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Commander
Military Traffic Management Command

and

Deputy Commander in Chief
United States Transportation Command

An Oral History

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*Part One: Commander, Military Traffic Management Command**

Introduction

Mr. McLeod: Which of your previous assignments were helpful in your present position as MTMC [Military Traffic Management Command] Commander?

Gen Thompson: The Division G-4 [Logistics] of the 3rd Infantry Division; Commander of the 37th Transportation Company, the 595th Transportation Group in Charleston [South Carolina], 1304th Major Port Command (then the South Atlantic Outport); my assignment to the Army Materiel Command as the Resource Manager; and my assignments as a general officer: Director of Operations Support for the Army Budget Office, and Resource Management Director for the Army Materiel Command [AMC].

Mr. McLeod: What did you extract out of these assignments that was helpful to you as MTMC Commander?

Gen Thompson: Experience at the division level was extremely helpful because it taught me what customers think, how they think, and how to meet their deployment and sustainment needs. Also, my assignment to the 37th Transportation Company taught me customer service because we had 1,100 tractors and 2,800 trailers operating in five different countries. We delivered commodities to the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. The resource management job in the Army taught me how the Army staff works. It gave me a good appreciation of the Defense Business Operating Fund [DBOF]. The Army Materiel Command job reinforced lessons learned in my

*Conducted by Mr. Don E. McLeod, September 1996.

previous assignments, but it also gave me wholesale logistics base experience. So, all of these assignments helped me form my approach to being a commander of the Military Traffic Management Command. Because the Army Materiel Command had done so much downsizing, that experience allowed me to see various ways to increase efficiencies without sacrificing mission effectiveness.

Mr. McLeod: What was your analysis of MTMC's strengths and weaknesses when you walked in the door?

Gen Thompson: MTMC's strengths have not changed that much over the years. Our ability to deploy the force, our super relationship and interaction with the reserve components and industry, and our partnership councils like CORE [Contingency Response Program] have remained constants. And, most importantly, the command's people: they are knowledgeable, dedicated, and experienced. Our people are the foundation of our strength.

Some of the possible weaknesses: in some cases, we are still wedded to old ways of doing business, and we are still catching up in some automation and simulation areas. And I am not sure that we are as focused on "The Customer" as we like to believe we are.

Mr. McLeod: Where did this appraisal suggest that you should lead the command? What was your plan of action?

Gen Thompson: My plan was to make sure that the command was prepared for the future. When I came to MTMC, there had been no Base Realignment and Closure [BRAC] Commission decision nor had the Department of Defense [DOD] determined what its BRAC candidates were going to be. [US]CINCTRANS' [Commander in Chief's, United States Transportation Command

(USTRANSCOM)] Defense Transportation System [DTS] 2010 study, although still in draft, seemed to be pointing us in new directions. TRANSCOM was slowly but surely becoming engaged in the TCCs' [Transportation Component Commands'] peacetime business. The Army was launching its Force XXI, which included some functional area assessments. And the commercial transportation industry was changing dramatically. We needed to understand how MTMC fit into the overall DTS picture so the command would be prepared to serve our military customers in the future. As a result, early on we sent out a message to our customers asking them how we could improve our services to them. To this end, I formed the Organizational Excellence Team, which was to further assess the environment in a macro sense, and tell me what the MTMC of the future--that is five years out--ought to look like. This was particularly important given the radical changes going on in DOD and in the commercial transportation industry.

Mr. McLeod: There is a Chinese expression: "May you live in interesting times." It seems like you were doing that, or more precisely, you were moving in very tumultuous times. How much flexibility did you have in effecting change in this environment?

Gen Thompson: Indeed, we at MTMC have lived in interesting times during the last two years and four months. Our Organizational Excellence approach allowed us to be predictive, proactive, and stay in charge, as much as possible, of our destiny, as opposed to having someone direct it for us. So, our Organizational Excellence program gave us flexibility right up until the time that we received CINCTrans' programmatic guidance in the early part of 1996, when suddenly we lost much of that flexibility.

Mr. McLeod: Were there any surprises at the outset for the command?

Gen Thompson: We tried to get a snapshot of who we were: our mission, roles, and functions; where we were located around the world; and what our work force looked like. As a result, we had some surprises. We found, for example, that 24 percent of our work force was either retirement eligible or early retirement eligible. That, to me, was surprising. The results of our informal headquarters survey, which we conducted about five months into my tour, also surprised me. Our people's comments pointed to a lack of communication among staff sections and a lack of employee empowerment. General Larson [Army Major General Richard G., Retired, Commander, MTMC, 1991-1994] had made both communication and empowerment his goals, and I made them mine, too. Word had evidently not gotten out to our folks. We used the survey's information to correct the perception.

Mr. McLeod: Would you say that the reorganization of 1993, having shook the grate, was a factor? And that without this reorganization, the survey would have had different results?

Gen Thompson: I don't know. People asked me if I was going to go back to the pre-1993 reorganization that General Larson was in charge of. My consistent answer was, "No, we are not going to do that," because it was my belief that the work that General Larson and his staff had done was probably the right thing to do at the time. We could not afford to have stovepipe staff sections.

Single Port Manager

Mr. McLeod: Moving into a slightly different area, what outside forces early on competed for your attention?

Gen Thompson: Probably the most significant activity was the deployment of Colonel Tom Brown and a team of his folks from MTMC-Europe to Mombassa, Kenya, to prepare for the download of AWR-III [Army War Reserve-III] ships in support of the Rwandan relief^{*} crisis. In fact, we deployed Colonel Brown's team in short order. His folks were on the ground, intheater within days of his order to deploy.

That deployment generated a lot of discussion about what had been called, until my time, the single port operator, later known as the single port manager concept, a TRANSCOM initiative. The discussion centered on MTMC's role vis-à-vis the Army's 7th Transportation Group's role intheater during contingencies. We worked with General Whaley [Army Brigadier General David A.], the Commandant of the Transportation School, to develop a framework for joint doctrine. We made sure that Army doctrine would be complementary to, and in line, with joint doctrine. Our effort has proven successful.

Mr. McLeod: Did we do this with 7th Group unilaterally, or did we have to work this with DCSLOG [Army Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics] or TRANSCOM?

Gen Thompson: We did this with TRANSCOM, with the [US] Atlantic Command [USACOM], with Forces Command [FORSCOM], and with

^{*}In July 1994 President Clinton directed an immediate and massive increase in US relief efforts to assist Rwandan refugees. Known as Support Hope, the operation lasted until 30 September 1994.

TRADOC [Army Training and Doctrine Command] through the Army Transportation School. And, of course, we coordinated with the Army. It was a multi-faceted and multi-command approach.

Mr. McLeod: How receptive was 7th Group to this?

Gen Thompson: I don't think the 7th Group, at first, was receptive at all. The commander of the 7th Group at the time believed that the initiative in some way threatened the existence of his force, which does an extremely good job of deploying to operational areas around the world to unload ships. But in fact, there was never any intent on my part as the commander of MTMC, or on TRANSCOM's part for that matter, to eliminate the 7th Transportation Group or in any way diminish its role and worth around the world.

Two other contingencies helped prove that the single port manager concept would work. We deployed to Haiti* later that year, and then following Haiti, we supported Operation Vigilant Warrior** in Saudi Arabia. In both instances, in addition to the Mombassa, Kenya, deployment, we were able to show that the Military Traffic Management Command, as the single port manager, could work in tandem with the 7th Group, which from a port operational viewpoint was doing primarily stevedore kind of work, ship loading and unloading. The 7th Group, of course, brings much more to the fray than just stevedoring. They have the watercraft and diving missions. They are also a multi-functional transportation company trained to work inland in terminal-transfer operations.

*Uphold Democracy/Maintain Democracy, September 1994-March 1995, was an international peacekeeping operation to establish order in Haiti and pave the way for the return of the country's exiled president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

**In October 1994 the US responded to Iraqi troops massing near the Kuwaiti border by deploying additional troops to augment forces already in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. McLeod: Were these deployments pretty much by the book?

Gen Thompson: The Haiti deployment was pretty much by the book, as was Vigilant Warrior, except for the download of the Army War Reserve-III ships. Since prepositioned ships can get to ports more rapidly than if they were coming from the coast of the United States, we, MTMC, must be on the ground sooner than ever before. And MTMC is set up to be on the spot first, on short notice, because we are spread out at 39 locations in the United States and around the world. We have the right people and the right equipment to manage port operations in theater.

Mr. McLeod: We are forward deployed in a sense.

Gen Thompson: That is correct.

Bosnia Deployment

Mr. McLeod: How about Bosnia?*

Gen Thompson: Bosnia was not a textbook deployment. First of all, it was a land deployment as opposed to a sea deployment. The decision was made early on not to have US forces stationed in Europe go to ports in Northern Europe, and then embark on ships for a trip through the Straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean to land in ports in Bosnia or Croatia or the former Yugoslavia. From a port operations viewpoint, then, MTMC's role lay elsewhere: the land deployment. Our folks in Transportation Engineering Agency [TEA] helped [US]EUCOM [United States European Command] determine the infrastructure required to deploy via land--road, rail, inland waterway--and, to some degree, airfield capability from

*Joint Endeavor, an ongoing UN peacekeeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, began in December 1995.

Central Europe down into the former Yugoslavia/Bosnia within time parameters. TEA used a modeling tool called Enhanced Logistics Intra-Theater Support Tool, E-LIST, which proved to be a big success. TC ACCIS [Transportation Coordinator's Automated Command and Control Information System] applications helped deploying units load equipment lists and improved visibility over what was deploying.

Decidedly non-textbook was MTMC support to the Brits. We helped them document and load-plan their cargo aboard US ships provided by the Military Sealift Command [MSC] out of Northern Europe as well as out of England. Then we deployed a MTMC Europe team to the ports of Ploce [Croatia] and Split [Croatia] to help the Brits download.

Portlook*

Mr. McLeod: Colonel Harpole [Army Colonel Jan H., Commander, MTMC Europe] and his people were, of course, very much involved in all of these operations. I had the great opportunity to talk to him and his staff last year, and they commented that this was an extreme challenge manpower-wise. Can it be fixed or do we live with this type of manpower crunch?

Gen Thompson: On the one hand, we have been asked to downsize, and on the other hand, we are being asked to do more exercises and more deployments. MTMC-Europe has been especially busy because its geographical responsibilities include Southwest Asia as well as Europe, and there has been a lot going on in Southwest Asia, like AWR-III operations. As a result, those folks have been strapped,

**Portlook Study Report: Review of MTMC Worldwide Port Infrastructure*, MTMC, 30 September 1996.

and that will probably be their plight for the foreseeable future. We will have to be very, very flexible in providing reinforcements from the United States to overseas operations. We cannot afford to maintain people overseas in peacetime who are on the scene just waiting for something to happen. So, it is a bit of a dilemma, and we are looking at it very closely. In fact, that was one of the key discussion points in our Portlook Study, our most recent effort to evaluate our port structure and operations.

Mr. McLeod: Do we also have new responsibilities here as the DOD container manager?

Gen Thompson: The approach has been herky-jerky. While MTMC is the Army's logical manager for containers in the Department of Defense, the Navy's Military Sealift Command continues to have container management responsibilities. Historically, MSC has been charged with leasing containers from commercial industry. Total responsibility includes determination of what the carriers will charge us for transporting commercial and military containers around the world.

The Army gave us the mission to be the Army container manager, and that covered a wide variety of tasks, from maintenance to accountability. But the Army later decided to modify its approach. We need a final resolution from the Army on what exactly it wants MTMC to do as the Service container manager. Specifically, we need to know our responsibility for containers belonging to units that are preloaded for deployments. How are they maintained? Who pays for them? How does the customer get charged? What are the mechanisms for accountability? What do we need in regard to turning them in for property disposal? We need to do a lot more work in this area, and TRANSCOM, I believe, is about to conclude

that MTMC ought to be the DOD-wide container manager. Container management will really be a growth area for MTMC. It is a complex business, one that is going to require a lot of our attention in the upcoming months.

Mr. McLeod: What were your intentions in initiating Portlook?

Gen Thompson: I originally intended Portlook to be undertaken as Phase II of the Organizational Excellence initiative. Phase I would be a macro-level look. In Phase II, we would have looked at our port operations processes. However, as we got to the end of our Organizational Excellence Phase I, CINCTRANS gave us programmatic guidance that said we had to take some gargantuan cuts, which prompted me to go ahead and launch Portlook earlier than I otherwise probably would have launched it. Portlook was intended to scrutinize our processes with an eye to making them more efficient, to come up with some savings. Our goal was to try to find about \$26 million worth of savings.

Mr. McLeod: What percentage would that have been?

Gen Thompson: Ten percent of the fiscal year 1995 port operations costs in DBOF. So, we launched Portlook. It has been an intense effort that has been accomplished very ably and capably by Bill Lucas [Mr. William R., Deputy to the Commander, MTMC], Len Priber [Mr. Leonard M., Delivery Systems Division, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations], and a host of others. It was certainly an emotional event for folks in the field, because it forced them to really look at where they needed to be located to perform their mission. While trying to find that ten percent savings, we did not want to destroy our DBOF revenue base by keeping open a port that was not paying for itself, or by closing a port with a customer base that was paying for itself. Portlook also helped us reduce in-

house privatizing functions like container freight stations. So, Portlook ended up being both a process and resource evaluation.

By and large, such efficiencies will prove useful. We just have to watch very closely our readiness to respond to crises. We can't allow our active and reserve forces to become too strapped to support contingencies or exercises.

Army Functional Area Assessment

Mr. McLeod: What impact has the Army's FAA [Functional Area Assessment] had on MTMC?

Gen Thompson: I went to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army [Army General John H. Tilelli, Jr.] and recommended to him that he add "deployment" to the Functional Area Assessments. He had not considered it before, but thought it made sense, so the Army added it. Now the Army of the future, the Army of the 21st Century, will in fact be configured to properly deploy.

Above and beyond the Functional Area Assessment, the Army will be publishing Pamphlet DAPam 100-XX. Originally the goal there was reorganizing the Service MACOMs [major commands]. Our question was, "Where would MTMC fit into the overall, final Army vision of the three MACOMs? Would we be a part of Army Materiel Command, or would we be a part of Forces Command?" Clearly at one point the Army was very close to concluding that we would be in Forces Command. At another point, they were more inclined to leave MTMC as a separate command, perhaps aligning with us some elements in Forces Command that were deployment-related.

Mr. McLeod: Would they ever consider an option of allowing MTMC to fall within the orbit of DOD or DLA [Defense Logistics Agency]?

Gen Thompson: I hope not because I think the Army would be the worse for it.

Mr. McLeod: They are our biggest customer, are they not?

Gen Thompson: Under such an arrangement, the Army, as MTMC's biggest customer, would lose its main connection to the Army Installation Transportation Office.

USTRANSCOM Streamlining

Mr. McLeod: What impact has GAO [General Accounting Office] had on MTMC?

Gen Thompson: GAO launched, at the behest of some members of Congress, a study of TRANSCOM and its value-added. Their study indicated that TRANSCOM needed further streamlining: the command was too layered. Of course, MTMC and MSC have their layers as well. The GAO also tried to drive home how expensive Military Traffic Management Command and Military Sealift Command were. That study is the most significant outside force that MTMC has had to deal with in my command tenure. It prompted Congress, as well as TRANSCOM, to pursue measures related to MTMC, which I believed and still believe, were very unhealthy. Through the help of MTMC Eastern Area and my own staff, we have been able to show that some of GAO's conclusions were, in fact, erroneous. GAO did not completely understand the kind of work that we have to do for our customers day in and day out.

Mr. McLeod: Did the GAO study drive the manpower reduction of 962 billets?

Gen Thompson: The study drove TRANSCOM to be draconian in the way they looked at MTMC. In direct response to the General Accounting Office report, TRANSCOM launched what they called a streamlining review. It was done in a team configuration--a lot of our people spent a lot of time at TRANSCOM in the winter and early spring time frame [1995-1996]--but the conclusions reached were not team conclusions. They were really TRANSCOM staff conclusions, and I took umbrage with their number because I believe it was ill-informed. It was a programmatic-based, rather than an operationally- and functionally-based, cut. In the end, TRANSCOM described the cuts as programmatic, and said that we needed to take 1,104 cuts. Their survey did not have enough in-depth analysis to support that decision.

Mr. McLeod: Is the jury still out on this issue?

Gen Thompson: No. We reclaimed the number. We told General Kross [Air Force General Walter, USCINCTRANS] the number was so high MTMC would be unable to perform its mission in the future. He and I reached an agreement that the cut would not be 1,104, but rather it would be 962, 939 of which will be DBOF cuts. He then obtained concurrence with the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army.

Mr. McLeod: Moving on to the question of TRANSCOM as an outside force, what impact has our "higher command" had on our operations?

Gen Thompson: I don't think it is an outside force, but it is a force, and increasingly so: it has matured greatly as a four-star command since I came on board as MTMC commander. It is now fully engaged in peacetime transportation, which obviously affects the wartime arena. They are better informed about our activities, and I certainly hope that they continue to increase their understanding of MTMC's contributions to the DTS and the nation.

Mr. McLeod: What role have you played in educating them? It may sound non-PC, but there seemed to be a lack of understanding at TRANSCOM as to what we do.

Gen Thompson: What is PC, politically correct or positive and cooperative?

Mr. McLeod: Whichever will lead to a productive discussion.

Gen Thompson: For whatever reason, when I came on board here I found it was very difficult to get TRANSCOM people to come and see how we operate on a daily basis. But now I am very encouraged by what seems to be a positive change in the way TRANSCOM views us. Key members of the TRANSCOM staff are visiting MTMC organizations at all levels, so that they can see what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. General Kross himself has been to see us several times already in his short time as CINC [Commander in Chief]. Of course, his previous experiences at TRANSCOM and elsewhere made him very well informed about our business before he ever visited us.

Tumultuous Times

Mr. McLeod: Portlook, Army Functional Area Assessments, and streamlining. Your time as MTMC Commander was tumultuous.

Gen Thompson: Absolutely. This has been a very tough time for folks at MTMC. For the first time ever in the history of the command, our people did not know what they would be doing five years down the road. They didn't know whether they would be a part of MTMC or whether they would be with some other organization because their job might be eliminated or transferred. Initially, these concerns were at the three headquarters, but now with Portlook, the concern is literally worldwide. So, a lot of our people have been anxious

over this uncertainty, giving me all the more reason to hold town hall meetings.* My subordinate commanders have followed suit, holding their own town hall meetings, to keep their people informed. We also sent out to the subordinate commands videotapes of me telling our folks what was going on and explaining to them the need for reengineering.

Mr. McLeod: Have we passed through the worst of the turbulence and are we now moving into a period of stability?

