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SMART, FAST,
LETHAL, PRECISE



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Infantry

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2015

Volume 104, Number 3

FEATURES



34 COMBATIVES: MORE THAN "JUST PT"

CPT Christopher J. Mattos

A company commander shares his approach to creating a sustainable combatives program as a medium to increase his unit's overall fitness, morale, mental toughness, and resiliency.

40 HEALTHY HABITS FOR PROSPECTIVE RANGER STUDENTS

CPT Michael Kearnes

Ranger School is as relevant to the Army today as it was when conceived in 1951. Individuals gain tactical and technical skills, in addition to leadership experience and feedback that they return to their units. Prospective students can maximize their potential for success by focusing on physical fitness, land navigation, personal study, leadership feedback, financial and personal readiness, and living the Ranger Creed.



44 TOXIC LEADERSHIP AFFECTS SOLDIERS AT ALL LEVELS

CPT Lisa Beum

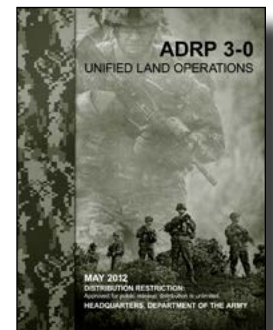
Toxic leadership continues to distress those affected well after the source is gone from a unit, and as an Army, we are failing our Soldiers if we do not take the necessary action to rectify this problem and remove the poison from our ranks. There is no 100 percent solution to ridding the Army of toxic leaders, but by making people aware of the issues, signs, and providing them with solutions, the Army may be better equipped with identifying any toxic issues that could be in a unit and ensuring a positive transformation.



50 OE CONDITIONS FOR TRAINING: A CRITERION FOR MEETING "OBJECTIVE TASK EVALUATION" REQUIREMENTS

Mario Hoffmann

By understanding the process of creating training conditions that introduce increasing levels of OE complexity, commanders will challenge the next generation of Army leaders to learn, be agile and adaptive, and figure out a way to win! This article seeks to amplify the concepts established in the Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0 in easily understood language by defining terms that describe required OE training conditions (complex, dynamic, simple and/or static).



OTHER DEPARTMENTS

INFANTRY NEWS

- 2 **ARMYU EXPERIENCE TO MAXIMIZE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE**
C. Todd Lopez
- 3 **ENVG III ALLOWS SOLDIERS TO ACCURATELY SHOOT FROM HIP**
David Vergun
- 4 **INFANTRY SCHOOL PROPOSES CHANGES TO EIB**
Noelle Wiehe

PROFESSIONAL FORUM

- 5 **THE BRIGADE DCO: A CRITICAL POSITION WITHIN THE COMMAND STRUCTURE**
COL Keith A. McKinley
- 9 **PEAK PERFORMANCE IN COMBAT**
Lt Col Jim Anderson
LTC Aaron Bazin
Gerald Graham
- 14 **ATVS IN THE LIGHT INFANTRY FIGHT**
LTC Mark S. Leslie
CPT Dave Kimsey
CPT Tyson Walsh
- 18 **COMPANY COALITIONS: MULTINATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AT THE LOWEST LEVEL**
CPT Jake Miraldi
- 22 **BALLOT RECOVERY AND ELECTION SUPPORT IN ZABUL PROVINCE**
CPT Tyler G. Matthews
- 28 **SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE TARGETING IN KANDAHAR CITY, 2011-2012**
CPT James McCabe
- 32 **SUPPORTING MISSION COMMAND: ASSISTING THE G3 IN SYNCHRONIZING INFORMATION-RELATED CAPABILITIES**
MAJ Jonathan S. Rittenberg

TRAINING NOTES

- 54 **EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR MCCC: WHAT ARMY LEADERS NEED TO KNOW**
LTC Chris Budihis
CPT Thomas Flounders
- 57 **THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF TESTING: THE SOLDIER**
CPT W. Brandon Schreiner
- 61 **OPERATIONAL OR GARRISON: TARGETING IS TARGETING**
CW2 Travis E. Smith

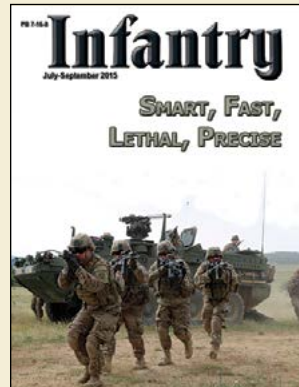
- 66 **LESSONS LEARNED FROM AN IBCT WEAPONS COMPANY IN DECISIVE ACTION AT JRTC**
MAJ Ryan R. Duffy

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

- 70 **THUNDER IN THE ARGONNE! SGT ALVIN YORK AND MISSION COMMAND**
COL Douglas V. Mastriano

BOOK REVIEWS

- 76 **TEAM OF TEAMS: NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR A COMPLEX WORLD**
By GEN (Retired) Stanley McChrystal with Tantum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell
Reviewed by MAJ Justin Bakal
- 77 **THE OSS IN BURMA: JUNGLE WAR AGAINST THE JAPANESE**
By Troy J. Sacquety
Reviewed by LTC (Retired) Rick Baillergeon



ON THE COVER:

Soldiers with 2nd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, dismount their military vehicles and join Bulgarian army special forces soldiers during a cordon and search joint training exercise during Kabilo 15, a multilateral joint training exercise, as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve in Bulgaria on 17 June 2015. (Photo by SPC Jacqueline Dowland)

BACK COVER:

A 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division NCO directs his Soldier's attention toward an objective during live-fire training on 3 July 2015 at Tactical Base Gamberi in eastern Afghanistan. (Photo by CPT Charlie Emmons)

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- *The 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Ia Drang
- *The Lost Art of Dismounted Land Navigation
- *The Concerning State of Army Counseling



Commandant's Note

BG PETER L. JONES

RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE

I am honored to once again serve at Fort Benning, this time as the 56th Chief of Infantry. My prior command and staff assignments at Fort Benning; in the Federal Republic of Germany; in Kosovo; at Fort Stewart, Ga.; in the Pentagon; in Iraq; and most recently with a NATO Joint Command in Afghanistan, have given me insights on how we build and motivate Soldiers, leaders, and the units that we will deploy in the defense of our nation, her people, and our way of life. Building the smart, fast, lethal and precise formations to meet the global challenges posed by today's complex global environments will demand our best effort.

The face of today's enemy is that of an implacable, resourceful fighter who embodies the warrior spirit, and the chaotic environment of today's Middle East is where he fights best. Gone is the monolithic, predictable threat that the Soviet Union posed during the Cold War, and in its place are a number of adversaries and non-committed players such as Taliban, Al Qaeda, ISIS, and units of Chechen warriors now in Syria who proved to be bitter, relentless foes against Russian forces during the Russian-Chechen Wars of 1994-2009. During the fight for Grozny, Chechens demonstrated an affinity for the urban fight when they not only inflicted staggering losses on Russian forces thrown against them, but also saw an opportunity to take the war to Russia herself, seizing hostages in a concert hall and other public buildings before they were killed along with a great many of the hostages. With ISIS claiming responsibility for the attacks in Paris and the downing of a Russian commercial airplane, they have revealed and expanded yet another dimension of conflict. The enemy has thrown down the gauntlet and we must be demonstrably ready to accept the challenge.

As we continue to train, deploy, and sustain Soldiers in this second decade of a war whose duration we could little have foreseen in 2001, the resiliency of the operational force has revealed the tenacity of our warfighters overseas and the total commitment of their family members and their support base here at home. Prominent U.S. entertainers and private citizens have also lent their support to initiatives such as Wounded Warrior and other Soldier-oriented programs. Our installations remain committed to the moral, physical, and cognitive components of the human dimension triad in full spectrum operations.

Today at the Infantry School and Maneuver Center of Excellence, we embrace the principles building Soldiers, Leaders, and small unit formations that are *smart, fast, lethal*, and *precise*. When the discussion turns to the desired end state of our training, the lethality of our fighting force is what

stands out because it is that and that alone which will break the enemy's will, reaffirm our capability and commitment to a cause, and reassure our allies — and our own citizens — that our Army is indeed in it for the long haul.

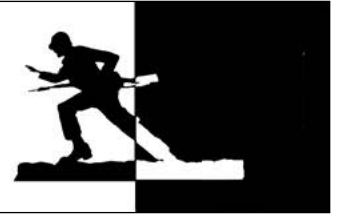
But lethality alone is not the answer; we must help our Soldiers become smarter. This is not solely a function of technical and tactical proficiency, but demands knowing how to develop and recognize the elements of situational awareness, the acquisition and reinforcement of language skills, an intuitive understanding of the nuances of a host nation culture, broadening of the foreign area officer as an alternate career specialty, and the willingness of junior leaders to commit to developing cultural and social skills that approach those that enabled T.E. Lawrence to lead and advise Arab forces against Turkish and German forces in Arabia during World War I. Today's wars will be fought in remote areas in which reliance on indigenous forces will spell the difference between victory and ignominious defeat. General Vo Nguyen Giap knew this, and was widely read on guerilla warfare, two of his most frequently read texts being tattered copies of Lawrence's *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and *27 Articles*. The latter reads like a checklist, and when one reads the list of rules for North Vietnamese soldiers living within a civilian populace the similarity is inescapable and ties in with Mao's dictum about the populace being the water in which the guerrilla swims.

The theme of this issue of *Infantry* is building the smart, fast, lethal, and precise formations that will mean victory on tomorrow's battlefields, be they in fields, forests, underground terrain, or on urban terrain. You will find subject matter that includes small arms, ATVs in the light fight, company coalitions, intelligence targeting, new rules of engagement, and the role of the brigade DCO. I highly recommend this issue of *Infantry* and encourage dialogue as we look at building Soldiers, leaders, and formations that embody the principles of *smart, fast, lethal*, and *precise*. I look forward to your input and any articles you want to see included in our branch magazine.

One Force, One Fight! Follow me!



Infantry News



ARMYU CONCEPT TO MAXIMIZE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

C. TODD LOPEZ



The Army is consolidating Soldier education under “one roof” as part of the Army University concept, SMA Daniel A. Dailey said.

The Army University, officially abbreviated “ArmyU,” is administered by the Combined Arms Center (CAC) on Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

While not a “brick and mortar” university, ArmyU will maximize the educational experience, which Soldiers are already getting in the Army through the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The plan for ArmyU is to organize the Army’s professional military education programs into a university system to increase academic rigor, create greater opportunities for accreditation, and enhance the quality of the force, according to CAC leaders.

ArmyU will integrate the education already provided in the Army for enlisted Soldiers, officers, warrant officers, and Army Civilians of all components. Included in ArmyU are all the Army Centers of Excellence: Aviation, Cyber, Fires, Intelligence, Maneuver, Maneuver Support, Mission Command, and Sustainment. ArmyU also includes the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Defense Language Institute, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, Army Management Staff College, Warrant Officer Career College, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the Army Press.

While not part of ArmyU, the new university will coordinate with the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., the U.S. Army War College, Cadet Command, initial military training, U.S. Army Reserve schools, Army National Guard schools, Army Medical Department Center and School, Judge Advocate General Legal Center and School, and the Special Warfare Center and School.

Universal Transcript

SMA Dailey said ArmyU will be nationally accredited, and will eventually provide a “universal transcript” to make it easier for civilian colleges and universities to understand the education and training Soldiers have received in the Army, and help them build a degree program.

Right now what the Army and other military services offer is a Joint Services Transcript (JST), which provides civilian universities with a description of military schooling and work history in civilian language. SMA Dailey said the JST will

not be eliminated but will be augmented with a transcript from Army University.

“Our goal is to have the Army transcript have the same value as any other university in America,” Dailey said.

A universal transcript, along with ArmyU accreditation, will mean that many of the types of training Soldiers receive in the Army can be converted into civilian education credits, said COL Michael J. Harlan of the CAC.

One of the goals of ArmyU is to ensure that the training provided across the Army meets the rigor required in the civilian academic world. This will make it easier for ArmyU to provide accredited courses, which in turn means it can provide universal transcripts of Soldier education that document coursework credits that civilian universities will be more willing to accept. When that happens, the education Soldiers complete in the Army will save them both time and money when they transition out of service.

Credentials for a Career

Another goal of ArmyU is to find ways for Soldiers to earn private-sector equivalent credentialing for the work they do in the Army, so they don’t need to be re-credentialed when they go look for private-sector work.

Soldiers, who may serve in the Army now as drivers, electricians, metal workers, plumbers, or even medical workers, will first need to be credentialed first before they can move their skills to a paying job in the private sector. The goal of ArmyU is to provide credentialing for every military occupational specialty (MOS).

Helping those Soldiers get credentialed in their skill set is important to both the Soldier and the Army because it proves “an individual is an expert in their particular area,” Harlan said.

SMA Dailey said the Army has already been partnering with industry at places like Fort Polk, La., Fort Hood, Texas, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., to help transitioning Soldiers get the right training and credentialing to move into work in the private sector. He said that credentialing transitioning Soldiers to work in the private sector on the same jobs they held in the Army is difficult, because credentialing requirements vary from state to state. Sometimes, he said, requirements vary within regions within the same state.

(C. Todd Lopez writes for the Army News Service.)

ENVG III ALLOWS SOLDIERS TO ACCURATELY SHOOT FROM HIP

DAVID VERGUN



New night-vision equipment promises an enhanced image of the battlefield and frees Soldiers from using traditional firing positions.

The Enhanced Night Vision Goggle III (ENVG III) is worn on a helmet in the same way earlier models were worn. The device can be wirelessly linked to the Family of Weapon Sights - Individual (FWS-I), which can be mounted on the M4 carbine, M16A4 rifle, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, M136 AT4 rifle, or M141 Bunker Defeat Munition, COL Michael Sloane said.

Because the FWS-I wirelessly transmits a video signal of the weapon sight to the ENVG III, a Soldier will be able to accurately fire his weapon without having to bring the weapon up to eye level. Soldiers will be able to point the weapon around a corner, acquire a target wirelessly through the FWS-I, and fire — all while remaining in defilade.

Other variants within the FWS are being developed for sniper rifles and crew-served weapons such as the M240 and M2 machine guns, as well as the MK19 grenade launcher.

The technological compatibility between the two systems provides rapid target acquisition capabilities, allowing Soldiers to much more rapidly acquire targets and clearly see them in their helmet-borne ENVG III without looking through the scope of the weapon.

COL Sloane, who serves as the project manager for Soldier Sensors and Lasers (PM SSL) on Fort Belvoir, Va., and others spoke during a media roundtable at Program

Executive Office Soldier on 22 July.

Because the sight picture, from the weapon's point of view, appears in the ENVG III, the Soldier gets the benefit of the 40-degree view provided by the ENVG III. This provides much greater situational awareness than the 18- to 26-degree view, which is provided by the scope of the weapon, COL Sloane said.

Both systems have undergone rigorous scrutiny by Soldiers at a number of installations and training areas during live-fire events. Additionally, Soldier feedback — called "Soldier Touch-Points" — has informed every step of the design and development, said COL Sloane.

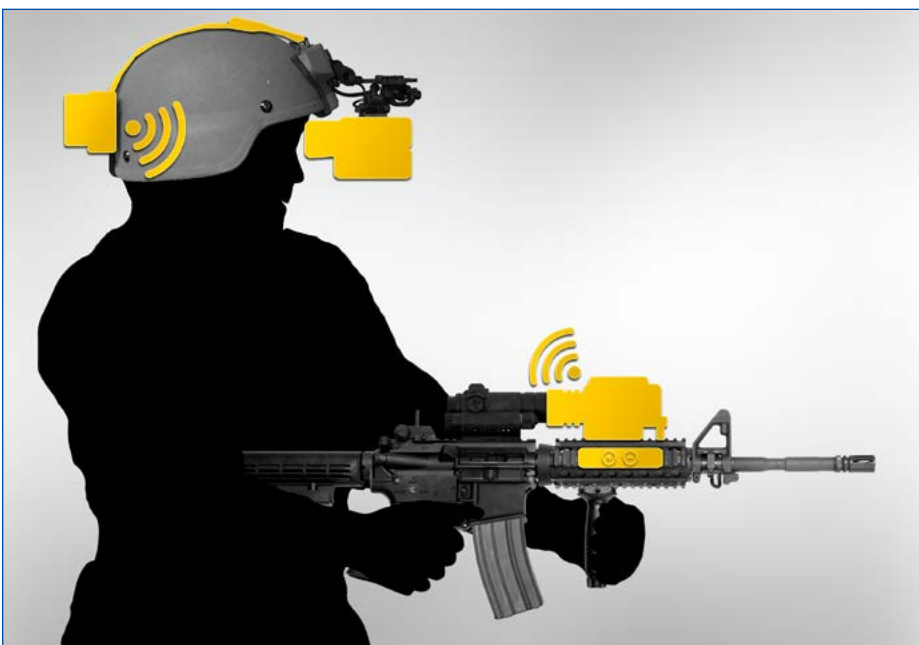
Sloane also said that tactics, techniques, and procedures with the new system will continuously be refined by the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) on Fort Benning, Ga., and the Army Training and Doctrine Command on Fort Eustis, Va. The refinements will ensure safe and effective employment of the new capabilities.

Thermal weapons sights have been around since the 1990s, said LTC Timothy Fuller, who serves as the program manager for Soldier Maneuver Sensors (PM SMS). The difference is that the FWS-I uses just four batteries instead of eight, is much lighter and smaller than earlier thermal weapons sights, and has a more ergonomically friendly set of control buttons. Those controls were designed with Soldier feedback in mind.

Additionally, the FWS-I can resolve images further away than traditional thermal weapons sights, LTC Fuller said, noting that targets can be clearly seen past 1,000 meters. He said the carbine's effective range is about half that distance. The reason it was designed to pull in images from further away is so it could be used with the M249, which has a much greater maximum effective range than the M4.

Read more about the ENVG III at http://www.army.mil/article/152691/New_night_vision_gear_allows_Soldiers_to_accurately_shoot_from_hip/.

(David Vergun writes for the Army News Service.)



The NVG-III, worn on a helmet like earlier models, can be wirelessly linked to the FWS-I.

INFANTRY SCHOOL PROPOSES CHANGES TO EIB TEST

NOELLE WIEHE

Changes to the Expert Infantryman Badge (EIB) test will become the standard following the completion of four pilot EIB tests to be administered between August and October 2015, said CSM Wilbert Engram, Infantry School command sergeant major.



The notable changes include making it performance-based versus outcome-based, requiring at least an 80-percent score on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), and the completion of the Objective Bull task.

Objective Bull will follow the 12-mile road march, CSM Engram said. During this 20-minute task, EIB candidates must move into an objective rally point and negotiate a 100-meter lane where they will find a casualty midway. They must reach the casualty by individual movement techniques, drag the casualty behind cover, stabilize the casualty, put them on a Skedco, drag the casualty out to a casualty collection point, and call for medical evacuation.

The reason for this addition is to test the Soldiers' will to complete the mission, CSM Engram said. The task got its name from Technical Sgt. Walter Bull, the first Infantryman in history to receive the EIB on 29 March 1944.

Requiring a minimum of 80 percent in each event of the APFT is going to force units to really get after their physical training.

Commanding General of the Maneuver Center of Excellence MG Scott Miller demands an institutionalized culture of fitness excellence and the physical dominance to overmatch and defeat adversaries, CSM Engram said. There was discussion to make the requirement 90 percent, because the EIB is such a determining factor for promotions 80 percent was the compromise.

CSM Engram said the latest modifications were discussed with the Army Forces Command, Training and Doctrine Command, corps, and division command sergeants major, and all were in support of the new test.

The four pilot tests of the new EIB test will determine if modifications are necessary, he said. Soldiers in the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division will conduct the first pilot EIB.

To earn the "true blue" designation through the new EIB test, Soldiers must now successfully complete 37 tasks, receive no less than an 80-percent on the Army Physical Fitness Test,

find three out of four points in day and night land navigation in two hours or less, complete a 12-mile march in three hours or less carrying

35 pounds of dry weight, negotiate Objective Bull within 20 minutes and receive a "go" in completing every task within three lanes — weapons, medical, and patrol.

