The Logistician

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Rackcliff Deploys to Support Local Ties Following Hurricanes

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Will Rackcliff leads logistical support during the emergency response following Hurricanes Helene and Milton. (Courtesy photo.)

As the devastation from Hurricane Milton unfolds, logistics teams are essential to national recovery efforts. Among them is Will Rackcliff, a Logistics Management Specialist and Regional Logistics Planner for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Northwestern Division, currently deployed to Jacksonville, Florida. Despite being based in Portland, Oregon, this deployment is personal for Rackcliff, who hails from Central Florida, an area hard-hit by both Hurricane Helene and Milton.

"My own family members were affected in some way by Milton," Rackcliff said. "From localized flooding, wind damage, debris, and power outages. I let them know and tell them to spread the word about our capabilities. I am also able to explain the challenges we face supporting the recovery."

As part of USACE's emergency response efforts, Rackcliff is serving as the Logistics Contingency Response Subject Matter Expert (CRSME) and Logistics Primary Response Team (LPRT) Lead. His role places him at the heart of coordinating logistics support for the recovery, which includes providing supplies, managing

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transportation, and working closely with federal, state, and local agencies.

"Our responsibilities include coordinating the delivery of critical supplies such as fuel, lodging support, deconflicting rental car matters, and coordinating between the supported district and follow-on responders like the Blue Roof team," Rackcliff said. "My team and I work closely with federal, state, and local agencies to ensure recovery teams have what they need to assist affected communities."

But the job is far from easy. According to Rackcliff, managing expectations and dealing with limited infrastructure resources are some of the most significant challenges in a post-hurricane environment.

"The biggest initial challenge is expectation management for inbound responders who may not understand the damage to infrastructure, which makes finding resources and lodging difficult," he explained. "It takes them a while to be flexible to the challenges, especially when they've never deployed before. We also must mitigate delays of essential supplies when FEMA is not set up for direct support early in the event."

Rackcliff's deployment to Jacksonville is one of many in his extensive career with USACE. With nine years of experience leading LPRT teams and multiple deployments, including five to Afghanistan, Rackcliff is well-prepared for the complexities of disaster recovery.

"My past experience as a Combat Engineer (Sapper) and as the Logistics Chief for all USACE Afghan operations honed my skills in organization, flexibility, decision-making, and team leadership, especially in high-pressure environments," Rackcliff said.

The work USACE Logistics teams do is often behind the scenes but essential to the overall recovery mission. Logistics support ensures emergency responders and recovery personnel have the tools and resources needed to help those affected.

"From providing personal protective equipment to ensuring vehicles are fueled and operational, logistics support ensures responders can do their jobs," Rackcliff said. "It also involves managing supply chains to prevent delays and make sure resources are replenished as needed."

Despite the difficulties, Rackcliff takes pride in knowing that his work is directly benefiting the people of Florida, many of whom are family and friends.

"This is personal to me," he said. "We are working with partners at all levels of government to restore services, deliver supplies, and rebuild infrastructure."

For Rackcliff, the chance to serve in this capacity is an opportunity to give back to his community and make a lasting impact. USACE employees often find themselves in positions where their work directly affects the communities they live in and care about, something Rackcliff deeply values.

Also deployed in support of logistics for the hurricane recovery efforts are Cherish Walker, Portland District; Winston Green, Huntsville Center; Jonathan Bollinger, Kansas City District; and Dennis Davis from the Logistics Activity Center Operations Division.

When asked what advice Rackcliff would give to others considering joining a logistics emergency response team, Rackcliff encouraged those interested to pursue the opportunity.

"Joining a logistics emergency response team is challenging but deeply rewarding," Rackcliff said. "It requires flexibility, quick thinking, and a strong commitment to helping others. This experience also prepares a person to deal with many life challenges."

As recovery efforts continue in the wake of Hurricane Milton, Rackcliff's work, and the work of his fellow USACE logistics team members, will remain essential to helping communities rebuild and recover. With deep ties to the region, Rackcliff's deployment exemplifies the dedication and personal connection that many USACE employees bring to their work, ensuring that they make a positive difference where it matters most.

Fort Worth District Disposes of Excess Property

From Tamara Mahaffey, Fort Worth District Logistics Manager

Fort Worth District (SWF) Logistics Office personnel including Iris Medina, Dwayne Curtis, and John Davis used the General Services Administration (GSA) personal property management system and successfully facilitated the efficient transfer and sale of surplus equipment, ensuring that no valuable property was left unused.