Gen Thompson: You have to measure that from two perspectives. First, what you know creates inside you a sense of unease or a sense of ease. Then secondly, you have to take a look at it from the “what is happening today” or “events” viewpoint. From the “knowledge” viewpoint, we are probably just over the peak. People now understand where the impacts will occur in the future and, generally speaking, whether they will be affected or they will not be affected. Now, hopefully, they can start thinking about making some personal career decisions. However, the key events are yet to occur. A number of employees have left the work force already in Oakland [California] and Bayonne [New Jersey], but what is yet to happen-- MTMC-Europe and MTMC-Pac[ific] reporting directly to MTMC Headquarters, and the Eastern Area and Western Area consolidation--will increase the turmoil. I do not think we have peaked in the “events” category. In the “knowledge” category, I think we are just over the peak.

*See page 24 for additional comments on town hall meetings.

Reengineering: JTMO, P-5, and Household Goods

Mr. McLeod: What was the origin of the JTMO [Joint Traffic Management Office]?

Gen Thompson: The JTMO is one of the streamlining effort's positive accomplishments. We were able to convince the TRANSCOM staff that traffic management was still fragmented--even though DTS-2010 set out to unfragment it--and that traffic management could best be unfragmented at the operator level as opposed to the planner and planner-policy making level. So, I was very pleased that their streamlining report recommended the formation of the Joint Traffic Management Office at Military Traffic Management Command. It is not complete, and there are some people at TRANSCOM who believe that whole function ought to be done out at Scott [Air Force Base (AFB), Illinois]. I disagree and have stated so in writing as well as publicly out there at TRANSCOM. I do believe that they need visibility over all requirements, and I believe that they need to act directly on some of those more macro, JOPES [Joint Operation Planning and Execution System]-related requirements, but the JTMO/Traffic Management functions are too detailed for a unified command to deal with day in and day out.

Mr. McLeod: Do you have initiatives underway, in addition to JTMO, to end fragmentation?

Gen Thompson: Yes, one of which, the P-5 program, was just getting going when I arrived here. The P-5 tested the use of one commercial contractor being responsible for delivery, receipt, preparation, overseas movement, and final delivery to the customer of privately owned vehicles. It is a new way of doing business. It employs a single

contractor to do all of those functions where in the past there might have been a combination of five different governmental or commercial entities involved. P-5 is one of our programs geared to unfragmenting traffic management.

We are also linking systems built for specific functions--like WPS [Worldwide Port System] which is primarily a port system--to other surface systems. This will give Headquarters, Military Traffic Management Command a macro-level look at a unit move throughout the whole process and make diversions or mode changes as the requirements may dictate. I made integration of transportation systems one of our core competencies.

Mr. McLeod: Passenger traffic. AMC [Air Mobility Command] has the industry side, and we have the passengers? Do you consider that fragmented?

Gen Thompson: Yes, that is the part of traffic management that JTMO did not fix. The original streamlining working group at TRANSCOM recommended all of that come to MTMC, but Air Mobility Command and others blocked it. General Rutherford [Air Force General Robert L, Retired, USCINCTRANS, 1994-1996], the CINC at the time, made the decision to bring air passenger transportation to TRANSCOM staff, which is, in my view, still a fragmentation of traffic management because every passenger movement is intermodal. As such, they must, by definition, involve Military Traffic Management Command and the JTMO.

Mr. McLeod: Is traffic management as practiced by MTMC alive and well?

Gen Thompson: We are no different than anybody else. We have to have process improvements, and we have tremendous opportunities for further traffic management process improvements. Some of that is a result

of the Interstate Commerce Commission's demise and the formation of something called a Surface Transportation Board, which portends different ways of doing business in the future as delineated under the government policies and laws of today. That is going to cause us to make sure that we are really doing things differently in traffic management.

In general, I believe our traffic management processes are still too cumbersome. We need to find ways to use automation and software to streamline everything from Guaranteed Traffic to the way we do tenders. We have made a lot of progress, but we have a long ways yet to go.

Mr. McLeod: Would you consider our household goods reengineering effort our flagship of process improvement initiatives?

Gen Thompson: In a sense it is our flagship. Household goods reengineering has been one of our most difficult process improvement initiatives because industry, in this case, really did not want to work with us, their customer. They wanted to continue with the same old, inefficient processes, which were contributing to unnecessarily high amounts of damage to our service members' possessions. So, household goods reengineering, in a sense, became our flagship because it represents a dramatic change in the way we do business with the industry. It will dramatically lower our overall costs and, more importantly, serve to improve service to our customers, the troops.

The DTS: Peacetime Investment in Wartime Readiness

Mr. McLeod: How seriously do you take the threat of DLA, DeCA [Defense Commissary Agency], and AAFES [Army and Air Force Exchange Service] moving out of the DTS?

Gen Thompson: I take it seriously because they have friends on Capitol Hill believing that that ought to occur. So, we need to take it seriously, and we need to deal with it decisively. The dilemma is that we in transportation are expected to be a business. And AAFES and DeCA and DLA are also expected to be businesses. Their business is more precisely measured on a daily basis in peacetime. They would have to expand or surge in wartime much the same as anyone else, but they do not have infrastructure that has to expand quite the same way as our transportation infrastructure would have to expand.

In the best of all business worlds, on a daily basis, a business has just enough to meet requirements. However, TRANSCOM has to have access to capability for wartime requirements that are above and beyond its peacetime capability. Such surge capability is not something you can easily build or bring into the deployment equation when the crisis occurs. You have to have that surge capability embedded into the command before the crisis. The business goals of AAFES and DeCA are sales, profit, and dividends, while the principle business goal of TRANSCOM, and hence MTMC, is capability to move and sustain the force in both peace and war with a surge infrastructure--including military knowledge and experience--embedded in the DTS.

This business goal imbalance or mismatch has some possibly serious ramifications. We have to reduce the rates that our customers pay for transportation or we might see them go outside the DTS, which would be disastrous! Another option: recognition by Congress and Department of Defense leaders that our customers must help pay for readiness. By letting DeCA or AAFES go out of the Defense Transportation System, we will lose the revenues we need to maintain our surge capability.

Mr. McLeod: Could you say that these agencies are, in effect, being taxed for strategic mobility?

Gen Thompson: I do not like the term “taxed.” They are contributing to the ability of the Defense Transportation System to support them in a crisis much the same as the Defense Transportation System supports them every day.

Mr. McLeod: So, they benefit from that embedded surge infrastructure in the DTS when the balloon goes up.

Gen Thompson: They absolutely do, and I have said this before. If AAFES goes out of the Defense Transportation System now, then in an all out war, say in the Balkans, when transportation capability is constrained, they will have a very hard time getting a container into Bosnia without coming back into the Defense Transportation System. AAFES has got to understand that. In peacetime, AAFES is like a commercial business. However, unfortunately--or fortunately, depending on how you look at it--they are a defense-related business, and part of their mission is to take care of soldiers in wartime.

Mr. McLeod: Who is the decision maker in this case?

Gen Thompson: Ultimately, Congress makes decisions and enforces them by enacting laws, but the Department of Defense to date has not been willing to let our customers take apart the Defense Transportation System.

Conclusion

Mr. McLeod: What are the fundamental challenges that General Montero [Army Major General Mario “Monty” F., Jr., General Thompson’s successor at MTMC] will face when he comes on board?

Gen Thompson: He has to make sure that all of our reengineering efforts will proceed on track. There are a series of four key activities that will have to take place: one, ensure that our people are taken care of; two, ensure that we close our garrisons, as designated by the BRAC Commission, effectively and positively; three, maintain and retain our mission accomplishment capability around the world during our reengineering; and four, ensure that we do not take any further manpower cuts without a complete understanding of what it will do to our mission accomplishment capability. General Montero must stay the course in these four areas.

Specifically, he has to work very hard to bring to fruition the pilot test for household goods reengineering. That will be a significant challenge for him and will occupy a lot of his time. In general, he must make sure that we focus our energies on our four core competencies. He will also have to continually assess industry’s willingness and capability to support our wartime surge requirements. All my contacts with industry the last two years lead me to question the commercial transportation industry’s ability to come to our aid like they did during Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

Mr. McLeod: What advice do you have for young transportation officers who have embarked on an Army transportation career?

Gen Thompson: I transferred out of field artillery into transportation after being in the Army for five years--one of the best decisions I've ever made. This career field is extremely exciting and tremendously rewarding in peacetime and wartime. I encourage young officers to embrace transportation for its critical role in national security, and to learn from the commercial industry how to apply technology to military transportation. I also encourage them to work in Military Traffic Management Command because so much of the Defense Transportation System relies upon us. Finally, I encourage them to focus on the customer.

Mr. McLeod: Are there other points that you feel we should have covered?

Gen Thompson: I would like to conclude by saying how I am continually amazed at the high quality work our folks do without a lot of overhead, supervision, or assistance. You can send a MTMC team--military or civilian--out anywhere in the world, and they find innovative ways to get the job done. And they do it superbly. General Kross recognizes MTMC's worth, and has told our folks so on more than one occasion. MTMC's tremendous achievements, accomplished with relatively few people, are often overlooked by many in the Department of Defense.

I am certainly very proud of our folks and their contributions to the DTS and national security. Let me give you one example of why I feel so proud to have commanded MTMC. Five days after US forces arrived in Haiti, I went down there to a dock at the dilapidated port to find about fourteen MTMC people--contractors, military, and civilians, male and female--living in pretty primitive conditions. But they were a team accomplishing the MTMC

mission in an outstanding fashion. That is the type of memory I will cherish from my assignment as MTMC Commander, our folks working together in a tough environment. We have people doing that every day around the world, and I am very, very proud of their contributions.

Mr. McLeod: Thank you very much.

*Part Two: Deputy Commander in Chief, USTRANSCOM**

Introduction: Early Career

Dr. Matthews: How would you describe your management style?

Gen Thompson: Collaborative. I trust the professionals at [US]TRANSCOM [United States Transportation Command], their skills, talents, abilities, and savvy, to get the job done right. I try not to look too frequently over their shoulders to tell them how to get to the right level of excellence. A term I often use is “positive and cooperative.” I’ve tried to convince everybody that they need to be positive and cooperative with each other to accomplish the mission. It has always been my view that if you keep things positive, people will enjoy working together to achieve excellence.

Dr. Matthews: Why town hall meetings?

Gen Thompson: My town hall meetings--meant to foster an atmosphere of cooperation--are “my style.” I had them as frequently as possible at TRANSCOM and MTMC [Military Traffic Management Command] and almost every time I went out to MTMC’s subordinate commands. I told our people what was going on as I viewed it from my position, and listened to their concerns, so I knew first-hand and personally what I needed to work on to continue nurturing an atmosphere of positivism and cooperation throughout the command. Town Hall meetings, I believe, facilitated the flow of information up and down the chain, and encouraged our people to be part of the team, the whole

*Conducted by Dr. James K. Matthews, September 1999.

TRANSCOM team.

Dr. Matthews: Is there anything in particular that you can look back on in your education, training, and experiences that helped shape your management style?

Gen Thompson: Through observation of bosses and co-workers, I learned that some may be able to accomplish a lot through intimidation, fear, ranting, and raving, but I noted that the people working for such bosses were not happy in their work, were not very innovative because they were always concerned about whether the boss was going to fly off the dag-gone handle and chew them out. I try to be flexible and open-minded, which generally results in innovation because workers then do not fear failure. Certainly I credit Army General Jimmy Ross [Army General Jimmy D., Retired] for whom I worked three different times, with shaping my management style. He was a bright, intelligent, dynamic leader who reached four stars in the Army through a positive and cooperative management style combined with keen talent. And everyone wanted to work for him because he was that good. I've seen it in more than just one Service. General Kross [Air Force General Walter, Commander in Chief (CINC), USTRANSCOM, 1996-1998] has the same method of management as does our current CINC [Air Force General Charles T. "Tony" Robertson, Jr., 1998 to present].

Dr. Matthews: Looking back on your time at West Point, what did you learn about logistics and transportation?

Gen Thompson: There wasn't a lot of instruction on logistics and transportation in an institutional, doctrinal sense. In some of the military history that we studied--Napoleonic Wars, the Civil War, etc.--there were times when logistics successes or failures were highlighted as a means by which a battle or campaign was won or lost. But the

courses didn't dig into the logistical issues. It was almost an afterthought. Most of the course time was spent on tactical/strategic maneuvers, as opposed to the logistics.

Dr. Matthews: You started as an artillery officer. Was artillery your first choice?

Gen Thompson: Yes. At West Point, you were given five different branches to choose from determined by your class ranking: armor, artillery, signal, infantry, and engineers. When it came my turn, I still could have gone four of the five. One of them was already closed out, but it wasn't the one I wanted so it didn't bother me. So I went into artillery.

Dr. Matthews: You were in Vietnam from June 1968 to June 1969. How and when did you hear you were going to war?

Gen Thompson: I received a call at Fort Hood, Texas, the end of May 1968 telling me it was my turn to go to Vietnam and I said, "Okay. I was expecting this one. When do you want me there?" They said, "We want you there by the end of June." I said, "You aren't giving me much time to sign over command of my artillery battery." They said, "We know but we want you there because you are airborne qualified."

Dr. Matthews: What action did you see in Vietnam?

Gen Thompson: I was deployed to Vietnam and assigned to the 2d [Battalion]/321st Artillery. This artillery battalion was in direct support of a separate brigade of the 82d Airborne Division. This brigade was attached to the 101st Airborne Division and had been deployed from Fort Bragg [North Carolina] to support our forces responding

to the Tet Offensive.* But once we got over there, Tet was pretty well finished. My first six months was as both Battalion S-2 [Intelligence] and S-5, the battalion civic action officer. My job was to gather and process intelligence from higher headquarters mostly about where the enemy was likely to be in the areas around Hue and Phu Bai, Vietnam. Once I did that I would build a target list for us to use to fire on the enemy, either as part of a major operation or as what we called harassment and interdiction fires. My first six months were spent doing that kind of thing.

Dr. Matthews: You were then assigned as a firing battery commander?

Gen Thompson: I commanded what was called Bravo Battery. There were A, B, and C batteries, and I was the B Battery commander. Each battery was in direct support of one of the infantry battalions of the brigade. B Battery was in direct support most of time of the 2d of the 505th [2/505]. When I took over the battery, the whole brigade had moved south from the Hue area, where some major fighting had occurred, to a position about twenty miles outside of downtown Saigon. We needed to be placed there to help block an expected massive infiltration of North Vietnamese units. Our battery location was on a Vietnamese Army Engineer compound about 15 to 20 miles out of downtown Saigon. Within a month we were deployed to an area further up into the middle of the jungle. We supported the 2/505 Infantry Battalion, which had been attached first to the 1st Infantry Division, then later to the 1st Cavalry Division. They helo-lifted us, our howitzers and ammunition. We went to five different locations within a period of

*Tet is a traditional Vietnamese holiday that celebrates the beginning of the lunar new year. During the Vietnam War, it had been customary for both sides to observe a cease-fire during the Tet holiday. In a surprise breach of the cease-fire, on 30 January 1968, at the beginning of the Tet holiday, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong simultaneously attacked major cities, towns, and military bases throughout Vietnam.

six or seven weeks. Our deployments were based on intel[ligence], where we thought the enemy was and where the firefights were likely to occur.

Dr. Matthews: So you'd go into these clearings and set up your firing positions and wait for the infantry guys who were out there in the firefights to call you and say, "We need fire support."

Gen Thompson: That's correct.

Dr. Matthews: Did the enemy ever attack your battery?

Gen Thompson: No, but we were operating in direct support of our troops no more than eight miles away who were in contact with the North Vietnamese or in some cases the Viet Cong. I remember one particular day where we fired over a thousand rounds.

Dr. Matthews: Was your civic action job similar to PSYOPs [psychological operations]?

Gen Thompson: In some ways, yes. I organized what was called medcaps. We traveled with the battalion surgeon and various medics in trucks into Vietnamese villages in coordination with the local Vietnamese authorities in an effort to "win the hearts and minds" of the locals. It was designed to show the Vietnamese villagers that the government in Vietnam had their best interests at heart. In the villages we would distribute donations of food and medicine from the United States. The doctor, and sometimes the dentist, would set up shop and the Vietnamese authorities would say, "Okay, we're here to help you." Of course the kids would come out first. We'd give them a toy or a bar of soap or toothpaste. The docs would do their thing. Meanwhile, the intel types would attempt to find out whether there had been any Viet Cong in the area. A squad or platoon of infantry would set up a semi-perimeter around

the village in the event something would happen while we were there. We left instructions with the village chiefs that if they saw anything or they were afraid, they could contact the Vietnamese government or a US military unit. So we helped the villagers while we looked around. After my six months command, which was fairly standard, and the end of my tour as well, I gave up my battery and went back to the United States.

Dr. Matthews: Why did you go into the transportation business?

Gen Thompson: I was about ready to get out of the Army. I had my papers in. There were several reasons why I wanted to get out of the Army but the most important was what General Meyer [Army General Edward C., Chief of Staff of the Army, 1979-1983] referred to as the “hollow Army.” I had finished my duty in Vietnam and was stationed in Germany. At the time, the early 1970s, resources were going to Vietnam. And in Europe, we were getting troops that were coming in from Vietnam who were draftees. They had only four or five months left and we couldn’t convince most of them to reenlist. So we had a lot of rotation, a lot of turmoil. Race relations were also bad. There was dissatisfaction among the African American soldiers. The Army in Europe in the early 1970s was just not a very good place to be. It had the mission of protecting Western Europe from a potential Soviet invasion, but was terribly under resourced. We did not have enough artillery ammunition to train properly. Out of a sense of helplessness about a number of things going on, I submitted my papers. When I did, two or three of my superiors threw an arm around my shoulders and said, “You really ought to stay in the Army. Let me tell you about some other opportunities in other branches of the Army.”

Dr. Matthews: Who were these people?

Gen Thompson: One was my battalion commander, Eberhard Pfaller, who had fought with the Germans in World War II. He told me, “We want guys like you to be in the Army of the future. I think you’re a great officer. Why don’t you stay in the Army and if you need to go to some other branch, I’ll help you get there.” And he did. He took me to the division G-4, which is logistics. I got a job working in that arena, where I learned more about transportation, supply, maintenance, medical, and so forth.

There I met Major John Morris, who was the Division Transportation Officer. He said, “Hey, if you’re looking for something else, we transporters have ships and trains and trucks. We have big responsibilities for things in peace and war. You’ll never be bored in transportation. There’s always going to be something to move.” Pfaller introduced me to a senior transporter who helped me link to Army PERSCOM [Personnel Command] to get a branch transfer. I left Europe and went to Fort Eustis, Virginia, to attend the Army’s transportation school for captains called the Army Advanced Course. That’s how it all happened.

Desert Shield/Desert Storm

Dr. Matthews: What did your command, the 37th Transportation Company, do during Desert Shield/Desert Storm?