The whole EIB process will take four weeks now instead of three, with one week for set-up, two weeks for training, and one week for testing.

A Soldier who fails on a task will be allotted one retest per task. A second "no-go" would result in failure of the test, and the Soldier cannot continue. Previously, Soldiers were allowed two "no-goes."

All Infantrymen are eligible to test for the EIB, CSM Engram said.

"We want as many expert Infantrymen as we can get," he said. "For us — the Infantrymen — the Expert Infantryman Badge tells everyone that we are proficient in our Infantry tasks; it validates our proficiency in our Infantry tasks, in our MOS."

To help units out now, the Infantry School has prepared one book to set the standardization of training for the EIB.

After the pilots, CSM Engram said the decision regarding changes will be made.

"On (Dec. 1), we are going to have a solid test that everyone is going to appreciate," he said.

(Noelle Wiehe writes for Fort Benning's Bayonet and Saber newspaper.)

EXPERT INFANTRYMAN BADGE

CURRENT

- 44 tasks
- APFT: 75 percent each event
- Day/night land navigation: three out of four points in two hours or less
- 12-mile forced march in three hours or less with 35 pounds of dry weight
- Weapons proficiency test
- Nine master skills training tasks
- Three introduction to tactics and techniques lanes for 30 tasks

PROPOSED

- 37 tasks
- APFT: 80 percent each event
- Day/night land navigation: three out of four points in two hours or less
- 12-mile forced march in three hours or less with 35 pounds of dry weight
- Objective Bull task within 20 minutes
- Three lanes — weapons, medical, and patrol



THE BRIGADE DCO: A CRITICAL POSITION WITHIN THE COMMAND STRUCTURE

COL KEITH A. MCKINLEY

As the contemporary operating environment for U.S. forces continues to grow in complexity in an uncertain, future strategic environment, the tactical brigade combat team (BCT) will be challenged in executing a diverse range of missions. Possible mission sets will span the full spectrum of operations and require the brigade to maintain a high level of organizational flexibility to meet requirements that have strategic impacts.

Over the past decade, we have seen BCTs execute complex and demanding operations to include counterinsurgency, humanitarian relief, advise and assist, and medical support, just to name a few. When called upon to accomplish the most difficult mission sets, the BCT has consistently demonstrated that it has the organizational framework and adaptive leadership within its structure to achieve its assigned objectives.

The deputy commanding officer (DCO) is a critical position within the command structure of the BCT. As the demands placed upon the brigade and the commander continue to grow in complexity, the importance of the DCO position is paramount to brigade success. A DCO should not be a special projects officer or assigned to a functional area but utilized in his true capacity as the second-in-command. He is a key enabler within the brigade command group who can provide organizational flexibility in the execution of a diverse range of mission sets. As the BCT completes its restructuring and increases in size incorporating an additional maneuver battalion as well as more combat support and service support echelons, an effective DCO is needed to increase the brigade commander's span of control.

This article will outline the desired attributes for a DCO and argue that the Army must continue to resource this position during combat deployments and at home station even while operating in a resource-constrained environment. When resourced within the organization, a DCO expands brigade influence, assists the brigade to see itself, enhances expeditionary capabilities, and provides mentorship and leader development to subordinates.

DCO Attributes

The DCO is a core member of the brigade command group. Unlike the brigade commander and brigade command sergeant major (CSM), the DCO is not centrally selected by

the Department of the Army. Most often, the DCO is chosen by the division commander or resourced externally by the U.S. Army's Human Resource Command. When selecting a DCO, the command should take into consideration the following desired attributes to better provide the brigade increased mission command capabilities.

The first requirement of a DCO must be prior battalion command experience. Successful battalion command experience is crucial because a strong DCO will need to know the expectations for a brigade command team. As a former battalion commander, the DCO has firsthand experience in the demands placed upon subordinate units that will allow the DCO to relate better to battalion commanders. A DCO cannot be "dual-hatted" and serve as both a battalion commander and member of the brigade command group; brigade-level leadership cannot be an additional duty. Also, as a former battalion commander, the DCO will better understand the mission, intent, and expectations at the division level that are vital for brigade success.

The battalion command experience of the DCO can either be tactical or institutional. Many could argue that tactical command experience would make a DCO more effective in a tactical brigade; however, the leadership and organizational demands within the institutional Army can considerably broaden his depth of leadership. Different backgrounds within the command group will make the organization more adaptive and effective in operating in complex environments. The more diverse the senior leadership within the brigade, the more capable it will be in addressing ill-defined problems.

Another requirement of a DCO is a clear understanding of the commander's intent. The contemporary operating environment and our doctrine encourages mission command execution. As a former battalion commander, the DCO knows how to operate within the commander's intent. The brigade commander must clearly outline the DCO's authorities, and those should be understood within the brigade command group, the brigade staff, and subordinate battalion command groups. The commander should grant the DCO the authority to make decisions within his intent in accordance with mission command principals. This will allow the brigade to become more adaptive in the execution of complex mission requirements. It will also groom the DCO for future command or leadership positions within the Army.

The next requirement of a DCO is a detailed understanding of the higher command structure and its operations. When a DCO is selected internally within the division, this is more straightforward; however, when selected externally, the DCO should have prior experience in that division as either a field grade officer or company commander. This previous experience, while at a more junior level, will provide the DCO with the background and understanding of the unique structure and requirements of the division.

Finally, a strong DCO needs to understand people and the importance of building and maintaining relationships. This will enable the DCO to expand the brigade's influence internally as well as outside the organization. Future tactical operations within the contemporary operating environment will require the BCT to work in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) environment. Building relationships within an ill-defined command structure is critical to the brigade's success.

Expand Brigade Influence

Once selected in accordance with the above attributes, there are four primary areas a DCO should orient toward which will increase the brigade's organizational flexibility in operating in complex environments. While there are several other areas in which the DCO can be leveraged, these four are the areas in which the DCO can best affect as outlined in our doctrine and organizational structure. Ultimately, it is the commander who will decide where he wants his DCO to focus, and this will normally complement the personality, strengths, weaknesses, and leadership style of the brigade command group.

The first area in which a DCO brings value to the brigade is in expanding influence. As the operating environment transforms, the brigade will need to leverage additional mission command capabilities to allow it to dominate its operational space. Within this environment, there are several forces that operate within the brigade's command structure as well as many who are outside of it.

Aside from its higher headquarters and adjacent units, there are other forces who operate outside U.S. Army authorities that the DCO can project brigade influence by building and maintaining relationships. Interagency partners, government contractors, coalition allies, political organizations, non-government organizations, and multinational corporations are just a few of the organizations that the brigade can expect to be working alongside whether in a deployed environment or stateside. As a senior leader within the brigade, the DCO greatly expands the brigade commander's level of influence with these forces who operate outside the brigade's command structure. Understanding the commander's intent and knowing how to work with people makes the DCO the right leader to build and maintain relationships external to the BCT. While the brigade commander sets the framework for external relations, the DCO is a key leader who can be utilized within the command group to expand upon them. In turn, this will assist the brigade in accomplishing its

The first area in which a DCO brings value to the brigade is in expanding influence. As the operating environment transforms, the brigade will need to leverage additional mission command capabilities to allow it to dominate its operational space. Within this environment, there are several forces that operate within the brigade's command structure as well as many who are outside of it.

objectives and goals by leveraging the principle of unity of effort.

Internally within the brigade, the DCO is a key leader who can reinforce the commander's intent. Due to the increase in size of the brigade combat team by the addition of a maneuver battalion and associated support echelons, the brigade commander will need to utilize his DCO in underscoring his vision for the brigade. The DCO is an experienced senior leader that the commander can use to ensure subordinates clearly understand his vision.

Assist the Brigade to See Itself

The second area a DCO brings value to the brigade is by providing the ability to see itself. As Sun Tzu stated, "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles." As a member of the brigade command group, the DCO has a responsibility in allowing the brigade commander to see himself which in turn will assist in decision making.

To accomplish this, the DCO needs to be mobile and move around the operational space to get a better perspective; true assessments can rarely be made behind a desk. While on circulation, the DCO should visit with subordinate leaders to assess how effective they are in meeting the brigade's intent. This on-the-ground assessment can provide metrics in which the DCO can share with the brigade commander. Firsthand assessments will help frame informed decisions that the commander will make to ensure the brigade remains within his intent and vision.

In the same manner, a DCO can assist subordinate battalion commanders see themselves as well. Having experience as a former battalion commander and established trust among battalion leadership, the DCO can provide feedback to his colleagues allowing them an additional perspective for their respective organizations. When appropriate and not established as a critical information requirement, this feedback should remain at the lieutenant colonel level to allow the brigade commander to focus on higher priorities within the brigade.

The DCO can also help the brigade commander see himself through the eyes of the higher staff as well as through

adjacent units. The strong relationships that the DCO has forged with higher and adjacent units will allow him to receive candid feedback on how superiors and peers perceive the brigade's operations. This feedback is extremely valuable and can only be obtained through relationships built on trust that the DCO has fostered externally.

A final consideration in enhancing the brigade's ability to see itself is mutual trust within the command group. Sometimes the assessments the DCO receives from external or internal sources may not be welcomed by the brigade commander. The DCO can only be effective in this area if there is mutual trust within the command group. Trust is paramount within an organization since it is not always easy to tell the king "he has no clothes on." Leadership by "walking around" is a time-proven technique and a true unit cohesion facilitator for the command.

Enhance Expeditionary Capabilities and Control

Deployments that will occur in future operating environments will be different from past expeditionary operations such as in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are many factors that will affect the brigade's deployment array as it task organizes to meet its assigned mission. Political conditions may limit the brigade to deploying only a portion of the force, or a vast operating area could require the brigade to restructure its mission command nodes to better oversee operations.

To meet future deployment requirements, the brigade commander can leverage his DCO in order to expand his operational reach. For partial deployments in which the entire brigade does not go forward, the brigade commander has two options: deploy his DCO or keep him with the provincial element. There is no one right answer for this, and the brigade commander must balance the leadership he has available versus forward mission requirements. Most brigade commanders would prefer to deploy their DCOs forward (since this will be the brigade decisive operation) and have the division assign an additional lieutenant colonel to serve as the provincial brigade commander; however, this may not always be an available option. The brigade commander will need to balance requirements for forward and home station operations with a command climate that is optimized for de-aggregated operations with effective command across the span of control.

Another consideration for deploying the DCO forward depends on the analysis of the factors of time, space, and force of the brigade's forward operating area. The brigade may be assigned a large area in which it will require its DCO to help the brigade commander command the organization. The brigade may have multiple mission sets that require additional brigade-level leadership which means the DCO will need to deploy forward as well.

Regardless of the scenario, there is no one right answer on where the commander should place his DCO during a deployment in which only a portion of the brigade goes forward. The only certainty is that future deployments and their inherent mission requirements will challenge all brigade commanders. The brigade commander and his staff must conduct detailed

analysis of both forward and provincial requirements in order to determine the best method to employ the DCO.

Mentorship and Professional Development

The final area in which the DCO can add value to the brigade is by providing mentorship to subordinates. Leader development is critical within our Army as we continue to grow and develop the next generation of leaders. With established trust and prior experience, the DCO can complement professional development and mentorship initiatives established by the brigade commander and sergeant major. All too often, leader development initiatives within the brigade are sacrificed to an extremely high operational tempo that takes time away from senior leaders. Mentorship and professional development are areas in which the DCO can be employed to strengthen the leadership of subordinate officers. There are two general categories of leadership that the DCO should focus mentorship efforts toward: battalion commanders and the brigade staff.

The DCO can be effective in providing mentorship to subordinate battalion commanders by using his prior command experience and understanding of the commander's intent. To accomplish this, the DCO must have first established trust and respect among his fellow lieutenant colonels. Even though this sounds simple, many DCOs struggle with this when they arrive at the brigade. The DCO is the same rank as the battalion commanders and may only be a year group or two ahead of them in experience. Additionally, many battalion commanders are very competitive by nature and could see a strong DCO as a threat within the brigade. This is why it is imperative that a DCO establishes mutual trust and respect initially and reinforces it continuously. If not, any efforts in providing mentorship or advice to battalion commanders will be in vain.

The best way to establish trust with battalion commanders is for the DCO to become the battalion commanders' advocate within the brigade command group. The DCO has the ability within the brigade to shape initiatives or goals at the battalion level. Once trust is established, a wise battalion commander will use the DCO to help influence the brigade commander to see the benefits of his desired endstate on initiatives for his battalion. In this capacity, the DCO can be used as a "sounding board" and provide feedback to a battalion commander on how his boss will receive his recommended proposal. This will assist the subordinate commander in remaining in line with the commander's intent and also prevent him from irritating his boss in many instances. As a DCO does this, he must not break the trust of the commander for candid feedback. He can only advocate when he is in agreement with the battalion commander. Advocacy of bad ideas will cause the commander to lose trust in his DCO.

One last area where the DCO can provide mentorship to battalion commanders is by expanding upon vision and intent two levels up. The DCO is privy to background conversations at the brigade and division levels and can provide additional clarity on higher guidance issued. Often, orders and directives are issued to battalion staffs but little background is given to

battalion commanders on what generated the decisions made. If the DCO takes time to provide additional perspective and background, battalion commanders will better understand the expanded intent of their superiors and execute mission command orders more effectively.

The second category of leadership that the DCO should focus mentorship efforts toward is the brigade staff, specifically the field grade officers. Majors run tactical-level organizations within our Army, but we do not invest the appropriate time in their development. Again, a high operational tempo is to blame. The brigade executive officer and S3 often rate subordinate staff majors but lack battalion command experience. This is in no way meant to circumvent the rating scheme but meant to grow leaders. The DCO should address this with the brigade executive officer and S3 to ensure they understand that this is not a measure to reduce the power structure within the staff. It is very easy for a DCO to be seen as a very senior staff officer but he is not. His job is to provide mission command within the brigade, and the professional development of field grade officers is an important aspect of this.

The DCO should dedicate time to talk with all the majors on the brigade staff on an individual basis to outline professional development goals and objectives. His focus should be on those field grade officers who do not get much interaction with the brigade commander. Most of the brigade's field grade officers will go on to command at the next higher level, and this investment is key to developing the next generation of leaders.

Conclusion

In summary, the DCO position within the brigade combat team is critical in expanding the mission command capabilities of the command group. As a former battalion commander, this leader needs to be an adaptive officer who understands intent two levels up. An effective DCO expands the brigade's influence, assists the brigade to see itself, expands the brigade's expeditionary capabilities, and provides mentorship and leader development to subordinates.

Increased force structure and constrained future budgets will put additional demands on operations in which a DCO can significantly assist the command. The complex operating environments in which tactical formations will operate will continue to stress mission command capabilities of the BCT. It is imperative that the Army continue to resource this position during combat deployments and home station operations even while operating in a resource constrained environment.

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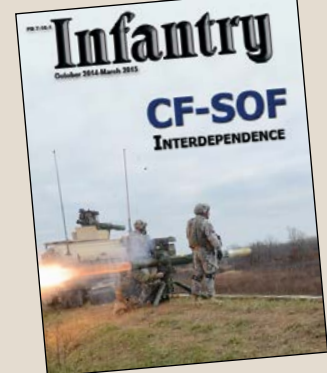
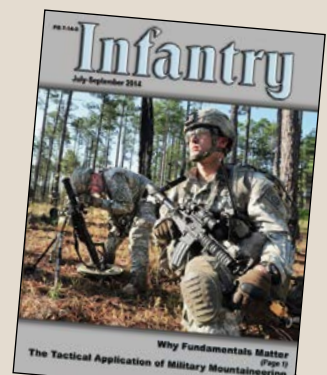
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PEAK PERFORMANCE IN COMBAT

LT COL JIM ANDERSON
LTC AARON BAZIN
GERALD GRAHAM

“Relax Rangers, take your time and just slow down. Never forget, in combat, slow is smooth, and smooth is fast.”

— SSG Joshua Enyart, 1998

Combat is one of the most stressful and dangerous endeavors imaginable. Throughout history, warriors have had to cope with the stressors of the battlefield and outperform the competition, both physically and mentally. For many years, the U.S. military has screened, prepared, and employed its men and women with the ultimate goal of making them as good at their jobs as possible. Rightfully so, the U.S. military takes its role in improving the performance of its warfighters seriously.

Some studies have indicated that research into other high-stress fields might have some validity to service members operating in combat environments.¹ As such, there are cognitive tools Soldiers could apply to improve and sustain peak performance in combat. This article seeks to address the question: what are some of the things that warfighters can do to achieve peak performance in combat?

What is Peak Performance?

The centerpiece of personal performance is the individual. Many factors determine an individual's performance level including physical make-up (nature), environment (nurture), and decisions made throughout his/her life (choice).² The military builds upon this foundation, first with training and then

with real-world experience. How well warfighters balance the “performance triad” of sleep, nutrition, and activity will affect their performance throughout their careers.³ Ultimately, the overall goal of both the service member and the military is the same: for the service member to achieve peak performance and win when it counts.

Peak performance is a state of optimal cognitive, emotional, and physical functioning. Cognitively, people are at their peak when they have focused attention, ignoring unimportant things and allocating brain power to the task at hand. Emotionally, warriors are at their peak when they control how they feel, displaying confidence, determination, and control. Of course, physical peak performance involves nutrition, rest, and level of overall fitness. Additionally, people are at their peak physically when they exert the right amount of effort without becoming over aroused or anxious.⁴

In sports, when athletes are at their best cognitively, emotionally, and physically, fans often label them as being “in the zone.”⁵ This is the mental state people enter when they are hyper-focused, energized, and fully immersed in their present activity. When in this state, people commonly lose self-consciousness, feel in full control, and may even feel time slowing down.⁶

Although sports is much different than war, arguably, peak performance is vitally important in combat where it can literally be the difference between life and death. Warfighters performing at their peak can better assess the situation, make

decisions, and perform the right tasks at the right time. Additionally, individuals performing at their peak are less likely to succumb to stress and “choke” when it counts. Fundamentally, combat involves violent competition with other human beings. With all other things being equal, warriors who can better handle anxiety will have a marked advantage over their enemy. Simply put, if warriors are able to achieve peak performance, they are more likely to complete their mission and come home alive.

SKILLS FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE (SEE-ACT)

Setting Goals

Employing Imagery

Executing Routines or Rituals

Activating Relaxation or Energy

Controlling Attention

Thinking Positively

Achieving and Sustaining Peak Performance in Combat

Often, the field of psychology comes under criticism because of its focus on problems and disorders. However, in recent decades, interest in the positive aspects of psychology has grown.⁷ There is an increasing body of research into how people at the top of their fields can optimize their performance under conditions of high stress. Professional athletes, much like police officers and firefighters, differ from warfighters in many ways.⁸ However, all have to face stressful situations and must perform complicated physical and mental tasks. Arguably, performance psychology applies directly to military service members.

Research has suggested that psychological skills training could improve a service member's well-being and intrinsic motivation by building higher self-esteem, confidence, problem solving, and reducing feelings of helplessness, loneliness, anxiety, and anger. This article will focus on six skills that warfighters can use to reach peak performance: setting goals, employing imagery, executing routines or rituals, activating relaxation or energy, controlling attention, and thinking positively (or the acronym SEE-ACT).⁹

Setting Goals

The first cognitive tool that this article will discuss is setting goals. Setting goals is a psychological process of control. Goals may be outcome, performance, or process based.¹⁰ The U.S. military is already mission-focused and bases much of what it does on setting goals. In a similar way, individual service members can also set goals to improve their own level of performance. For performance purposes, process-based goals are typically more effective than outcome-based goals.

Process goals can help a person focus on the present and are more within the person's ability to control. For example, instead of platoon leaders focusing on how many casualties their patrol will take (outcome), they should focus on setting a goal within their control, such as completing pre-combat inspections or executing battle drills (process).¹¹ After identifying the process goal to achieve, leaders should next attach a specific time frame to achieving that

goal (today, short-term, or long-term). Additionally, they should set performance goals that are positive vice negative, achievable yet challenging, and easily measurable. Finally, as leaders achieve their goals, they should set new goals to stretch their performance to higher levels.¹² Whether a warfighter is an Infantryman leaving the wire or a fighter pilot in the cockpit over Afghanistan, setting goals is a valuable skill that can lead to better performance.