Managing personal property efficiently is critical for any government agency, and at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, logistics personnel leverage the GSA platform to simplify the process of property disposal. Whether it's surplus equipment or outdated vehicles, the GSA platform is a vital tool for ensuring resources are utilized effectively and efficiently transferred or disposed of.

Fort Worth District, along with the lakes managed by our organization, benefits from the GSA platform by easily disposing of property no longer required for mission-critical tasks. This property might include vehicles, trailers, and other durable assets that are still usable but have surpassed their functional lifespan for the district. Instead of letting valuable items accumulate or waste away, GSA facilitates the transfer of these items to other government agencies. By doing this, they ensure that surplus property continues to serve the public interest in another capacity, preventing unnecessary waste. When government agencies don't express interest in acquiring the surplus property, the GSA opens it up for public sale. This system allows individuals and businesses to purchase equipment at fair market value, benefiting from items that still have functional use. In turn, this public-facing aspect of the GSA platform helps generate revenue for the government and ensures that valuable assets continue to be put to good use, even outside the government domain.

Over the past few months, Medina, the SWF Property Disposal point of contact has been actively engaged in the significant task of managing and disposing of surplus property for the Fort Worth District. Through collaboration with GSA, she successfully facilitated the disposal of various assets, ensuring that valuable equipment found new homes, either through public sale or transfers to other government agencies. A total of eight items were transferred, donated, or sold in public sales with a dollar value of $70K. Here are some key accomplishments from these efforts:

- Cargo Trailer: Successfully sold to the public for $500, with the earnings returned to the district.
- Dump Truck: Transferred from Lake O' the Pines Project Office to another government agency.
- 100 Guardrails (26 feet long) and approximately 70 posts, and John Deere Backhoe: Donated from Lavon Lake to another agency.
- John Deere Skid Steer Sweeper Attachment: Transferred from Stillhouse Hollow Lake Office to another agency.
- Big Tex Goose Neck Trailer: Successfully donated to another agency from Stillhouse Hollow Lake as well.
- Onan 100 Generator: Donated from Whitney Powerhouse Office to another agency.

(Courtesy photos.)

Preserving History While Embracing Modernization: The Renovation of the Mississippi River Commission Building

The Mississippi River Commission (MRC) Building, nestled in the heart of Vicksburg, Mississippi, is more than just the headquarters for the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD). Constructed in 1890-1891 and expanded in 1912, this iconic structure holds a prominent place on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing element within the Uptown Vicksburg Historic District. As one of the key pieces of architecture symbolizing the rich history of the region, the MRC Building is undergoing a significant modernization project to ensure its future while respecting its past.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Facilities Management Division (FMD), represented by mechanical engineers Dedric Pitts and Stephen Lytle, is deeply involved in this multi-million-dollar effort, working in collaboration with the General Services Administration (GSA) to review the Architect/Engineer (A/E) team's 35% submittals for the renovation. Pitts explains that the MRC Renovation is a 22-million-dollar construction project to resolve some infrastructure and HVAC systems issues.

The modernization of the MRC Building includes critical upgrades to its infrastructure while preserving its historical integrity. The building's heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, along with electrical and plumbing, are set to be completely overhauled. "Overall, the renovation will update the heating ventilation and air conditioning, window reglazing, ceilings, and electrical systems," Pitts said.

While many of these updates are essential to ensure the building remains operational and meets modern standards, the project team is especially mindful of the MRC Building's historic status. The modernization plans include the restoration of original architectural features, such as the ceilings and lighting fixtures. Pitts said that "the building plans are to restore some of the original components such as ceilings, some lighting fixtures, and maintain the initial architectural intent for the building envelope."

Balancing the integration of modern systems with the preservation of historic elements can be challenging, but the FMD team is committed to ensuring that modern upgrades do not compromise the building's historic character. "Most of the building upgrades comprise subsystems like HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, and lighting. While most of these systems offer upgrades and reliability to the future function of the building, they will not diminish the historical appearance," Pitts said.

The FMD has a vital role in reviewing development drawings and specifications, ensuring that any updates meet strict regulatory standards while maintaining the building's historical integrity. Pitts said,

The Mississippi River Commission (MRC) Building. (Courtesy photo.)

