the MSB commander and staff integrate their activities; and the MSB's role in providing support. This includes both the logistics and medical mission and the tactical responsibilities. This manual also describes the many coordination links the MSB must maintain with supported and supporting units.

This manual is based on doctrine in FMs 100-5, 100-10, 71-100 and 63-2-2. FM 100-5 is the Army's keystone doctrinal manual. It outlines how the Army will fight the Airland Battle. FM 100-10 is the Army's keystone CSS doctrinal manual. It provides an overview of the CSS system for supporting the Army in the field. FM 71-100 is the Army's capstone manual for division operations. It assists the MSB commander in planning and conducting combat operations. FM 63-2-2 describes the support provided by resources within and outside of the division. It is directed toward commanders and staff who are concerned with providing CSS within armored, mechanized infantry, and motorized divisions organized and operating under/ "Division 86" TOEs as modified by the Army of Excellence Study. (Work is currently underway on a new FM 63-2, which will cover the operations of a heavy division support command in depth. The new manual is designed to supersede FMs 63-2-2 and 63-22.)

The proponent of this publication is HQ TRADOC. Submit changes for improving this publication on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) and forward it to Commander, US Army Logistics Center, ATTN: ATCL-CLD, Fort Lee, Virginia 23801-6000.

Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.

CHAPTER 1

MSB Organization and Functions

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**ARMORED, MECHANIZED INFANTRY,
INFANTRY, HEAVY/LIGHT DIVISIONS**

Main support battalions exist in four types of divisions. They are the armored, mechanized infantry, infantry, and heavy/light divisions. In each case, the role of the MSB is to support customers in the division rear and provide designated reinforcing support to the forward support battalions. MSB commanders and staffs must understand the composition, employment, and missions of the supported force.

The division has varying numbers and types of combat, combat support, and combat service support units. It is a self-sustaining force capable of independent operations. The division's main focus is to defeat the enemy by conducting close and deep operations while protecting its combat support, CSS, and command and control facilities with successful rear operations.

**ARMORED AND MECHANIZED
INFANTRY DIVISIONS**

Armored and mechanized divisions close with and destroy the enemy by firepower, mobility, and shock

effect. Heavy elements move, attack, and defend to defeat the enemy in close combat. Heavy divisions normally fight over wide areas against a threat with similar capabilities. The divisions operate best in basically open terrain. There they can use their mobility and long-range, direct-fire weapons to best advantage. The divisions need significant logistics support of tracked vehicles for long ground moves. The divisions consume supplies, especially class III and V, at high rates and require substantial maintenance support. The MSB will shift its support effort forward to the critical place and time to influence the battle.

INFANTRY DIVISION

The infantry division operates in virtually all terrain, weather conditions, and enemy situations. It is organized for responsive employment and immediate combat operations upon arrival in any environment. It is most effective in terrain favoring dismounted operations. This includes large urban areas, mountains, and jungles. The infantry division has limited mobility. Therefore, its fuel