Employing Imagery

During training or before a major competition, professional athletes commonly employ imagery to achieve peak performance. Imagery is the set of mental visual pictures of oneself proceeding through a series of actions.¹³ Imagery can go beyond just pictures and incorporate the other senses as well. For example, top fighter pilots have employed this technique for many years in what they call “chair drills.” For these drills, pilots go in a quiet room, close their eyes, and rehearse commands and movements using their chairs. Research into the use of imagery indicates that it has positive effects including improving self-confidence, task completion, concentration, and coping. A warfighter can also apply this technique to learn from past mistakes and decrease anxiety.¹⁴

To use the imagery tool, all Soldiers have to do is vividly picture key tasks they want to accomplish in their mind. Effective use of the imagery technique has seven elements: physical, environment, task, timing, learning, emotion, and perspective (PETTLEP).¹⁵ Those using imagery should imagine the environment using all five senses. Then they should visualize themselves accomplishing each task in order, first in slow motion and then in real time. They imagine the emotional component through answering the question, “how do I feel.” Finally, they should imagine the task from the first person and an outsider's point of view. If Soldiers apply the technique of visualization in this manner, they can begin to improve their performance both on and off the battlefield.

Executing Routines and Rituals

Although combat situations rarely unfold exactly the same twice, research has indicated that if service members execute routines and rituals in the right way, they may be able to improve their performance. Routines are a specific set of mental and physical steps that can initiate or sustain peak performance.¹⁷ A warfighter can use a routine before, during, or after combat situations. Routines can also help service members know where to put their attention when recovering from a disruption. For example, when Soldiers have misfires with their M4s, they follow the steps of SPORTS. They slap the magazine, pull the trigger, observe the round, release the charging handle, tap the forward assist, and squeeze the trigger. In many ways, the military is already built on routines

and checklists; service members can tap into the power of routines for their own benefit as well.

Some people argue that rituals are important because they can help a person “psych up” or “wind down” emotionally.¹⁸ Let us say a pilot listens to a Metallica song one morning during physical training and later that day flies a mission where everything just went perfect. The pilot then adopts the habit of listening to that song every morning for good luck. Although his fellow pilots might consider this silly, listening to the Metallica song helps him prepare mentally and returns him to his optimal mental state. It is a matter of debate just how beneficial rituals are.¹⁹ However, if rituals work for some people, they may have value for others.

Activating Relaxation or Energy

Research has indicated that warfighters should activate relaxation or energy at the right time to perform at their peak. Most service members can already get themselves hyped up to perform difficult tasks but may have difficulty when trying to relax. The ability to relax and perform at a high level despite stressful circumstances is the centerpiece of performance psychology.²⁰

When a person is “on stage,” increased anxiety and muscle tension can lead to performance problems. The benefits of structured relaxation techniques are that they can refocus attention away from negative thoughts, reduce anxiety, prevent fatigue, improve sleep, and assist in pain management. Physically, focused relaxation reduces sympathetic nervous system activation, muscle tension, heart rate, cortisol levels, and blood pressure. Relaxation also increases activity in the vagal area that contributes to the brain’s higher mental and motor functioning, which improves a person’s ability to adapt to change.²¹

There are a variety of structured methods that service members can employ to relax under stress. Relaxation coupled with a positive attitude helps reduce anxiety and improves performance.²² Diaphragmatic breathing and progressive muscle relaxation are two powerful tools that any service member can use to cope with anxiety and perform at a high level.

Perhaps the easiest method warfighters can apply to handle stress is diaphragmatic breathing, often referred to as combat breathing. Diaphragmatic breathing is simply deep breathing using the stomach instead of the chest. To apply this technique, take in a breath for a count of five, hold for a count of five, release for a count of five, and repeat five to 10 times.²³ For years, civilian and military marksmanship experts have advocated similar methods as a tool to improve focus and improve the ability to employ their weapons in combat.²⁴

Another simple and effective technique is progressive muscle relaxation (see box

on page 12). Progressive muscle relaxation involves tensing and then releasing each major muscle group in the body for a count of 10. Many research studies laud the physical and mental benefits of progressive muscle relaxation.²⁵ Although it may be impractical to close one’s eyes, to loosen clothes, or get comfortable during a firefight, tensing and releasing the major muscle groups can improve functioning. Arguably, progressive muscle relaxation is a valuable technique that any service member could easily employ before or after stressful experiences to relax both physically and mentally.

As a complement to relaxation training, Soldiers can use biofeedback devices to assist them in achieving a state of relaxation. The advantage of these devices is that it gives direct and immediate feedback on the state of relaxation to the person. Armed with information about their physiological state (e.g., heart rate, skin temperature, etc.), Soldiers can quickly see the state of their relaxation and make the mental adjustments to bring them to a greater state of relaxation more quickly. This direct and immediate feedback helps sharpen focus during relaxation training.

Controlling Attention

If warfighters are successful in controlling attention, it allows them to quickly recognize cues and respond to circumstances as they unfold. In combat, sometimes attention is best focused narrowly on a specific individual task (e.g., reading a map, performing first aid, etc.). Other times, a Soldier should focus on broader tasks in the external environment (e.g., scanning a sector of fire, leading a convoy along an unplanned route, etc.). Much like focusing a telescope, a warfighter should focus attention in and out in the right way at the right time.²⁶

The key to controlling attention is the awareness to recognize cues that trigger specific actions while ignoring



Photo by Master Sgt. Lance Cheung, USAF

Pilots often use “chair drills” to apply imagery methods to prepare themselves for combat.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Step 1. Assume a comfortable position. You may lie down; loosen any tight clothing, close your eyes, and be quiet.

Step 2. Assume a passive attitude. Focus on yourself and on achieving relaxation in specific body muscles. Tune out all other thoughts.

Step 3. Tense and relax each muscle group as follows:

- **Forehead -** Wrinkle your forehead, try to make your eyebrows touch your hairline for five seconds. Relax.
- **Eyes and nose -** Close your eyes as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.
- **Lips, cheeks, and jaw -** Draw the centers of your mouth back and grimace for five seconds. Relax.
- **Hands -** Extend your arms in front of you. Clench your fists tightly for five seconds. Relax.
- **Forearms -** Extend your arms out against an invisible wall and push forward with your hands for five seconds. Relax.
- **Upper arms -** Bend your elbows. Tense your biceps for five seconds. Relax.
- **Shoulders -** Shrug your shoulders up to your ears for five seconds. Relax.
- **Back -** Arch your back off the floor for five seconds. Relax.
- **Stomach -** Tighten your stomach muscles for five seconds. Relax.
- **Hips and buttocks -** Tighten your hip and buttock muscles for five seconds. Relax.
- **Thighs -** Tighten your thigh muscles by pressing your legs together as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.
- **Feet -** Bend your ankles toward your body as far as you can for five seconds. Relax.
- **Toes -** Curl your toes as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.

Step 4. Focus on any muscles which may still be tense. If any muscle remains tense, tighten and relax that specific muscle three or four times.

Step 5. Fix the feeling of relaxation in your mind. Repeat as needed.

Taken from the American Medical Student Association Website, <http://www.amsa.org/healingthehealer/musclerelaxation.cfm>

distractions. For example, let us look at a Marine in a firefight in Afghanistan. As he scans his sector and engages enemy targets, his attention is wide and focused externally. The second he hears the sound of his bolt locking to the rear (the cue), he depresses the magazine release and shifts his attention to the steps of a magazine exchange. Once the bolt rides forward on his weapon (the cue), he taps the forward assist and he begins to scan his sector again. If the Marine has trained at this task repeatedly, his actions are almost second nature, and little conscious thought is needed.

Related to controlling attention is the concept of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the idea that one should be present in the moment and acknowledge his or her own feelings, thoughts, and sensations. Arguably, mindfulness is similar to a term already commonly used in the military: situational awareness. Research suggests that mindfulness decreases accidents while increasing memory and creativity. Researchers also assert that mindfulness can decrease stress and even increase a person's general health.²⁷ Additionally, recent research into mindfulness showed that it could actually change the brain physically for the better. This research indicated that mindfulness could increase the density of brain matter in the anterior cingulate cortex and the hippocampus resulting in better attention, self-regulation, thinking flexibility, reduced stress, and increased memory.²⁸

Thinking Positively

Elite military schools such as Navy BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) and Army Ranger School purposely push students beyond the edge of their preconceived physical and mental limits. In these programs, just like in actual combat, the service member may have a moment of doubt. They may engage themselves in negative dialogue such as "this is impossible" or "I just can't do this." Research has indicated that if service members engage in negative self-talk such as this it can cause their decision making and physical performance to falter, turning negative thoughts into a negative reality. Conversely, thinking positively can have a favorable effect on performance.²⁹

Research has indicated that positive self-talk can help warfighters increase their attention, mental toughness, learning, and overall functioning. Self-talk can also help service members control anxiety and help get them psyched up to perform difficult tasks.³⁰ In essence, positive self-talk is simply repeating positive and affirming statements beginning with "I am."³¹

Employing positive self-talk as a performance-enhancing tool is simple. First, select the purpose of the self-talk as either instructional (e.g., "step one is ..., step two is ..., etc.") or motivational (e.g., "I am going to do this"). Then, all a person has to do is repeat the statement mentally or out loud beginning the words with "I am." At the advanced level, service members can use cue words to trigger certain sequences of activities in their mind (e.g., "I am focusing," "I need to go now," etc.).³²

On the firing range, instructors will often use whistles or megaphones to inform firers to begin their sequence of fire. One technique some advanced marksmanship instructors use instead of an artificial signal is to yell the word "fight" to initiate the sequence of fire. The idea is that in combat if service members say the word "fight" in their own mind, it will trigger the

appropriate sequence they learned in training. If warfighters employ the method of positive self-talk and use cue words, they can perform their assigned tasks more effectively, even under stress.

Conclusion

To maximize every warrior's performance in combat, all branches of the military should train their people on the fundamentals of SEE-ACT.³³ Whether it is on a ship, in a plane, or on the ground, combat is hard. Killing and living under the threat of being killed will always be stressful but will forever remain a part of the warfighter's job. Commanders and trainers should educate their young warriors on these skills and encourage them to employ these methods to reduce anxiety and improve performance.

Additionally, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines should take responsibility for achieving their own personal level of peak performance and apply these techniques throughout their careers. Service members do not need to be under fire on the front lines to feel stress. As such, these techniques could help any service member, from the private to the general officer. Simply put, if service members apply the SEE-ACT

skills, they can do their jobs better, increase their odds of surviving combat, and come just a little closer to becoming all they can be.

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Notes

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ATVs IN THE LIGHT INFANTRY FIGHT

LTC MARK S. LESLIE
CPT DAVE KIMSEY
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Since the beginning of modern warfare, military forces have looked for ways to get soldiers and supplies to the fight faster. In order to reach this realm of fighting efficiency, modern armies have had to develop a vehicle platform that is reliable and able to handle any terrain it may encounter. The class of vehicle developed is the all-terrain vehicle (ATV). Recent military history shows the replacement of the service Jeep with the high mobility, multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV) and the development of fast attack vehicles (desert patrol vehicles), which were tested by the 9th Infantry Division (Motorized) in 1980.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, select light Infantry scout platoons were equipped with motorcycles (or dirt bikes) due to their speed, light weight, and durability. They have the ability to be transported by rotary-wing aircraft and be air dropped by airborne forces. These motorcycles provided an advantage in reconnaissance and rapid reporting, especially in airborne units. The tactical risk was considerable due to noise signature, and accidental risk to operators eventually led to the quiet retirement of these platforms from Army conventional units. Although today they can still be found

in special operations units, this is the exception rather than the norm.

The Polaris or John Deere ATV variants are readily available to conventional forces and have been used with varying degrees of success. The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) has been particularly resourceful and creative in the tactical employment of these platforms in combat operations in Afghanistan.

The focus of this article is the employment of ATVs during a Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) rotation and the lessons learned. The 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment deployed to JRTC with three light Infantry companies, a forward support company, and headquarters company. The battalion's heavy weapons company was not part of the requested force package for this rotation. This severely restricted the battalion's ability to move forces and supplies due to limited armed escorts to secure forward support company assets. As a result, the battalion had a heavy reliance on aerial resupply to sustain its Infantry companies. This took much longer, was weather and aircraft dependent, and forced the battalion to rely on aircraft more than if the organic heavy weapons company had been available to



Photos courtesy of author

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment maneuver after a raid during the JRTC 15-02 Hybrid Rotation at Fort Polk, La., in November 2014. The integration of ATVs assisted in quickly moving Soldiers, weapons, and equipment off of the objective.

secure critical lines of communication and support. To enable light Infantry companies to carry sustainment for several days, each Infantry company was issued one ATV to be used during the JRTC rotation.

ATVs fit into two distinct categories: light and quick on one side, slow and heavier on the other. Both types of ATVs bring a considerable range of capabilities to the fight. Leaders must determine if the ATV is feasible or practical for combat operations during the planning

process. This process should take into consideration the capabilities and limitations of each variant. A light ATV, the Polaris Sportsman MV 850 for example, can deliver messages, deliver mortar rounds, and aid in resupply, but load capability is sacrificed for speed. Conversely, the trusty John Deere Military-Gator (M-Gator) A1 or Polaris Ranger 6x6 are more than capable of resupplying an entire company with Class I or fulfill the role of non-standard casualty evacuation (CASEVAC). The M-Gator is an adaptation of the civilian model John Deere Gator. It has an 18 horsepower, overhead valve, 3 cylinder, liquid cooled, 4-cycle diesel engine that can operate off of standard diesel fuel or JP8. It has an automatic transmission and can travel up to 18 miles per hour and can carry up to 1,250 pounds.

The battalion's forward support company mechanics enhanced the garrison A1 M-Gators to incorporate both infrared and white flood lights, brush guard, weapon-carrying clamp for driver and passenger (TC), GPS mount, and a flat rack with straps for use as a litter mount. However, the addition of a hard-wired, modular battery trickle-charger was by far the most useful modification during this unit's JRTC rotation. The charger effectively replaced the need for the rifle companies to request replacement radio batteries during sustained operations.

The advantages an ATV offers — agility and flexibility — must be balanced with a healthy dose of risk mitigation. The commander's knowledge of the enemy, terrain, weather, and mission as well as strengths and weaknesses of the ATV and what it brings to the fight is essential for full exploitation of the platform.

Maintenance, Preparation, Recovery

With a wide range of engine output starting at 300cc and climbing to over 900cc, tasks such as hauling route obstructions and recovering downed equipment are much



Soldiers use an ATV to drag fallen debris onto an avenue of approach to reinforce a concertina wire obstacle effectively deterring mounted enemy forces. The ATV's ability to negotiate the micro terrain and saturated ground of Fort Polk's training areas during the JRTC rotation was invaluable and a testament to its versatility.

simpler to expedite. But a healthy maintenance program is key to success. Without this, unprepared units may find themselves with an ATV that is a tactical liability due to mechanical breakdown or operator error. An ATV is a slow and soft target that also has a noise signature that must be considered in any tactical employment. Proper preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS), a trained operator, and simple repair parts as a small battle damage assessment repair (BDAR) kit, like with all vehicles, is the key to success. Fuel (most likely diesel), oil, coolant, and camouflage will take up a small corner of the ATV's cargo space whether the operation is on the training ground or battlefield. Without these simple items and proper pre-combat checks/pre-combat inspections (PCC/PCIs), the ATV may not be an enhancement but a burden.

ATVs, like all other military vehicles, must be secured when they break down. This will be a drain on combat power that is needed for mission accomplishment. When/if ATVs break down, field-repair/recovery is the first and most tactically sound option, but planned and designated "cache or recovery points" are key to preserving the capability if it is deemed necessary to abandon it. Recovery of a stuck ATV is not difficult, nor is recovery of a broken down vehicle if there is a contingency plan. The plan must include how the supplies the ATV is carrying will be redistributed and how this will affect the mission now that this asset is not available. CASEVAC, resupply, landing zone (LZ) operations, etc., may take longer, need to be changed, or need more manpower than originally planned with an ATV.

Maneuverability

The rifle companies' typical movements were often up to 10 kilometers through restricted to severely restrictive terrain. The commanders initially were skeptical of the ATVs' ability to negotiate the terrain at JRTC, especially since they

were loaded down with additional CL I, V, and VIII. The ATVs, however, were able to traverse steep declines and inclines, high grass, dead fall, and small but deep ravines and ditches with no issues. Maneuver success and safe operation in these conditions can be attributed to having trained NCOs as operators. ATV training includes driving with night vision devices and it paid off. Having NCOs that understand ATV capabilities and limitations, accidental and tactical risk, and the mission contributed greatly to the safe operation of these platforms throughout the rotation. Additionally, the use of a ground guide in rough terrain ensured safe operation and preserved this valuable asset from becoming disabled or stuck.

Training

The selection of mature operators and proper ATV initial driver's training are key to success in tactical use. Initial driver's training should address not only the mandatory periods of instruction required by Army Regulation 600-55, *The Army Driver and Operator Standardization Program (Selection, Training, Testing, and Licensing)*, but also familiarize the operator with the unique characteristics of the ATV to include grade maximum limit, secondary load limitations and securing, how to properly secure the ATV to load on a CH-47, how to properly sling load with a UH-60, night driving, tactical recovery, moving in/on other wheeled vehicles (such as a light medium tactical vehicle [LMTV]), noise signature risks, fuel consumption tables, field repair, camouflage, and tactical integration.

Probably the biggest advantage the ATV brought to the fight was the increased sustainment capability it gave to a light Infantry company on its own. The companies were able to carry additional CL I, IV, V, and VIII.

Air Assault Operations

The 101st Combat Aviation Battalion (CAB), an experienced battalion with multiple tours of Afghanistan, made every effort to take care of our battalion. When we approached them with the idea of ramp-loading an ATV, it was nothing new to them and was not considered a "unique load." After consulting with 101st CAB during the planning phase, the "cage" or roll bar on the M-Gator was removed in order to accommodate being loaded on the back ramp of a CH-47.

Air assault operations were unhindered by the addition of the ATV, but planning factors must incorporate the weight of the vehicle, the troops that will be bumped to account for the weight of the ATV, and the time required to secure and release it from the ramp. A fully loaded ATV with sustainment for four days cut 12 troops from the CH-47 load. The ATV was loaded and secured on the back ramp and took approximately three minutes to disengage from the ramp of the aircraft.

Defense

Without the ability to secure much with wheeled vehicle assets and preserving the few precious gun trucks to meet

the commander's intent, there were limited wheeled assets available to the companies in the defense. Class IV assets were delivered by combat patrol at night and by air to each company. The company LMTVs and HMMWVs were also delivered for use in the defense. The battalion had a follow-on mission to delay as the transition of the defense was passed on to host-nation security forces. The companies found that the M-Gator was invaluable in defense preparation. As CL IV was centrally delivered to each company in one location by battalion support company assets, the ATV became useful in quickly delivering CL IV to positions. Most commanders found that they had to place a "gator-priority" and time limits to platoon use, much like we do with dig assets in the defense. Everyone needed it and wanted it. Priority went to a company's main effort and then allocated out from there in accordance with individual priorities. The ATV was then placed in a covered and concealed survivability position near the company command post to take advantage of the add-on battery charging capability the battalion maintenance platoon had installed.