"FMD's mission is to provide A/E development drawings and specification review with plans to provide contractor submittal review."

Collaboration is a key component of this project, with the FMD team working closely with the GSA and other stakeholders throughout the process. As Pitts said, "FMD will continue to provide developmental drawings, review of all A/E documents to completion, and attend all required meetings to support MVD."

Drawing on years of experience in historical building renovation, Pitts and his team are well-equipped to handle the unique challenges of modernizing a structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places. "Staff within FMD has collective experience with historical building renovation and years of consulting design of contractual drawings and

specification development," Pitts said.

For those tasked with the delicate balance of modernizing historic buildings, Pitts offers valuable advice: “It’s imperative to consult guidance from the Historical Registry on any of its listed buildings while providing an effective regulatory-based construction design to suit all stakeholders.”

As the project moves beyond the 35% review phase, the FMD team will continue to play a crucial role in ensuring its successful completion. The renovation of the Mississippi River Commission Building is not only about restoring a piece of history but also ensuring it stands the test of time as a functional space for future generations.

With its unique blend of historical preservation and modern innovation, the MRC Building renovation serves as a model for future projects. As Pitts and his team continue their work, the result will be a seamless integration of past and present, ensuring that the Mississippi River Commission Building remains a symbol of both tradition and progress.

Dedric Pitts and Stephen Lytle review plans for the historic Mississippi River Commission building, which is also home to the US Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley Division. (Courtesy photo.)

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Powell Praised for Successful Telematics Roll Out

Name: Regina E. Powell
Division/ District: Mississippi Valley Division (MVD)/ St. Louis District
Position: Transportation Assistant

This month's highlight for the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) shines upon the St. Louis District Transportation Assistant, Regina E. Powell shown (left) in picture with a GEO-Tab telematic installer.

In response to OPORD 2024-21 directing installation of telematics equipment in General Services Administration (GSA) leased vehicles, Powell quickly jumped on the requirement by providing the GSA Fleet Solution Team the required ordering document listing information such as basic information on the district's lease vehicle fleet as well as addresses and points of contact at each site so that the GSA Fleet Solution Team in conjunction with GEO-Tab representatives could contact the offices directly to coordinate shipping of the equipment and establish dates/ times for installations.

In the past two months, Powell superbly maintained constant communications with the site fleet managers, GSA Field Service Representative, and GEO-Tab Team Leads resolving multiple issues ranging from equipment deliveries to sites and installation scheduling, which ultimately led to the district accomplishing its goal of having telematics installed on the entire 173 district vehicle fleet during the Fiscal Year 2025 1st quarter period.

In addition to facilitating the installation process, Powell ensured the St. Louis District was aware of the capabilities of telematics and how the associated cost of the telematic subscription being amortized into vehicle monthly rental rates. This action enabled total transparency of the District Logistics Office support in ensuring the district gained compliance with the headquarters' directed OPORD.

Lastly, Powell acknowledged the GSA Field Service Representative, Johnny Crockett; the Fleet Solution Team Lead Kyle Bromir; the two GEO-Tab Leads Frederic Guertin and Venus Medina; and all of the installers for doing their parts in ensuring approval of installations, shipping of equipment to sites, scheduling and executing installations in a very timely manner across the district's footprint spanning from Southern Illinois down to Southern Missouri. Powell will continue monitoring telematic activations on the fleet until GSA has activated all systems.

Streamlining OCONUS Travel for USACE Personnel: Insights from Reginald Tuggle

Navigating the logistics of overseas travel is a complex task, especially for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) personnel and military members tasked with carrying out important missions abroad. The Transportation Division (TD) plays a critical role in ensuring that these travel requests are processed efficiently and in compliance with Department of Defense (DoD) regulations. Reginald Tuggle, Lead Logistics Management Specialist within the USACE Logistics Activity Transportation Division, recently discussed how his team supports this essential function.

Tuggle explained that USACE employees and military personnel must follow a structured process when requesting to travel outside the continental United States (OCONUS), particularly when traveling to countries that require clearance under the Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG).

"USACE members must be traveling to a country that requires an OCONUS clearance per the Foreign Clearance Guide," he said. Travelers must submit the Engineer Form (ENG) 6073 as soon as their travel requirement is known to initiate the clearance process. This paperwork is then forwarded to TD for review."