Gen Thompson: Just about anything you could think of. We were a truck unit with 1,100 tractors and 2,800 trailers. There were four battalions under my command. In peacetime we hauled ammunition, mail, commissary goods, and other normal unit supplies. We were in charge of ALOC [air lines of communications] traffic routes where high priority parts would be flown into Ramstein [Air Base (AB)],

Germany] or to Rhein Main [AB, Germany] and we'd route it to the units. Very little moved commercially.

Dr. Matthews: That was your peacetime mission.

Gen Thompson: We did it every day. But when Desert Shield and Storm popped, I needed to expand big time into commercial contracting. The movement control guys were the ones who usually made contracts or arrangements with the bus companies and whatever commercial transportation was required. I was called on the Friday after Thanksgiving [1990] and told that in two days or less I had to be in Stuttgart, Germany, where I would now be in charge of all of the arrangements to bus 75,000 troops and to haul their baggage from over a hundred locations in Germany to one of five different air heads. There we would turn them over to the movements guys to get them aboard planes to fly to the Persian Gulf. In addition, I was ordered to prepare two companies of my own troops to deploy to Saudi Arabia, and charged with hauling unbelievable tonnages of ammunition to ports in Northern Europe and to rail heads to be loaded on trains for movement to the seaports of embarkation. It was a very busy time and we did it with fewer troops because we had deployed those two units forward. We did get one National Guard unit as a backfill, but it seemed to take forever to get them trained. I mean, driving on European highways at the normal high speeds in Germany requires intense safety and driver training programs. You don't do that in just a couple of days.

Dr. Matthews: There were MTMC transportation terminal units deployed during Phase II deployment to Europe. Did you interact with them at all?

Gen Thompson: Yes, I was in direct contact with Colonel Barnaby [Army Colonel Richard J.], commander of MTMC-Europe. There were no transportation generals in Europe. Since there were three colonels

in command positions who were transporters, my vision was to organize an informal colonels group where we would meet periodically to try to make sure that we understood what each other was doing, and if we needed a united voice when interacting with generals in Europe.

Dr. Matthews: Who was the third colonel and what was his job?

Gen Thompson: Carl Salyer [Army Colonel H. Carl]. He was the commander of the 1st TMCA [Transportation Movement Control Agency].

Dr. Matthews: Did you coordinate with Barnaby and Salyer on barge transport?

Gen Thompson: Yes. Both were outstanding officers who accomplished so very much there. We delivered a lot of stuff to barge sites, the one at Mannheim [Germany] primarily.

Dr. Matthews: The units that you deployed to the desert, did you go out to see them?

Gen Thompson: I wish I could have. I didn't go to the desert. I was busy enough in Europe. [Laughter]

Dr. Matthews: Reforger* in reverse?

Gen Thompson: But in a lot less time, and with hardly any advanced notice at all. If you recall, there was an election in early November that year [mid-term congressional elections] and we were not given any formal notification about a Phase II deployment from Europe of 75,000 soldiers until after the election. All we had deployed at that point was an aviation brigade.

Dr. Matthews: How well did the organizational structure for transportation work?

*Return of Forces to Germany was an exercise for deploying troops from the United States to Germany.

Gen Thompson: It worked remarkably well given the short planning time frame, and given the fact there was no single general officer leadership of the disparate organizations. I should rephrase that. There was general officer directionship of each of the three transport commands, but the directions came from four different people. My direction came from both the Commanding General of the 21st TAACOM [Theater Army Area Command], Lieutenant General William Flynn--who was responsible for all European troop sustainment and for “beefing up” the stocks of deploying VII Corps units--and from Major General John [C.] Heldstab, the USAREUR DCSOPS [United States Army Forces, United States European Command, Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations], for the actual movement of troops and baggage. Carl Salyer took direction from USAREUR DCSLOG [Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics], General Laposata [Army Major General Joseph S.]. Colonel Barnaby took direction from General Piatak [Army Major General John R., Commander, MTMC, 1989-1991] at MTMC headquarters in Washington, D.C. It was important that we worked together to make sure that we weren’t being dysfunctional. If we didn’t coordinate our individual efforts, we’d have major screw-ups that USAREUR couldn’t afford.

Dr. Matthews: Is there anything else on your experiences during Desert Shield/Desert Storm that you would like to add here?

Gen Thompson: I feel I need to emphasize one point. Perhaps our forces in Europe have not received due credit for their achievements during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Those forces weren’t deployment-oriented. They were a GDP [General Defense Plan]-oriented force. When they talked about wartime deployment, they meant driving an average of about fifty miles from their bases in convoys to set up battle positions to defend against the Soviets. Other peacetime

training deployments were planned well in advance by rail, to Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, or Wildflecken, for example, for weapons fire or maneuver practice. Figuring out what to take to a war a continent away on short notice and to load out on ships and barges, which they had not trained to do, was, to me, a gargantuan accomplishment. It wasn't done easily. There were a lot of fits and starts but they pulled together, "they" being the European force. To get about half the total troops out of Dodge and in theater was no mean task.

Dr. Matthews: So calling the Phase II deployment from Europe a Reforger in reverse greatly oversimplifies the task?

Gen Thompson: If you're on a Reforger, you know that you're going to deploy a year to two years out. You know where the box is in which you are going to maneuver. You start collecting all your stuff. You designate which soldier will go and which soldier will stay. In Desert Shield and Storm, all this was done on the fly. The other thing that they aren't given enough credit for is that even though it was called the VII Corps, half or near half of the units really came from V Corps. So the V Corps gave up some of the units from their command and control structure. I mean they were used to V Corps training, operating, and logistics policies and procedures. Some of those units went lock, stock, and barrel over to the VII Corps commander and so they had to learn how to work together...and quickly! It was no Reforger in reverse. Our transporters and logisticians did a superb job in this "come as you are" environment. I think those guys and gals deserve more credit than they have received in the historical record to date. For example, USAREUR DCSOPS, General Heldstab, put together an ad hoc team of about five colonels, I was one of them, in Stuttgart on 26 November to figure out how the heck we were going to start

the move out the first of December. We had only about five days to put it together.

Dr. Matthews: Were you part of the group that set up that model for train equivalents, measuring the amount of goods that you would have to move to the ports by train? They weren't actual trains but train equivalents.

Gen Thompson: I was involved in it but it was principally the movement control guys under Colonel Carl Salyer. They did a super job. General Laposata set up a cell with Carl Salyer that figured out train equivalents, how many containers would be needed, where we got them from, and all that. I would occasionally sit down with that group and do some cross-checking about how they were doing, what they were doing, and making sure that what I was doing was linking to them; not only what we were doing in moving troops and baggage, but also what we were doing in our daily movements, how we moved ammunition on our trucks, was it going to be containerized or not, and flatbed trailers capabilities. I would tell them, "Here's what we can move by truck and, oh by the way, if that's not enough for you," which it wasn't, "you're going to have to figure out how to move it by trains." They figured out the train equivalent not only for what that would mean in terms of tonnage throughput but also how it might least disrupt the normal German rail system.

Dr. Matthews: The story of how we deployed from Europe during Desert Shield/Desert Storm hasn't been told accurately or fairly yet in a book form.

Gen Thompson: And slowly but surely we are losing the opportunity to capture that story.

First MTMC Commander to Serve as DCINC

Dr. Matthews: We could probably spend the rest of our interview time on Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Maybe some day we can come back to it. You were the first MTMC commander to serve as our DCINC [Deputy Commander in Chief]. How did that experience benefit you here?

Gen Thompson: [Laughter] It benefited me in a lot of ways. First of all, just the peripheral exposure I got to what was going on here at Scott [AFB, Illinois] that was not in the MTMC area made me, I think, better prepared to be DCINC. The fact that I, through that same experience, had met some of the players at TRANSCOM and got to know them really smoothed my transition. I can't speak for General Smith [Army Lieutenant General Hubert G., Retired, DCINC, USTRANSCOM, 1995-1997] or General Wykle [Army Lieutenant General Kenneth R., Retired, DCINC, USTRANSCOM, 1993-1995] or any of the other former DCINC's, but I can definitely say I felt like I rolled into the job a little more easily than I might have otherwise just because I had had that exposure. I knew essentially what the command was all about. I knew that they had gotten the peacetime mission in 1992 and they started working on it in 1993. I knew some of the "bright ideas"--for example, the Defense Transportation Agent or what we know as Installation Transportation Officers should belong to TRANSCOM--proposals that General Fogleman [Air Force General Ronald R., Retired, USCINCTRANS, 1992-1994] and his staff came up with.

I think my in-depth and detailed understanding of MTMC operations also helped at times because there weren't a lot of

people who had that kind of experience and background out here at TRANSCOM or elsewhere for that matter. I represented the MTMC corporate knowledge, operationally and in the policy arenas.

Dr. Matthews: General Kross has said “role theory” is not really a theory, it’s an actuality. In your case, as the MTMC commander, you think one way and when you come to TRANSCOM, you’re going to think another way, from a different perspective. How did your ideas change about MTMC--in particular the streamlining efforts that you were involved in on the MTMC end--when you came here a couple of years later?

Gen Thompson: I sense that when you heard I was coming out here that you probably started licking your chops to see how this role theory would work.

Dr. Matthews: Yes sir.

Gen Thompson: And you weren’t the only one. You all thought, “Oh gosh, we’re getting this guy who was always fighting us about streamlining MTMC. Now let’s see what he’s going to do now that he’s wearing the DCINC hat.” First of all, to set the record straight, I was not against streamlining. As a matter of fact, I had launched our streamlining well before Bob Rachor [Navy Captain Robert L., Jr., Director, Financial Management and Program Analysis, USTRANSCOM (TCJ8)] and the others started crunching numbers to figure out what they thought the MTMC manning number ought to be. I was already in the role of streamlining well before TRANSCOM decided that they needed to tell me what they thought the number should be.

Dr. Matthews: And why was that?

Gen Thompson: When I took over MTMC I had just come from the Army Materiel Command [AMC]. In the mid-1980s, AMC had 125,000 people. I came into AMC in 1993 and they were in the high 70s. And by the time I left that command in 1994 their new target was about 52,000. In that command, I watched AMC eliminate large numbers of personnel positions, including SESs [Senior Executive Service] and general officers in their headquarters and staff sections. I had seen them eliminate entire layers of headquarters bureaucracy. When I arrived at MTMC I could see that the command, the way it was manned and organized, didn't fit with the realities of what was going on out there in the world. My experience on the Army Staff as a one-star budget guy as well as my AMC experience let me see the writing on the wall at MTMC. Before TRANSCOM said, "Geez, MTMC, we really think you need to streamline," we had already embarked on an "organizational excellence" initiative. I drew a picture on the board for my MTMC team and I said, "Okay guys, here are all the external forces. Now go tell me what you think MTMC ought to be five years from now." They went away and came back in two weeks and said, "We've had a lot of discussions about this, but we're not really sure what you want us to do." I said, "The reason I gave you such a broad tasking was to see where you might go." Then I drew more pictures, I gave more specific guidance, we had good discussions, and they went back to work again.

Dr. Matthews: You knew the BRAC [Base Realignment and Closure] Commission was coming.

Gen Thompson: We had several offsite meetings to examine if there were no Eastern and Western Area MTMC Commands and how that might work with a CONUS [continental United States] command, which we now call the Deployment Support Command [DSC]. And this

was before BRAC was even done. The Army suggested closing Bayonne [Military Ocean Terminal, New Jersey], which was the location of the headquarters for Eastern Area and one of the O-6 [colonel] terminal commands. During the course of the BRAC proceedings, the BRAC team itself said, “Geez, if you’re going to do Bayonne, why don’t you do Oakland [Military Ocean Terminal, California]?” But we were already fairly well down the road with the concept for having a single CONUS command, a Pacific command, and a European command before BRAC directed closing Oakland and Bayonne.

The point I’m trying to make is that we at MTMC were well on the way to streamlining our command before TRANSCOM said in any formal way that they wanted us to streamline. Before I left MTMC, General Kross and I reached the bottom line number for personnel at MTMC. It was higher [more people] than the number that TRANSCOM had, on General Rutherford’s [Air Force General Robert L., Retired, USCINCTRANS, 1994-1996] watch, told me to get to. After I left MTMC, my successor, Monty Montero [Army Major General Mario F., Jr., Commander, MTMC, 1997-1999], made it happen.

Dr. Matthews: What were the differences between your approach to streamlining and TRANSCOM’s to streamlining MTMC?

Gen Thompson: I wanted two phases, first headquarters, then the ports. TRANSCOM pressure prompted me to undertake sooner the Portlook Study* and it became a great baseline. The Portlook thing was something that I had intended to delay a little bit, though we went ahead and did it. When we saw TRANSCOM’s numbers, we

**Portlook Study Report: Review of MTMC Worldwide Port Infrastructure*, MTMC, 30 September 1996.

said, "Geez, I guess we are going to have to go ahead and take a look at the ports now." So, initially, I probably didn't go as far, as radically, and as dramatically as TRANSCOM wanted me to. But we eventually did.

Dr. Matthews: Assess the Deployment Support Command.

Gen Thompson: The Deployment Support Command construct for today is the right construct. It is an organization that has its prime connections to deploying units, but also has connectivity to installation transportation offices, transportation management offices, and movement control centers, which is really where transportation in the military starts. It doesn't start at TRANSCOM. It doesn't start at MTMC headquarters. It starts on bases and camps and posts where something has to be moved and there had better be procedures in place for the ITO [Installation Transportation Office] and TMO [Transportation Management Office] to be able to get their stuff out of the fort or base and to its final destination. They use the regulation TRANSCOM has responsibility for, but it's the MTMC people who do that, and the Deployment Support Command is the first connection point day in and day out for those ITOs and TMOs. I think the Deployment Support Command, for now, is right where it should be. They're running most of the ports of the continental United States and they have the main connectivity with the reserve component units that train with us. They are down on the ground making it all happen. When the Services have to deploy, they will be sustained.

But the challenge has always been what do we do at MTMC headquarters versus what occurs at the Deployment Support Command. Who does this and who does that? Can there be shared responsibilities and so forth? Is MTMC Headquarters more of an

outward looking, strategic, kind of organization, whereas the Deployment Support Command is inward to the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine ITO/TMO/MCC [Mobility Control Center] structure? More importantly, how do our customers view the set up? Does it confuse the customer? Are they or will they be asking, “Where is my point of contact? Do I go to the headquarters or do I go to the Deployment Support Command?”

Dr. Matthews: What do you think the construct or organization of MTMC will be in five years?

Gen Thompson: You should really ask General Privratsky [Army Major General Kenneth L., Commander, MTMC, 1999-present] what he thinks because he’s going to be responsible for it. Ultimately, though, I think there will be another look at what the headquarters does versus what the Deployment Support Command does. Will there be some virtual connectivity that will be seamless to the customers, so they won’t see what the headquarters does versus what DSC does? And how will all that fit into the JMCG [Joint Mobility Control Group] concept? How will the virtual ops [operations] center of the future work? I think that will shape a lot of where MTMC goes in the future. Along with more centralization of “administrative” functions.

Dr. Matthews: How will third party logistics shape MTMC?

Gen Thompson: My view is that MTMC is and should be *the* third party logistician for transportation and traffic management for the Department of Defense [DOD]. There are those who think that ought to be all contracted out to some civilian company and that MTMC should serve as the Contracting Officer Representative. There is probably some middle ground there that will eventually prevail, but my personal view is we can never give that away to some commercial

firm and let them do it lock, stock, and barrel. That would be like shooting ourselves in the foot. We must show judiciousness in how we accomplish this traffic management.

Dr. Matthews: Would you please define that for me?

Gen Thompson: Judiciousness?

Dr. Matthews: [Laughter] No, traffic management.

Gen Thompson: I don't have the schoolbook definition in my head. But here's what I call it. Traffic management is providing the transportation mechanisms through which cargo gets moved from the origin to the destination in a way that efficiently and effectively meets the customers' needs. It is an array of tools, either contractual or procedural, that takes the way commercial companies and military transportation units operate, and then superimposes transportation requirements on the operational characteristics and capabilities. Thus, when something gets moved, it gets moved in the most efficient and effective way, using generally accepted transportation principles.

Dr. Matthews: And you feel that is the best title for the command?

Gen Thompson: Your implication is that since so few people understand the phrase "traffic management," why do we put it in the title?

Dr. Matthews: I don't know that there is anything better. Now that you have defined it, it seems to fit pretty darn well.

Gen Thompson: There are some former MTMC commanders who were upset with the moniker "Deployment Support Command." They thought that it took too much away from all that I just described as traffic management. Beauty is obviously in the eye of the beholder. Unlike those former commanders, there are many people in

organizations who don't understand the value of traffic management or what MTMC does day in and day out. As long as things are going well, it's kind of like, "Geez, what do those folks do?"

Dr. Matthews: How have our relationships with the component commands evolved since you've been the MTMC commander and our DCINC? What changes have you seen for the better or for the worse?

Gen Thompson: There has been an overall steady improvement in the daily working relationships. I remember that the first few months of my time as MTMC commander I seldom, if ever, got a call from TRANSCOM. And I seldom called TRANSCOM. But then we got into a couple of contingencies in which I worked pretty darn close with General Handy [Air Force Major General John W., Director, Operations and Logistics, USTRANSCOM (TCJ3/J4), 1993-1995], the J3/J4 at the time. I found that that led naturally to me providing either the CINC or the DCINC updates or sanity checks on what we were doing and how we were doing it, how we were fitting in. So I think over time, the relationship has evolved into a much more smoothly functioning, more integrated command. The two CINCs I have worked for, Generals Kross and Robertson have led the way. Is there room for improvement? Yes, there will always be room for improvement.

Dr. Matthews: Anything in particular that you think we need to improve?

Gen Thompson: We have a lot more work to do on the JMCG construct, how it will coordinate air, sea, and especially land movement. Establishing rules for the three modes has been a positive step.

Household Goods Reengineering

Dr. Matthews: In his oral history, General Kross didn't have much good to say about the household goods moving industry. As a MTMC commanding general and as TRANSCOM DCINC, you've fought this war even longer than him.

Gen Thompson: [Laughter] Yes, I have my battle scars to prove it, too.

Dr. Matthews: Can you put a positive spin on the progress in reengineering the process and on how our relationship--past, present, and future--has evolved with the industry?

Gen Thompson: How many hours do you have? [Laughter] The short version is that that industry has been *extremely* difficult to work with for a lot of reasons. The biggest reason, though, is they wanted to defend the status quo and we were moving too far away from the status quo as they viewed it. They had some lobbying organizations that, I believe, poured gasoline on a fire. "In the beginning," a guy named Ken Wykle sent a tasker to a guy named Roger Thompson. It was a very short, little memo saying something like, "Would like for you to reengineer household goods."

I first had to convince my own people that reengineering, vice a few tweaks, was in order. I said, "Go out and talk to corporate clients of the household goods industry. Find out how many claims for damages there have been in those corporate accounts. Then we'll compare that to the Department of Defense. And if the difference is significant, then the answer is, yes, we need to reengineer." They did it, and the difference was significant. I said, "We're going to reengineer." That's where it all started.