CASEVAC

Casualty evacuation is physically grueling and requires significant manpower in any light Infantry unit. Often, one casualty will take at least a squad out of the fight to assist with evacuation, or more Soldiers may be needed if a pick-up zone has to be secured for aerial evacuation. During JRTC in a movement to contact, it is not uncommon to take casualties. For example, a company sustained four casualties in its first engagement. It took a platoon some time to move the casualties to the company casualty collection point (CCP) due to the manpower needed to move all of them. This prompted the company commander to designate the ATV as the primary CASEVAC method. Once the threat was eliminated (or the area was deemed secure and no enemy in the area), the ATV would be called up from a pre-postured position in the movement formation. The first sergeant with a security element moved from the company CCP, picked up casualties from a covered and concealed position, and then moved them back to the company CCP. The ATV could safely move up to three casualties at a time (a combination of litter and walking wounded). Simultaneously, the companies became proficient at multitasking the ATV to deliver CL V whenever it went up to retrieve a casualty. This is a good tactic for efficiency and balancing risk with necessity, more "juice for the squeeze" when exposing this critical asset and getting the most out of every run.

In resupply operations the ATV is invaluable. One company that was isolated from the battalion due to mission requirements and weighted risk was initially reliant on aerial resupply. They secured an LZ during limited visibility around 0200 and received a sling-loaded resupply of CL 1, water, and CL V. The ATV enabled a rapid recovery of the supplies and clearing of the LZ — time that would have exposed Soldiers and supplies if it had to be hauled by hand.

One planning consideration that was overlooked by staff planners was what to do with the ATV when the unit

is picked up by LMTVs. There was no lift capability on the combat logistics patrol that could have lifted the ATV onto a truck nor was there room available. In hindsight, units must plan for an additional LMTV or load handling system (LHS).

Security

As stated earlier, the ATV is a soft-skin vehicle that is highly vulnerable to direct and indirect fires as well as any type of improvised explosive device. Consideration and appreciation of terrain when planning its employment in tactical operations and mitigation of that risk by time and distance is critical. The ATV is not an armored vehicle, and the driver and vehicle commander (VC) will require security. A fire team worked best as the company moved from objective to objective, and phase lines were called in to creep it forward to more secure areas that had been cleared and contact was less likely.

There is a lot to take into consideration when integrating the ATV into tactical combat operations — what type of ATV, how it's inserted into the fight, where to put it in the fight, and how to keep it fully mission capable and protected at all times? All these questions need to be answered during the military decision-making process (MDMP), and standard operating procedures (SOPs) should be developed. Just like any other enabler, ATVs come with advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of ATVs often outweigh the disadvantages with proper planning and risk mitigation. When implementing ATVs into the tactical environment, ensure security and route planning are accounted for at all times to ensure they stay in the fight.

The Department of Defense (DoD) defines mobility as: “a quality or capacity of military forces which permits them to move from place to place while retaining the ability to fulfill

their primary mission.” The M-Gator and other ATV variants definitively fulfill this definition. They are reliable and versatile work horses that contribute efficiency in many ways. With proper training, preparation, planning, and synchronization, they can also contribute to the light Infantry in the tactical fight.

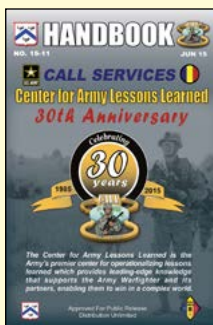
LTC Mark S. Leslie currently commands the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. He has served in a variety of enlisted, command, and staff positions in airborne, air assault, Ranger, light and mechanized Infantry units. He has served in operations Just Cause, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom.

CPT Dave Kimsey currently commands Bravo Company, 2-4 IN. CPT Kimsey is a Virginia Military Institute graduate who previously served as a Stryker platoon leader and executive officer with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Wainwright, Alaska, from 2008-2012. He also served as a company senior observer, coach, trainer at JRTC from 2013-2014.

CPT Tyson Walsh currently commands Alpha Company, 2-4 IN. He is a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. His previous assignments include two Central Command deployments to the Horn of Africa (Djibouti/Somalia) and the Philippines, and two deployments to Afghanistan.



Additional munitions, extra rations, and injured Soldiers' equipment are easily tethered down and quickly accessible while on the move. The dynamic of an operation changes when factoring in both the payoffs and limitations of an ATV.



CALL RELEASES SERVICES HANDBOOK

The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) is an agent for change focused on the collection, analysis, dissemination, integration, and archiving of new concepts; best practices; and doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) solutions throughout the Army from the tactical through theater/strategic levels of war. This handbook should assist you in understanding CALL and how you and your unit can participate in, and profit from, the lessons learned program.

This handbook can be downloaded at:

<http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/15-11.pdf>.

COMPANY COALITIONS: MULTINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AT THE LOWEST LEVEL

CPT JAKE MIRALDI

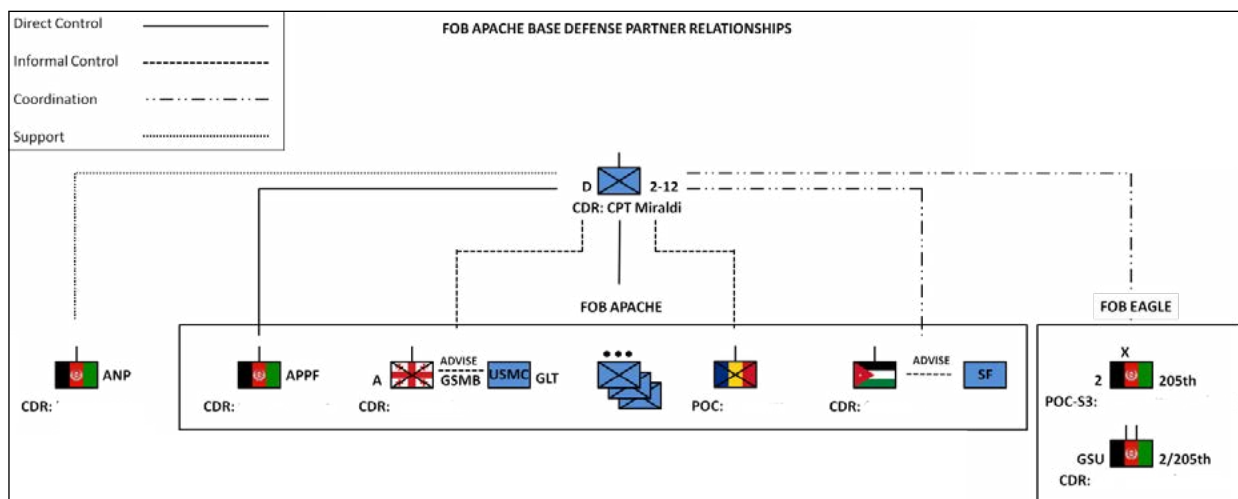
The United States has fought alongside dozens of coalition partners during the global war on terrorism. Whether in Iraq or Afghanistan, American Soldiers have lived, worked, and fought with a mélange of multinational partners. In Afghanistan's Regional Command - South (RC-S), the problems and opportunities associated with the multinational approach were legion. Upon arriving at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Apache in Zabul Province, I was confronted with the daunting problem of having to manage and coordinate base defense operations with four nationalities, two of which had their own advisor teams, as well as the full gamut of Afghan Nation Security Force (ANSF) units including Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP), and the Afghan Public Protection Forces (APPF). Each of these entities needed to work together to conduct base defense operations. Myriad cultural (both national and military) differences and a supremely complex command relationship presented a difficult and unique problem set — one that, it quickly became clear, had little to no doctrinal framework.

The nature of the coalition at FOB Apache was unique in the sheer number and type of different units responsible for base defense operations. While we had a plethora of combat power, my company had the complex task of coordinating and synchronizing the operations of each of our partnered contingents to successfully defend the FOB. The problem is best articulated through the chart shown in the figure below.

Though my company (Dagger Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment) was ultimately responsible for the overall defense of FOB Apache, we shared that duty with a company from the Romanian Army, one company from the Georgian Special Mountain Battalion (GSMB) with its associated U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Georgian

Liaison Team (GLT), one company of Jordanian Special Operations Forces (JORSOF) with its associated special forces detachment, and a company of APPF. Each element provided tower manning, entry control point (ECP) support, or patrols in support of base defense security zones outside the FOB. In addition to the support provided by FOB Apache elements, my company was also responsible for coordinating base defense and local area security operations with the ANP and ANA. FOB Eagle was attached to FOB Apache and housed the headquarters of the ANA's 2/205th Corps which had its own base defense elements and mission command nodes. In coordination with elements from 2/205th Corps, my company conducted joint base defense operations while simultaneously advising those same elements on engagement area development and defensive procedures. Outside the FOB we coordinated our base defense security zone patrols with ANP elements and helped develop ANP checkpoint defensive procedures. In extreme cases we were also available to provide them with supporting combat power.

The thoroughly complex layout that comprised the base defense at FOB Apache was further confused by the difficult and varied command relationships among each element. Though my company was overall responsible for defense, I only had direct tasking authority over my own platoons and the APPF. I had "indirect" control over other elements within the task force (Georgians, Romanians), which meant I had the ability to determine what I wanted each of these elements to do but needed a battalion fragmentary order (FRAGO) to actually task them to do it. Other elements I had no control over but was required to coordinate part of the base defense with (JORSOF, 2/205th Corps ANA), and others still I coordinated with and supported with combat



power as part of local area security efforts (ANP). This complexity extended higher up the chain of command through parallel command structures to my task force which included the Special Operations Task Force-South (SOTF-S), the GSMB, and Marine GLT channels, each requiring different levels of interaction and tasking methods.

None of the organizational complexity was as daunting as the requirement to manage different levels of capacity among each of our partnered contingents. From equipment and training to linguistic capabilities, interactions with each nationality brought with it an entirely separate set of considerations that significantly affected their use as part of base defense. The Georgians did not have enough Kartuli (Georgian) interpreters to maintain one at the ECP at all times, occasionally making situations at the ECP more difficult than they might have been with English speakers. The APPF maintained a battalion-level staff but did not have the ability to task its company or to request supplies and operational support from higher headquarters. JORSOF existed as a separate entity entirely removed from the rest of the FOB within the special forces (SF) compound. The idiosyncrasies of each partnered country presented challenges every day.

I looked for any doctrinal guidance that could help me develop a way to successfully engage with each multinational element I was partnered with. How was I supposed to ensure that the base was secure despite the disparate training level and discipline of each national contingent? Was there a way to conduct combined planning with my partners without it devolving into bickering? How would I manage to maintain my ability to be overall responsible for the defense of the FOB without upsetting or alienating my partnered commanders, especially those higher ranking than me?

After doing some research and coming up empty, I began to look into joint planning doctrine as well as some special operations doctrine with limited success. I found only a few publications that were of some value: Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operational Planning* (August 2011) and JP 3-16, *Multinational Operations* (July 2013). Though JP 5-0 was written to support strategic-level planning, some elements of the Joint Operational Planning Process (JOPP) specifically addressed the complexities of planning and executing missions in conjunction with several different agencies or organizations. Similarly, JP 3-16 is strategic-level planning doctrine that provided a broad framework and gave me



Photos by 1LT Kyler Bakhtiari

Soldiers from the U.S. Army, Romanian Army, Afghan Public Protection Forces, Georgian Special Mountain Battalion, and USMC Georgian Liaison Team conduct a base defense commanders meeting.

some guidance as to how to plan with my partnered nations.

However, neither of these documents could provide me with any concrete understanding of how, at the tactical level, to plan and execute operations with such a complex array of forces. Nothing I could find within Army doctrine was able to articulate a similar problem set to the one I found myself presented with despite the fact that I was not the first company commander presented with such a problem. Most doctrine related to a multinational coalition effort was either based in strategy and a poor fit for executing at the company level, or it was related to train, advise, assist doctrine borne out of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, also a poor fit due to there being limited need to train, advise, or assist most of my partners.

Without a clear doctrinal framework to build around, I was left to cherry-pick from some of the strategic considerations pulled out of JP 5-0 and JP 3-16 and to develop on the fly. To manage and synchronize efforts across our partnered forces, the company developed several different means that were informed by JP 5-0 and JP 3-16 but built by trial and error to aid in planning and in engaging each contingent. Some were successful, some were not. I'd like to highlight three attempted solutions to the problem of synchronization to better illustrate some of difficulties in solving this problem.

1. Platoon – Partner Relationships

Upon arrival of our last base defense partner (the GSMB), I assigned one set of platoon leadership to each national contingent as a way to maintain constant contact with each partner and to build relationships. The goal was for our base defense partners to feel and be more of a team with the members of Dagger Company and to ensure that any issues or concerns that each partner had were addressed by my company's leadership. I tasked 1st Platoon to liaise with the GSMB, 2nd Platoon to partner with the ANA at FOB Eagle,

4th Platoon to work with the Romanian company from their TF, and the fire support officer (FSO) and other headquarters elements to work with the APPF.

Each platoon linked up with its partner and attempted to develop a relationship. This quickly fell apart in all cases but the APPF. There were several reasons for this: The APPF was the simplest because we had direct control over their operations, and my company's chain of command quickly morphed into a de facto APPF chain of command. The Romanians and Georgians, on the other hand, existed only under indirect control of my company and therefore were not obligated to share any information with my platoon leadership. Nor were they keen to partner with us in the more traditional sense.

This effort broke down quickly due to the complex nature of our command relationship with our partners. Not having any direct control over the Georgians, Romanians, or the ANA made it impossible to act in the advisory role taken in the past when working with Afghans. The relationship with other NATO and coalition allies did not fit well with advise/assist templates.

2. Base Defense Commander's Huddle

We developed a weekly meeting of the base defense commanders so that I could be sure that each element representing the base defense team was able to contribute to planning and that there was a forum for concerns or recommendations to be aired. The commanders of the Georgian, Romanian, and APPF companies, as well as points of contact from the JORSOF and the Marine GLT, were typically present to discuss evolving base defense issues.

This meeting was very successful in letting the various commanders broach their concerns, but it quickly became apparent that I was personally required to prevent the meeting from devolving into unending complaints. My needing to arbitrate or redirect the arc of the meeting did not necessarily hurt discourse, but it did limit the free exchange of ideas I had hoped the meeting would be. Frequently, the meeting felt more like a briefing to me than a working group comprised of equals. The meeting also suffered from operations security (OPSEC) concerns that prevented us from discussing some pertinent issues due to the presence of Afghans or other partners.

The commander's meeting did help identify several issues, but it never took off as a collaborative effort among equally responsible commanders.

3. Base Defense Zone/Ring Concept

When the GSMB company arrived, FOB Apache's base defense team was flush with combat power. To make the most of this opportunity, we developed a concentric ring system for our local security patrols and then divided those rings into a GSMB area of operations (AO) and a Dagger Company AO. The nearest ring consisted of short reconnaissance and surveillance patrols out to about one kilometer. The next ring comprised longer daily patrols to assess nearby village



CPT Jake Miraldi and soldiers with the Georgian Special Mountain Battalion conduct an external security review.

atmospherics and changes to the environment. The final ring constituted our disruption zone where entire platoons would conduct ANP support operations and overwatch missions to limit enemy freedom of movement. The Georgians were responsible for the nearest ring and the southern portion of the middle ring, with my company conducting longer duration patrols in the furthest ring.

This concept and associated graphics were given to the ANA at FOB Eagle, which used them in conjunction with our weekly meetings to build their own reconnaissance and surveillance patrol schedule, and the ANP who, through their understanding of our local security operations, were better able to support disruption operations in the furthest ring.

This split of the local security area between the Georgian company, Dagger Company, and ANSF was quite successful despite the lack of formal command relationship between our three organizations. By giving the Georgians and Afghans a general task and purpose and a well-articulated AO, we were able to push much more combat power into the AO while also expanding my company's reach and increasing the FOB's stand off from potential threats. The ring system allowed us, the Georgians, and the ANSF near FOB Apache flexibility in our patrol planning so as to change up tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and routes for each patrol while still

working toward a common goal.

The rings and the associated guidance for each area allowed me to have some measure of control over the Georgians and ANSF without having direct tasking authority over them, skirting one of the primary issues we saw with many of our other attempts to solve coordination and synchronization problems.

Each initiative described above sought to solve the problem of how to bring the disparate elements of the team together to improve base defense. Some worked, some did not, but each success or failure yielded observations that could potentially be used in the future to build basic guidelines for a company commander confronting his own coalition. Here are a few of those observations:

1. Develop baseline guidance and graphics that can be applied across the team.

By developing a standard template like the ring system, you are able to more concretely and efficiently influence the actions of your partners than by engaging them individually. By applying the same basic concept to all partners, it will streamline understanding across the team and will allow you to shape the actions of your partners without explicitly dictating their actions. It will lessen the daily coordination load but still ensure that your end state is being met.

2. Be prepared to act as the “First Among Equals.”

Especially during planning, your role as the U.S. commander is one that other leaders in your coalition will defer to. It is unlikely that you will get a fully open and honest discussion among the other nationalities of your team. Regardless of the command relationships with the members of your team, more often than not when you are all in the same room, you will be the decision maker.

Building and maintaining relationships is absolutely essential to working around and through the command relationship issues, cultural issues, and general day-to-day difficulties that coalition operations entail.

3. You may spend most of your time as a commander playing diplomat.

Building and maintaining relationships is absolutely essential to working around and through the command relationship issues, cultural issues, and general day-to-day difficulties that coalition operations entail. By ensuring that you have face time with your partners, you will be more likely to get the work you need out of them. You will better understand their needs and their concerns, both of which will help you

accomplish the mission.

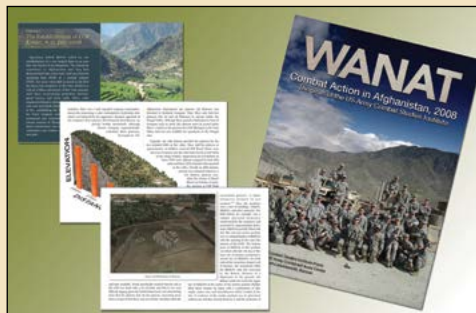
As the Army moves toward smaller deployments of battalions and companies in support of regional alignment or acute crises, company commanders are more likely than ever to find themselves in the position of leading a coalition. Company commanders will be forced to work, as they have been during the global war on terrorism, at levels well above that of a tactical commander. They will be required to interface with foreign militaries and work hand in hand with partners of varying capabilities over which they may have little formal control. The Army must recognize the need for tactical leaders to be able to handle that situation and build training and doctrine to facilitate our leaders' ability to accomplish a mission that in the past was well outside the tactical leader's purview.

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CSI ENHANCES BATTLE OF WANAT IBOOK

The Combat Studies Institute (CSI) has enhanced the well-known work entitled *Wanat: Combat Action in Afghanistan, 2008* with the iBook format. This updated version incorporates digital 3-D terrain views, video from both U.S. and insurgent perspectives, infographics and other interactive features.

“The multimedia elements lend a deeper sense of understand of the challenges facing the platoon in the valley before, during and after the battle,” said Dr. Donald Wright, deputy director of the Army Press. “In a traditional book you can quote a Soldier, but to watch and hear him talk about the situation brings home what happened in this battle.”



The Battle of Wanat was fought on 13 July 2008 when roughly 200 Taliban and al-Qaeda insurgents attacked NATO troops in the Waygal district of Afghanistan. The position was defended primarily by U.S. Army Soldiers of the Chosen Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team. Nine Soldiers were killed in the attack.

To access a free download of this book for iPad, visit <https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/wanat/id1031728372?ls=1d9e3a87a11fdaf32a4d648f4d6b3c849ce602360b679843b842ca099ad940db9bcd578ce558a2be5846f533b8a4bed1d72ba3a49f93e20660976d9775bfa814mt=11>.



An ANA Soldier guards ballot boxes from Shamulzai District and the surrounding areas following the Afghan presidential election in April 2014.

Photos courtesy of author

BALLOT RECOVERY AND ELECTION SUPPORT IN ZABUL PROVINCE

CPT TYLER G. MATTHEWS

In February 2014, I deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) as a rifle platoon leader in Chosen Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, which was assigned to Combined Task Force (CTF) Lethal. Our company and the majority of our battalion deployed to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Apache in Zabul Province near Qalat. FOB Apache was among the largest FOBs in southern Afghanistan, and in 2014 our battalion served as the primary U.S. presence in Zabul, a province slightly larger than the state of Connecticut. Our task force's mission was to support Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) efforts to deny the enemies of Afghanistan (such as the Taliban) safe haven in Zabul. In April 2014, my platoon helped host nation forces and civilian election officials facilitate the Afghan national elections by providing security and logistical support in one of Zabul's peripheral districts. The election support mission taught me valuable lessons about planning for nonstandard operations under tight timelines, integrating tactically in a controlled manner with partnered forces, and using innovative techniques to mitigate risk and ensure mission success during politically sensitive operations.

