

Logistics Group Three: Source C

“IMPORTANCE OF AMMUNITION SUPPLY. Adequate and timely supply of ammunition to combat troops is indispensable to the successful prosecution of any military operation. No other single item of supply is SO vital to combat.

b. Cardinal principles of supply. The cardinal principles of any supply system are —

(1) Simplicity. Simplicity, properly applied, reduces the likelihood of mistakes and increases the speed and efficiency of supply. Every administrative and operational detail should serve some essential or useful purpose, and should be as simple as possible without impairing efficiency and control.

(2) Mobility. The ammunition supply system must provide sufficient mobility to deliver ammunition to the using units at the time and in the amounts needed to accomplish the tactical mission. Ammunition in storage is only a potential asset. It does not become a real asset until it is in the hands of combat troops.

(3) Flexibility. The ammunition supply system must be flexible in order to adjust itself to the requirements of a changing tactical and strategic situation. It must be capable of expansion or adjustment to meet the widely varying demands of rapidly moving warfare and frequently changing missions.

(4) Continuity. An uninterrupted supply of ammunition to combat troops is essential.

(5) Security. The ammunition supply system must provide for the safeguarding of ammunition supplies against loss from any cause, including enemy action.

(6) Forward, movement. The impetus of supply must be from rear to front. It is the duty of each higher echelon of command to push supplies forward within reach of subordinate units. However, there is a concurrent duty of each subordinate commander to make the requirements of his unit known to the higher echelon, and to follow through diligently to see that such requirements are filled.”

Excerpt from the 1944 War Department Field Manual FM 9-6 Ordnance Department, Ammunition Supply.