Dr. Matthews: You beat your heads against the wall for a long time.

Gen Thompson: Meanwhile, we were providing excellent top cover for the Army to do what they called, at the time, a “relocation test.” It had many of the same tenets and objectives that we had in our MTMC household goods reengineering. They were able to contract for a pilot test at Fort Stewart Hunter Army Air Field [Georgia] while we were still struggling with our piece of it. We learned from the Army pilot test that the relocation company’s third party logisticians could provide a value added, and one of which wouldn’t be purely household goods but a number of other services as well.

It took us forever, even with DOD’s help, to get the final permission from Congress to do the MTMC pilot, which is underway right now. I’m encouraged by where we are. We’ve reached a plateau, and I think we are in a good position to go forward with what’s now being called the Full Service Movement program. Mary Lou McHugh [Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Transportation Policy (ADUSD (L/TP))] has been working hard on it for over a year to get buy-in from the industry on what their roles might be in something that is a combination of MTMC’s test and the Army relocation test. I have great hopes. That said, it’s been too slow a process in part because of industry’s lack of cooperation. Six months to a year ago, they were mostly uncooperative. They have made it a gunfight at the OK Corral on Capitol Hill for two years running.

Dr. Matthews: What is your vision for the end state? How do we want to do household goods movement in the future?

Gen Thompson: It will probably be under the supervision of the Military Traffic Management Command through contractors. I see the tenets of the MTMC test will remain tenets for us to strive towards, and I sense

that major changes in the commercial world will revolutionize the way household goods move. Overall, I see a good news story for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and their families.

Financial Management Background

Dr. Matthews: I have a couple of observations about your role here as DCINC and how you differed from the past DCINCs. You have an exceptional grasp of the budget programming processes. Consequently, you were exceptionally well prepared to help us lower costs and rates.

Gen Thompson: I had the background to know the framework in which funds are requested and how funds move with missions. I had a good understanding from my Army budget days and from being in Army Materiel Command of how working capital funds operate. You didn't have to explain to me the process whereby extra costs of operations this year will become, all other things being equal, higher transportation prices to the customer two years from now.

General Kross made it my job to help the J3/J4 and the J8 get the cost drivers initiative to the next level. It helped that I had been involved in some other drills in other places on reducing operational costs. I had the background to know how it all worked and how it all played one against the other, at least in the major muscle movement arena.

Dr. Matthews: TRANSCOM really hit its stride in its cost efficiency movement on your watch here. It's almost like the Army sent you to work the Army budget to prepare you for coming here and running our efficiency program. [Laughter] I know it's hindsight, but it sure worked out well for us.

Gen Thompson: I don't know if any of that is true, but it might appear that way. In a farewell luncheon for several general officers, when it came to be my turn to be 'farewelled' from the Army Staff, and I'd only been the Army budget officer for nine months or so, the Chief of Staff of the Army told the attendees that he was really looking forward to me getting out to TRANSCOM because he figured I was going to find a way to solve the Army's transportation costs problems. Whether that was all magic planning by a whole bunch of people, I can't say. He, the Chief, said it tongue in cheek, I think. But you're right in thinking that having had that background and knowing how the parts moved together in the budget and programming world were certainly beneficial to me being able to do what General Kross wanted done. I can say it that way, I think.

Dr. Matthews: Another observation I have is that your involvement in policy issues here at TRANSCOM, more than any other DCINC, was personal, first hand, and on-the-spot. How did you manage to pull it off and still keep this place running?

Gen Thompson: [Laughter] A lot of people are asking that question, including my wife.

No one person keeps a place running by himself. And no one person can do all the things that a command gets credit for. There are all kinds of people who do wonderful things. If you look at the staff we have here and the construct that was here when I got here, I'd say conditions were fairly good for me being able to do the kind of things that you are "accusing" me of.

First of all, General Kross had already established the Business Center, a great mechanism for getting into policy, cost control, metrics, and customer focus. There was also considerable congressional pressure on TRANSCOM to reduce its costs, and I

was aware of all of that from my time in MTMC. I knew there were perceived threats by Congress and GAO [General Accounting Office] that Congress would write legislation forcing TRANSCOM to reduce customers' costs. Before I came to TRANSCOM, people at the command had worked a lot of hard days, months, and years to begin increasing transportation efficiencies. The ground here was fertile for change. I see myself in the efficiency area as an implementer.

Dr. Matthews: Is there anything in the policy arena with your trips to D.C. to work issues that stand out in your mind as having paid off big time because a three-star was involved in it?

Gen Thompson: The first day as DCINC I was in Washington [D.C.] to get \$54 million of out-of-cycle budget authority on the capital side for GTN [Global Transportation Network] so that we could make a technological leap. My charge from the CINC was to bring home the bacon, so to speak, to make dramatic improvements in GTN user friendliness. I led the team that briefed the Services and OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense]. Our job was to convince the skeptics that this was the right thing to do. I made phone calls and participated in behind-the-scene discussions to try to convince naysayers of a righteous cause. Then our J3/J4 and our [TC]J6 [Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems Directorate, USTRANSCOM] briefers were able to get everyone's buy-in, so we got the money. That is an example where the DCINC helped.

Transportation and Logistics Policy

Dr. Matthews: And the DCINC's role in the LRSSG [Logistics Reform Senior Steering Group]?

Gen Thompson: Another place where the DCINC works to great benefit of TRANSCOM and the Department of Defense is in the Logistics Reform Senior Steering Group. It was originally called the Breakfast Club, which was larger than the LRSSG and tended to discuss key logistic issues in the abstract. The Breakfast Club membership was streamlined and the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics [DUSD(L)], Mr. Kallock [Roger W.], teamed with the Joint Staff [JS]-J4 [Logistics Directorate] to form the LRSSG. It's goal was to speak with one voice in the DOD logistics policy arena. The LRSSG is the place where the DCINC can best articulate TRANSCOM's concerns and modus operandi so that there is no misunderstanding about what we do and what we need. Through the LRSSG we can build the DOD Strategic Logistics Plan, including strategic mobility and something called "customer wait time," which will be a new standard for how we measure getting things to the customer from its point of production to its point of reception. A customer, be it a unit in the field or someone on a battleship, who says, "I need this," [snapped fingers] and the clock starts ticking. And it doesn't stop ticking until the customer has received it and the system knows it has been received. The standard will be measured in that entire end-to-end time frame in which the customer was satisfied or not satisfied.

Dr. Matthews: Who are the members of this LRSSG?

Gen Thompson: Chaired by the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics, Mr. Kallock. Sort of co-chaired by, I call it a co-chair, the Joint

Staff J4, the director of the Defense Logistics Agency [DLA], each of the Service DCSLOGs, the TRANSCOM DCINC, certain Secretariat members of the Air Force, Army, and Navy logistics systems, and the Service LOG [logistics] chiefs. I would say the core group is really the Service DCSLOGs, DCINC, DLA, the Joint Staff J4, and the DUSD(L) as the chair. DISA [Defense Information Systems Agency] plays and that's important because of the information role that we've come to rely on so heavily. It's not the commander of the Defense Information Systems Agency, but it's one of his people. Anyone else who comes in is really not considered to be a voting member. They are auxiliary members with some applicable expertise. Right now the LRSSG meets religiously.

Dr. Matthews: Do you feel that there's someone not on it that should be on it?

Gen Thompson: No, I think it's about right. The bigger the organization, the more difficult it is to stay focused.

Dr. Matthews: There are a number of other groups that the DCINC goes to Washington to sit down with.

Gen Thompson: There's an AIT [Automated Information Technology] Principals Group that convenes periodically to try to make sure everyone is on the same sheet of music on how we do AIT. I, as the DCINC, was involved in several sessions in Washington dealing with household goods policy, including meetings with CEOs [chief executive officers] of various sections of the household goods industry. So the DCINC can play a very important role in the DOD transportation *and* logistics policy decisions.

Dr. Matthews: It seems to me that an Army three-star would be better suited to doing something like this than an Air Force or a Navy flag officer.

Gen Thompson: Strike me dead for being prejudiced [laughter], but I think it's absolutely essential that an Army officer do this. There aren't many totally air campaigns or totally sea campaigns--but when there is a significant ground campaign, it's going to be the Army that has to do it. And if you don't have the connections that an Army person in this DCINC position provides, then it's going to be harder to get the Army deployed. There have been countless times that I and my Army predecessors wearing the DCINC hat--by virtue of knowing how the Army deploys from the unit level and what their moving parts are--have been able to help expedite and, what I call "splain" to the Navy, the Military Sealift Command [MSC], and the Air Force, Air Mobility Command [AMC], and the TRANSCOM staff what must be done to get the job done with a little less spinning of wheels and confusion. Every one of the Army guys before me--Starling [Army Lieutenant General James D. "Dane," Retired, DCINC, USTRANSCOM, 1991-1993], Wykle, and Smith--had been in the Army transportation business. They were charged with moving troops on an intratheater level if not an intertheater level. They knew Army equipment, how much it weighs, and how it moves.

Dr. Matthews; So you think the DCINC should be Army every time?

Gen Thompson: I really think it ought to be an Army guy every time. The Air Force, so far, has been very successful in articulating why CINCTrans ought to be an Air Force guy every time: "we need someone as CINC who understands strategic air, all the moving parts that come with strat[egic] air." Well, it seems if you buy that logic, then the best complement as the DCINC must be an Army guy who can "splain" what the Army moves and how it moves. That's not to say there are not competent Navy or Air Force or Marine Corps guys who can do the DCINC job, but I think the

greatest good is gained by keeping the TRANSCOM three-star Army.

Dr. Matthews: How would you rate our relationship with the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Transportation Policy?

Gen Thompson: Good. Mary Lou McHugh and her folks do a good job of keeping us informed, and we are pretty good at keeping them informed. There are some on the TRANSCOM staff who believe at times OSD gets too much into the operator role when they should instead remain in the policy role. They would say that we need the balance checked every now and then. I think that we in TRANSCOM will always be making some policy and operating decisions, and they will always be coming up with some operational constructs in addition to the policy role that is their primary mission. The key point is that we collaborate. Most of the time we work very well together.

Dr. Matthews: How has our good working relationship with OSD improved a process or action?

Gen Thompson: Take MTMC Household Goods Reengineering, for example. They helped us with the overall game plan. They were instrumental in keeping Congress from killing the initiative. They helped us educate staffers. We wouldn't be in a MTMC Reengineering Pilot Test today had OSD not supported us heavily. It took four years as it was with all the maneuverings that occurred in the industry and on Capitol Hill, but it probably would have taken six years or more had OSD not helped us every step of the way.

Dr. Matthews: While General Fogleman was our CINC, we had a Top Ten list for TRANSCOM, projects and initiatives we needed to stay focused on at all costs. Everyone in the command knew what was on that

list. If we were to compose such a list today, what do you think should be on it?

Gen Thompson: I'm not going to give you ten, but I'll give you a few that have to be on the list. Making sure that we are providing the best possible product to the customer in GTN is one. Right now we're working on a new database that is targeted to be done in seventeen months. We need to stay the course. Management Reform Memorandum-15's impact on DTS [Defense Transportation System] operating capabilities must be on the list. Similarly, it is extremely important that the Mobility Requirements Study-2005 [MRS-05] is brought home to do what the CINC wants, which essentially is to have a realistic statement of transportation requirements. That will be easier said than done. We must make sure, through the QDR [Quadrennial Defense Review] process, that TRANSCOM roles, missions, and capabilities are clearly understood and supported. I was going to say protected, but I think supported is better because we are who we are and we need to stay that way in terms of what we are expected to do.

Another issue for our list is TRANSCOM manpower. There has always been and there will always be those who think that we are too big. They resort to counting the number of people in what they call "non-operations" positions. People just flat don't understand TRANSCOM's operating role. Operating is a broad term but operating in the sense that there are people here who are involved in formulating policy for operations and those who are involved in planning for wartime day in and day out. Worldwide Express,* for

*Worldwide Express (WWX) is an international delivery service initiated by AMC. A peacetime program providing high-priority delivery of documents and packages weighing up to 150 pounds, it promises door-to-door pickup and delivery, customs clearance, and intransit visibility via GTN and the worldwide web.

example, is a TRANSCOM operating system that works with a contract, but how it works in setting up the terms and conditions that will end up in the contractual document is, to me, operational. VISA [Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement]^{*} is another major muscle movement for the list. TRANSCOM people work on the contracting and legal aspects of VISA. That is “operational” work. It’s not only the successes that we’ve had in contingency contracting for Stages I and II, but it’s the linkage to the peacetime contract USC [Universal Services Contract]-02 and ultimately USC-03^{**} that we are going to have to stay the course on.

Dr. Matthews: You are halfway there.

Gen Thompson: Another Top Ten item is the strategy for airlift’s future. How will TRANSCOM play in that strategy? It has several facets. Services and the CINCDom requirements, and bright ideas in the Defense Science Board, Army Science Board, and various “think tanks.” How will we do early entry? There’s the AEF [Air Expeditionary Force] and Strike Force concept. “Tails, tails, tails”: the less flexibility we’ll have with C-141s going out and the C-17s coming in and the C-5 service life and operational reliability. TRANSCOM must play the central role in sorting this all out.

Dr. Matthews: Stay the course with the LMSRs [Large Medium-Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off ships]?

^{*}Developed in 1991 and approved by the Secretary of Defense on 30 January 1997, VISA is the United States’ primary sealift mobilization program. A unique partnership between DOD, Department of Transportation, and the US flag commercial sealift industry, it represents a major improvement over its predecessor, the Sealift Readiness Program or SRP. (SOURCE: USTRANSCOM Pamphlet 10-1, *VISA and the Sealift Mobilization Programs*, 21 September 1998).

^{**}USC-01, USC-02, and USC-03 are different versions from different years of the MTMC peacetime liner contract.

Gen Thompson: I don't see nearly the challenge on the sea side as I see on the air side, assuming we will stay the course, but every indication we have had so far is that no one is trying to undermine that approach. That's why I didn't raise it as a key issue, because I see it as being successful.

VISA

Dr. Matthews: VISA is tied in with keeping the maritime industry robust and that's tied into, of course, merchant mariners to man our ships.

Gen Thompson: Yes, you're right. And it's even bigger than that: Globalization, sea and air. But we're talking sea: the brave new world of foreign-owned, quasi-US flag companies where Neptune Orient Lines [NOL] or Canadian Pacific or Maersk [Line Ltd.], all three foreign companies, have a major say-so in how we get daily peacetime sealift for TRANSCOM. What does this all mean in wartime? Understanding that meaning will be a major challenge for us. I am, so far, very pleased with these new arrangements. We at TRANSCOM--most especially the CINC, DCINC, and component commanders--must keep engaged, assessing the impact of these new arrangements on the DTS in peace and war.

Dr. Matthews: When you came on board two years ago and walked into the VISA arena, what did you find? What was it like then?

Gen Thompson: A train in motion, but moving very slowly. We were getting ready to go into a rail yard, but we couldn't tell which track the train was going to take through the rail yard. The process had reached a point of detailed discussions but not much resolution. The carriers had written a letter to the CINC, General Kross, saying that they felt like the strategic partnership was having its problems and they made a recommendation or two. One of them was the DCINC

should chair an Executive Working Group [EWG] to resolve key issues. General Kross' guidance to me was, "You go ahead and do this. You be the chair of the Executive Working Group and you keep the focus on the strategic partnership/strategic trust." Early on in my tour there had been a CEO meeting at Piney Point [Maryland] at which General Kross had listened to all the concerns of the carriers and once again reiterated his desire to move VISA forward through strategic trust, strategic partnership. He said, "General Thompson, here at my right, is your man." We referred over the next two years to the "spirit of Piney Point," which is where General Kross made several pledges to the CEOs, and they in turn gave us their pledge to work as a team. As I recall, we had our first mini-EWG meeting in Oakland, California, during the NDTA [National Defense Transportation Association] Forum where we laid out what we thought the EWG should look like and do.

Dr. Matthews: What were the major points?

Gen Thompson: Keep the group as much as possible at the strategic level. We would let the working groups sort out the details. We also established the goals and objectives of the EWG, and the group's standard format for meetings. Each meeting included an agenda item called "friction points" designed to get the tough nuts out on the table. If something might not seem workable, I wanted to get it out in the open. I wanted it to be where we could see and act on it. We ended the meetings with a sort of score sheet. We rated each meeting, ten being good and zero being bad, on how well we had done to meet the objectives of the EWG charter.

Dr. Matthews: How often did you have a meeting?

Gen Thompson: These were day-long monthly sessions, sometimes twice a month.

Dr. Matthews: Who were the government representatives on the Executive Working Group?

Gen Thompson: For TRANSCOM, General Regan [Air Force Brigadier General Gilbert J., USTRANSCOM Chief Counsel (TCJA)]; Mr. Weber [Frank P., SES, Deputy Director, Logistics and Business Operations, TCJ4-D, USTRANSCOM]; Admirals Naughton [Navy Rear Admiral Richard J., Director, Plans and Policy, USTRANSCOM (TCJ5), 1997-1999] and Fahy [Navy Rear Admiral Edward J., TCJ5, 1999 to present]; and Mr. McMillin [Daniel F., SES, Deputy Director, TCJ5]. From the component commands we had Bill Lucas [William R., Deputy to the Commander, MTMC] from MTMC and either Rick [Richard S. Haynes [Business Operations, MSC] or Peter [I.] Bullenkamp [Program Manager, Sealift, MSC] from MSC. From MARAD [Maritime Administration] we had Jim [James E.] Caponiti.

Frank started off as the facilitator. Dan had come over to J5 as the deputy so he understudied Frank for awhile and followed Frank as the facilitator. He and Colonel Tom Shea [Army Colonel Thomas M., Chief, Mobility Analysis Division, TCJ5] and other people in J5 on the TRANSCOM sealift team worked very hard to keep track of everything we were saying and doing, getting the minutes out, setting the time lines, like for the contingency contract and the USC-01 and USC-02. Others from TCJA and the Business Center were big helpers, too.

Dr. Matthews: You worked through a whole bundle of industry issues and concerns.

Gen Thompson: Both sides were good listeners. There were government only meetings and there were lots of carrier only meetings. There was posturing about what the contingency contract might look like and

what sort of money percentage “bump,” if you will, the carriers would get for doing Stage I and Stage II for us. They, of course, were concerned about loss of market share if they ever had to deploy off their regular service during a contingency. They were interested in what kind of compensation they could get for that. There were a whole number of other issues related to how much they would be protected for their diversion of service for us. When we got close to the end of what we, the government, thought were pretty good concessions in terms of understanding the nature of their business and the risks that they were undertaking, they still came in with a very high proposed “bump up” for war time.

Dr. Matthews: Did the government side and the industry side consistently act united or were there factions within each of the sides?