During the first three months of the deployment, my platoon participated in a wide array of missions. We supported Afghan National Army (ANA) efforts to clear the Taliban from villages in the province's many contested valleys, conducted joint air assault operations with Afghan soldiers and police to build

ANSF air assault competency and interdict Taliban, and — more frequently — served as a security force (SECFOR) element for senior U.S. military officers and officials as they advised and assisted the ANA and police in locations across Zabul.

The Afghan national presidential election served as a critical, high-visibility test of the progress and capability of the U.S.-led coalition and ANSF across Afghanistan at every echelon. A successful national election would facilitate a legitimate peaceful transition of power between democratically elected governments for the first time in Afghanistan's history; an unsuccessful election would cast doubt on Afghanistan's government institutions and its security forces.

The elections, which were set for 5 April, offered the ANSF that chance to secure its people while they exercised their democratic right to vote for their next leader. All across the country, Afghans would go to the polls and vote. In most places, Afghans would secure the ballots, consolidate them locally, and then drive them to Kabul.

In Zabul Province, the task was not so simple. The Taliban threat and the terrain constraints in Zabul were so great that the government officials did not have the confidence to drive their ballots to the provincial headquarters. They requested CTF Lethal's help, and our commander obliged. As a result, my platoon was assigned a mission in support of the election effort: to secure International Election Committee

(IEC) officials and sensitive election materials (SEM) in Shamulzai District to facilitate the success of the national electoral process in Zabul. Simply put, we were to fly to Shamulzai to pick up the civilian election officials and the ballots cast by the local Afghan population to ensure the safety of the officials and the secure delivery of the ballots to Afghan-held FOB Eagle. Following our mission, the Afghan and election officials would drive the ballots from FOB Eagle to the nearby provincial headquarters in the Qalat District Center, where they would be consolidated and accounted for in the larger national vote tally.

Our SEM recovery mission was a component of the final phase of the task force's larger election operation. Phase one, conducted prior to the election, entailed the delivery of IEC officials and the sensitive election materials to the province's outlying districts, where ANSF could not reliably travel without coalition support. Phase two of the operation was the election window itself, a period of time during which leaders of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul severely restricted U.S. forces' freedom of maneuver through the implementation of a "limited operations window." Generally speaking, this meant that U.S. forces were unable to leave the U.S. FOBs during the 72 hours surrounding election day. Phase three was the SEM recovery and consolidation phase, during which U.S. forces were to return to the same outlying districts, collect the officials and the

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The prevalence of social media and the ease with which data can be captured and shared through mobile devices put additional pressure on the entire operation. Our platoon's mission — and others like it across the country — was a tactical-level assignment with potential strategic implications. For the election to be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the local population and the international community, it was paramount that the event occurred with little to no ISAF assistance. Afghan and ISAF leadership were clear that

the operation would be Afghan focused, Afghan led, and Afghan secured. If the Taliban or other enemies of the Afghan government were able to portray undue or excessive U.S. influence in the election process, the election itself was at risk of being viewed as illegitimate.

The guidance from our battalion commander was clear: no American Soldier would touch the ballot boxes. U.S. Soldiers should not be pictured moving or assisting with the moving of the materials. Generally, task force personnel were there as security escorts only; the lower the profile of support, the better. These circumstances presented my platoon with a unique problem that we had not had to face in our prior operations: how to account for, secure, and transport election officials and sensitive election materials while maintaining an appropriate distance. More specifically, we planned and rehearsed how

to avoid being perceived as overly involved in the process while simultaneously performing a critical support service in the form of security and transportation.

The operational environment in Zabul further complicated the planning considerations surrounding the mission. When our battalion replaced CTF Duke in February in Zabul, we replaced a brigade-sized element. The most significant tradeoff we faced as a result of the lack of manpower was the inability to regularly project U.S. presence in partnership with the Afghan forces throughout the province, particularly in the outlying districts. Our lack of presence required us to rely on Afghan reporting for intelligence

Map — Zabul Province



updates and the enemy situation template (SITE MP). While the reporting was steady, it was often unreliable. As a result, we were uncertain as to how active the enemy might be in the vicinity of Shamulzai immediately following elections, and we were relatively unfamiliar with the district's terrain.

By all friendly accounts, the elections on 5 April were a resounding success in Zabul. Afghan voters turned out in droves, the ANSF secured the voting centers, and the few enemy attempts to disrupt the voting in the major population centers were contained. After the election hours ended, ballots in Qalat and Shah Joy — Zabul's main cities — were easy to consolidate in the provincial capital. All that was left was to collect the ballots from the outlying districts, such as Shamulzai. Earlier in the day, ANSF in Shamulzai reported that the FOB there had received direct and indirect fire from Taliban forces. This led us to plan to reinforce the Afghan area defense while on the objective during the SEM mission.

On 6 April at 0630, I received the mission from my company commander to execute the SEM extraction from Shamulzai. While we knew that there was a possibility that our platoon would be assigned the mission, at the time we believed the odds were unlikely. Higher headquarters had stressed the importance of the Afghan air force — specifically the Kandahar Air Wing (KAW) — taking ownership of the high-visibility mission. Further, we expected the collection to occur on the 7 or 8 April rather than immediately following the election. However, due to environmental factors and our battalion commander's intent to quickly collect the SEM before the enemy had a chance to plan a coordinated attack to recover from its poor showing on election day, the recovery mission was set for the evening of 6 April, and division tasked CTF Lethal with its accomplishment.

Three platoons from the battalion — two from Chosen Company and the battalion scout platoon — were tasked with collecting the SEM and election officials from three of Zabul's outlying districts. My platoon was tasked with Shamulzai District. Because of the relatively higher likelihood of direct contact, our company commander and fire support NCO traveled as attachments with our platoon. The mission was to leave FOB Eagle at 1550, move to Shamulzai via helicopter, link up with the local ANA officials, spend approximately five hours on the objective organizing the personnel and consolidating the election material, and then return with the ballots to FOB Eagle by 2300.

After receiving the mission, I conducted a time analysis to decide when and to whom to deliver the mission order. We were to go "wheels up" by 1550, allowing approximately eight hours to move through the basic troop leading procedures. I was able to give my platoon sergeant the basic mission details and then a warning order to him and squad leaders by 0745. A handful of us had been to Shamulzai's landing zone (LZ) prior to the election. Otherwise, the rest of my platoon was completely unfamiliar with the site.

My platoon sergeant and squad leaders were understandably unexcited about the mission. They did not need reminding that Shamulzai had been the enemy's most active district on election day as the Taliban had reportedly engaged with small

arms fire and mortar attacks to attempt to disrupt the voting. Further, the 1550 wheels up meant landing on the Shamulzai LZ in daylight, giving the enemy's observers the opportunity to observe our movement and easily determine our composition. Worse still, Zabul had been the site of multiple downed aircraft in the preceding months. We were especially concerned with the threat of rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs). The threat would require us to develop our defense and ensure that our available assets assisted in setting the conditions prior to the landing of both the UH-60s and the CH-47s.

Following the warning order, my platoon sergeant immediately went to work resourcing the various special needs for the nature of the mission. Colored chem-lights and infrared stickers were among the unique resource needs. We planned to use colored chem-lights hung around the election officials' necks to organize the officials into chalks. We recognized the tactical risk that colored chem-lights would present; however, we accepted the risk as necessary to ensure we had full accountability and did not inadvertently leave any election officials in Shamulzai. My platoon sergeant worked to secure round infrared stickers the size and shape of salad plates that the Afghans could stick to the ballot boxes for accountability. That way, after darkness, we could visually inspect the boxes as they moved toward the Chinooks.

The planning for the extraction required me to coordinate with the battalion's government affairs officer to ascertain exactly how many officials and exactly which materials we were to move. He gave me the numbers of boxes and officials which had been delivered prior to the election. Furthermore, he alerted me that he had informed the local officials in Shamulzai of our plan to recover the SEM that afternoon. This was significant since it essentially removed a degree of the element of surprise from our mission. We had experienced difficulty on the deployment with ensuring our Afghan partners maintained operations security (OPSEC). Chances are, we assumed, word would spread quickly throughout the district that the Americans were coming soon with helicopters. It was one of many catch-22s: our Afghan partners needed advance warning of when we were coming, but providing that information increased our tactical risk of being compromised and ambushed upon arrival. As a solution, our government affairs officer gave limited information to our partners, such as an approximate arrival time as opposed to a full itinerary of the flights.

During our terrain analysis, we realized that the terrain surrounding FOB Shamulzai — where we would link up and seek to consolidate the officials and SEM — posed challenges for our temporary defensive posture. Less than one kilometer to the west of the base was the town of Shamulzai, marked by several small structures and orchards that would provide the enemy with significant cover and concealment. To the north was a ridge, approximately 1.5 kilometers away, and to the east was a vast open area with good fields of fire. With little effort, the enemy could creep to within the effective ranges of his RPGs and machine guns. We determined that we would need to task our close combat attack (CCA) support to observe beyond the intervisibility line to the north and to report

any significant activity in the village if observed.

We task-organized our platoon down to the team level. Two M240B machine gun teams would assist the Afghan defense by posting in opposite corners of the compound with sectors toward our most likely enemy avenues of approach. Special teams were designated to assist with full body searches of the election officials and serve as security for our company commander, who would spend much of the mission engaging the ANA. My platoon sergeant and weapons squad leader shared the responsibility for maintaining security both inside and outside of the perimeter while my second squad leader, two of my most culturally adept Soldiers, and my linguist would focus on the task of securing and organizing the officials and the election materials. Finally, my platoon sergeant assigned the chinks for the CH-47 extraction of the officials, the SEM, and our platoon. Each chink had to have a minimum of five of my Soldiers aboard for force protection and control, which created a plan for a phased withdrawal of our defense off of the objective.

Following my mission order to the squad leaders, we took advantage of the few hours that we had to rehearse our infiltration on UH-60s, our exfiltration on the CH-47s by chink, and our actions on the objective. Specifically, we rehearsed the SEM-specific tasks: how to handle cell-phone cameras and pictures and how to avoid handling election materials. Each Soldier understood the battalion commander's intent: whatever happens, do not touch the election materials. After our final rehearsals, we moved to the flight line.

As planned, we went wheels up at 1550 in two Blackhawks. I spent the 30-minute ride preparing mentally for the next

several hours. We would have five hours to find and consolidate the election materials and the IEC officials before three Chinooks would come pick us up. It was not a dream itinerary. Five hours was plenty of time for local Taliban in the area to prepare, approach, and emplace for a high-profile ambush. The 30-minute flight went by fast. Before I knew it, we were on the ground in a pile, and our Blackhawks moved quickly up, away, and out of sight.

The pilots did an excellent job placing us near an entrance to the compound. We quickly established link-up and moved inside to assist the Afghans with their defense. As was often the case, our arrival prompted the ANA to generally displace from many of their security positions, most likely due to their correct assumption that we would add to their security.

When we entered the compound, we were surrounded by beaming faces. I felt like a party guest; there was a palpable sense of joy that the Afghans had just pulled off a historic feat — a mostly safe election day. While my commander respectfully toasted the peaceful results of the election day with chai, I prepared a staging area for the election materials and the IEC officials, and my platoon sergeant emplaced security.

The importance of our platoon interpreter's role in the mission cannot be overstated. I kept my interpreter, Nomi, in arm's reach throughout the mission. He was critical to the initial completion of link-up with the ANA and the local officials. During the first 30 minutes at the FOB, I set out to determine

Just outside of the ANA compound at Shamulzai, 2-12 IN Soldiers work with an interpreter to confirm the number of IEC officials and ballot boxes waiting to be transported.

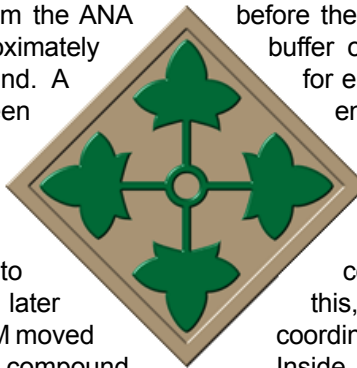


the situation. With Nomi's help, I learned from the ANA leadership that the election officials were approximately 1.5 kilometers away in a different compound. A miscommunication in the conversation between the government affairs officer and the local leadership had resulted in the SEM and officials staging at an alternate location. As a result, the ANA had to coordinate for the IEC officials and their materials to be moved to our current position, where the aircraft would later return. The choice to have the officials and SEM moved to our location rather than moving to the other compound was one based on hasty mission analysis after developing the local situation. We had occupied and reinforced the ANA compound. Our area defense was strong and emplaced. It was, therefore, an instinctive decision to request that all materials and personnel that needed to be transported back to FOB Eagle would be consolidated at our location. With Nomi's help and a sense of urgency, we told the officials and their police escorts by phone that they needed to be staged as soon as possible to gain accountability and plan for extraction.

I gave them the guidance through Nomi at approximately 1615. We anticipated darkness setting in at approximately 1830, and we agreed that we needed to be tightly organized before dark to mitigate the risk of misplacing materials or losing accountability of the officials. Within 30 minutes of my initial guidance, the police had delivered the officials and the election materials to the landing zone, just outside of the compound. We were pleased to see that the materials looked to be well marked and sealed. Our next task became organizing the personnel and equipment for the Chinooks that would return later in the evening.

While my platoon sergeant maintained security on the compound's perimeter, I worked with Nomi and my squad of riflemen to prepare the extraction of the Shamulzai ballots (without getting within 10 feet of the boxes of ballots themselves). Between 1645 and 1845, we needed to accomplish several critical steps: determine how many boxes of ballots the officials had collected, separate the boxes of ballots from the boxes of election materials, and mark each ballot box with an infrared sticker so that we could see the boxes moving in the dark as they made their way to the Chinooks. Two hours provided ample time to perform each of these tasks thoroughly; however, we wanted to work efficiently in case enemy contact or a change in flight itineraries required the exfiltration timeline to change.

Using our interpreter, I identified motivated IEC officials who would be willing to assist with organizing the heavy-lifting portion of the operation. The first test was to move the boxes inside the compound. Because of the lack of information we shared about our time on objective, the IEC officials and ANA understandably assumed that the Chinooks would arrive sooner than later. As a result, they initially placed the boxes and materials on the LZ itself. However, the timeline was more extended. The dedicated aircraft were performing similar insertions and extractions in Shinkai and Daychopan districts, which meant that there would be several hours



before they would return to Shamulzai. In hindsight, this buffer of time was useful because it allowed margin for error for the types of issues that we had already encountered such as miscommunications on pickup sites. Because we were still more than two hours away from the Chinooks' arrival, we organized the movement of the materials inside the compound to provide cover and concealment during the interim period. By doing this, we increased our protection and rehearsed the coordinated movement of the materials.

Inside the compound, we made hasty manifests for each of the three Chinooks. We gave half of the election officials blue glow sticks and the other half red glow sticks. The glow stick was to hang around each official's neck and to be activated on our command. The rule was simple: no glow stick, no trip back to Qalat. Once each manifest was complete, my squad leaders led respectful searches of each IEC official. Five of my Soldiers would be the escorts for the ballots and officials on each of the first two Chinooks. The third Chinook would pick up our leadership and machine-gun teams. By 1900, the materials were organized. We waited in our security positions for almost two hours — quietly pulling security on the perimeters while inside the compound we passed the time by trading congratulatory phrases about the election's success, the Taliban's demise, and the optimism for a brighter Afghan future.

Our aircraft began to arrive to initiate our extraction at 2055. First, two Apaches arrived and visually cleared our predetermined named areas of interest (NAIs) beyond the intervisibility line and in the orchards surrounding the compound. After the area was confirmed clear, at about 2110, we heard the first of our Chinooks approaching.

The first Chinook picked up the first half of the IEC officials and non-sensitive election materials (such as collapsible voting booths) and hastily left the LZ. I used our interpreter to shout directions and control the movement of the chalk while squad leaders hastily ordered the Afghans to board. Poised and calm in the quiet daylight, the election officials looked scared, nervous, and anxious as the roar of the rotors and the haze of the dust fueled the urgency of the moment. Once full, the Chinook lifted off. One down, two to go.

The second Chinook was the main effort. As it approached, we staged the IEC officials and their boxes in an orderly line on the compound side of the LZ. Again, the simplicity of the staging plan and the precision and redundancy of the interpreter's instructions enabled the Afghan election officials to become an efficient assembly line that moved the boxes of ballots onto the helicopter with relative ease. Through our night-vision devices, we assisted with controlling personnel and watched as the ballot boxes, marked with the IR stickers, moved in a line like ants onto the Chinook. It looked a lot different than election day in the U.S., but this was Afghan democracy in action, and even through the night vision, it was a beautiful sight. Once full, bird two took off. Two down.

The last extract was the smoothest of the three. As we had rehearsed and executed earlier that morning, our security

collapsed in a phased withdrawal from the various towers surrounding the compound in time to file up the Chinook's open ramp and into our seats. As we withdrew, Afghan Soldiers re-assumed the security positions and provided overwatch for our exit. In the end, we did not gain contact with the enemy; there were no RPGs to dodge or small arms fire to repel — just three helicopters full of Soldiers, election officials, and ballots to show for our efforts in one of the most remote districts of Zabul.

The final phase of the operation was predominantly Afghan led. In terms of command and control, I ensured that one of my platoon's mature squad leaders was on each of the Chinooks escorting the materials back to FOB Eagle. He visually counted the ballot boxes and officials onto the Chinook at FOB Shamulzai and off the helicopter at FOB Eagle. The first two Chinooks, full of IEC officials, landed on the FOB Eagle LZ at approximately 2145. The battalion's government affairs officer was there with IEC officials to receive and visually inventory the SEM as they emerged from the aircraft. Once the SEM was off of the Chinooks and the officials were secured by the police, our platoon's mission was complete. The Afghan police then escorted the officials and election materials into the Qalat District Center, where they would be consolidated with the votes from the remaining districts in Zabul.

Lessons Learned

I learned several lessons from my platoon's mission in support of the Afghan national elections in Zabul. Most importantly, I learned the importance of training Soldiers and leaders to fully appreciate the sensitive nature of election support missions as a subset of stability operations. In the counterinsurgency environment, perception is reality in the eyes of the local population and the international audience. Leaders must act like everything is being recorded, photographed, and shared. Every facial expression, gesture, and physical act can be manipulated to support a narrative. Soldiers need to train on what this means in practice. A technique I recommend is for leaders to take pictures and video of their Soldiers training for the counterinsurgency environment by interacting with role players simulating local officials or civilians. Showing those photos and replaying the videos to the Soldiers and presenting a negative message when applicable can add to Soldiers' self awareness at every level, and it will prepare them better for missions such as mine, where a point of failure would have been an ill-timed photograph that could have changed the perception of the U.S. involvement in the election.

Secondly, flexibility is paramount in planning for election support operations. Simple techniques, such as the use of chem-lights to control chinks and IR stickers to identify ballot boxes in the dark, enabled the success of our mission. Such techniques are not in field manuals. Instead, leaders are likely to come to these types of innovative solutions by framing the problems clearly, considering their assets, and prioritizing simplicity in the planning process.

Third, whenever possible, leaders should include host-nation forces in the pre-mission rehearsal process. I was

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pleasantly surprised when the loading of the Chinooks in Shamulzai went as smoothly as it did. After all, we had not rehearsed corralling IEC officials and their precious cargo at our training center rotation. However, by using the hours available on the ground while waiting for extraction to rehearse the movement and transfer of the cargo, we built confidence in the IEC officials and a shared understanding of the plan. This paid dividends when the Chinooks touched down on the LZ, and the noise, darkness, and blowing debris confused the scene.

