

RECOGNITIONS RELATED TO LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT IN MILITARY ORGANIZATION DURING PEACE TIME

Marius MILANDRU

Territorial Internal Audit Section No. 5, Braşov, Romania

ABSTRACT

Any modern organization, preserving its specific existence, its cultural originality manifests also availability to assimilate conquers of culture and civilization of other nations because of their human universality, their appropriation to override local or national limits. So, it can be stated that, in managerial frame, the last decade was marked by the resettle of managerial functions.

Logistics' management inside military structures is a continuous process, according to their dimensions, but also depending on their peace time missions. Its role is represented by ensuring, providing and endowing military structures with weapons, vehicles, uniforms, food, services, also the preparation under all circumstances of the maneuver forces, maintaining them at a high readiness level.

KEYWORDS

Organization, management, system, process, logistic.

The security environment is in a continuous transformation, as a result of complex interaction and interdependencies of social, economical, political, military, demographical and ecological processes and events, facts which determine states to be more interested in selfsecurity and defense.

Transition from centralized and planned economy to economy based on market's relations, imposes as first necessity more transformations, some substantial, in all domains: social, political, economical, financial, organizational, judicial, military, etc.

For realizing a correct application of new methods, techniques and instruments it is necessary a **rigorous approaching by principles regarding scientific theory of management.**

It is known and unanimous accepted that science of management has to offer theoretical and practical solutions suitable to all what represents administration' activities, at micro and macro-economical level.

The concept of "*leading*" appears in the same time with constitution of first social organizational forms, this representing a process which evolves, concurrent with material and spiritual society developing.

Activity "*old as human civilization*", leadership, can be found all over in society, in all domains at all its levels. Today this activity is known as "*management*" and the specialist involved in its developing are "*managers*".

Management as a theoretical concept is derived from the Anglo-Saxon language,

from Latin's "manus", transformed into Italian's "mannegio" (which means hand craft). The verb "to manage" (borrowed in English from French) has many understandings, as: to direct, to maneuver, to lead (a ship, a car, a motor), to administer, to rule, to conclude.

Generally speaking, the management is focused on attending strategic or tactic objectives, in this spirit the management influencing people in order to determine their actions for accomplishing them.

From the definition regarding management given by our country specific literature, I consider the most suitable to military organization, that one which belongs to the following Ph.D.: O. Nicolescu and I. Verboncu: "*Management of organizations is the studies of management processes and relations inside them, to discover laws and principles which govern them, to compose new systems, methods, techniques and modalities of leading, to assure obtaining and increasing competitiveness*".

Both management theory and practice make substantial developments which are seen as real mutations in management at a global level because is in a continuous competition in order to respond to more complex demands.

The stages of management evolution were determined by a series of influential factors with complex action which sometimes manifests contradictory.

The organization's management gravitates around some activities which are supposed to be fulfilled and, which in fact are its functions and attributes.

In order to accomplish its proposed objectives or established it is necessary for the organization to own resources, including the logistics ones.

Logistics is a concept with wide use, but with something common to all social, economical and military activities. "*Logistics enters in civilian life, in the second half of XXth century, for resolving the problems of markets supply in USA, being at long distances from the North-East side with*

intensive industry" [1]. This is seen as a science of future having as "*object of study scaling and optimal correlation of goods and information flows, to ensure continuous adaptation of factory to frame conditions of commercial market*" [2].

Military logistics is a complex process through which troops are supplied with all the materials needed and ensured all the forms of assistance: technical, medical, veterinary, psychological, religious, cultural, etc. Through this definition, logistics has to be understood as an organism, in which logistical system defines its anatomical area and logistical processes defines its physiology.

The structural modifications of the military system determined permanent changes of logistics management, this identifies itself as an integrated process of goods and services flows with the scope of realizing the logistical needs essential for fulfilling the established objectives at the level of military units (at both tactical and operational level).

In this way, the logistics management could be defined as a complex and continuous process which leads to attending the specific objectives, as a result of efficient use of human (logistic specialists), material and financial potential, available in military organization.