"The lead time for submitting requests is 45 days to allow TD to inform travelers of any missing training or information and still process the clearance within the lead time requirement of the foreign country," Tuggle said.

He emphasized that travelers must ensure all documentation, including official passports and any necessary visas, is prepared in advance.

"The traveler is responsible for obtaining any immunizations required by the country visited prior to departure of travel and training requirements outlined in FCG," he added.

The role of TD is crucial in ensuring travel requests are processed in a timely manner. Tuggle pointed out that TD does not approve the requests but facilitates the process by submitting paperwork to the Aircraft and Personnel Automated Clearance System (APACS) for approval.

"TD does NOT approve requests. However, we track travel clearance approvals and will forward a copy of the approved clearance to the travelers," he said. The division's experience and established relationships with both the U.S. embassies and combatant commands (COCOM) streamline the process and ensure personnel receive the necessary approvals.

TD's work ensures compliance with DoD regulations, including those outlined in the DoD Foreign Clearance Guide and DoD Directive 4500.54E, which govern foreign travel for DoD-sponsored personnel. "We also have professional relations with both COCOM and foreign country (U.S. Embassy) personnel," Tuggle said, highlighting the importance of these partnerships in ensuring smooth coordination and mission success.

One of the most common challenges Tuggle noted is travelers not adhering to the 45-day lead time requirement, which is critical for processing OCONUS travel requests.

"Established lead time allows TD to inform travelers of any missing training or information and still process the clearance within the lead time requirement of the foreign countries to ensure mission success," he said. If the lead time isn't met, travelers must provide a justification for why their visit cannot be postponed.

Despite the complexity of managing OCONUS travel for USACE personnel, Tuggle's team remains committed to ensuring that every request is handled efficiently. While there haven't been significant reports of challenges members face while traveling abroad, Tuggle advised that personnel should always maintain control of their no-fee passports when traveling. TD remains a crucial resource for personnel traveling overseas, helping them navigate the logistics so they can focus on their mission.

Streamlining Fleet Management: Tulsa District's Telematics Installation Process

The installation of telematic devices across the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tulsa District fleet of vehicles represents a significant step forward in modernizing vehicle operations and improving fleet management. William D. Minock, Transportation Specialist for the Tulsa District, spearheaded this initiative for the district, which involves fitting government vehicles with telematics devices to enhance data collection and optimize fleet utilization.

To begin the process, Minock captured a comprehensive data report of the district's General Services Administration (GSA) leased vehicles and agency-owned assets, sorting them into categories to identify which vehicles were eligible for telematic installation.

"I used several different categories," he said. "Vehicles that were new and already had devices installed, vehicles that were up for replacement, and vehicles that weren't accepting the devices."

After this detailed review, Minock compiled a list of routes for various project office locations, ensuring an efficient plan for on-site installations to reduce the disruption to district operations. Managing the logistics of installing telematics across a large geographic area, which spans Oklahoma, parts of Kansas, and Texas, was no small feat.

"I knew I was able to do up to three vehicles at a time, with about 10 minutes per vehicle," said Minock. In addition to installing devices, Minock took time during each site visit to perform quick inspections of the vehicles, checking for deficiencies like missing tags or equipment conditions. This proactive approach helped him address any issues he discovered along the way.

William Minock installs the telematics device on a government vehicle. (Courtesy photo.)

One of the more significant challenges Minock encountered was the lack of cellular service in remote areas, a crucial factor since the telematic devices rely on cell signals to transmit data.

"Half of my sites are very remote in nature, meaning lack of cell service," Minock said. To overcome this, he had to drive vehicles up to 10 miles to find a signal strong enough for the devices to connect. He used both his phones with different mobile carriers, to find suitable areas with service. "I would then stop and let the device connect," he said.

Despite the challenges, Minock has achieved nearly 90% installation across the district's fleet for vehicles that could accept the telematics devices. However, the immediate impact on operations has been minimal.

"Honestly, I haven't seen any change in operations at all," Minock admitted. "The only change that I see is the benefit of vehicle analytics, which we need and use for vehicle utilization reports."

The telematics devices provide more accurate data, which helps streamline reporting for Vehicle Allocation Methodology (VAM), Vehicle Utilization Review Board (VURB), and quarterly reports.