Lastly, while reflecting on my platoon's support to the Afghan election in 2014, I have come across multiple sources of helpful military doctrine that would have given me a stronger framework from which to approach the tasks we faced. Specifically, Army FM 3-07, *Stability*, identifies "support elections" as a subtask to the overall stability task of government support (pages 1-4). The Army's stability techniques manual (Army Techniques Publication 3-7.5, *Stability Techniques*) goes even further, specifically outlining the phases and requirements of providing election support (pages 5-9). Lastly, U.S. Joint Forces Command has provided a useful manual titled *Handbook for Military Support to Governance, Elections, and Media*, which serves a useful purpose to junior officers preparing for election support operations — albeit its scope and target audience are leaders at the strategic level. Leaders anticipating that their units may play a role in election support would do well to review these sources. However, the greatest lesson that this mission taught me is that the mission requirements involved in supporting election support — whether through logistics, security, or otherwise — fully require flexibility and adaptability at every echelon within a task force.

Recognizing the importance of integrity and legitimacy in the electoral process and the ease with which an adversary could use modern social media to influence international perception allowed our platoon to utilize the techniques necessary to provide effective support to our Afghan partners while maintaining a low profile.

At the time this article was written, **CPT Tyler Matthews** was a student at the Maneuver Captains Career Course. He is currently a platoon trainer at Officer Candidate School, Fort Benning, Ga. He previously served for 19 months as a rifle platoon leader in 2-12 Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, during which time he deployed twice to Afghanistan. He holds degrees from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., and the University of Oxford in England.

SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE TARGETING IN KANDAHAR CITY, 2011-2012

CPT JAMES MCCABE

During a deployment to Afghanistan during 2011 and 2012, my multifunction team (MFT 3301) conducted more than 300 combat patrols and detained 108 high-value individuals (HVIs) from target lists spanning every echelon between company and theater levels. My team's keys to success were innovation, adaptability, and the trust to operate freely within our commander's intent. This article is a brief summary of my team's story and a small analysis of our successes.

The sun leaned on the Soldiers — a stale desert heat that sapped both will and strength from all beneath it. I was a newly appointed second lieutenant given charge of an MFT.

Kandahar City's Camp Nathan Smith (CNS) was where we would lay our heads while away from hearth and home for the next 12 months. It was July and it was hot. We were part of the main effort against the insurgency in Regional Command South (RC-S), and we were there to do one thing: catch bad guys. We were understrength, of course. Of the 12 Soldiers (including me) that I was supposed to have, I deployed with eight — one of whom would depart after only three months to exit the Army. The team was composed of two signals intelligence (SIGINT) Soldiers, five human intelligence (HUMINT) Soldiers — one of whom was the NCOIC — and me. Despite the manning shortage, our morale was high; we were excited at the prospect of doing our job and experiencing a great deployment.

After completing the reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI) training at Kandahar Airfield (KAF), the team moved to CNS to fulfill a direct support role to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 4th Infantry Division. We settled into our living area and took the tour of the forward operating base (FOB). CNS was small but had many of the conveniences of the so-called mega-FOBs like KAF and Bagram with fewer people and therefore fewer headaches. After the quick tour, I went up to meet with the BCT S2 at the headquarters, find my team room, and get to work.

After meeting with the S2, I met with the assistant S3, who in turn paired me with the BCT's scout platoon. The scout platoon leader (PL) and I divided up sections of his platoon into primary and secondary assault forces, exploitation/search teams, and security teams. Each section of his platoon was augmented with a member or members of my MFT to support the appropriate effort (direction finders [DF] with each assault team and battlefield forensics experts with each exploitation team). I would remain paired with the PL and provide any additional guidance or updates via tactical radio. This was the disposition of what would become "Team CNS" — the 2nd BCT, 4th ID focused targeting force.



Photos by SGT Brendan Mackie

A Soldier with the 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, speaks with members of the Afghan Border Police before hitting a possible weapons cache site during an operation near Yaro Kalay, Afghanistan, on 4 June 2012.

Innovation

The brigade commander had a three-fold operational focus for our mission in Kandahar City. This was:

- 1) Maintain pressure on the insurgency,
- 2) Disrupt insurgent networks, and
- 3) Prevent spectacular attacks.

If we were able to accomplish these tasks, then he would have the white space necessary to focus on transitioning authority back to the local government and reducing tactical infrastructure throughout Kandahar City.

Because of the nature of Kandahar City, we began to develop a training plan on CNS that would keep us sharp in the event of a planned patrol or time-sensitive target (TST). We trained with our targeting equipment and incorporated members of the scout platoon into that training. We learned to move as one unit — each DF Soldier would lead one of the assault teams. We would practice running, walking, maneuvering all throughout CNS. We were able to zero in on our practice targets quickly — usually within minutes of the beginning of the drill. Being able to communicate nonverbally with the assault teams reaped huge dividends as the entire element could seamlessly move along an azimuth and then fluidly change direction without any disruption in momentum or violence of action.

Knowing that Kandahar City was an environment conducive to special intelligence (SI) targeting, it seemed prudent to leverage all of the appropriate assets to support that effort. Seeing as how our team room was already in headquarters, we brought in a SI analyst to work directly with the team and moved a radio and a Blue Force Tracker (BFT) into the office so that we could have reach-back all the way back into our databases while out on patrol. This simple arrangement became an SI operations cell capable of launching and monitoring an SI-enabled focused targeting force throughout all of Kandahar City and surrounding rural areas. The flexibility gained by the patrolling team to conduct SI-enabled raids and on-site exploitation, analysis, and re-tasking turned a conventional Army formation of 35 Soldiers into a formidable targeting force that would systematically take down network after network of insurgents in Kandahar City.

CPT Michael Lewis, a 2007 West Point graduate, served as an MFT leader for Alpha Company, 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade (BfSB). He had previously deployed to Iraq in 2009 where his team was pushed far from the flagpole. He worked in Mosul, and the 504th was near Baghdad. "It was difficult for us to get supplies; in fact I had to barter with the unit that I was directly supporting because it was logistically difficult for the 163rd to support me. It's hard to get a supply drop when you are a one-hour flight from your parent unit," Lewis said, "Finally, I had to get the brigade involved to ensure that we were supplied."

During that deployment, Lewis augmented the scout platoon and they became the brigade's TST team. His MFT followed the same basic procedure as my team would in Afghanistan two years later — trigger initiated the mission

Military Intelligence analysis is by its nature required to be flexible. Threats evolve and adapt new tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs); one enemy falls and gives way to another, different threat with different problem set to solve. Situations do not fall into a particular pattern exposing a particular end from the beginning. On the contrary, the rapid development of enemy situations is not measured in days or weeks but in hours.

and then complete a sensitive site exploitation (SSE) in hopes for a follow-on mission. This was particularly helpful in a target rich environment. Because the area offered so many opportunities to be out of the gate enroute to the objective, many missions would begin right after the other ended. They worked the target decks of every echelon in Iraq. CPT Lewis's MFT detained multiple high-level targets during his rotation.

"Our rest plan was energy drinks," Lewis joked.

This is a great example of how, while Team CNS did not reinvent the wheel, we took lessons learned from previous teams and improved upon them. Adding a reach-back capability to the patrols on the ground proved to be one of the most significant improvements.

Adaptability

Military Intelligence analysis is by its nature required to be flexible. Threats evolve and adapt new tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs); one enemy falls and gives way to another, different threat with a different problem set to solve. Situations do not fall into a particular pattern exposing a particular end from the beginning. On the contrary, the rapid development of enemy situations is not measured in days or weeks but in hours. Two methodologies of analysis are espoused in the intelligence community: the formal military decision-making process (MDMP) that follows a strict metric tested both by time and application and has shown to be empirically reliable, and the thin-slicing method that derives rapid conclusions based on limited information in a very short time which also promises accurate results.

In addition to adding the reach-back capability, we were also fortunate enough to provide SI support to some of the other agencies that were supporting RC-S. Each of these organizations worked under different rules and had different capabilities as well as internal goals. Providing support to these entities required a great deal of flexibility — moving from SI-focused targeting to HUMINT targeting with minimal notice, chasing dynamic targets across the battlefield, operating at night and during the day, and oftentimes conducting multiple patrols a day. One of the hallmarks of working with these groups was the time-sensitive nature of many of their targets. It was not unusual for us to be

activated in the middle of the night for an unexpected night raid as a target moved into our area of operations (AO). It was a standard practice for Team CNS to leave the gate at 0200 and return at 0600 with an HVI in custody, only to be retasked and sent after another target by 0800. We were good, we knew we were good, and we had fun being good at what we did.

The adaptability of Team CNS to pivot between deliberate planning and relying on developed TTPs allowed us to seamlessly integrate into a variety of formations with exceedingly positive results.

One of the seminal events during our deployment was a series of operations that took place in the autumn of 2011. These operations were aimed

at repelling a cell from a transnational terrorist network that had moved into Kandahar City with the intent to conduct violence in conjunction with the International Day of Peace. RC-S determined that between 30 and 35 of these terrorists had infiltrated the city and began working as day-laborers while planning spectacular attacks against RC-S Afghan leadership during the peace day conference.

It was an early Monday morning when we were called into the operations center and briefed on the situation. We were told that there were more than 30 of these fighters that had moved into the area, and we were given target information on 11 key individuals within the network that were definitely in Kandahar City. That first day, Team CNS actively targeted each of these 11 individuals and successfully detained eight of them. Through incidental collection and analysis on the objective, we concluded that we also detained an additional six individuals who were part of the 30-plus fighters in the area for whom we did not have accurate targeting data but did confirm through biometrics and tactical questioning. The following two days were similarly successful, adding to a grand total of 23 of the 35 fighters that were eventually detained. Team CNS was responsible for the capture of two-thirds of the terrorists in that network in Kandahar City; the other four agencies working in the area detained the remaining 12 individuals.

How did we accomplish this? Adaptability. We did not sit and wait for the targets to come to us, but we actively pursued them. When one target fell out of range, we could dynamically re-task ourselves to hunt down the next on the list. At one point while on the objective and going through a tactical-questioning session with a detained individual, one of my Soldiers identified another target approximately one kilometer away from our current position. He, with



Soldiers with Security Force Assistance Team 8 and the 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion evaluate local terrain features during a dismounted patrol in Enjergay, Afghanistan, on 2 June 2012.

my consent and the consent of the scout PL, took a small group of Soldiers and positively identified and detained him as well, bringing him from the point of capture back to our detainee holding area. It didn't require an elaborate pre-planned checklist, just a Soldier's initiative and adaptability. This brings me to my final key to success — trust.

Trust

After the initial series of successes that Team CNS had in detaining HVIs in Kandahar City, the brigade commander trusted us. He trusted the operational center, trusted the capability of the team, and trusted that we would achieve results. He knew that the team would deliver real effects on the operational environment because we had a proven methodology that would satisfy his three-fold guidance.

We maintained pressure on the insurgency by consistently being on patrol. Even our presence patrols had an effect because we would purposefully enter enemy support zones. We disrupted insurgent networks by removing HVIs from all warfighting functions, rendering the enemy's ability to conduct any operations in Kandahar City completely null. We did not focus on only targeting leaders or facilitators within insurgent networks; we also actively targeted low-level fighters (improvised explosive device [IED] emacers, for example). By removing this seemingly small aspect of the network, the insurgents were unable to successfully carry out attacks.

Team CNS was intelligence driven. We did not leave the FOB unless we had credible targets that could realistically be targeted and held in detention. Once a potential target met the threshold for derogatory reporting, we would launch and usually detain within a few hours. On-site exploitation would either lead to follow-on targets or feed the post-operation

analysis and dissemination function of the targeting cycle to develop future target sets and even illuminate additional networks.

In his book, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, Malcolm Gladwell discusses the idea of “thin-slicing.” Thin-slicing is a term used in psychology and philosophy to describe the ability to find patterns in events based only on “thin slices,” or narrow windows, of experience. Using this notion, Gladwell suggests that in the first few moments of an experience, or at the initial exposure to something new, the mind very quickly generates impressions, decisions, and judgments at the unconscious level. These impressions, decisions, and judgments are the root of the hunch or “gut-feeling” that are experienced when there is little or no evidence dictating that a conclusion should be made.

The preponderance of intelligence that was analyzed and acted upon bred the trust that became the lifeblood of our operations. For better or worse, we were a personality-driven organization that was built around a culture of trust. The right people using the right skills at the right time to generate the appropriate and desired effects.

Team CNS was visited by representatives from the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), the Army Cryptological Office, the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), the RC-S commander, and the 504th BfSB commander. During every encounter, we happily explained how we operated and why we were successful. Furthermore, we learned from each of these visitors. We were always open to advice on how to better execute our missions. Our methodologies were captured and taught to our relief as we prepared to return home after a successful deployment. Additionally, the TTPs that we developed were captured by CALL and AWG and entered into their training programs for the broader Army.

The key takeaway from this article is that enthusiastic Soldiers with the freedom to be innovative and adaptive and the trust of their higher command will make the Army better in any capacity. With doctrine and lessons learned as a baseline, adaptive and innovative leaders will develop better ways of doing things.

Team CNS conducted more than 300 combat patrols and detained 108 HVIs. We reset the 2nd BCT, 4th ID high-value target list several times, caught HVIs in multiple battalion areas of operations, and supported theater targeting by detaining joint task force (JTF)-level targets. The keys to the success of Team CNS were innovation, adaptability, and the trust to operate freely within our commander’s intent. To quote the 504th BfSB commander, we “contributed to the irreversible momentum toward victory.”

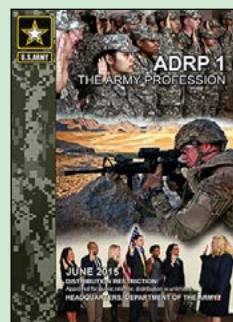
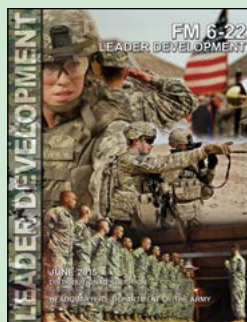
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ARMY UPDATES DOCTRINE ON LEADER DEVELOPMENT, ARMY PROFESSION

With the publication of **Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Leader Development***, the Army is helping Army leaders understand how to develop other leaders, their units, and themselves. Intended for leaders at brigade level and below, FM 6-22 integrates doctrine, experience, and best practices, drawing upon applicable Army doctrine and regulations, input of successful Army commanders and noncommissioned officers, recent Army leadership studies, and research on effective practices from the private and public sectors.



A major revision of **Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1, *The Army Profession***, includes a new chapter on the Army ethic. The Center for Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE) serves as the primary proponent for doctrine on the Army profession.

ADRP 1 describes the essential characteristics, which identify and establish the Army as a military profession:

- Trust
- Stewardship
- Honorable service
- Esprit de corps
- Military expertise

Both publications are available online at www.apd.army.mil in a pdf format and in an eReader format for commercial mobile devices

SUPPORTING MISSION COMMAND:

ASSISTING THE G3 IN SYNCHRONIZING INFORMATION-RELATED CAPABILITIES

MAJ JONATHAN S. RITTENBERG

The division G3 position is the most difficult of any staff officer. The G3 is responsible for the movement and maneuver warfighting function. Also added to this are the responsibilities of training, planning, conducting operations, force development, and modernization in the division. Additionally, the G3 is responsible for integrating and synchronizing the rest of the warfighting functions in support of the commander's plan. This is a complex task, and the G3 requires subject matter experts within the G3 cell and across the staff to support these responsibilities. With recent additions into the G3 cell from the release of FM 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations*, in May 2014, the information operations (IO) officer has become a special staff officer within the cell and can assist the operations officer with the mission command staff task of synchronizing information-related capabilities (IRCs).¹ This article will examine two methods a G3 could employ to best accomplish the task of synchronizing IRCs for the commander's plan. One method is establishing a vertical organization led by the G3 IO officer. The other method would be a horizontal organization with each IRC reporting directly to the G3. I will provide the advantages and disadvantages to each method.

in mutually supporting each other while getting the most out of their contributions to the plan and the accomplishment of the mission objectives. The planning activities that occur will allow the IRC specialists to lead their activities. It will also ensure that IRCs are focused and minimize the silo effect and information fratricide risk. During the targeting process, IRC's can be allocated towards nominations in a way that they can gain complementary effects and maximize the advantage given to maneuver elements to accomplish their tasks and achieve desired results. Through this open dialogue between the IRCs, a combination of different elements can be packaged to support future operations and maximize the friendly advantage within the informational environment. Using this method, the G3 can give the IO officer his intent and allow the IO officer to integrate the proper IRCs to accomplish the task that supports and enhances the maneuver plan and achieves campaign objectives.

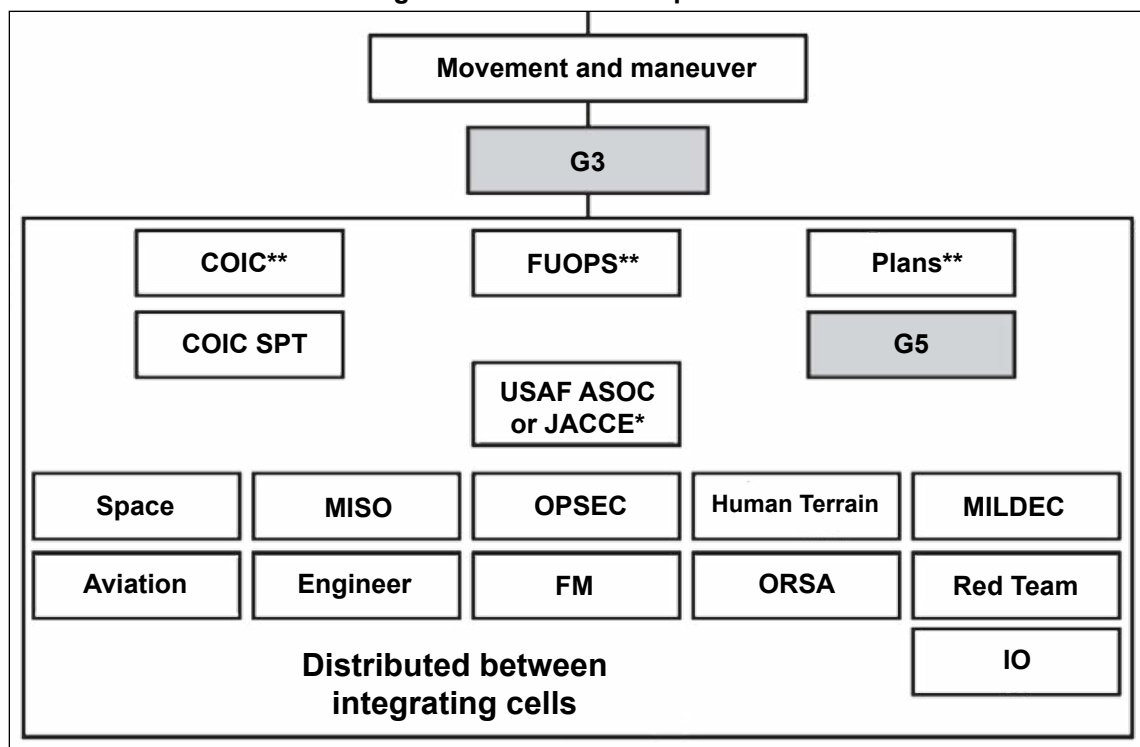
Vertical Organization IRCs within G3 Cell

In a vertical organization, the G3 IO officer leads the IRCs

Horizontal Organization IRCs within G3 Cell

In the horizontal organization method, the IO officer will assist the G3 in synchronizing the IRCs. In this application the IRC lead will have direct access and be more involved with the G3 officer. In this manner the G3 will become more knowledgeable on the specific IRC capabilities. The challenge to this is that it may exceed the G3's effective span of control.

Figure 1 — G3 Cell Components²



This isn't universal, however, as the G3 staff elements already coordinate with numerous other staff elements. If the IRCs are spread out and able to act independently, they may have established relationships and be able to coordinate more quickly across the staff and with other elements. Placing them under the G3 IO officer could create a filter that may slow down the planning and coordination of their activities or limit their use to whatever is in the G3 IO's comfort and experience level.