Gen Thompson: There were pop-up factions. A faction would say, “We don’t like this because it impacts us this way. We need to have this addressed.” We tried to address it and they’d pipe down and then something else would pop up. They came from all sources. The Maritime Administration would sometimes have a position on an issue that differed from the Department of Defense stance, even though both were government. There is a wide variety of carriers in VISA and each carrier has its own interests, its own trade routes, and different specialty companies. A RO/RO [Roll-On/Roll-Off ship] company with three ships is a heck of a lot different than a containership company with maybe twenty ships. In fact, we had three different rate methodologies because of factions on the carrier side. Originally we were going to have one rate methodology, a sort of revenue-based methodology. We also had to get DCAA [Defense Contract Audit Agency] as a sort of third-party auditor because the carriers were not interested in opening their books to MTMC. They felt like the government might use

such information to industry's disadvantage during the contracting process, so we got the Defense Contract Audit Agency to help. They played a big role. They came to the meetings, but they were not members of the EWG, in the formal sense.

Dr. Matthews: What bones of contention were there in the government?

Gen Thompson: There are Military Traffic Management Command contracting officers and there are Military Sealift Command contracting officers. They have years and years of experience with the sealift industry, and they also know the federal acquisition regulations. So they proceeded to, and I don't mean this negatively, do what they've always done in the past. That sometimes became problematic from an EWG perspective because the EWG was trying to push a whole process forward. And I'd say, "You have to listen to these concerns and you have to address these concerns." During this time frame we were forming the Joint Traffic Management Office [JTMO] at MTMC. They took the liner service business over from Military Sealift Command. There were some start-up challenges in that transition with MSC retaining the charter part of the contracting function. The DCC, the Dry Charter Contingency, was being run out of MSC. One of the MSC representatives had his view on how certain parts of it worked. EWG didn't try to change that so much, but by the same token we were working timelines, we were working understandings at the strategic level, and sometimes those guys felt concerned that EWG, as a larger, more strategic group, didn't understand all the challenges. So a lot of the government's work dealt with how much time or how much assistance MTMC or MSC needed to get their work done in the framework of the larger timelines.

Dr. Matthews: You mentioned earlier about one or two marathon sessions.

Gen Thompson: Towards the end, after months and months of hard work, we had only about three key issues left. It just didn't look like we, the government, wanted to budge anymore, and it looked like the industry wasn't going to be satisfied with that. We had briefed General Robertson, who had come in as the new CINC, and he was up to speed on where we were and where we were going. He knew what the three issues were. We had already scheduled a CEO meeting to brief the finished product, but we weren't quite finished because of those three issues. So we briefed where we were and General Robertson said, "Okay, now I'm going to form a smaller group, chaired by the DCINC. Let's sit down and work through this until we can come out with an agreement." The CEOs agreed to that. Again, NDTA Sealift Committee chair, Mr. Jim Henry [James L., President, Transportation Institute], picked the players and we went into our session at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, just south of Washington, D.C. We rented a meeting room at the Officer's Club and we started at 7 or 8 in the morning and we went until about 10:30 at night, two nights in a row. So we put in thirty hours over two consecutive days, and we were prepared to go the entire weekend until we got this resolved. We had great cooperation from everyone involved and superb support from both TRANSCOM staff and the MTMC contracting officer, Karen [L.] Coccio. We went through it line by line. About 10:15 that Friday night, that second night, we had a suitable VCC, VISA Contingency Charter, for liner services.

Dr. Matthews: What were the last three sticklers?

Gen Thompson: I can't even remember. It's been so long. This wasn't a question of getting, "Okay, here's Issue One, let's deal with. Here's Issue Two and Issue Three." What we decided to do was to take the issues in the context of how the whole contract was written

because it was a draft. We put the draft up on the board and we went through it line by line. Someone would say, “I don’t like that line.” And we would say, “Okay, what language would you propose?” Industry had a lawyer and we had General Regan, Mr. Lucas, Mr. McMillin, and others. The last tough issue dealt primarily with operating rules and financial compensations. They were very complex and, in some cases, the origins of the issues dated back to the Shipping Act of 1916. One of them had to do with US flag versus foreign flag as it related to the Jones Act* trade, for example.

Dr. Matthews: Would it be fair to say that a long term adversarial relationship between MSC and the liner services is now over through this strategic partnering that transpired in the VISA process? Are the old wounds healed and forgotten?

Gen Thompson: I don’t think the old wounds, if you want to use that term, will ever be forgotten as long as people who were around are still working on either side. I don’t think they’ll ever be totally forgotten because people on both sides believe they were looking out for the best interests of their organization. They had hard times convincing the other side of what those best interests were and reaching some points of compromise. But the VISA EWG served as a forum in which issues could be laid on the table and worked through in a positive and cooperative fashion. And I insisted on

*The Shipping Act of 1916 initiated government regulation of ocean transportation. Congress passed the shipping act in response to fears of monopoly and the shipping shortage caused by World War I. The Jones Act is a popular term used to refer to the section of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 that reserves the coastwise and intercoastal trade to US-flag vessels built in the United States and owned by American citizens. The Merchant Marine Act covered other issues and sought to amend or complement the earlier Shipping Act of 1916. (SOURCE: Rene De la Pedraja Tomain, *A Historical Dictionary of the U.S. Merchant Marine and Shipping Industry*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994).

that. I just said, “We aren’t going to sit here and carp at each other. We aren’t going to start accusing people of things because of something that happened five or ten or fifteen years ago. We are going to focus on the product.” The product was, for starters, the VCC, [versions] USC-01 and USC-02. And that’s what we focused on. When it got ugly and people got a little heated, we took a break. If the government side was getting heated, I would pull the government people off in a separate caucus room. We’d go over the issue until we reached a consensus. In this way the process could move forward. And the carriers did the same thing. If they felt like they needed a break, they took a break to work through a sticking point. We all worked hard to succeed. It was very time consuming, painstaking, but ultimately productive. Working the strategic trust issues takes constant care and feeding. I got feedback from both sides, carrier and government, that having the DCINC, not necessarily me, in the room as the representative of the CINC, actively engaged in the issues, following them, and trying to work to a common solution seemed to pay big dividends.

Dr. Matthews: Looking back on the two years you worked on VISA as the DCINC, would you recommend any changes in its structure, membership, or the process itself?

Gen Thompson: You could argue that perhaps one or two more companies could come in that aren’t there now or rotate the membership among companies in some way. You could argue that meeting monthly may be too frequent. I think for now it’s about right. General Brown [Army Lieutenant General Daniel G., DCINC, USTRANSCOM, 1999-present] is going to have to decide how he wants to do that based upon the conditions that will exist as we finish the VCC and get into USC-02. NDTA will have to decide if they want to change the membership. Right now, though, no one

is saying that the EWG process is seriously flawed and needs a major change.

Dr. Matthews: A couple of weeks ago, at a staff meeting, the name of Eleanor [R.] Specter [Director of Defense Procurement] came up in regard to VISA. I got the feeling that there was some concern about how to get her involved in the process and perhaps she should have been involved sooner. Would you give us some background on that? And what's transpired since that staff meeting in regard to that issue?

Gen Thompson: We believed that because SECDEF [Secretary of Defense] made us executive agent for VISA, we didn't have to get permission for the actual line by line construct of the VCC. And we believed by keeping Mary Lou McHugh's office informed every step of the way--representatives of her office attended some of the EWG meetings--that we had indeed included OSD in the VISA construct. Late in the game, though, there was some concern that the contracting folks, procurement folks, and acquisition folks in the Pentagon were not in the loop, and consequently, the Service heads of agency--the Army and especially the Navy--were not going to be comfortable with the results. Towards the end, as we got to this very critical juncture, MTMC and MSC, but mostly MSC, said that the Navy wanted to get this to OSD Office of Acquisition. The next two to three weeks will tell the tale, but we feel confident OSD will be in concurrence with what we have accomplished and where we are headed.

Dr. Matthews: And you mentioned NDTA's role in setting up the Fort Belvoir marathon session, recommending meeting times, places, and membership. Can you expand on NDTA's role in the VISA process?

Gen Thompson: We went to the Sealift Committee chair and said, “We’re doing an EWG. We’d like you to help us formulate the membership from the commercial side.” The NDTA knows the players in industry and the issues. It can populate our working groups with folks who are going to be best informed and have the most credibility with the rest of the industry. NDTA is absolutely essential. They are the motherlode of cooperation and encouragement between TRANSCOM and the industry.

Dr. Matthews: You named a half dozen or so key people from government who served on the VISA EWG. Who represented industry?

Gen Thompson: Eric [L.] Mensing from APL [American Presidents Line]; Ken Gaulden [Kenneth C., Vice President, Government Marketing] from Sea-Land [Service, Inc.]; Jim [James R.] Wachtel from Lykes [Line Limited, LLC.]; Bob Leyh [J. Robert] from Waterman/Central Gulf; Edward [T.] Fortunato from Crowley [Maritime Corporation]; and Tony [Anthony M.] Ryan from American Auto Carriers.

Dr. Matthews: Do we have what we need in the VISA arrangement?

Gen Thompson: We are very close to being able to do all the things we have to do. We have the contingency contract now. We’re working up to USC-02, but it has not been easy. There have been bumps in the road and some stops along the way. We made it this far because everyone’s heart was generally in the right place. Because the contingency contract is an annual contract, I think we will get a simpler process and a simpler contract year by year. USC-02 is simpler than USC-01, and it’s the first ever best value contract in the sealift industry. So we are on the right track.

Munitions Carriers and the American Trucking Association

Dr. Matthews: Why do we need a readiness program for munitions carriers?

Gen Thompson: As you know, munitions carriers must comply with more stringent rules than average truckers because the cargo they're carrying is hazardous. The military has a whole series of security rules and equipment requirements. Loads have to be tracked as they move across the highway. They have to have certain configurations on the trailers and so forth. Ten years or so ago the DOD had a lot of ammunition to be hauled from one fort to another or from one plant to another, so there was a relatively large number of companies competing with each other, and there was enough business for all of them. But as the DOD downsized in the early 1990s, it became obvious that those truck companies couldn't be solely munitions carriers. They had to be able to do something besides carry munitions or they would go out of business. The traditional truck companies that were munitions carriers went under or they merged or declined to haul ammunition. What at one time had been, I think, nineteen munitions carrier companies went down to less than ten. The remaining companies talked to General Kross. They told him they needed a munitions carrier readiness program. We agreed to look into having a program that would form a partnership among them, us, and the Army's Industrial Operations Command, because it is the single manager for defense ammunition. We held some exploratory sessions primarily run by the J4 and J5, and came up with a construct that would allow for the establishment of a munitions carrier readiness program to get at issues such as what is the projection of peacetime ammunition, how much of it's going to go by truck versus rail or some other

conveyance, what could we do to form a joint planning advisory group as we have done for VISA, and what were some of the major routes we would be using if we had a contingency or a one or two major theater war. We had to look at both the peacetime business and war readiness angles. We had to see what, if any, compensatory issues there might be out there for companies that specifically configured their vehicles for hauling ammunition. Both government and industry needed to understand the challenges associated with various scenarios.

Dr. Matthews: Where are we in this agreement? Can we call it an agreement?

Gen Thompson: We can call it a program, a program in which we have had some JPAGs [Joint Planning Advisory Groups] and, eventually, we'll have some more. At the same time, the NDTA Board of Directors has given the NDTA Surface Committee at the national level the okay to form a munitions sub-committee. Now the issue is whether there is duplication between the issues that might be raised in the NDTA Forum meetings of that sub-committee or if these are issues that ought to be continued by the JPAG. Ultimately, I think the JPAG will focus more on wartime planning. I think the NDTA Surface Committee sub-committee on munitions will deal with daily operational and policy concerns about the safety and security of hauling munitions.

Dr. Matthews: Is our ultimate goal to guarantee or help guarantee that there will be the capacity there in wartime?

Gen Thompson: That's the reason. We have to make sure there is understanding of what each other's requirements and concerns are. We must have the capacity by truck, rail, and barge. It only makes good sense that we do this.

Dr. Matthews: And this program will include rail and barge?

Gen Thompson: It's not going to exclude them, I'll put it that way.

Dr. Matthews: Do we have concern about the capacity for rail and barge?

Gen Thompson: Oh yes. We have capacity concerns across the board and it depends upon the contingency. I have no doubt that we'll get whatever ammunition we need to the ports if there's a major theater war. I don't have as good a feeling about the response to something less than a major theater war. Only because if it is not a national emergency or perceived national emergency, people will want to continue with the business as usual. That is the challenge.

Dr. Matthews: The American Trucking Association [ATA] visited us here a few weeks back. What came out of that meeting?

Gen Thompson: The American Trucking Association was trying to do two things, in my view. First, they wanted to establish a more precise and regular relationship with the Department of Defense as an association representing all the truckers who do business with DOD, and this is not just munitions carriers but all carriers. I would say it was an exploratory meeting designed for the head of the ATA to talk about the "new" ATA and what its members were doing now that they weren't doing before, and how they want to partner with us. We agreed that we would keep an open dialogue through regular meetings between them and Military Traffic Management Command, because MTMC is in fact the organization that deals with that industry. It was a good meeting, and I think everyone came away more informed than they had been before. We all got to know each other's names and faces. General Privratsky has picked up on it and is carrying the ball.

Two Major Regional Contingencies and MRS-05

Dr. Matthews: Putting the readiness issues we've discussed in a broader context, from your perspective what are the biggest "ifs" in fighting a two major theater war and swinging from the Persian Gulf to Korea?

Gen Thompson: Distance and time. We have a long, long way to go with a force that could very easily be spread out from the United States to the Persian Gulf and then may be asked to turn. Or the force might all close in the Persian Gulf and be way up country somewhere and then be required to come back to air and seaports, and the equipment may not be, in some cases, in a very transportable condition. We'd also have to deal with port security and channel security, air and sea. All of that plays, but it's principally the equation of distance and time. How much time will we have and where will we have to go? That's the very simplistic and direct answer to your question: distance and time; and capacity. Capacity of ports, capacity of our organic assets, capacity of our C4S [command, control, communications and computer] systems, and capacity of the commercial industry.

Dr. Matthews: A lot of our US flag carriers don't go straight into the Persian Gulf.

Gen Thompson: They go to transition points and they transship cargo to other carriers. That makes it difficult if we need to get out of the Persian Gulf. What carriers are we going to rely on? If there must be an initial reliance on foreign flag carriers, one, what problems do you have with intransit visibility; and two, where's the transshipment point and how hard will that be to manage? On the sealift side, we have severe challenges. On the air side, again it's distance, but it's also diplomatic clearances, how many detours you will have to

make, and what that's going to do to your flow. Those are just some of the challenges.

Dr. Matthews: Do you feel confident from TRANSCOM's perspective that MRS-05 [Mobility Requirements Study-2005] assumptions are valid?

Gen Thompson: Pretty much so. The overall objective with MRS-05, as far as CINCTrans is concerned, is having a clear, understandable, and definable transportation requirement. There have been a number of assumptions, many of which are classified, in MRS-05 that have caused us to take pause. In some cases we've gone back and said that their assumptions just don't make sense. As a result, they have altered them in some cases, or chosen not to use them, or taken them out of the main part of their study, and instead considered them as excursions. Even after you figure out the tons to be moved and the distance they have to be moved, and the day it's supposed to be there, we are faced with the fact there are no analytical mathematical ways to deal with some assumptions, like the environment, clean or contaminated with chemical/biological weapons. And if the area gets contaminated or threatened by those kinds of weapons, what will be the reaction of our partners, allies and commercial?

Am I confident we're going to have a good MRS-05? I'm confident we'll have as good a MRS-05 as we can given the defense planning guidance scenarios, and if the Joint Staff keeps all the CINCs apprised of the degree of risk associated with their OPLANS [operations plans].

Dr. Matthews: How about something like Kosovo? How does that play into these assumptions? Have we assumed perhaps too much, that we can continue to do these peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, and also do two major regional contingencies?

Gen Thompson: No. I don't think we've assumed anything away. Kosovo was an eye-opener for a lot of people. Because of the stress it put us under, Kosovo shed more light on what it might mean for us to do a major regional conflict and another Kosovo-like operation simultaneously. The Joint Staff is trying to get their arms around it.

Dr. Matthews: What were, for you, the most frustrating moments of the Kosovo operation?

Gen Thompson: No different than anyone else's. In order for us to get the most effective and efficient lift, we have to have a good "Tip-Fid," [Time Phased Force Deployment Data (TPFDD)]. Often we did not have that from our customers, with enough lead time so that we could serve the customers as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Then there is the warfighter's propensity to go immediately to aerial delivery regardless of the circumstances. We need to do better at getting the supported CINCs to think more seriously about sealift when it makes sense, given timelines. What they do not understand yet is that lift is perishable. To go automatically to air when surface lift would suit the circumstances is dangerous.

Dr. Matthews: What are you most proud of as far as TRANSCOM's contributions to Kosovo?

*In February 1999 the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies waged an air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Operation Allied Force to end the Yugoslavian pogrom against ethnic Albanians living in the Serbian province of Kosovo.

Gen Thompson: First of all, I'm proud of the people, not only here but our troops at the three components. They did their darndest to make sure we pulled this off in the best possible manner for our customer.

Dr. Matthews: It seems to me that MTMC proved itself to be a value added many times over during the operation. And that maybe, just maybe, they are underappreciated and under used intheater. One lesson learned from Kosovo should be that MTMC might have a lot more to give intheater.

Gen Thompson: Yes. MTMC is worth every ounce of their total weight and more because of their expertise, especially in port ops, and also in traffic management. I also think they are underappreciated because they are so good at what they do. They make it all look so easy. I think MTMC has much more to offer the supported CINC in his AOR [area of responsibility].

Dr. Matthews: Are we making headway in convincing the Army to containerize unit equipment?

Gen Thompson: Yes, through Turbo Intermodal Surge and Turbo Challenge exercises. We are also working with them to factor containers into MRS-05. The real challenge is the never ending educational process. Having commanded several Army units, I know the Army guys are looking for unit integrity when they go to order a vessel. They are looking for accountability so they can see where their stuff is. The Army's natural tendency is to keep all their units, battalion or company, on a ship all together instead of putting it in containers and having it go some other way to some other port for some later delivery. Our challenge is to show our customers, Army and Marines, that whenever we put their stuff in containers or on flatracks, we can bring their unit back together as one unit at the appointed place and time, regardless of the number

of conveyances that the unit goes on. We are going to have to build their confidence, and then, through exercises, keep them confident.

Dr. Matthews: Former Army Chief of Staff Dennis [J.] Reimer stated in an article in *Inside the Pentagon* that “nothing in the Army is organized for expeditionary warfare.” What is TRANSCOM doing to help the Army “get out of Dodge” and what should the Army be doing that they aren’t doing to help TRANSCOM accomplish this?