As the installation process nears completion, Minock reflected on the lessons learned. One of the biggest hurdles was finding a secure place under the dashboard to install the device without interfering with the brake pedal or risking the device falling out while driving.

"You must get creative," Minock said. "If the device shakes or vibrates during vehicle operation, it won't register or give a fault code. It just won't communicate."

Looking ahead, Minock plans to monitor the devices through the fleet management website, ensuring they remain operational.

"I'll use the website to monitor each device to ensure it is working," he said. In the long term, Minock sees telematics as a key tool in improving fleet management. "The benefit of vehicle analytics will help us complete reports with accurate data."

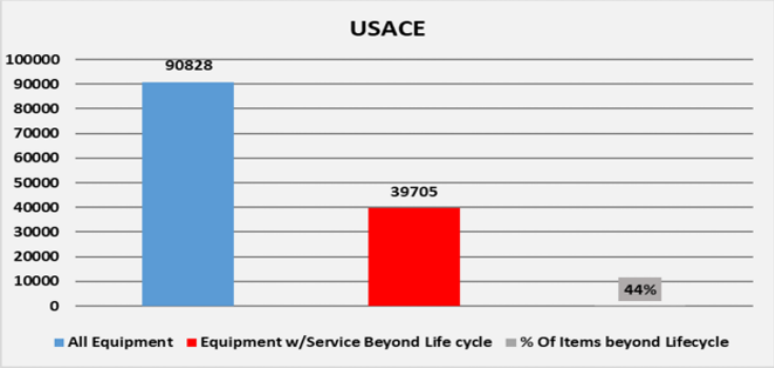
Minock's careful planning and execution of the telematics installation project across the Tulsa District's fleet showcases the importance of leveraging technology for better fleet oversight. His experience offers valuable insights for other fleet managers embarking on similar projects, demonstrating how meticulous preparation and adaptability are essential for success.

Sustainment Division Completes Equipment Replacement Plan Analysis

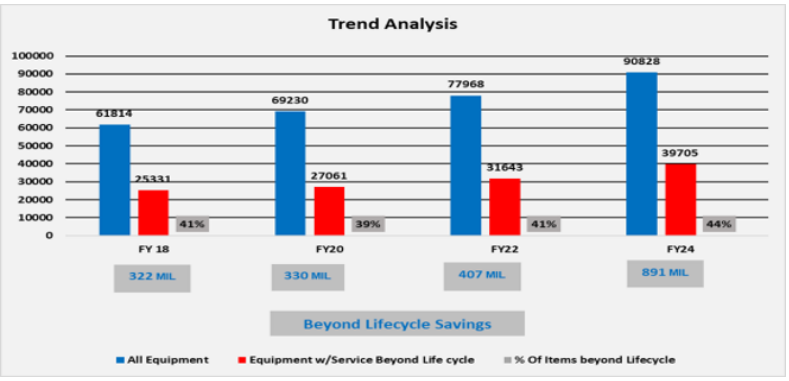
From Sustainment Division

Sustainment Division Maintenance Team Members recently completed the Fiscal Year 2024 Equipment Replacement Plan (ERP) (Part- A Deprecative Analysis). The purpose of this effort is to inform the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Headquarters, along with commanders, resource management, district and regional logistics managers, operations chiefs, and project managers on the number of pieces of USACE owned personal property and equipment that have reached or exceeded their life cycle expectancy.

The ERP can be used as a trigger mechanism for commanders and stakeholders while assisting with forecasting and planning for upcoming fiscal years acquisition and sustainment budgets. The intent is to provide visibility throughout the enterprise on equipment that is on-hand and has exceeded its useful life expectancy. Continued servicing and refurbishment of equipment utilized throughout mission support has saved USACE $891M over the lifecycle of the equipment.