Example Vertical Organization IRCs within G3 Cell

During 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team's 2011-2012 deployment, the unit established a staff cell and termed it the Fusion Cell. This cell was very similar to the vertical organization within the G3. This cell contained the brigade's IRCs and Fires Cell. The Fusion Cell maintained the campaign plan, facilitated the targeting process and integrated IRCs in support of operations. With the IRC expertise within the cell, this organization was able to consistently complement lethal missions with non-lethal effects. This method of employment ultimately led to the accomplishment of numerous intermediate objectives across all lines of effort not only in the brigade mission but also in the division campaign plan. During my time as the fusion chief, I experienced great mission command between the IRCs which allowed them to continue coordination without disruption of their specialization. Through shared understanding and synchronized planning this element was able to maximize IRC effects and leverage them in the right spot and the right time for the commander and S3.

As a future division IO officer, I would recommend employment of the vertical organization. This allows the G3 to focus on larger task integration. The IO officer can then take the commander's intent and G3 guidance and sync the IRCs to ensure that their capabilities are leveraged to maximize an operational advantage. This will provide the means to achieve our plan's objectives and accomplish the division's mission.

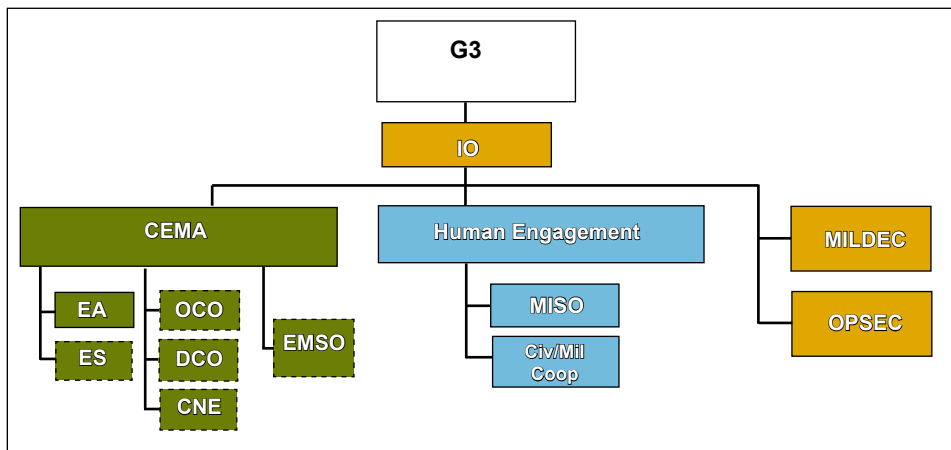


Figure 2 — Vertical Organization IRCs within G3 Cell

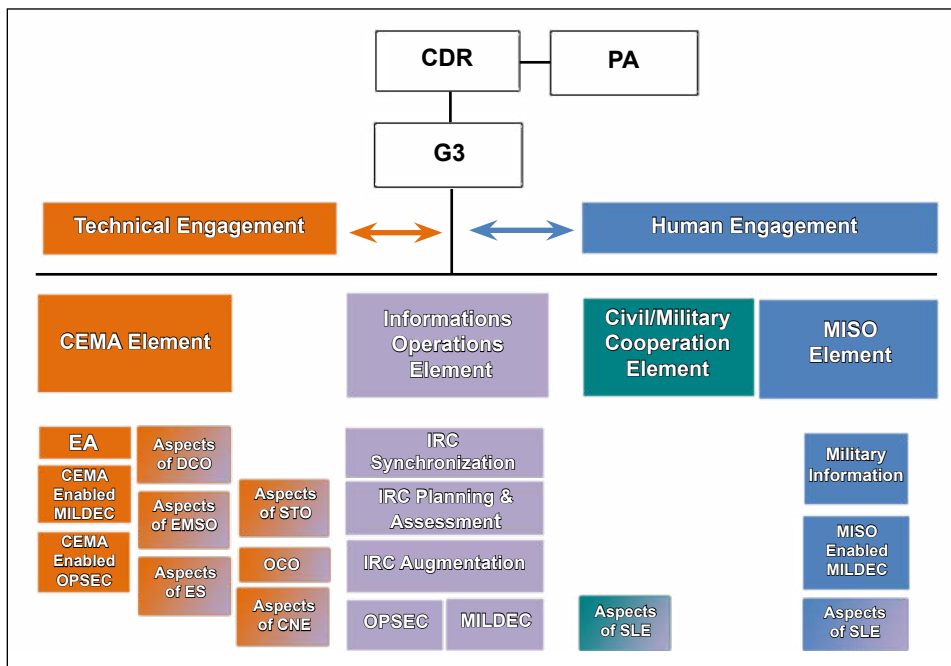


Figure 3 — Horizontal Organization IRCs within G3 Cell

Notes

¹ FM 6-0, *Command and Staff Organization and Operations*, May 2014.

² FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*, April 2014.

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Other Acronyms Used in Figures

- | | |
|--|--|
| ASOC — air support operations command | JACCE — joint air component coordination element |
| CEMA — cyber electro-magnetic activities | MILDEC — military deception |
| CNE — computer network exploitation | MISO — military information support operations |
| COIC — current operations integrating cell | OCO — offensive cyberspace operations |
| DCO — defensive cyberspace operations | OPSEC — operations security |
| EA — electronic attack | ORSA — operations research and systems analysis |
| EMSO — electromagnetic spectrum operations | SLE — Soldier and leader engagement |
| EW — electronic warfare | SPT — support |
| ES — electronic warfare support | STO — special technical operations |
| FM — force management | |
| FUOPS — future operations | |

COMBATIVES: MORE THAN “JUST PT”

CPT CHRISTOPHER J. MATTOS

After several staff assignments and a few unanticipated turns of events, I was afforded the opportunity to command Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Ky. On my second night of command, I received my first of many late-night phone calls — this one informing me that two of our Soldiers were involved in a vehicle accident in which one was killed and the other incarcerated for drunk driving. The wake of this tragedy rippled through the heart of the company and left me and the rest of the leadership searching for ways to bring the unit together and refocus the Soldiers on their mission.

In all of the years of training for company command, nothing can really prepare you for such a tragedy. We spent a lot of time talking to Soldiers, leveraging professional assets at Fort Campbell, and finding ways to honor the memory of the deceased. The first sergeant and I knew that above all other things we had to get the Soldiers back in the field, training and working. We knew we needed to find a way to create solidarity among the unit, and we were determined to help guide the company to become stronger after such a serious blow.

Unknown to us at the time, one of the significant contributors to the rebound of the company was a blossoming line of effort in its infant stages of development. In 1-187 IN (Leader Battalion), we were fortunate enough to have a battalion command team that not only supported combatives training but pushed it as a critical element of overall Soldier readiness and resilience. As a new commander, I wanted to make it clear that I understood and supported my commander's intent and guidance, and I realized how important it was to carry my higher command's priorities at my level. As a scholastic wrestler in my youth and a graduate of the Level II Army Combatives Course, I also had a deep appreciation for the program.

As I contemplated how to not only integrate combatives into the company's operations but to find the means to restore morale in the unit, I recalled the three large words painted in black on the wall of my old high school wrestling room: "Discipline, Dedication, Desire." I thought about the long three-hour practices in that room that often resembled a sauna as my coach would frequently put an ice bag on the



thermostat to trick the system into pumping hotter and hotter air. I thought about the closeness our team and the attitude we carried through the halls, knowing that we were the hardest-working athletes in the school. Our confidence was unwavering; we knew there wasn't a single "tough guy" who could stand toe-to-toe with any of us. More importantly, the lasting values of teamwork, pride, and discipline were ingrained in us every day through incessant training, competition, and hardship.

If I could leverage those same principles in my Soldiers now and harness the energy and virtues that helped shape who I had become, I felt that we could really do something great in the company. This article highlights how we approached creating a sustainable combatives program in Charlie Company as a medium to increase the unit's overall fitness, morale, mental toughness, and resiliency.

Introduction

"When we started the tournament, I noticed one of the Soldiers overcome with emotion; it looked like all of his anger, frustration, and stress was released at once. He clearly had a lot going on in his head, and it was like he never knew how to deal. During his first match, he had to be taken off to the side because he just let it all out and he got way out of hand during the bout. At the end of the tournament, I went over to talk to

him, and he told me that today was the first time he ever had to fight for real, and that he learned a lot. More importantly, he learned control. I could see it in his eyes; he wanted more.”

— **SSG Publio Pena**

C Company Lead Combatives NCOIC

Most Infantry company commanders have invested vast amounts of time, energy, and brain power into creatively seeking active and new ways to attack atrophy in their physical training and resiliency programs. Through our commissioning sources, our institutional training, professional development, and general experience, we develop an extensive array of options to tackle the common challenges that we face as leaders to keep our formations fit, ready, and resilient. At various times as platoon leaders or commanders, we have tried training purely on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) or on combat-focused physical training (PT); we have listened to all the briefings and attempted to integrate new CrossFit trends, military fitness training (MFT) programs, or Martin Rooney workouts. We have all taken our 16-hour Master Resiliency Training (MRT) courses and spent hours talking to our Soldiers about their attitudes and their ability to adapt and overcome adversity. However, the integration of combatives into unit training programs can serve as an extremely influential and effective tool for increased physical, mental, and emotional readiness across your formation.

Developing Your Program

Starting the unit combatives program is the most challenging part of the process. It may take some calculated strategy to dispel any preexisting misconceptions associated with the program. One may encounter leaders or subordinates who are not familiar with or particularly interested in combatives; you may hear clichés like, “it is just an excuse for Soldiers to pretend they are in Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), “it will get your Soldiers hurt,” or that “it will turn your formation into a bunch of wild bar-fighting hooligans.” The first duty of the unit leader is to do the adequate research; read the appropriate manuals, handbooks, or doctrine; and ensure the benefits of the program are understood at all levels. Develop an approach and pull in a support system. Start by bringing in the experienced trainers in your formation and the Soldiers with experience in wrestling, boxing, or martial arts. Then develop your strategy; see Figure 1 for an example strategy outline.

Pique an Interest and Get Buy-in

Buy-in From Higher — Leaders need to show their commanders that they fall within their higher intent and guidance. You do not want to create the perception that you or your unit has gone “rogue” or that you have decided to disregard standing training and physical fitness guidance; if you cannot pitch it as an extension of your current PT, training, and resiliency programs, you are less likely to receive support from higher. You may only get one chance to prove that your unit can execute this program responsibly before you lose the backing of your higher chain of command.

Buy-in From Subordinates — After you receive approval from your commander, you need to be able to articulate the plan to your subordinate leaders and Soldiers. Without buy-in

I. Pique an interest and get buy-in

- A. Get buy-in from higher HQ
- B. Get buy-in from subordinates
- C. Seek professional support
- D. Start with the platoon leadership
- E. Bring in the Soldiers

II. Integrate combatives into the company battle rhythm and training plan

- A. Apply command emphasis
- B. Integrate into range operations
- C. Integrate into field training
- D. Integrate into urban operations training
- E. Integrate into unit challenges
- F. Integrate into daily PT
- G. Execute during deployment

III. Push the envelope through competition

- A. Execute unit-level competitions
- B. Enforce risk-mitigation measures
- C. Foster professionalism

IV. Reap the benefits of the program

- A. Physical readiness
- B. Mental toughness
- C. Combat readiness
- D. Resiliency

Figure 1 — Example Strategy for Starting a Unit Combatives Program

from your NCOs and junior commissioned officers, you are likely to lose momentum before you start. You must be able to explain how this program will benefit your Soldiers and how it will translate into increased physical fitness performance, improved physical and mental toughness, long-term resiliency, and combat proficiency. If your NCOs do not care, the Soldiers will follow quickly behind them.

Seek Professional Support — A great method to help kick-start your program is to enlist the support of subject matter experts (SMEs) on your installation. Many Army installations are co-located with special operations units and other organizations that house some of the most experienced and professional trainers in the world. They are generally eager and willing to get involved and help spread the “right way” of doing combatives. After a few initial coordination meetings and establishing a baseline rapport with these SMEs, you should seek to get your Soldiers involved in entry-level basic instruction training. The heightened atmosphere and the natural enamor that our Infantrymen hold for their special operations brethren and highly trained mixed martial arts experts will help constitute an initial interest and curiosity for a part of the Army to which conventional Soldiers are seldom exposed.

Start With the Platoon Leadership — A successful method is to begin by bringing in all of the senior leaders in the company for initial training with the experts. The trainers will expose your leaders to advanced techniques in order to give them a preview of where the program could go. They

will also dispel many of the misconceptions associated with combatives programming, and they will certainly serve out a dose of humility that will leave your leaders challenged to increase their own skill sets.

Bring in the Soldiers — Approaching the next step correctly takes an understanding of the true nature of Soldiers. Soldiers want to be challenged and they want to discover their limits. Ultimately — they want to fight and win. Most Infantrymen have “type A” personalities. They are hungry to push themselves, and tapping into this precious resource is critical. Thus, if you feel that you have successfully grabbed the attention of your platoon leadership after your initial “exposure” session, the next step is translating that energy into buy-in from the Soldiers. By coordinating to have each platoon conduct several similar introduction classes with your SMEs and internal trainers, you can begin to build a foundation in your ranks.

Once the Soldiers have a base level of knowledge and understand how to properly execute the techniques, they become increasingly engaged in the program. Most Soldiers state that they have always enjoyed combatives, but they never knew enough techniques to perform well, so they became discouraged and backed away from it. However, once they know what they are doing, they gain confidence and actually start enjoying the training. Harnessing the competitive nature of Soldiers and specifically that of Infantrymen is imperative to your success in making this program survive the long haul. Soldiers want to be the best, and they want to be better than their peers. Competition is critical, and you will find the most success by integrating competition into every facet of the program.

Integrate Combatives into the Company Battle Rhythm and Training Plan

Command Emphasis — Integrating combatives into your routine will be one of your biggest challenges. Assuming that you have already sold your commanders and your unit on the benefits, now you have to keep it alive. If you treat it like a deliberate training event, you will find success. Put it on the calendar, brief it in your training meetings, and follow the 10-step training model just like you would for a live-fire exercise. The amount of effort that goes into planning and resourcing this training will demonstrate its level of importance. Apply command emphasis to let everyone know that it is an absolute priority and then execute the basic fundamentals: task subordinate leaders to plan combatives events in order to foster their ownership of the program; leverage time and resources to make quality, worthwhile training events; and show up yourself. As a leader, if you are not present in this endeavor, it will likely fall apart. Get involved and execute the training with your Soldiers; do not be afraid to get beat in front of them either. Learning humility in defeat rather than gloating in victory is an equally important example to set for your Soldiers. Some quality engaged leadership will make the difference in maintaining the momentum in your program. If it is not clearly important to you, it won't be important to your Soldiers.

Range Operations — Once you have planned, resourced, and allocated time for your events, you may need to get creative. Finding ways to integrate combatives using non-standard methods during your busy training schedule will be a difficult task. You are certain to find success by implementing combatives into various other areas in your training calendar in order to maximize exposure to the program and to avoid atrophy as competing requirements mount. During range

Trainees learn combatives techniques during training on Fort Benning, Ga., on 12 May 2015.

Photo by Markeith Horace



operations, there are countless hours spent away from the firing line that can easily serve as a prime opportunity to integrate combatives into your concurrent training plan. You will likely meet some resistance in this task, but once it becomes the norm, it can be a great supplement to your range operations. While Soldiers are waiting to fire or are finished firing, assign a qualified NCO to run a combatives station nearby. Additionally, an effective technique is to integrate combatives into your stress-shoot exercises. Develop a plan where Soldiers are required to execute several exercises to elevate their heart rate and then culminate the drill with a time-driven bout against an adversary of similar weight and skill before moving to the firing line. This will simulate the stressors of combat and will teach Soldiers how to maintain their composure before and after a physical altercation with the enemy while continuing to engage targets.

Field Training — There is also a great opportunity to continue to train combatives during field training exercises. Not only will you have the time to execute, but you will also have a captive audience devoid of the common distractions and daily tasks associated with garrison operations. By training combatives in the field, you are able to continue your PT regiment. Ensure unit packing lists accommodate combatives in the field to mitigate attrition of fresh uniforms and maintain field hygiene.

Urban Training — Integrating combatives into urban operations training is a great way to train multiple skill sets simultaneously while sustaining your program and providing your Soldiers with realistic and challenging training scenarios. In combat, Soldiers may have to resort to hand-to-hand combat while closing with the enemy or when a primary weapon system fails. Further, Soldiers will be carrying cumbersome full combat loads in excess of 100 pounds. Learning how to apply tactical combatives techniques in full kit against a live adversary will heighten the realism of your training extensively. After your Soldiers have a good base of training, stepping up the intensity by training hand-to-hand combat with Battle Drill 6 exercises (enter building/clear room) will truly excite your Soldiers and will give them a realistic sense of what it may be like entering a room that is inhabited by a trained enemy. Collectively, we often perform urban operations training using glass houses, wooden mock-ups, or empty training villages. By safely placing a few trained enemy combatants in Blauer suits inside your objective, you will bring your training to life and test the aggressiveness of your teams and squads.

Unit Challenges — During unit PT or morale challenges and competitions, you can augment and enhance your events with combatives. For example, at the beginning of a multi-station event, Soldiers may have a given time frame to take down and subdue their opponents. Time bonuses and penalties can be enforced on each team given the performance of the designated Soldier. Another technique is to establish a station where Soldiers are required to disarm an enemy combatant in a Blauer suit with a knife or firearm without being incapacitated in order to proceed to the next station. Other commanders have had success using ACU (Army Combat Uniform) runs with unannounced combatives stations along the route as a successful tool. The Soldiers



Photo by Markeith Horace

Maneuver Captains Career Course Soldiers participate in a tactical combatives exercise at Fort Benning, Ga., on 26 June 2015 to evaluate proficiency in hand-to-hand combat in an urban environment.

will find these events both challenging and fun, and it will allow leadership to integrate combatives training in a non-standard methodology while simultaneously teaching mental toughness under stressful combat-simulated conditions.

Daily PT — Using combatives as an extension of your normal PT program is the most efficient way to keep your program running. Whether you make it a weekly battle rhythm event or not, there is no reason that leaders cannot take 30 minutes before or after daily PT to teach a few techniques or to have the Soldiers compete against one another. The most effective method is to execute a few combatives drills after PT as a cool-down technique. Simply put, if you and your subordinate leaders want to train combatives, there are ample opportunities to do so; you just have to plan, execute, and supervise. Further, after you have created a sustainable and diverse program, push additional onus down to your subordinate leaders to assist in carrying on the training by integrating it into their platoon and squad operations. Challenge your platoon leaders and platoon sergeants to continue to execute under your intent and supervision.

Deployment — Combatives does not have to cease while deployed either. If your unit cannot take mats and equipment downrange, you can order these items while deployed or improvise. Combatives is a great release of frustration, boredom, stress, and anxiety often found in a combat

environment. Additionally, when running is not an option and lifting weights becomes the only means of PT, combatives is a great supplementary PT or morale event to maintain spirits and distract Soldiers from negative deployment influences.

Push the Envelope through Competition

Unit-level Competitions — Plan culminating events in accordance with your unit's battle rhythm in order to create a venue where your Soldiers can assess their progress, compete against each other, and build esprit-de-corps in your formation. One technique is to hold a quarterly company-level combatives tournament. The single most important contributor to the success of this event is preparation. Figure 2 lists some keys to success.

