The following technical paper abstract information was recently submitted in connection with session DOD106,Infrastructure

Offer Number: 14DOD-0027
Paper Title: Expeditionary Depot Maintenance Ship
Author:
Phillip Thompson
U.S. Army
Bldg 270 2nd floor
Michigan
(586)282 1081
phillip.thompson@us.army.mil

Abstract: Expeditionary Depot Maintenance Ship (EDMS)

This abstract proposes to have ship converted to perform depot maintenance repairs as are feasible to perform on a ship. A ship can be positioned, fully operational in a given theater of operations before the 1st boots hit the ground. The EDMS primarily addresses readiness and infrastructure.

The Army's experience in the 1990s revealed a need for much improved strategic responsiveness. In sharp contrast to the geographic focus of the Cold War experience, which allowed massive prepositioning of units, equipment, and supplies in Europe and Northeast Asia, the post-Cold War Army must be able to deploy rapidly around the world. The combat arms side of the Army has been moving towards that goal, but our depots are in essence – the same as they were in the 1940's when conceived. They have newer equipment, but are still immobile activities within CONUS. Our depot maintenance support needs to be able to rapidly deploy anywhere in the world to support our troops who are doing the same.

The EDMS will be a modified version of a successful proof of concept program conducted during the Vietnam War. At the time, the Army wanted to reduce the transport time and cost of shipping damaged helicopters back to CONUS for repair and then shipping them back to Vietnam. The solution was to convert a retired seaplane tender named USS Albemarle into a ship equipped to perform extensive helicopter repairs with the ship nearby off the coast of Vietnam with the ability to quickly move to any location as needed. The ship was renamed the USNS Corpus Christi Bay. It had cranes and a helicopter pad to facilitate the movement of helicopters/cargo on and off the ship. As the U.S. participation in Vietnam waned and a renewed focus on the Cold War ensued, the USNS Corpus Christi Bay was deemed in excess of current and future requirements.

The EDMS will be configured to repair small end items such as small arms and chemical/biological defense end items. It will also be configured to perform depot repair on Line-Replaceable Units (LRUs), from the larger end items, with the highest Average Monthly Demand (AMD). While the EDMS will be primarily for repair, it will also have a manufacturing capability similar to the Mobile Parts Hospitals.

In past conflicts, the Army has either sent all items needing depot repair to CONUS or set up a temporary depot facility in a host country. We can't be guaranteed that our next conflict will have a host country and setting up a depot in a host country can take months or even years. A ship already outfitted as a functioning depot can be in theatre within hours/days from receiving orders to deploy. Our soldiers are required to deploy anywhere in the world at a moment's notice – shouldn't our depot maintenance support also have the agility to immediately support their needs as they are sent into harm's way?

Thank you for considering this proposal.
Phillip Thompson
DSN 786-1081, 586-282-1081
phillip.thompson@us.army.mil