Sustainment Division Maintenance Team Members analyzed over 300,000 pieces of personal property within categories of Floating Plant; Automotive Plant; Material Handling Equipment; Shop Tools, TMDE and Survey Equipment. There were 90,828 items within the categories and 39,705 had exceeded service lifecycle and having no book value, which is 44% of USACE Equipment still being utilized to perform its mission. (Courtesy Graphics)



Trend Analysis captures equipment during selected FY's annotating total pieces of equipment meeting the defined criteria verses the total items beyond its life cycle with no book value and percentage depreciated. The Trend Analysis also captured cost saving during selected FY's. Continued servicing and refurbishment of equipment utilized in mission support has saved USACE $891 Mil for FY24. (Courtesy Graphics)

Members of the Sustainment Divisions Programs Management Branch. From the left: Scott Rollins, Darren Branham, Zachary Plowick, Stanley Pearson, Sarah Nielson, and Jacqueline Murphy. Not Shown, Charles Hickman.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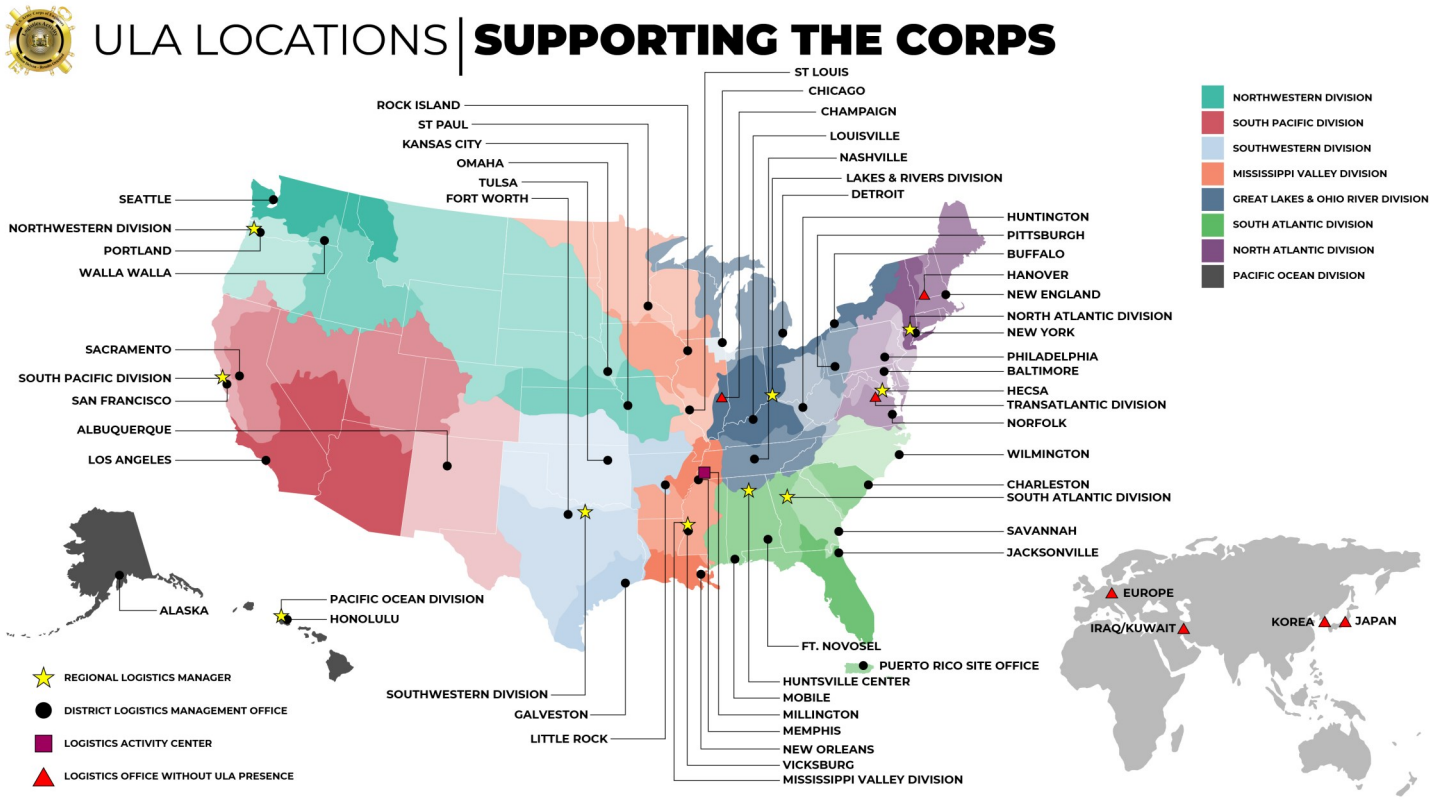
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