Gen Thompson: The Army is beginning to think “expeditionary.” Last year the Army commissioned the Army Science Board to study the issue. I have met with them on four or five occasions showing them what our concerns are. The Army recognizes that they are going to have to build--I wouldn’t call it an expeditionary force; I think I would call it an early entry force--and we have to be able to get it to the fight as required by the supported CINC. We are working with the Army on deployment process improvement based on our recent experiences in Kosovo and on discussions with General Robertson and the Chief of Staff of the Army. The Army will be looking very closely at the weight and size of their equipment for the future. I would suspect they will design a new generation of equipment that is a little smaller and just as or more lethal than their current equipment.

Dr. Matthews: Is the TRANSCOM JTCC [Joint Transportation Corporate Information Management (CIM) Center] going to do the process improvement analysis?

Gen Thompson: The JTCC will have a role in the process improvement along with our J3/J4, but the equipment design will have to come from inside the Army.

Dr. Matthews: Will TEA [Technical Engineering Agency] have a role?

Gen Thompson: TEA is a very critical part of the process, in design, design testing, and operational testing.

Dr. Matthews: We've previously looked at the proper relationship between TEA and TRANSCOM and MTMC. Are you comfortable with the way it is now?

Gen Thompson: Several years ago there was a discussion about bringing TEA to Scott. As MTMC commander, I didn't see the necessity of doing that, and I've seen nothing in my last two years that says we should do it. TEA is more Service-oriented than joint-oriented.

Dr. Matthews: The other day with the National Security Study Group you made some comments about JLOTS [Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore]. You listed three or four reasons why we're not quite as prepared to do JLOTS as we would like to be. Would you list those challenges again please?

Gen Thompson: JLOTS is the albatross around TRANSCOM's neck, because although we might have to depend upon it heavily in war, we are not directly responsible for it day in and day out. We don't own the majority of troops who need the training. We don't own the equipment, and we don't own the dollars to fund the training. In peacetime, all we really do is serve as JLOTS' high-level advocate to the supported CINCs, primarily, but also the Services--Navy, Army, and Marines--who would be doing the bulk of any JLOTS operations. Unfortunately, our plan of three years ago, to do two JLOTS exercises a year, has not been successful. Due to lack of funding and world events, we have been lucky to do one JLOTS exercise per year. We have now proposed to the Joint Staff that they help us sponsor a new approach to JLOTS, one that would

have JLOTS conducted primarily in the United States. We would invite the supported CINCs to participate in the planning and the execution of the JLOTS exercise. We would partner with Joint Forces Command [USJFCOM] to have JLOTS be done in the United States, and we would ask the Army to help us do the JLOTS mission in terms of funding because the Army equips the bulk of the troops who would do JLOTS in war.

Dr. Matthews: There are other JLOTS challenges for us.

Gen Thompson: Being able to operate in Sea State 3. Again, we don't own the equipment or the development programs. We are relying on an Army/Navy partnership to develop equipment that would allow us to operate in Sea State 3, a breakwater kind of device, as well as floating causeways and some other things that can operate when the seas are causing lots of different oscillations and motions that shear the connections.

Dr. Matthews: We inherited this advocacy role for JLOTS from the JDA* [Joint Deployment Agency] when we stood up TRANSCOM. Do you think TRANSCOM is still the CINC that should be spokesman for JLOTS?

Gen Thompson: I suppose we could argue that JFCOM should take the responsibility for JLOTS because it is the lead on deployability. I sense that they would probably encounter the same problems that

*As a result of command post exercise Nifty Nugget conducted in 1978, the Joint Chiefs of Staff established the Joint Deployment Agency in 1979 to act as the single manager for deployment and execution. Headquartered at MacDill AFB, Florida, over the next eight years the JDA significantly improved US force projection capability. With the establishment of USTRANSCOM in 1987, the JDA's missions and functions transferred to the new command when the agency became the command's Directorate of Deployment. SOURCE: *So Many, So Much, So Far, So Fast: United States Transportation Command and Strategic Deployment for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm*, by James K. Matthews and Cora J. Holt, (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1999.)

we encounter. More importantly, I don't think CINCTRANS can afford to wash his hands of daily involvement in JLOTS. He has to stay engaged because it will be we, TRANSCOM, who will have to depend on JLOTS in order to be successful in our transportation mission.

Mission and Organization

Dr. Matthews: We've been tightening our relationship with Defense Logistics Agency over the last few years. Recently, the commander of DLA sent a letter to our CINC proposing that DLA and TRANSCOM accelerate their partnering initiative. What is it we hope to accomplish with a tighter, closer relationship with DLA?

Gen Thompson: A lot. A more streamlined, effective, and efficient supply chain in DOD. We want to make certain we are performing our mission in line with the Transportation Acquisition Regulation: intransit visibility, expansion of DLA's use of the transportation [simulation and modeling] tools, and TRANSCOM improving ways to meet shippers' and receivers' needs. A big dilemma for the transporter is determining "Who is the customer?" We have two customers: the shipper and the receiver. We, TRANSCOM, are between those two as it relates to customer satisfaction and understanding what the customer needs. I'm being a little flippant here, but DLA mentality in the past was, "If we get it to the loading dock and onto some conveyance, our job is done." Now they are looking at delivery times, port receipt times, and those kinds of things, giving them a lot more scrutiny, and we are, too. Additionally, a closer working relationship with us will give them increased opportunity to shape our transportation policy regulation to fit their needs. I think it's a great opportunity for us to work together to streamline, to be innovative, and to avoid duplication of effort, while at the

same time providing DLA the opportunity to use some of our great transportation tools.

Dr. Matthews: How do you see the organization structure for this partnership evolving? We used to have a DLA liaison officer. Is it time to get that back?

Gen Thompson: We're going to get a DLA liaison officer and we're going to try to come up with a TRANSCOM liaison officer for DLA. I don't think you will see much happen organizationally. At some point in the future you may see some mixing or melding of functions that were previously in the domain of one or the other; but in the near term our combined emphasis will be on process improvement to reduce order-to-ship times, increase intransit visibility, and, in general, give the customer, especially the receiving customer, total confidence that the system will deliver when we say it's going to deliver: time-definite delivery.

Dr. Matthews: How will the Logistics Reform Senior Steering Group play with this new partnering with DLA?

Gen Thompson: Ultimately, I see the LRSSG as an integral part of the TRANSCOM/DLA partnership. We need to take our initiatives to the LRSSG to get their comments and critiques. Their buy-in will be instrumental in making process improvements.

Dr. Matthews: The term in the letter from the DLA commander to the CINC was "reinventing global distribution." Do you think that captures where we're headed?

Gen Thompson: Yes. There always has been confusion over the word "distribution." Everyone asks, "What's distribution?" Some say distribution is mostly supply, procuring, and manufacturing stuff, and making sure it is configured in a way to get shipped to the

customer. Others say there is as much transportation in distribution as there is supply. One of our dilemmas is agreeing on how much of distribution is supply and how much is transportation. In the future--in my view, years down the road--we may not care whether we call it transportation or supply. In the near term, rice bowls will be protected; there will be supply people who want to protect what they call the "supply rice bowl"; there will be transportation people who want to protect the "transportation rice bowl." If we do good work on process improvement, I think we will be able to work our way through it. Perhaps most importantly, if we don't have clearly defined and measurable objectives that drive the process improvement, then we might improve some process but we won't know if we obtained what we wanted to obtain.

Dr. Matthews: At the Component Commanders' Conference last month [July 1999], we rewrote our mission statement. I'm curious as to what is being done to get that new mission statement issued to us?

Gen Thompson: A lot of issues since that conference have forced us to take the eye off that ball. Ultimately, we will put that mission statement to the components in a formal fashion and we will tell the Joint Staff that this is what we believe our mission is and if they have any problems with it, they will have to tell us what they are. And then it's a question of training to mission, determining that our training objectives will allow us to accomplish the mission. Since the new mission statement isn't dramatically different from what it was before, I don't think it's going to be a problem.

Dr. Matthews: We did get our current mission statement along with our peacetime, single manager charter. Now that we're looking at updating our mission statement, shouldn't we also think about

updating our charter as well? It's been eight years since we reviewed it. Our roles and functions and responsibilities have expanded dramatically.

Gen Thompson: Your observation is probably correct. But I would argue that unless a command takes on a dramatically different mission or different set of responsibilities, like from another command that has been disestablished by a change in the Unified Command Plan, it would be better to leave the charter alone. As you know, most of those new duties we took on because OSD or the Chairman [of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] asked us to do so. As for a new charter, I'd say sit back and watch what happens in our partnership with DLA. Once we have worked out that partnership for streamlining the supply chain for DOD, we can take another look at the charter.

Dr. Matthews: Define for me, please, third party logistics and the pros and cons of it?

Gen Thompson: Third party logistics is another "eye of the beholder" issue. A third party logistician is someone who is not necessarily the asset owner, but is a logistics expert who has the connections to the means that will allow any logistics function to be accomplished as if they owned all the assets. "Third party" just connotes someone who is an expert out there marshalling someone else's resources to get a job done for the customer. Those are the three parties: the customer, the asset owner, and the third party logistician. In my view, that is the definition.

Dr. Matthews: What are the pros and cons of using third party logisticians in the Department of Defense?

Gen Thompson: My view is that the DOD third party logistician is the Military Traffic Management Command because, with the exception of

containers and rail cars for certain deployment missions that they already own, MTMC goes out and gets assets and capabilities from someone else for DOD. And, in fact, the Joint Traffic Management Office, the JTMO, is the quintessential organizational twin, if you will, of the typical third party logistician. JTMO doesn't own assets but they have the expertise to find them to get the transportation job done. But having said all that, there are third party logistics companies outside the DOD that arrange door-to-door movements worldwide in an intermodal way. They are the enablers for ITOs and TMOs. Some of them are asset owners and we contract with them. For example, they may own the air assets but not the ground assets so when we sign up to move something from Fort Benning, Georgia, to Baumholder, Germany, that asset owner has to use other people's assets for the surface legs and it flies the air mission. Military Traffic Management Command puts together Guaranteed Traffic. Air Mobility Command puts together Worldwide Express, for instance. In my view, they are kind of a third party logistician because they are a link between the customer and the carrier. It's been happening for years. We just didn't call it that. MTMC has embarked on a pilot program where some of the routine domestic transportation, surface transportation in CONUS, will be contracted out to a third party logistician. It could be a tough call in some cases. We don't want to contract it all out because certain capabilities and processes need to remain inherently military for readiness.

Dr. Matthews: An example, please, of one of each.

Gen Thompson: Would you want some contractor who held no assets work with a truck company to move munitions in a contingency or war? Or would you rather have Military Traffic Management Command move the munitions? My view is you would want MTMC to do

that. If there are daily runs of, say, food and fence posts from Susquehanna Depot [Pennsylvania] to--pick any air base or Army post--would you insist that be done by MTMC orchestrating the commercial carriers? Probably not. You would be inclined to allow some commercial third party logistics company to do all that.

Dr. Matthews: What was your modus operandi to get the JDTC [Joint Deployment Training Center] stood up?

Gen Thompson: A lot of jawboning. [Laughter] Actually, the bulk of the work had already been done by the time I got here. Hugh Smith and the folks in J5 had worked that pretty hard. But the job wasn't completely done. There was still resistance, especially on the part of the Marines, but also the Navy. My job was to carry the ball to the "Tank,"* with the J5, and brief the Ops Deps [operations deputies]--the Navy, Army, and Air Force three-stars--and the Director of the Joint Staff [Navy Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Director, Joint Staff, 1996-1999]. We briefed them, answered their questions as best we could, and solicited their support. When it came down to the day to tie the ribbon, we still did not have Marine Corps and Navy support. The Director of the Joint Staff, with whom I'd talked to two or three times on the issue, was for it and we had all the cogent and right arguments. We were able to get an agreement in the Tank to go do it. One of the things we told everyone is, "If you don't like our product in eighteen months, we'll shut it down since you're paying for it out of your funds." That was a big selling point and, of course, that put the pressure on the JDTC to really develop the products. In fact, it has done a great job of developing products. Even so, eighteen months later,

*The Tank is a nickname for the Joint Chiefs of Staff Conference Room.

the Services won't fund it directly. It's being funded through the transportation working capital fund.

Dr. Matthews: What is your vision for JDTC? What would you like to see it doing in five years?

Gen Thompson: Ideally I'd like for them not to exist because that would mean we have done so well with deployment that we didn't need them. [Laughter] Likely that won't occur, because of the perishability of deployment knowledge and skills. I think in five years they will have expanded their influence through distance learning. They will be making maximum use of the state of the art distance learning tools. They will be recognized for their expertise in teaching JOPES [Joint Operation Planning and Execution System] 2000, not just how to turn on a machine and run it but how to manipulate JOPES 2000 for deployment. They will become "the trainer of choice" for JOPES. I think they will become increasingly involved in mobile training teams for deployment issues beyond JOPES. I see them working extremely close with MTMC's deployment support brigades. And they won't grow any larger or cost the customer any more money than they do right now. That's my vision.

Dr. Matthews: Do you expect they will be under TRANSCOM in five years or under Joint Forces Command?

Gen Thompson: That's a good question. It's an "either/or" situation. A lot will depend on how well JFCOM succeeds as the deployment process owner. They have leaped into it and have done well in the last year or so. They will have to decide in the next several years to what degree training will become one of their core competencies. My gut feeling is they [JFCOM] will probably end up getting the JDTC mission one of these days.

Dr. Matthews: It started out that the JDTC was a J3/J4 function and then for a variety of reasons it moved to J5. Is it still going to be sponsored by the J5 or do you see it moving back to J3/J4?

Gen Thompson: It's going back to J4. That's where it ought to be.

Manpower and Personnel

Dr. Matthews: Is the dual-hat of the DCINC/Chief of Staff functioning to your satisfaction?

Gen Thompson: No. This command is too big and too widespread for the DCINC to also be the Chief of Staff. It's essential that we get a stand-alone Chief of Staff here. Since I've been DCINC, I've been required to take on strategic roles, like being the military liaison to the NDTA Business Practices Committee. The LRSSG's strategic role is increasing as is the frequency of its meetings. I spent a tremendous amount of time with the VISA EWG, and I suspect General Brown and others who follow him will also be required to take the lead in VISA negotiations. For all those reasons there ought to be a Chief of Staff here, day in and day out, working issues on the spot in this thousand-plus person command at Scott. Furthermore, CINCTRANS, cannot, by himself, be out there checking on the troops everywhere in the world when we get these multiple contingencies. My view of the DCINC of the future would be less of a Chief of Staff and more of a CINC alter ego who can be in the Pacific when the CINC is in Europe or vice versa, making contact with the supported CINCs at the DCINC level, being at the right places at the right times for contingencies and training exercises.

Dr. Matthews: You changed your executive officer's position description to help take some of the Chief of Staff load off your shoulders.

Gen Thompson: Yes, I had Captain Quinn [Navy Captain Christopher D.] take on a few more Chief of Staff kinds of duties, and then when Captain Crisp [Navy Captain Donna L.] replaced him I changed her title to "Director of Staff," making her personally responsible for how the staff and process flows day in and day out.

Dr. Matthews: What is the possibility of getting a reserve flag officer in here full time as Chief of Staff? It sounds like that's a way of fixing the problem.

Gen Thompson: Yes, we now have an opportunity to get a full time reservist to do that job. We're working on it.

Dr. Matthews: If that flag officer came in as a Chief of Staff, how would that impact the JTRU [Joint Transportation Reserve Unit] commander's position as Chief of Staff during wartime?

Gen Thompson: We have to ask ourselves the following questions: how many reservists does TRANSCOM have during wartime; where are they worldwide; what kind of reserve management problems will we face in a PSRC [Presidential Selected Reserve Call-up]; and couldn't that JTRU commander be the CINC's full time person for working issues like PSRC and the training of reservists during wartime. I think there might be a role there for the JTRU commander if we end up having a full time reservist as Chief of Staff. We would also have to ask what are the rules going to be for that full time reservist if war is declared. Is he or she suddenly game to be picked off and sent somewhere else in a reserve role? There have been no promises made, no checks deposited in the bank on this one.

Dr. Matthews: How would you assess the service balance at TRANSCOM in general and in senior positions--director and deputy director levels?

Gen Thompson: We don't have enough Marine Corps or Army guys and gals, to put it fairly bluntly, at the director and deputy director levels. At the lower level ranks we have good representation of those services. General Smith saw that and brought in an Army guy as a reservist in the J3/J4, and I think that was a good move. Until our most recent PAO [Public Affairs Officer] arrived, we did not have any director or direct reporting element [DRE] chief who was Marine or Army. It's not a showstopper and it's not that the people in the positions now are not doing their jobs; they are. But more Marines and Army troops at the higher levels in the command would, I believe, give us more connectivity to the services we are trying to support.

Dr. Matthews: You changed the PA [Public Affairs] billet from Navy to Army to help with the balance?

Gen Thompson: Partly, but it wasn't the original thrust. It was clear that the Navy was not going to be able to give us an appropriate level person at the time we needed it. When the opportunity appeared on the Army side, we seized it.

Dr. Matthews: Why did the Navy change the MSC commander billet from a three-star to a two-star?

Gen Thompson: They were doing a "rack and stack" on the number of allowable three-star billets and they had some other priorities in the Navy that caused them to think that for now they needed to shift that three-star billet out of MSC to another Navy billet. I can't comment on the Navy's long term intent, but I suspect that there

will be pressure at some point in time to reinstate the MSC commander to a three-star. I don't think the Navy would be adverse to it if they could meet their other needs for which they made the switch in the first place.

Dr. Matthews: What is TRANSCOM's role in this? Were we asked an opinion on it or was it not our prerogative to even weigh in either way?

Gen Thompson: TRANSCOM was in on the discussion. We would rather have kept it a three-star billet, obviously. The discussions were held, and the Navy made its decision.

Dr. Matthews: We now have a two-star as our advocate on the Navy chain of command instead of a three-star.

Gen Thompson: Right. And in the Pentagon, that has some importance. If you believe that four beats three beats two beats one, and we send a two-star from MSC into the building to represent us on any critical issue, you could say we're at an automatic disadvantage because it's no longer a three-star. But you and I both know that you can get a two-star or one-star who can be very influential in various circles. It's not always rank dependent. Admiral Holder [Navy Rear Admiral (Upper Half) Gordon S., Commander, MSC, 1999-present] certainly is an example of a two-star who can represent TRANSCOM on any issue. Thus far we have not run into a war stopper, but clearly it would be better to have a three-star in the Military Sealift Command.

Dr. Matthews: Do we need to redistribute our manpower between directorates?

Gen Thompson: The short answer is "not necessarily." When I first got here I initiated the Organizational Excellence Council [OEC] to see if there was an imbalance of resources. We were able to use the OEC as a tool to, first of all, understand and prioritize what we do

day in and day out by staff section. And secondly, we were able to reduce some redundancy that existed from staff section to staff section. We have to look at workload balance every now and then. If there is a screaming need, realignment of billets will occur as a major muscle movement as opposed to a gradual muscle movement. So the OEC accomplished two or three pretty important things, but what it didn't do was realign resources to workload.