Logistic management can be identified through materialization of planning, organizing, commanding, coordination and controlling activities, with scope of establishing and realizing the specific objectives, as it follows:

- projection, developing, procurement, transportation, maintenance and control of vehicles and military equipments;
- personnel transportation;
- procurement or construction, maintenance, distribution and exploitation of facilities;
- procurement or supplying services;
- providing medical treatments and services.

Modifications which intercede in action of inside and outside factors, to each structure, determine important mutations in the manifesting way of some management functions components, but without changing their senses.

In the specialty literature, the management functions are defined as *efforts of thinking and rational action, specific to management activities, which start a logical cycle of future events, of preparing, prevision and organization of existing ways, of knowing and influencing people.*

From this definition results that process of management has a cycling character, which starts with defining of proposing scope, continues with issuing of objectives on determined period of time, establishing tasks for the structures components (military units at tactical level) and ends with analyzing of their meet.

Recent approaches at the level of each organization, including military, even though there are some differences, lead to the

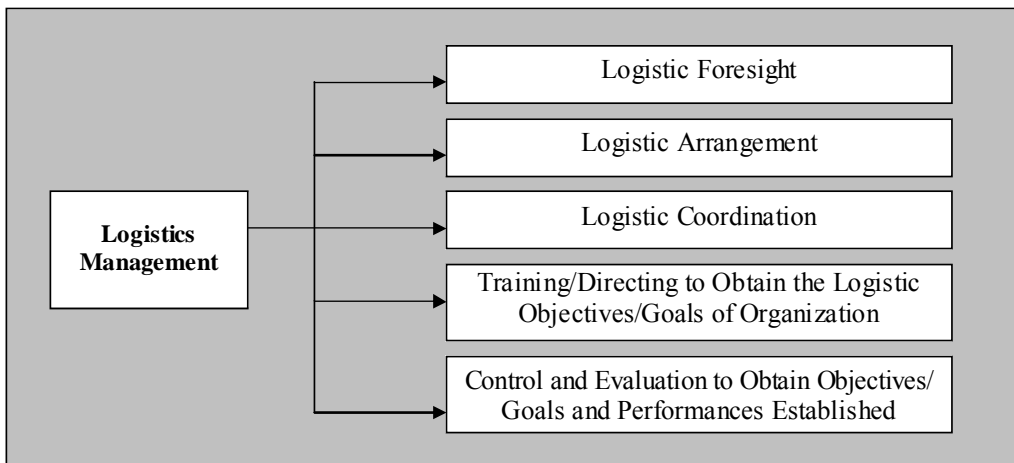
following functions: **foresight, organizing, coordination, directing (training) and evaluation-controlling.**

In the process of every management cycle some operations are done, in a logical succession, and are systemized on stages and represent the content of those five management functions.

During peace time, the functions of logistics management have functional character, these having the scope of projecting and realizing the specific activities necessary to accomplish military units' missions and tasks, without taking into account the destination, activity domain or mission.

Inside every logistics management process, each of the functions mentioned before leads and ensures the functioning of specific systems and of course fulfills the tasks and orders received.

The logistics management functions, as sections which continue and complete the general management of organization, are underlined in the following diagram:



Foresight function takes into account an effort of thinking and action from logistic managers in order to identify anticipatory the problems which will interfere in unit's activity, from inside or outside.

Foresight becomes an integrated part of military managers' mentality, managers

who have to anticipate, through their activity the courses of action for future missions.

The manager has to orientate continuously the unit to obtain superior performances through anticipation of ongoing procedures for economical and financial processes, according to past results and learned experience.

Generally speaking, manifestation of foresight function implies activities systematization and going through with the following stages:

- *establishing perspective*, respectively the direction in which action has to be conducted;

- *defining objectives (goals)*, based on the information analysis from the former stage – general objectives are lay down;

- *establishing programs for each activity domain*;

- *defining material and financial resources necessary for proposed objectives (goals)*.

Foresights are materialized in: *prognosis, plans and programs specific to logistic domain*.

Organizing function represents the most complex component of logistic management; this could be defined through a sum of actions made in order to utilize with maximum efficiency material, human and financial resources which the organization has at its disposal.

To realize objectives, logistician has to initiate actions and take decisions in order to assure optimal reports and proportions between category of resources, to elaborate and apply practically rational structures of organizing and practice the most appropriate informational system.

