



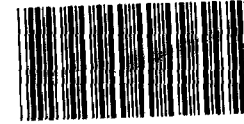
UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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NATIONAL SECURITY AND
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

APRIL 8, 1985

Major General Harold I. Small
Commander
Military Traffic Management Command



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Dear General Small:

Subject: Use of Transportation Technology by MTMC
(GAO/NSIAD-85-67)

We have completed our survey of the application of advanced transportation technology by the Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC). This assignment was done under our code 393078.

The objective of our survey was to determine if MTMC adequately identifies and uses modern transportation technology to improve the Department of Defense's (DOD) transportation management, operations, and readiness. During this survey, we met with several MTMC officials and obtained information from various private shipping organizations and federal agencies.

Although we found no instances where MTMC had not used modern transportation technology, we believe that MTMC's practices for keeping abreast of new transportation technology could be improved. MTMC officials told us that currently there is no focal point or formal system to collect, evaluate, use, and disseminate information on such technology. Instead, MTMC relies on its day-to-day contacts with industry representatives, in-house research efforts, and periodic involvement in national transportation industry meetings and seminars to obtain this information.

MTMC's informal method is undoubtedly helpful. We believe, however, that MTMC could better ensure that it receives useful technological information in a timely manner by establishing formal communications with organizations directly involved in developing, accumulating, and disseminating information on transportation technology.

MTMC officials agreed that their procedures for identifying transportation technology could be improved. They also said they would consider establishing more formal relationships with

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organizations involved with transportation technology in order to better assure the identification and use of relevant transportation technology.

TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

A number of organizations involved with transportation technology could provide information helpful to MTMC. These organizations include:

1. The Transportation Research Board--a unit of the National Academy of Sciences which encourages research and provides a clearinghouse for research activities and information on transportation technology.
2. The Office of Technology Sharing, Department of Transportation (DOT)--the designated focal point within DOT for exchanging information, ideas, experience, and technology with the national transportation community. This office regularly transmits information on transportation technology to organizations that request it or are on its mailing list.

There are also a number of commercial and government-sponsored information services that could provide MTMC with a wide range of information on transportation technology topics. They include the Defense Logistics Studies Information Exchange, located at the U.S. Army Logistics Management Center, a major educational activity of the Army Materiel Command; the DIALOG Information Retrieval Service, which has over 200 public and private data bases on science, technology, chemistry, medicine, engineering, social sciences, business, economics, and current events; and the Defense Logistics Agency's Technical Information Center, which makes available technical information summaries.

Officials at two government agencies we visited, DOT's Technology Sharing Program and the Army Materiel Command's Technology Planning and Management Office, said they did not have any contact with MTMC officials and would not know where to send transportation information to MTMC even if they thought it would be useful.

These officials gave us data on their information resources which indicated a number of reports on transportation technology. For example, DOT distributed a report prepared by the Maritime Administration's Office of Port and Intermodal Development which presents a quantitative data base on minibridge cargo movements through U.S. ports. The purposes of this report are to help in planning, promoting, and developing U.S. ports to meet the requirements of foreign and domestic waterborne commerce and to help in planning for the use of ports in national

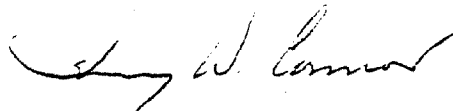
emergencies. Because MTMC shares a mutual concern regarding the use of ports in national emergencies, such information could be useful in its planning.

The Defense Logistics Studies Information Exchange provides numerous reports on transportation technology which could benefit MTMC. Examples include such studies as Innovative Components and Advanced Commercial Technologies for Future Amphibious Ships, An Analysis of the Use of Merchant Ships and Containerization in an Amphibious Operation, and Freight Containers in Intermodal Land Bridge Commerce. The first study was prepared for the Naval Coastal Systems Center by Presearch, Incorporated, and the latter were prepared as master's theses at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

The above organizations and information services represent only a small portion of the available sources which MTMC may find helpful. We believe, however, that they illustrate the type of services and organizations available to help MTMC in its efforts to plan for and better manage DOD's transportation services.

In view of MTMC's willingness to improve its efforts to keep abreast of new transportation technology, we plan no further work on this matter at this time. We would, however, appreciate your views on our observations and we would like to be advised of any corrective actions planned.

Sincerely yours,



Henry W. Connor
Senior Associate Director