Dr. Matthews: Fifteen percent manpower reduction at the unified commands. How could we cope with something like that?

Gen Thompson: It's a management headquarters reduction and if we have to do something like that, then in my view we're just going to have to jettison some functions, things that we do around here everyday. Tell the Joint Staff that we aren't going to do them. We've taken on functions in the last several years for which we got manpower, but in most cases we didn't. If we have to get hit with a big manpower reduction, we should go right back into that list of priorities that we developed in the Organizational Excellence Council and pick out some functions we aren't going to do anymore. And tell everyone.

Dr. Matthews: I find it ironic that fifteen percent is about equal to the number of billets we received for our peacetime, single manager charter.

Gen Thompson: The Joint Staff is fighting it. I don't know how successful they are going to be. It's an interesting construct. First you had Goldwater-Nichols,* and you had to get a whole bunch of people to be comfortable with that. Once they got comfortable with that, they finally said, "Geez, if we're going to do what Goldwater-Nichols

*Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

envisioned, we'd better give the unified commands sufficient robustness." Now we're at that level, we're doing most of what Goldwater-Nichols envisioned, and then we're told we might have to reduce our numbers. Well, fine, if we have to reduce our numbers, we'll have to decide what we won't be doing anymore.

Dr. Matthews: We work so hard and we produce so much with so little. And then to be told we're going to have to cut more meat off that bone...It's discouraging.

Gen Thompson: It is discouraging. But it's no different in the civilian world. You see corporations knock huge numbers of people off their payrolls because the business isn't there anymore. But then when the business cranks up, they have to struggle to fill the positions. They pay a lot of people a lot of money to work overtime until they can fill the positions. And they probably pay a lot of money for the recruiting and training. So it's not just germane to the Department of Defense or to TRANSCOM. That said, I find it frustrating as well.

Dr. Matthews: What have been the JTRU's most important contributions to the command on your watch as DCINC?

Gen Thompson: I would probably not give them their due with any list I came up with. So I'm not going to come up with a list. Instead, I will say that in the last two years these people have been worth their weight in gold in helping us run crisis action teams [CATs]. I don't know how we could have manned those teams without the highly trained JTRU members.

Dr. Matthews: Is there anything that you could recommend that we tweak to improve the organization?

Gen Thompson: It's not enough for Sally or Fred to come to work and do eight or twelve hours on a shift in the CAT. We need to look at the value they bring to us by being on the shifts in the CAT vis-à-vis what their Service expects them to accomplish in their overall skill category. We need to do a better job of establishing their training plans, and then making sure they meet their Service objectives.

Dr. Matthews: How do you explain those three-in-a-row, first-ever promotions to flag officer--our deputy J3 [Air Force Brigadier General Robert D. Bishop], deputy J4 [Army Brigadier General H. A. "Buzz" Curry], and our current ops chief [Army Brigadier General Charles W. Fletcher, Jr.]?

Gen Thompson: An easy one to answer. We have great people in those jobs. If the talent is allowed to work and grow and shine and represent TRANSCOM, you'll see it and notice it and take care of those folks who have demonstrated those talents. I think it's a great deal, for the individuals, obviously, and also for TRANSCOM and for the future of the DTS. When young men and women on their way up through the ranks see our colonels here at TRANSCOM making general, they'll say, "Geez, maybe I ought to go to TRANSCOM and see if I can't get one of those O-6 billets." Or O-5 [lieutenant colonel/commander equivalent] billets, for that matter. We've had pretty good rates on O-5 promotions to O-6. We work hard to get the talented folks here.

Dr. Matthews: How would you describe the morale of the troops at TRANSCOM, and how do you make that assessment?

Gen Thompson: I would assess the morale as being generally good. I make this assessment by just talking to people. I talk to them in the hallways. I watch them in meetings and in briefings. I have lunch and breakfast with the troops. I find that the bulk of the folks have

good attitudes and that they are generally satisfied with their work at TRANSCOM. They understand the mission and they understand why it is important to the nation.

Dr. Matthews: And you did a survey.

Gen Thompson: I took a survey my first year here to assess morale. I had done the same thing at MTMC, and the surveys at MTMC came out not nearly as well as the surveys we did here. And, by golly, the TRANSCOM folks ought to be pretty happy. They've avoided the huge RIFs [reduction in forces] that other organizations like MTMC had to endure. There has been stability at TRANSCOM. When I served in Army Materiel Command in the mid-1980s, it had close to 2,500 people in the headquarters. They are down to something like 750 today. TRANSCOM has been spared such dramatic and traumatic cuts.

Dr. Matthews: Some people are working long hours.

Gen Thompson: Working on morale is never ending. We all are feeling the effects of the numerous crises we've had to support in the last two years. General Coolidge [Air Force Major General Charles H., Jr., Director, Operations and Logistics, USTRANSCOM, July 1997-January 2000] estimated that for seventy percent of his two year-plus time here at TRANSCOM the CAT has been stood up. When you factor that in, plus TRANSCOM's very innovative and ambitious peacetime mission, you have people who are working pretty hard. We need to make sure our people have time for themselves and for their families.

Dr. Matthews: We've had good promotion rates for military and civilians. We have generous bonuses year after year. Most of us have pretty good working conditions. There is some crowding.

Gen Thompson: Yes, there sure is.

Dr. Matthews: What prompted you to get us a new building?

Gen Thompson: Most of us are aware that when the work force is separated from each other, the synergy is not nearly as good as it could be. Part of our work force is in a building that is in lousy shape, the old commissary [Building 1961]. There is nothing that we can do of a permanent nature to make that building the way it ought to be in terms of a good, solid, stable, pleasant work place. For those reasons I embarked on a exploratory search to see if a new building would make sense and if it did, would it be financially feasible. We would never know if we didn't ask the questions and make a plan to get everyone in one or two buildings instead of three or four. I hope it works.

Cost Drivers

Dr. Matthews: What have we accomplished in our cost drivers?

Gen Thompson: First off, command awareness of the cost of doing business, not only within TRANSCOM but also within the components. We have, in fact, saved money or avoided expenditure of money, as the case may be. The J8 estimates that we have either saved or avoided the expenditure of \$700 million from 1994 to now. We have really started to refine the process this last year because of one, CINC involvement; and two, hard looks at output and the dollars that are related to the output. But cost drivers still is not as successful as it could be, for two primary reasons. First, we have an antiquated financial system that doesn't give us the real time data on what the results are of our actions. In other words, if the CINC wanted to change a process during this period to see if he

could decrease costs, it would take more than thirty days for him to be able to see the results of his management decision because DFAS [Defense Finance and Accounting System] only gives monthly reports. You don't get to see daily financial results. You can't manage real time. Secondly, there isn't enough clarity in the financial reports. We can see a large jump in a number of the financial indicators, but we can't get any real description of what caused the jump. In some cases it's because DFAS made an accounting error, and the system makes it impossible for us or them to catch the error in a timely fashion. We spend entirely too much time trying to make sense of numbers. The second thing that causes us to not be able to achieve our full level of capability in cost drivers is the lack of a cost accounting capability where we can relate outputs and outcomes to dollars. We're going to have to look at a cost accounting system at TRANSCOM and at activity-based costing as the two means by which we can get a better handle on what it really costs us to do business.

Dr. Matthews: What can we do in this building to cut costs?

Gen Thompson: We can reduce our travel budget, but I've learned a lesson during my years in the military: travel is a sort of pendulum. A manager/leader says, "Okay we're going to reduce travel costs." And they do that by imposing all sorts of restrictions on their people's travel schedules. Sooner or later, something goes wrong and where we should have been at a meeting or we should have seen something first hand, we weren't there because we chose not to travel. Then things get turned around, and we start sending people out again. But there is not much we can do at TRANSCOM to cut expenditures that would have any impact on the cost of DTS business.

Dr. Matthews: You expressed some uneasiness about how money was going out to contractors. What did you do to get a handle on it?

Gen Thompson: I tweaked the Contract Review Board [CRB], which my predecessor General Smith established. I felt the CRB wasn't showing long term cost data at their briefings. We weren't finding out whether or not we could sustain a program or project for the long term because we weren't showing in the budget what the cost would be for the out years. I asked for a standard format for the financial part of the briefings so we could see what was driving the costs and what the color of the money was, TWCF [Transportation Working Capital Fund]-operating versus TWCF-capital being the two primary colors of money. I asked a lot of questions in these briefings about why, for example, one contractor FTE [full-time equivalent] cost \$130,000 when another one, which appeared to be a similar position, cost \$105,000, or why we were paying whatever we were paying for an FTE when in-house it would ostensibly cost less. My approach on contracts and the Contract Review Board was to get more data and more detail so I could understand what we were doing and why we were doing it. I was also looking for duplication of effort.

Dr. Matthews: Did you find any?

Gen Thompson: A bit. People were not trying to hide anything. It was just the right hand didn't know what the left hand was doing. We have more work to do on that.

Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems

Dr. Matthews: You asked J3/J4 and J6 if we had articulated savings in time, dollars, and cost avoidance based on GTN. In other words, you asked them if we had any metrics to show what we saved by using GTN? Did you get an answer back on that and, if so, what did you find?

Gen Thompson: We don't really have a good answer for it yet. The challenge will be to determine what the value added for the investments that we put into GTN are. And those measurements cannot be done at TRANSCOM. They have to be done, literally, everywhere something is moving. I really didn't expect to get a precise number from them in a short period of time. And we may never find out, but we need to be thinking about measuring GTN's value added and how to articulate it.

Dr. Matthews: Of course we're talking peacetime. In wartime, you can't put a price on getting the ammo to the right place at the right time and giving confidence to the supported CINC in knowing where things are and when they will arrive.

Gen Thompson: You're absolutely right.

Dr. Matthews: Another GTN issue we're interested in is getting metrics on who is using it. Where are we at in that endeavor?

Gen Thompson: I wanted to go the next step and ask, "All right, if these are the people who are using it, what do they use it for? Command and control of transportation assets? Command and control of non-transportation assets? Do they use it for intransit visibility? Or do they use it for some other reason?" What I would like to be able to

do is get an array of users by types of use and levels of use. Are we talking about the E-1 to E-5 [enlisted ranks] level or more the O-4 [major/Navy lieutenant commander equivalent] to O-6 level? As we go design the next whiz bang improvement to GTN, should we work with the GCCS [Global Command and Control System] community on the interface? If we thought E-1s to E-4s would be using this whiz bang tool and it turns out they aren't, and only half the number of total users are there, did we spend some money that we shouldn't have spent? Did we fail to market the tool with the result that potential users did not know about the new capability? Do we have populations that are potential users who we have not reached? Or maybe we have tapped out at about 10,000 users on an annual basis. If that seems to make end-to-end supply chain management, ITV [intransit visibility], and command and control what it ought to be, then maybe we are okay. I don't think we know the answers to those questions. What I wanted J3/J4 and J6 to do is think about the current and potential users as they go out to units to demonstrate and teach GTN. The overall objective is to make it more user-friendly.

Dr. Matthews: Shortly after you got here, maybe six months into your tenure, you called a group of us together to talk about a marketing plan for GTN. I guess a couple of contractors bid on it. I believe Lockheed-Martin got it. I heard their briefing. It was very impressive, how they had mapped out what was needed to be done to educate the deployment community on GTN. Have we embarked upon that plan?

Gen Thompson: Not to the degree we should have, primarily because of its cost, somewhere between one and two million dollars. So we picked off bits and pieces of it. Our dilemma is balancing the need to do something new with making sure everyone knows what we've

done already. We have a number of very exciting things that we need to spend some money on to make the overall system work better.

Dr. Matthews: What marketing have we been doing specifically and how is it paying off?

Gen Thompson: Our GTN teams go out to units around the world. These teams are involved in training and information, especially focusing on some of the additions we've had in the last couple years, enhancements to GTN to improve user friendliness as well as completeness of information. We have given GTN briefings with demonstrations to various groups like the LRSSG. We have taken GTN to trade fairs, conferences, and conventions for demonstrations. Also, the CINC talks about it in his speeches. Those are some of the things we have tried, within a reasonable amount of money, to make GTN understood and loved and appreciated.

Dr. Matthews: What are the users, especially at the CINCDoms, been saying to you about GTN? What's the feedback?

Gen Thompson: They like it. They're impressed with some of the things we've done in the last couple of years. They're embracing it for the information that it provides. They're talking less about its lack of user friendliness. To me, it's a good news story. I just think there are a lot more people who would use it if they knew about it.

Dr. Matthews: What more can we do without great costs?

Gen Thompson: We can put more articles in the military publications. We can make demo videos and send them out to a wide variety of potential users. We can increase the number of visits we make to units. Those are just some of the things we can do.

Dr. Matthews: Why is the Oracle database important to TRANSCOM?

Gen Thompson: Let me rephrase the question for you. Why is effective data base management and enterprise resource programming the way to go?

Dr. Matthews: Because the US Transportation Command moves information.

Gen Thompson: That's correct. You used the word "Oracle." That just happens to be the company we ended up contracting with. We want the capability to manage data and information and knowledge under the identity of a single state-of-the-art company. Also, we wanted to take advantage of some of their packages. We wanted to avoid development in bits and pieces, which in the long run would cost more and likely cause interface problems over time. Oracle is already so embedded in other parts of the Department of Defense, their architecture seemed like the best fit for us.

Dr. Matthews: Does it have application to GTN and to JOPES? Or is this something we'll be using on our computers in our offices?

Gen Thompson: We're going to be using it on our computers in our offices. It is not necessarily to be used in JOPES and GTN, although it would help feeds back and forth between them and what we're doing in our offices. And if, for example, we someday want to have BDSS [Business Decision Support System] interact with GTN or Logbook, then we would expect Oracle to have a role in helping us be able to do that.

Dr. Matthews: You were deeply and personally involved with our Y2K [Year 2000] initiatives. Why?

Gen Thompson: [Laughter] Because if our systems failed, then TRANSCOM wouldn't be able to accomplish its mission. Simple as that.

Dr. Matthews: You took the load off the J6 and made preparation of our systems for the new millennium the responsibility of all of us. Why?

Gen Thompson: Because information management is not just a J6 function. Everyone of the functional people in the command rely on good data information. So it was logical for me to expect that functionals take their fair share of ownership and not make Y2K strictly a J6 drill.

Dr. Matthews: My perception is we did a bang-up job organizing our forces to prepare our systems for the new millennium. I suspect, although I don't know if I can prove it or even articulate it, we made contributions way beyond TRANSCOM.

Gen Thompson: I think so. I can tell you flat out that Mark McTague [Marine Corps Colonel Mark S., Chief, Joint Plans Division, TCJ3/J4] and his team's work for the Y2K op evals [operation evaluations] and their numerous meetings in Washington D.C., had an impact on what other people looked at and how they proceeded to prepare their systems. In fact, he was able to convince the Joint Staff to have a JMRR [Joint Monthly Readiness Review] that included the readiness aspects of Y2K. Mark and his crew did a great job in conveying how we were attacking problems here at TRANSCOM, and I do believe people were emulating us far and wide. Overall, in total numbers of systems ready or certified, we were generally ahead of most of the other DOD agencies.

Dr. Matthews: TCJ2 [Intelligence Directorate, USTRANSCOM] did some very original thought on it also.

Gen Thompson: They did. And they convinced the folks in the intel world that they needed to speed up what they were doing and to ensure that those DOD-wide systems and even other government systems, like those

in the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], would in fact be able to do what had to be done. So our J2 proved a bonus to the DOD and the nation way beyond just the transportation side.

Dr. Matthews: J2 looked at the transportation infrastructure of foreign nations.

Gen Thompson: If we didn't do that, then we weren't accomplishing our mission because we rely on that international infrastructure. And my sense was nobody else was looking at it. When I asked J2 to do it in an organized fashion, I recognized we would likely be the first customer of that information. I also knew that there would be a lot of other folks who would need to have that kind of confidence, of knowing what shape the worldwide infrastructure would be in as we entered the 21st Century.

Dr. Matthews: Did we share that information with State [Department], [Department of] Commerce, and other federal agencies that would have an interest?

Gen Thompson: I can't tell you the level at which sharing went on. I do know there were some conversations with State. We had a lot of discussions, of course, with DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] and other intel folks.

Dr. Matthews: What concerns you most about Y2K, for the DTS, for DOD, and for the nation?

Gen Thompson: What we don't know, obviously. We paid an awful lot of attention to systems that we have internally or that we rely on to accomplish our mission. I feel pretty good about those. But pick an airfield in the world; I don't know whether it's going to be open January 1st because I don't know whether the power sources to those airfields are going to be reliable even if we asked the foreign countries and

they said “A-OK.” I was encouraged when we passed 9-9-99 [9 September 1999] with no major problems.

Dr. Matthews: What are your concerns about TRAC²ES [TRANSCOM Regulating and Command and Control Evacuation System]?

Gen Thompson: The lack of interest on the parts of those not in TRANSCOM to embrace it and to be aggressive about bringing it to fruition. It’s an ambitious approach to a wartime mission that has a low intensity in peacetime. Come a real crisis with lots of patients moving through the system--American soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and maybe even their families as casualties--then the interest in it will be great.

Best Business Practices

Dr. Matthews: How has the NDTA’s Business Practices Committee been a value added?

Gen Thompson: I’m really excited about its potential and what we’ve been able to accomplish during the committee’s first year. It’s brought new ideas into DOD from various companies and committee participants. It started with General Kross asking for an analysis of how airlines handled major spare parts assemblies and how those processes might be applicable to the Air Mobility Command. The committee’s work has helped us refine requirements forecasting, and how best to run customer surveys, and then apply what we learn from them to process improvement. But like anything else, the success of the committee will require dedication over time. It will require the DCINC’s personal interest.

Dr. Matthews: Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the TRANSCOM/NDTA relationship?

Gen Thompson: I think the relationship is pretty darn good. Continued active participation in the committees is essential. They must stay focused. Our relationship with NDTA can't become generalist in nature. It must remain primarily specific in nature. Focused agendas, focused objectives, focused reports on how we can do process improvements or major innovative improvements for the future must remain central to the relationship.

Dr. Matthews: Which industry visits have been most fruitful for us and why?

Gen Thompson: The more recent ones have been more fruitful, I think. When I arrived here as DCINC, I concluded that the benchmarking the command had done to date with business was planned haphazardly. We did not go to the companies that would give us what we needed for process improvement. Before, we'd sort of go in and say, "Hi, how do you guys do your work?" They'd tell us and we'd take notes and come back. In the more recent visits, we've had a specific and definite approach about what we wanted and we targeted companies that were related to the competencies that we were trying to improve. When we go out now, we know why we're visiting a particular company, we know what we want to get out of that company, we have focused questions, and we bring back information that can be applied directly to our process improvements. It's paid off. Can benchmarking be improved in TRANSCOM? Probably a little bit.

Dr. Matthews: Anything in particular for Motorola?