Coordination function represents a process through every logistics' manager creates and maintains harmony between activities, people and specialties subordinate sections, in condition of inside and outside impulses, which determines profound changes, to realize proposed objectives in superior performance conditions.

Exertion of coordination function by manager implies a knowledge effort regarding: table of organization, personnel position in table of organization, jobs description for each job inside organization.

Directing (training) function, through directing, management is able to influence and oversee the behavior of the staff in

achieving the unit's goals. How important this function is comes from, the lack of execution elements, which lead to the impossibility of achieving the established goals.

Directing consists in managers' actions for attracting personnel in order to preserve a normal functioning of system's mechanisms and to obtain superior economical performances. It requires a lot of will, tenacity, transmitting certitude to subordinates in realizing the established goals.

The exertion of this function from the logistician imposes a carefully selection and preparing of subordinates, acting with an assembly of ways through which this influences directly the structure's components who's leading, orienting its actions in the chosen aim.

Controlling and evaluation function represents an assembly of actions which track if the obtained results are identical with their preset level or standards. More than this, systematic tracking of similarities between results and programming, quantitative and qualitative point of view, anticipating consequences, which can come from its unreached, allows taking the proper measures, which ensures functionality, regardless of the nature of influences and the place where it happens.

Prior, it achieves, a confrontation of results obtained in different periods with initiated forecasts.

With this occasion deviations are identified, measured and the causes that generate them are highlighted.

Exertion with competence of this function makes necessary first time to define the elementary structure of act itself, of control which reunites in a logical succession many operations.

During the management process, the essential moment is represented by the managerial decision, because this is often met in the management functions.

The specific activities related to logistics system lead, permanently, to processes of decisions with different importance and value.

The decisions specific to military logistics during peace time are founded on an event or a situation whose appearance is interpreted by managers as a reason of decision process.

It is obvious that, in this case, the fact that an event is the trigger of a decision making process, only if it receives from managers' side the character of reason or "trigger event".

For realizing the logistics objectives and directions, scheduled in plans and programs, analyzing and comparing actions or activities are necessary with the scope of taking decisions. So, in logistics domain, decision represents the essential element of management and consists of choosing from many variants (courses of action) which precedes always specific actions or activities.

It can be concluded that logistic decision defines the course of action chosen by military logistician with the scope of achieving one or more activities scheduled in leading documents which have related sequels for subordinates actions (personnel, structures, organizations, both leading or execution).

According to their complexity, logistic decision can be taken by military logistician after a decision making process.

This requires time consumption, including hours, days or even weeks, in this way a huge amount of data and information, are collected, stocked and analyzed, professional contacts are established and consultations are made with lot of persons in order to ground and adopt a decision.

The decision making process requires the following levels:

- *preparing the logistical decision*, which requires mission statement through commander's information and initiation of logistic planning;

- *taking the logistic decision* which comprises: logistical courses of action

evaluation and comparison, developing, in the same time with logistic estimation, choosing the course of action, according to logistical point of view, organizing and executing of logistics reconnaissance, developing of logistics concept of operation;

- *applying the logistic decision* and recording the effects imply successions of activities with organizational nature as: activities related to logistics planning, issue decision;

The logistic decisional act has, as in every management system, in situations with small complexity, which are taking place in a short period of time or when that situation is repeated and the variables implies (resources, time) are well known by the specialist.

At the foundation of decisional acts, which are predominantly quantitative, at the execution logistic structures are personnel knowledge, experience, aptitudes and abilities.

Transformations which took place in the last years in military domain, regarding table of equipment and military actions, determined at the level of military logistics an accommodation of thinking and practicing in management.

Logistic decision during peace time, under the commander's decision is selected according to existence status of decisional area taking account the manifesting of: risks, dangers, vulnerabilities related to projecting and doing of specific logistic activities.

In order to solve the particular problems of logistic decisional process during risk conditions it is necessary to make the management process of risk, with the following levels:

- identifying the risks which can affect the logistic system of military organization;
- evaluating and analyzing the risks;
- leveling the risks, determining the residual risk and elaborating methods of control in order to take an optimum decision.

