

Aviation Support Battalion

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Preface

This manual provides information on the mission, structure, and operations of the Aviation Support Battalion (ASB). It outlines the functions and operations of the battalion staff and subordinate units. It also describes the interface between parallel units; Forward Support Battalions (FSBs) and supporting units; Main Support Battalion (MSB) and Division Support Command (DISCOM) and the ASB.

This manual is based on doctrine in FMs 1-100, 1-500, 100-5, and 100-10. At press time the ASB is authorized only in the Army's heavy divisions. Under the Aviation Restructuring Initiative (ARI) ASBs will also be added to the support structure of the light and airborne divisions. Although the TOE will differ between the light and heavy division ASBs, the doctrine and support concepts detailed in this field manual will remain basically the same.

A wide range of publications supports this field manual by providing details of specific combat service support (CSS) functional areas. The publications referred to throughout the manual are listed in the references.

The proponent of this FM is HQ, TRADOC. Submit comments and recommended changes on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commander, USACASCOM, ATTN: ATCL-AL, Ft Lee, VA 23801-6050.

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

CHAPTER 1

Sustaining the Aviation Brigade

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AVIATION BRIGADE

The aviation brigade (AB) of a heavy division is a flexible organization designed to find, fix, and destroy enemy forces on the battlefield. It uses maneuver to concentrate and to sustain combat power at the critical time and place. The brigade can accomplish its mission as a pure-aviation organization or as a task-organized force. The speed and mobility of this brigade make it ideally suited for rapid-reaction deep, close, and rear operations. It can also move from one area to another to prevent enemy fixing of combat forces in a single area. In addition to attack helicopter and cavalry maneuver forces, the aviation brigade provides—

- Maneuver capabilities to dismounted infantry through air assault operations.

- Combat support by lateral repositioning of artillery, air defense, or engineer assets.
- Immediate personnel or logistics transport for critical specialties, supplies, or equipment.

Combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) units are task-organized to support the aviation brigade as required. The aviation brigade operates over the entire width and depth of the division area of operations. Chapter 2 addresses how the DISCOM commander task-organizes to support units within the division area. All aviation brigade units require CSS on a battlefield unlike any in the past. Fluid, nonlinear operations and enormous demands for resources characterize Army operations.

SUPPORT PRINCIPLES

Sustainment of the aviation brigade in Army operations is the challenge facing CSS planners and operators. The logistics system must man, arm, fix, fuel, and sustain the aviation brigade. The aviation brigade commander can then seize opportunities to achieve tactical advantage. This requires the aviation support battalion (ASB) commander and CSS planners at all levels to *integrate* CSS and operational planning. The logistics planning characteristics are: anticipation, integration, continuity, responsiveness, and

improvisation. These are not substitutes for the basic tenets of Army operations doctrine; they complement them.

CSS leaders and staffs *anticipate* future requirements and missions by understanding the commander's plan and by staying aware of current developments. The main purpose of anticipation is to help the aviation brigade commander form a supportable plan. The ASB commander and staff must develop the close