Gen Thompson: Six Sigma Quality. It's a manufacturing approach, but we think there are some elements in it that we can use in our service-like organization.

Dr. Matthews: How about Caterpillar?

Gen Thompson: Coordination of the strategic planning cycle and the business execution cycle. It also became more obvious to us there than a lot of other places we've been to that information has to be a corporate asset. You can't have pockets of people who have information and don't share it with everyone else. It goes back to what I said about DFAS: you have to get your statistics every day to know whether your management initiatives are taking hold or not. You can't wait until the end of the month or 45 days when it is too late to relate it to business decisions. They [Caterpillar] had a goal of putting 99.7 percent of ordered parts in the hands of their customers within 24 hours and they met the goal, which was a major accomplishment. We had to find out how they did it and how they do it every day. I thought it was a very useful visit.

Dr. Matthews: Sabre Technology.

Gen Thompson: First we went to Wal-Mart and said, "We want to know how you manage data and information as it relates to business." Wal-Mart said, "You don't want to talk to us. We're good, but the folks you really need to talk to are at Sabre Technology." So we went to Sabre to learn about effective data management and systems that support it.

Dr. Matthews: Were you pleased with the results of the recent customer survey?

Gen Thompson: I was pleased that we asked appropriate and even piercing questions, but I wasn't pleased with the results themselves. I thought, in some cases, we had made better inroads than we were given credit for. Still, we were given credit for many things we did. I had sort of mixed feelings. The survey sets a base line for the future. As a matter of fact, our whole approach to customers has improved in the last couple of years. We need a responsive customer response cell that can address a customer's question in

three minutes and solve it or at least return a response to the customer in 24 hours or less.

Dr. Matthews: In the MCC?

Gen Thompson: Most likely it ought to be in the MCC, but it ought to be virtual because it has to pick up a lot of other players along the way. When the customer calls a 1-800 number and gets “Sally” or “Fred” in the MCC, Sally or Fred won’t be able to answer all the questions. What we need is a system allowing Sally and Fred to tap into the Sallys and Freds of the TCCs [Transportation Component Commands] to get the answer and get it quickly. They ought to be able to address the customer’s problem to the customer’s satisfaction in three minutes, and then solve the customer’s problem to the customer’s satisfaction in 24 hours.

Dr. Matthews: Is there an example in industry that you’ve seen?

Gen Thompson: Both APL and CSX tie computers to telephones. When a person calls in, you can see who it is before you pick up the phone. It says “Jim Matthews.” It says what Jim’s nickname is, where his office is, when was the last time Jim called here and what for. If we know some personal stuff about Jim--such as he likes canoeing and he has two dogs named Pete and Susie--it will be in his computer file. All of that is there.

Dr. Matthews: A customer history right on the screen.

Gen Thompson: A subtle profile.

Dr. Matthews: How has our Customer Day process paid off?

Gen Thompson: It’s absolutely great. We got rave reviews on the last one we did, for a couple of reasons. First, we restructured. We decided to let the customers talk and brief first and ask them what they thought

they needed from TRANSCOM that they weren't getting. The other thing we did was set up break-away groups so they could work specific issues as a team. There were three different teams in separate break-away rooms talking about command issues. It was also a success because General Robertson attended the entire time and engaged personally with the attendees.

Dr. Matthews: Do you think it's time that we once again key in on our biggest customer, the Army, and do a special day for them?

Gen Thompson: The short answer is yes. The bulk of the issues that we have are with the Army. If we did another Army Day, it would probably be more focused and revolve around mostly deployment issues like how JOPES can best be used, what's the status of TC-AIMS II [Transportation Coordinator's Automated Information for Movement System II], how the Army ITOs rate our defense transportation regulation, and things like that. But it's extremely time consuming for all concerned. If we can cover the key Army issues in our broader Customer Day, that would be great.

Dr. Matthews: What do you think TRANSCOM needs in the near term and in the long term to become a truly world class quality transportation organization?

Gen Thompson: More automation. Some may say, "Geez, you have an awful lot of that already." And certainly we do; probably two-thirds of TRANSCOM's transportation budget has to do somehow with automation. However, in my view, you can't have a responsive customer cell if it's not automated. We need automation for improved modeling and improved requirements forecasting. GTN will continue to need improvements. We need additional automation for many functions and it all costs money.

Dr. Matthews: What else?

Gen Thompson: The other thing that we need to do, and we work it hard all the time, is informing and educating our customers about how we do our business so they can help us help them. It will be a never ending task for us because of the turn over and rotation, especially on the deployment side. The sustainment side is a little easier because that's mostly done by installation transportation officers, but deploying the force on either training exercises or for contingencies requires a bunch of trained people. My view is in order to be a world class organization, we have to continue to automate and educate.

Conclusion

Dr. Matthews: What accomplishments at TRANSCOM are you most proud of and why?

Gen Thompson: I'm not sure I accomplished anything. It was the people on the staff who accomplished things. If you look at all the staff's accomplishments, I would say moving VISA to a contingency contract ranks up at the top. It was very difficult to do. I'm very proud of the folks here and at the TCCs for their work on VISA. I'm also very proud of our folks here for their work during contingencies. It was just outstanding the way we set up and kept up crisis action teams. No doubt our folks' work on Y2K was way beyond the call of duty. We decided on an approach, refined the approach to make it better, and we drilled it hard across the command and the components, so we were all in sync.

As I look back on my time at TRANSCOM, I feel confident that we are making better use of our JTRU folks and that the Mobility

Control Center is set on the road to success. We now have surface, air, and sea business rules thanks to Charlie Coolidge's leadership. His folks and the component commands have done a super job. Linking strategic planning with the budget cycle was a great step forward for us. I am extremely proud of the JTCC's contributions to TRANSCOM and our customers in process improvement. JOSAC [Joint Operational Support Airlift Center] just does grinder work every day and supports in a superb fashion the operational support aircraft requirements of DOD. We have TRAC²ES on track now, which it wasn't when I got here, for various reasons. Standing up a CIO [Chief Information Officer] holds great potential for the future. Literally every staff section and every direct reporting element have done some outstanding work at TRANSCOM. So I'm proud of all of them.

Dr. Matthews: If you had had more time, money, and people at TRANSCOM, what else would you have liked to complete?

Gen Thompson: [Laughter] If I had more time, money, and people? My time in TRANSCOM, another year in TRANSCOM or are you talking about this time during the day while I was in TRANSCOM?

Dr. Matthews: [Laughter] If you had another year in TRANSCOM.

Gen Thompson: Focus our benchmarking to realize deliverables more quickly. And concentrate our efforts on the NDTA Business Practices Committee, which I believe holds great promise for TRANSCOM and the DTS. Work to improve and expand automation. See our people under one roof or at least find an alternative that would bring our employees closer together so we have better synergy and interaction. There is lots left to do.

Dr. Matthews: What are TRANSCOM's greatest weaknesses and its greatest strengths?

Gen Thompson: The greatest strength is its people, no question about it. It's the folks here and in the component commands. Outsiders don't understand that TRANSCOM and the TCCs are relatively thin in terms of manpower, considering the enormity of their global mission. They do not get enough credit for the contributions they make day in and day out to our nation and the whole world for that matter. The strength of TRANSCOM is its people, their dedication, their motivation, their intelligence, their openness, and their willingness to see what's new out there and how it could be used for us.

Dr. Matthews: And weaknesses?

Gen Thompson: Rather than discuss weakness, I will reiterate some of the challenges. We have to address how we are going to meet the nation's needs given that we will be saying good bye to our C-141s in a few years, that we are going to have more C-17s--but probably not enough--and that our C-5s have questionable mission readiness capabilities for the long haul. It's going to take a lot of money to guarantee the future of airlift. Another related major challenge is assuring diplomatic clearances for landing and overflight.

Dr. Matthews: What concerns you about the other modes, our sealift and our land transportation?

Gen Thompson: We rely heavily on the commercial industry, and the commercial industry is in a state of hyper-flux. We have to make sure we understand the commercial business environment so that we'll get the commercial transportation when we need it to go to war. We are working that hard through NDTA and other venues, but in

today's world it's usually not cut and dried when we will need commercial transportation augmentation. If it was a cut and dried war, I think it would be easier for us. When we have contingencies, America's heart doesn't skip a beat because it's "only 7,000 or 15,000 troops," and the commercial industry is not necessarily going to do what we want them to do at the time we want them to do it. That reality raises great challenges for us now and will continue to challenge us greatly in the future.

Dr. Matthews: What excites you most about the future of transportation?

Gen Thompson: Transportation is so absolutely essential to everything the military and commercial world does. That alone is exciting. The future of transportation is exciting for two or three other reasons. First, application of automation to enhance command and control. Second, watching the development of the next generation of conveyances like high-speed sealift and "aero-craft." Third, in the next ten or fifteen years new concepts of air and surface travel, I believe, will prompt new ways of fueling and powering conveyances. The field of transportation will be extremely exciting for generations to come.

Dr. Matthews: What is your heartfelt assessment of this assignment?

Gen Thompson: It was definitely the most rewarding assignment that I've had as a general officer. It was just a bit more rewarding than being the MTMC commander, but those two jobs as a general officer were most rewarding because I felt I could see the results of the work. This job is wonderful because there are so many talented and dedicated people here. It's been neat because I had two great bosses in Walt Kross and Tony Robertson. They made it fun to come to work every day. They allowed me to be their chief operating officer. I was in charge, for all practical purposes, in

making this place go day in and day out. When you get bosses who allow you that kind of latitude and they are there to give you guidance, support, and education, it makes the work fulfilling. It was also good to be in the Midwest. The values of midwesterners as well as the environment of Illinois and the greater St. Louis area make for high quality living. On the other side of the coin, work hours were longer than I expected them to be. Being both the Chief of Staff and DCINC with a relatively lean staff made the job challenging in terms of time management

Dr. Matthews: Is there anything else you would like to discuss for the record before we close this off?

Gen Thompson: I get teased because I promoted the ideas in the book *Only the Paranoid Survive** that talks about strategic inflection points, but I really believe that the author was on to something. TRANSCOM is at a strategic inflection point. It is now in an environment where it can be a major contributor to, and even the leader in, logistics end-to-end supply chain management, or it can maintain a status quo and miss the opportunity to go onward and upward. The opportunities that we established through our customer relations initiatives, as well as the CINC's intent to partner with DLA and others to do supply chain management and end-to-end distribution, are, I think, moving us in the right direction. The potential for TRANSCOM and DLA partnering success is equal to that which the command faced and accepted in 1992 with its new peacetime, single manager charter. Finally, I wish every member of TRANSCOM--all the troops, civilians, and contractors, who make the command a success--the very best professionally and personally.

*Andrews S. Grove (New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1996).

Biography

Lieutenant General Roger G. Thompson, Jr. is deputy commander in chief, U. S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

General Thompson was born in Ashland, Kentucky. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the artillery and initially served as executive officer and later Commander, Battery D, 1st Battalion, 73d Artillery, 1st Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas. He has served in a variety of combat and combat service support unit command and staff positions. His military education includes the Transportation Officer Advanced Course, United States Army Command and General Staff College, and United States Naval War College.

General Thompson and his wife, Inga Marie, have two children: Colleen and Brendhan.

Education:

- 1966: United States Military Academy, BS Degree
- 1977: Syracuse University, MBA Degree-Comptrollership
- 1991: United States Naval War College, MA-National Security and Strategic Studies

Assignments:

1. December 1966-June 1967, Executive Officer, Battery D, 1st Battalion, 73rd Artillery, 1st Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas.
2. June 1967-May 1968, Commander, Battery D, 1st Battalion, 73rd Artillery, 1st Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas.
3. May 1968-December 1968, S-2, Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 321st Artillery, 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, United States Army, Vietnam.
4. December 1968-June 1969, Commander, Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 321st Artillery, 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, United States Army, Vietnam.
5. August 1969-May 1971, S-3/Executive Officer, later Assistant S-3 (Operations), later S-1 (Personnel), 3rd Battalion, 76th Artillery, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.
6. May 1971-September 1972, Chief, Plans and Operations Division G-4 (Logistics), 3rd Infantry Division, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.
7. September 1972-September 1973, Assistant Instructor, later Student, Transportation Officer Advanced Course, Fort Eustis, Virginia.
8. September 1973-May 1974, Training Officer, United States Army Transportation School, Fort Eustis, Virginia.
9. May 1974-June 1975, Commander, 870th Transportation Company, 24th Transportation Battalion, 7th Transportation Group, Fort Eustis, Virginia.
10. June 1975-April 1976, Combat Development Staff Officer, United States Army Transportation School, Fort Eustis, Virginia.
11. April 1976-August 1977, Student, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.
12. August 1977-June 1978, Student, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

13. June 1978-June 1981, Budget Analyst, later Chief, Programs Branch, later Chief, Budget Division, VII Corps, United States Army Europe, Germany.
14. June 1981-May 1982, Assistant Chief of Staff, Transportation, 2nd Support Command, VII Corps, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.
15. May 1982-May 1983, Logistics Staff Officer, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, United States Army, Washington, D.C.
16. May 1983-July 1985, Commander, South Atlantic Outport, Military Traffic Management Command, Charleston, South Carolina.
17. July 1985-June 1986, Student, United States Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island.
18. June 1986-August 1989, G-4 (Logistics), 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.
19. August 1989-August 1991, Commander, 37th Transportation Command, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.
20. August 1991-April 1992, Deputy Commander for Combat Developments, United States Army Combined Arms Support Command, Fort Lee, Virginia.
21. April 1992-August 1993, Director for Operations and Support, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management), Washington, D.C.
22. August 1993-May 1994, Deputy Chief of Staff for Resource Management, United States Army Materiel Command, Alexandria, Virginia.
23. May 1994-October 1996, Commanding General, Military Traffic Management Command, Falls Church, Virginia.
24. October 1996-August 1997, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Budget, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, Washington, D.C.

Major Awards and Decorations:

Distinguished Service Medal
 Legion of Merit (with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters)
 Bronze Star Medal
 Meritorious Service Medal (with 6 Oak Leaf Clusters)
 Army Commendation Medal (with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters)
 Parachutist Badge
 Ranger Tab
 Army Staff Identification Badge

Effective Dates of Promotion:

Second Lieutenant	June 8, 1966	Colonel	April 1, 1989
First Lieutenant	June 8, 1967	Brigadier General	November 1, 1992
Captain	June 8, 1968	Major General	November 1, 1995
Major	October 8, 1976	Lieutenant General	August 7, 1997
Lieutenant Colonel	August 1, 1982		

(Current as of August 1997)

Glossary

AAFES	Army and Air Force Exchange Service
AB	Air Base
ADUSD (L/TP)	Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Transportation Policy
AEF	Air Expeditionary Force
AFB	Air Force Base
AIT	Automated Information Technology
ALOC	air lines of communications
AMC	Army Materiel Command
	Air Mobility Command
AOR	area of responsibility
APL	American Presidents Line
ATA	American Trucking Association
AWR-III	Army War Reserve-III
BDSS	Business Decision Support System
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure Commission
C4S	Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems
CAT	Crisis Action Team
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINC	Commander in Chief
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CONUS	Continental United States
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CORE	Contingency Response Program
CRB	Contract Review Board
DBOF	Defense Business Operating Fund
DCAA	Defense Contract Audit Agency
DCC	Dry Charter Contingency
DCINC	Deputy Commander in Chief
DCSLOG	Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics (Army)
DCSOPS	Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations (Army)
DeCA	Defense Commissary Agency
DFAS	Defense Finance and Accounting System
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DISA	Defense Information Systems Agency
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DOD	Department of Defense
DRE	Direct Reporting Element
DSC	Deployment Support Command
DTS	Defense Transportation System

DUSD(L)	Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics
E-LIST EWG	Enhanced Logistics Intra-Theater Support Tool Executive Working Group
FAA FTE	Functional Area Assessment (Army) full-time equivalent
G-4 GAO GCCS GDP	Logistics (Army) General Accounting Office Global Command and Control System General Defense Plan
ITO ITV	Installation Transportation Office intransit visibility
JDA JDTC JLOTS JMCG JMRR JOPES JPAG JS-J4 JTCC	Joint Deployment Agency Joint Deployment Training Center Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore Joint Mobility Control Group Joint Monthly Readiness Review Joint Operation Planning and Execution System Joint Planning Advisory Group Joint Staff Logistics Joint Transportation Corporate Information Management (CIM) Center
JTMO JTRU	Joint Traffic Management Office Joint Transportation Reserve Unit
LMSR LRSSG	Large Medium-Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off ship Logistics Reform Senior Steering Group
MACOM MARAD MCC MRS-05 MSC MTMC	Major Command Maritime Administration Mobility Control Center Mobility Requirements Study-2005 Military Sealift Command Military Traffic Management Command
NDTA NOL	National Defense Transportation Association Neptune Orient Line
O-4 O-5 O-6 OEC	major/Navy lieutenant commander lieutenant colonel/Navy commander colonel/Navy captain Organization Excellence Council

Ops Deps	Operations Deputies
op evals	operation evaluations
OPLAN	Operation Plan
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PA	Public Affairs
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
PC	Positive and Cooperative
PSRC	Presidential Selected Reserve Call-up
PSYOPS	psychological operations
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RIF	reduction in force
RO/RO	Roll-On/Roll-Off ship
S-2	(Army) Battalion Intelligence office
S-5	(Army) Battalion Civic Action office
SECDEF	Secretary of Defense
SES	Senior Executive Service
TAACOM	Theater Army Area Command
TC ACCIS	Transportation Coordinator's Automated Command and Control Information System
TC-AIMS II	Transportation Coordinator's Automated Information for Movement System II
TCC	Transportation Component Command
TCJA	Office of Chief Counsel, USTRANSCOM
TCJ2	Intelligence Directorate, USTRANSCOM
TCJ3/J4	Operations and Logistics Directorate, USTRANSCOM
TCJ5	Plans and Policy Directorate, USTRANSCOM
TCJ6	Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems Directorate, USTRANSCOM
TCJ8	Program Analysis and Financial Management Directorate, USTRANSCOM
TEA	Transportation Engineering Agency
TMCA	Transportation Movement Control Agency
TMO	Transportation Management Office
TPFDD	Time Phased Force Deployment Data
TRAC ² ES	TRANSCOM Regulating and Command and Control Evacuation System
TRADOC	Army Training and Doctrine Command
TWCF	Transportation Working Capital Fund
USACOM	United States Atlantic Command
USAREUR	United States Army Forces, United States European Command

USC	Universal Services Contract
USCINCTRANS	Commander in Chief, USTRANSCOM
USEUCOM	United States European Command
USJFCOM	United States Joint Forces Command
USTRANSCOM	United States Transportation Command
VCC	VISA Contingency Charter
VISA	Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement
WPS	Worldwide Port System
Y2K	Year 2000

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ITV (See intransit visibility)

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JDTC (See Joint Deployment Training Center)

JFCOM (See US Joint Forces Command)

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