From all above, results that during logistic decision making process, planning

logisticians have to apply efficiently the risk management taking into account the specific vulnerabilities.

As a result of studies realized but also as a result of specialists' experience, there are a lot of requests that logistic decision, during peace time, has to fulfill:

- decision must be scientifically grounded, for this reason the personnel has to detain knowledge, methods, techniques and abilities required and also to understand the mechanism specific to logistics;

- decision must be lawful, for this reason it must be taken by the personnel which have the responsibilities according to jobs' description;

- each decision must be integrated in the area of decisions already taken or projected taking into account logistic structures policies and strategy;

- decision has to be taken in a optimum period of developing and applying in order to obtain the desired effect.

- decision must to be phrased logically which is an essential condition for efficient result.

- decision must be formulated in short terms and contain objective and principal operational parameters, this means that it has to indicate the followed objective, action purpose, allocated resources, leader, period of time and applying term.

In conclusion, logistic management is a section of general management, an extension of this in administrative and economical organization area with the following descriptions:

- logistics foresight is part of general organization foresight action, but not as an inside component through addition as a component with remarkable role;

- logistics organizing has to fulfill an active role in organization managerial preoccupations;

- logistics communication represents sending of messages which implies organization activity domains and logistics subsystems;

- logistics control is the base of other management functions.

A remarkable importance is represented by the realization of military logistics management system, respectively its components:

- organizational system;

- informational system;

- decision system;

- the system of management methods and techniques.

An outstanding logistics management based on economy, efficacy and efficiency can't be realized than through exercitations of it functions or peculiarities, as it follow:

- foresight which answer the question: "*What has to and what can be done in this structure?*";

- organization, which answer the question: "*Who and how concurs to attain structure's goals?*";

- assuring a efficient coordination through adequate communication to all management's level;

- training (directing), which has to answer the question: "*Why the structure's personnel participate to establish and to realize its' goals?*";

- controlling and evaluation, function which answer the question: "*What are the results of unrolled activity?*"

Logistics management functions are interconnected and interacting between them, lack of appreciation or restraining the form of manifestation of one or another will influence negatively the whole activity in the entire unit.

Frequency of management functions' exertion in manager's activity differs from the personnel position in logistics structure inside management system.

If the foresight and coordination functions occupy the most important percentage related to managers time at high echelon, and organizing and controlling functions have a smaller percentage, at low echelons more important are controlling and organizing functions.

Inside the military management processes a high importance is represented by logistic decision process.

The quality of decisions in military logistic during peace time depends on a lot of variables, from level of managers knowledge until the structural mode of authority inside logistic structures.

Knowing those variables can be realized through a profound analysis at

logistic structures level, in order to upgrade the system from time to time, according to the new strategy and internal and external conditions of the environment.

In this way I consider that logistics management has to be receptive to economical, social and military mutation that are taking place in our country, being necessary to respond to requirements imposed by eventual military conflicts.

REFERENCES

1. Mircea Udrescu, "Military Logistics in the Context of Global Logistics and the Future Military Conflicts Typology", *Military Science Magazine*, Year IV, 2, 7 (2004): 30.
2. *Ibidem*, 31.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Burduş, Eugen. *Compared Management*. Bucharest: Economică Publishing House, 1998.
- Enache, Ioana. "Logistics Management Functions". *Scientific Communication Session with International Participants STRATEGICS XXI – Security and Defense in European Union*. "Carol I" National Defense University Publishing House, Bucharest, (2008).
- Johns, Gary. *Organizational Behavior*. Bucharest: Economică Publishing House, 1998.
- Minculete, Gheorghe. *Modern Approaches in Logistics Management*. Bucharest: "Carol I" National Defense University Publishing House, 2009.
- Moise, Mihaela. "Romania – Importance of Inverted Logistics for Commercial Activity". *Economical Amphitheater* 24, Economics Studies Academy, Bucharest, (2008).
- Nicolescu, Ovidiu, and Ioan Verboncu. *Fundamentals of Organizational Management*. Bucharest: University Publishing House, 2008.
- Udrescu, Mircea. "Military Logistics in the Global Logistics Context and Future Military Conflicts Typology". *Military Science Magazine*.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.