This event will greatly contribute to your unit's morale. Your Soldiers will truly covet the opportunity to compete in a public forum, and your leaders will be able to show their experience and provide their Soldiers with an example to follow. It also gives the command team the ability to assess which Soldiers have excelled during training, those who possess the attributes of the Warrior Ethos expected of them, and which

Figure 2 — Keys to Holding a Successful Combatives Tournament

- 1) Assign motivated and experienced NCOICs to supervise the event.
- 2) Get involved in the planning process early and often; give good intent and articulate your vision to your planners.
- 3) Allocate time, resources, and personnel; do not undersell this event.
- 4) Conduct weigh-ins and create a tournament bracket based on weight and skill; everyone (who is certified and healthy) will participate.
- 5) Create a quality venue: get real mats, tape off multiple fighting areas, and have skilled referees, scoring tables, bracket charts, clocks, music, water, medical staff/supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE), etc.
- 6) Challenge other units to participate to increase the level of competition.
- 7) Assign a head table to manage who will fight, on which mats, and when.
- 8) Create and brief rules, regulations, safety, and scoring standards.
- 9) Have a process for tie-breaks, disputes, and disqualification standards.
- 10) Use intermediate rules as an incentive for the semi-finals and finals.
- 11) Ensure the composite risk management (CRM) worksheet and concept of operation (CONOP) are approved by the higher HQ.
- 12) Award winners and runner-ups; acknowledge and thank outside help.

Soldiers need additional training or mentorship.

Risk Mitigation — Nothing will prove your skeptics right and prove you wrong quicker than if your troops sustain multiple small injuries or a serious injury during your training, if one of your Soldiers is arrested for fighting or hitting a family member, or if your unit begins to exude a general atmosphere of rowdiness, "tough-guy" attitudes, or arrogance.

When it comes to safety and the integrity of your program, you must take all necessary precautions. However, you must also avoid degrading the quality of the training by over-mitigating. Although it is likely that some Soldiers will sustain minor injuries, by taking some common-sense risk aversion measures you can greatly improve the quality of your training, avoid unnecessary pressure from your chain of command, and maintain a high level of intensity. First and foremost, you have to protect your unit by ensuring that all trainers are legitimately certified to train the given level of techniques and subsequently that all participating Soldiers are certified to the level 1 or level 2 standard. Secondly, always enforce rigorous stretching and perform warm-up and cool-down techniques before and after training to significantly reduce the potential for injury. Always have a medic or Combat Life Saver (CLS)-certified individual with the proper medical supplies to treat injuries and to maintain the casualty evacuation plan in the event of a serious injury. If conducting higher level or advanced training, ensure proper protective equipment is worn (groin protector, shin-guards, helmet, gloves, mouthpiece, etc.) and that all trainers and participants are certified for intermediate or advanced training. If conducting combatives integration into urban operations training with opponents in Blauer suits, Soldiers should receive an adequate safety brief and demonstration of the approved training techniques. Given the heightened level of adrenaline, there is a high potential for Soldiers to use their firearms or helmets as hand-to-hand weapons against the opposing force, which can result in serious injury even when protection is worn.

Professionalism — It is paramount that you create a responsible, mature, and professional climate for your program that is founded on discipline, restraint, and trained skill. When it comes to standards and discipline, you have to preach your intent and guidance from day one:

- 1) We are here to learn, to train, and to be experts in our craft.
- 2) We will take a deep pride in our ability to close with and destroy the enemy, but we will not use our skill sets when not in training or combat.
- 3) We will conduct all training to standard and implement the proper safety and risk-mitigation measures.
- 4) All training will be supervised by a trained NCO or officer.
- 5) Professionalism will be maintained at all times; sore losers or winners will be removed from training.
- 6) Partners will not attempt to hurt or injure each other; we are one team even during competitions.
- 7) This is not the UFC; we are training military hand-to-hand combat techniques in preparation for combat operations.

It is imperative that leaders give clear and direct guidance on appropriate conduct both on and off duty. Your combatives program will disappear quicker than it started if you have a

Soldier put someone in a triangle choke at a bar downtown. Teach your Soldiers to respect the program and the art of what they have become a part of. Quality and disciplined mentorship coupled with direct supervision can prevent these problems. Be aware of the potential off-duty risks, identify high-risk Soldiers, and mitigate foreseeable issues before you have a serious incident that degrades the future of your program.

Reap the Benefits of the Program

Physical Readiness — There are both obvious and subtle benefits that can be leveraged across multiple company-level initiatives. First, is the inherent benefit to your unit's physical readiness. Contrary to popular belief, when executed correctly, combatives will typically increase your performance measures in PT. Units that effectively integrate this training into their standard PT regiments will notice an increase in APFT performance that can be attributed to the full-body muscular endurance, the anaerobic and aerobic conditioning, and the intangible mental shifts in attitude gained through sustained combatives training. While executing your program, Soldiers naturally increase strength and increase their cardiovascular efficiency without realizing it. Additionally, Soldiers seem to take more of a vested interest in their own strength and conditioning in order to enhance their performance during combatives training.

Mental Toughness — One of the primary goals of your program should be to build and foster mental toughness in your formation. Through competition, pushing Soldiers to their limits, and by harnessing the natural potential energy in your warfighters, you will teach your Soldiers to fight through adversity in everything that they do. Over time your Soldiers and subordinate leaders will begin to exude positive attitudes during stressful situations in their daily tasks and during field training. Your combatives program will begin to seep into other aspects of the company, and the formation will begin to embody more of a "can-do, no-fail, never quit" attitude in everything that it does. In general, performance and morale increases in parallel to the progression of your combatives training program.

Warrior Ethos and Combat Readiness — In military units, living and embodying the Warrior Ethos is critical to continuing to maintain the strategic, operational, and tactical overmatch of our enemies. Beyond our nation's deep pockets and vast resources, our country's military has always and should always fight harder, longer, and with more violence of action than our adversaries. It is this very attitude that combatives provides for your formation. We have to teach our warriors from day one that they will never quit, never waver, and always strive to win. Combatives at its essence is founded on these principles, and through a sustained regiment of training, your Soldiers will begin to learn these very basic truths. We cannot expect our Soldiers to fight through the objective and win for the first time in combat; just as we train as we fight in our military tasks and drills, we must train the human attributes needed for warfare. A Soldier should not experience the physiological and emotional strains of "the fight" for the first time when the stakes are life or death; through combatives you can teach your Soldiers how to keep fighting after they think they are beat, after they have nothing left, and after all hope is seemingly lost. You

can establish a pre-configured trigger mechanism in your Soldiers that creates muscle memory so the body becomes comfortable with the "fight" solution when faced with the option for fight or flight. Of course, you want your Soldiers to exercise disciplined initiative and common sense when presented with a certain set of mission and operational variables, but you can greatly reduce the body's natural tendencies to protect itself when faced with a potential mortal situation. Soldiers can learn how to control the adrenaline and maintain focus in combat through training combatives. At its core, this principle reduces to the development of self-confidence. If Soldiers believe in themselves on the mat and learn that they do have what it takes to defend themselves, they will believe it when the rounds start flying in their direction. There is an absolute correlation between the skills learned during combatives training and the mental, physical and emotional skills needed on the battlefield. Soldiers who can learn how to fight out of a choke hold — or who get taken down time and time again in the combatives room but still get back on their feet — will naturally and unknowingly bring the same spirit to the real fight against real enemies.

Resilience — A strong combatives program can translate into a more effective resiliency program. The mental and physical toughness that has been gained on the mat translates directly into emotional strength in your formation. In part, a strong combatives program can potentially assist your unit work towards decreasing suicidal ideations, behavioral issues, domestic violence issues, and serious incidents overall. The discipline gained through this training — as well as the mental capacity to overcome the rigors of daily life — can serve as coping tools for Soldiers to deal with unforeseen stressors, relationship issues, and ambiguous decision-making scenarios in their lives.

Conclusion

Combatives is more than just PT. It can assist your unit in all aspects of readiness. Leaders at all levels and all branches of the military seek to create formations that are fit, ready, resilient, and capable. Combatives is by no means the stand-alone solution, and engaged leadership must be applied in all aspects of command. However, when managed and implemented correctly, safely, and with intensity, this unique tool can assist in transforming your formation for the better. It can attack problem sets in your unit from an indirect approach, and above all other things it can create immediate positive effects in your unit's morale, esprit de corps, and performance. Not all leaders are naturally interested or skilled in this training, but for those in combat arms units, it is imperative that leaders and Soldiers alike demonstrate and spread the values and warrior attributes that can be gained during combatives training.

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HEALTHY HABITS FOR PROSPECTIVE RANGER SCHOOL STUDENTS

CPT MICHAEL KEARNES

“Ranger course graduates return to their units physically and mentally tough, proficient in squad- and platoon-sized dismounted operations in austere terrain. Graduates will understand how to plan, coordinate, and execute small unit missions confidently and completely with little to no guidance. The superior stress management ability of Ranger graduates will enable them to push their subordinates further and faster than previously thought possible. Ranger graduates better understand the limits of the human body and the complexity of leading Soldiers in adverse conditions during tactical operations.”

— Ranger Course Graduate End State

Ranger School provides the Army with proven leaders who possess the skill, will, and drive to succeed in the harshest of conditions with physically and mentally exhausted subordinates. Operating under those conditions requires great resilience in addition to understanding how to deal with personal weaknesses and limitations. After three days of less than an hour of sleep and limited rations while walking up and down the mountains of North Georgia, even the fittest Soldiers begin to break down physically, emotionally, or mentally. Ranger graduates return



to the Army with a greater understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, along with strategies to increase the overall performance of themselves and their operational units. The completion of the Ranger course is an indicator of future success,

especially for new lieutenants in the Army and junior enlisted Soldiers in the 75th Ranger Regiment. New leaders are able to place themselves above their peers by proving their tactical and technical competence in preparation for leading Soldiers in combat. The lessons learned in Ranger School will continue to pay dividends to the units that receive and retain Ranger-qualified leaders during training and deployments. There are certain habits that can enable success in the course when properly incorporated into a daily routine.

As stated by MG Austin S. Miller, commanding general of the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE), “No one smokes the course. Ranger School smokes you.” While the course may seem daunting, there are proven ways to increase the chances of success. One of the best ways to become familiarized with the course conditions is to attend a unit-level pre-Ranger class. If a unit-level course is not available, the National

Ranger School students conduct patrols during the Darby Phase of the course 21 May 2015.

Photo by PFC Antonio Lewis



Guard's Warrior Training Center offers the Ranger Training and Assessment Course (RTAC) at Fort Benning. Many officers attend Ranger School immediately following their basic courses, most of which provide a solid preparation program. With this in mind, there are certain habits that will instill positive behaviors and mitigate prospective students' weaknesses during training for attendance.

The most important habit every student should have is a daily physical fitness regimen that focuses on running, rucking, and upper body strength. Potential students should include several days of running and at least one day of foot

marching per week (increasing weight and distance over time). The vigorous nature of the Ranger course requires Soldiers to carry heavy loads over long distances and be able to arrive on the objective ready to fight through all three phases. The vast majority of the course is spent wearing a rucksack of increasing weight that varies from 50 to more than 100 pounds. Running is a major part of the Ranger Physical Assessment (RPA), and Rangers are required to run everywhere when they do not have a rucksack on their backs. Workouts focusing on upper body strength, especially push-ups and pull-ups, should comprise the other days' events.

The most significant stressor in the first week of Ranger School is the tempo of events. Performed individually, each task is easily attainable, but when combined with little sleep and restricted food over a period of 80 hours, they become much more difficult. Without sufficient physical and mental preparation, Ranger students are more susceptible to injury, and recovery is very difficult because of the tempo of the course. A recommended workout program can be found on the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade (ARTB) website and offers 30-, 60-, and 90-day programs (<http://www.benning.army.mil/infantry/rtb/content/PDF/Sample%20Ranger%20School%20Physical%20Training%20Program.pdf>).

Land navigation is a perishable skill, and Rangers must demonstrate their ability to navigate at night and during the day using terrain association, dead reckoning, intersection, and resection. A strong foundation in these techniques will benefit students in all phases of the course as Ranger students will maneuver their units over great distances in arduous terrain. There is a brief train-up during the first day of Ranger School, but if students enter the course expecting to learn how to navigate they will most likely fail. There are two major incentives in passing land navigation on the first attempt: more sleep and less wear on the feet! Re-testing Rangers must wake up several hours prior to those that pass



Maneuver Center of Excellence photo

The most important habit every prospective Ranger School student should have is a daily physical fitness regimen that focuses on running, rucking, and upper body strength.

on the first morning. Practicing in uneven, wooded terrain both at night and during the day will improve navigation skills. Training Circular 3-25.26, *Map Reading and Land Navigation*, provides a good reference for what to train and how to train on improving land navigation (Find the manual at http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/21_Series_Collection_1.html).

Ranger students should also practice the 26 basic infantry tasks and gain overall leadership experience outside the school environment. To prepare for the basic infantry tasks, go to the ARTB website, identify the Ranger Tactical Tasks, and seek training on them from unit members prior to attendance. While these tasks are reviewed and evaluated during Ranger Assessment Phase (RAP) week, a base knowledge will be inherently beneficial to students. Making a habit of practicing frequently will increase confidence and reduce the possibility of errors when tired and hungry. Even inexperienced privates first class and second lieutenants can improve their leadership skills by displaying the volunteer attitude and receiving as much feedback as possible from subordinates, peers, and leaders. Whether using the Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) 360 tool or a face-to-face conversation, potential Ranger students should identify weaknesses prior to attending the course to develop techniques to mitigate flaws. The time to discover weaknesses is not at the end of a phase when students can fail peer evaluations due to poor teamwork within the squad. Potential Ranger students can set themselves up for success in the course with a balanced and focused training plan.

Improving tactical knowledge is another habit potential Ranger students should incorporate into their routines. Regardless of Ranger School attendance, it is not possible to be too knowledgeable about tactics. Newer Soldiers and officers may lack tactical knowledge and should establish a habit of studying the *Ranger Handbook* and FM 3-21.8, *The Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad*, daily with an emphasis on

react-to-contact, ambush, raid, and patrol base tasks. For inspiration in instilling an offensive mindset, I recommend reading *Attacks* by Erwin Rommel. Prospective students should seek out knowledgeable leadership within their units while practicing these maneuvers as well. Additionally, understanding the roles and responsibilities of the platoon leader, platoon sergeant, squad leaders, and team leaders will enable Rangers to be proactive and more effective overall.

Personal and financial readiness is a habit that is not only advised but necessary. All personal and financial issues should be resolved prior to reporting to Ranger School. Similar to deployment, basic Soldier Readiness Program tasks such as updating the Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI), DD93, personal will, and automating monthly payments such as rent and car payments will reduce stress and allow students to keep their focus where it should be: on graduating. Attending the Ranger course with these distracters and without the right habits can potentially prevent a student from completing the course.

Finally, the Ranger Creed contains a blueprint for success both in the course and as a Ranger leader. A daily habit of saying it or reading it nightly will help to instill the Ranger spirit and give additional motivation to succeed. After reading and living the creed every day, the words “never shall I fail my comrades” and “I will always fight on to the Ranger objective” become more than words. They become ingrained in the psyche and provide the will and drive to keep moving, even if it is just one step at a time. Not everyone will successfully complete the Ranger course, but Rangers can maximize their potential for success with these habits.

Daily habits such as these will help potential students achieve their goal to earn the coveted Ranger tab. Greater

A daily habit of saying the Ranger Creed or reading it nightly will help to instill the Ranger spirit and give additional motivation to succeed. After reading and living the creed every day, the words “never shall I fail my comrades” and “I will always fight on the Ranger objective” become more than words.

knowledge of what the course entails can only help to reduce anxiety and increase confidence prior to showing up at Camp Rogers on Fort Benning.

To graduate from Ranger School and earn the Ranger tab, all students must pass at least one patrol in each phase while maintaining a 50 percent passing rate of their graded patrols, receive a favorable rating in peer evaluations in each phase, and possess no more than eight negative spot reports. Spot reports may be earned for positive events, such as exceptional performance in the non-graded position of radio-telephone operator (RTO), or for negative events, such as repeatedly falling asleep in a tactical environment.

Each phase of the Ranger course includes progressive field training exercises (FTX) that continually test students' physical and mental limits. Upon arrival at Camp Rogers, Rangers undergo RAP for four days. RAP week determines if the Ranger candidates possess the physical and mental stamina to continue the course and begins with the RPA, which consists of 49 push-ups, 59 sit-ups, a five-mile run in 40 minutes, and six chin-ups. The Combat Water Survival Assessment measures the students' ability to perform while managing fear of heights and to complete a 15-meter swim in ACUs and boots. Land navigation is a night-into-day course in which students must find four of five points in five hours. A two-mile buddy run and the Malvesti and Darby Queen obstacle courses ensure that Rangers have the intestinal fortitude to continue despite fatigue and stress in physically and mentally demanding circumstances. Finally, RAP week concludes with a 12-mile foot march, which is conducted with an approximately 35-pound rucksack, fighting load carrier (FLC), and rifle in three hours. More than 60 percent of Ranger School failures occur during RAP week.

In the Darby Phase, Rangers learn how to conduct squad-sized reconnaissance missions and ambushes, in addition to squad patrol bases at night. Over the course of the six-day FTX, Rangers are evaluated as squad leaders and team leaders, and must pass at least one graded patrol to move forward to Camp Merrill (Dahlongega, Ga.) for the Mountain Phase.

In the Mountain Phase, Rangers learn the fundamentals of military mountaineering including rappelling, rock climbing, and mobility rope systems. After mountaineering, Rangers transition into platoon operations with a focus on platoon ambush, raid, and patrol base operations. Following an in-depth troop leading procedures (TLP) class, Rangers begin a 10-day FTX that emphasizes the ambush and how to use terrain to gain



Photo by PFC Antonio Lewis

Ranger School students conduct the Darby Mile buddy run and Darby Queen obstacle course on 21 April 2015.



Photo by Sue Ulibarri

A Ranger instructor conducts training during the Benning Phase of Ranger School at Camp Darby on 10 February 2011.

superiority against an agile and aggressive enemy.

Rangers then progress to the Florida Phase at Camp Rudder (Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.) where they learn the basics of waterborne operations and are taught how to conduct a movement to contact. Following the techniques classes, Rangers spend their final 10 days conducting raids, ambushes, and movements to contact with levels of increasing complexity. This culminates into a battalion operation on Auxillary Field. Over the duration of the course, Rangers spend a total of 27 days in the field, not counting additional techniques days.

At the unit level, there are some constraints that have the potential to limit attendance to the Ranger course in units. First, the relative lack of Ranger-qualified NCOs and officers can lead to fear and hesitancy about the course. Success breeds success, and when more individuals attend and earn the Ranger Tab, more will be willing to volunteer. Finally, many units may simply de-emphasize the Ranger course as an unnecessary use of valuable unit time and money through policies and common practices. Ranger School is the premier combat leadership course in the Army, and the honor roll of the Ranger Hall of Fame serves as an indication of the contributions made in the past and the potential for the future. By limiting potential attendees to certain ranks and duty positions, units may reduce the course's accessibility. Leader development is one of the Army Chief of Staff's highest priorities. By sending Soldiers to Ranger School, units gain better trained Soldiers, even though they may lose them for National Training Center (NTC) or Joint Readiness Training

Center (JRTC) rotations. During the Ranger candidate's absence, subordinates will have the opportunity to gain invaluable experience by stepping up and filling in for the Ranger student. There are also other ways to attend the Ranger course outside of a unit. First, the Infantry Advanced Leader and Maneuver Senior Leader Courses offer a pre-Ranger program that allows attendance prior to returning to home station at no cost to the unit. The Army will also pay for a Soldier to attend Ranger School TDY enroute to their next duty station. Branch managers and re-enlistment NCOs can provide more information about both options. Potential students should explore their options and focus on attending Ranger School by any means necessary.

Ranger School is as relevant to the Army today as it was when conceived in 1951. Individuals gain tactical and technical skills in addition to leadership experience and feedback that they return to their units. Prospective students can maximize their potential for success by focusing on the habits of physical fitness, land navigation, personal study, leadership feedback, financial and personal readiness, and living the Ranger Creed. Grounded in the past with a vision for the future, Ranger School will continue to provide proven agile and adaptive leaders to the Army well into the 21st century.

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TOXIC LEADERSHIP

AFFECTS SOLDIERS AT ALL LEVELS

CPT LISA BEUM

What does a subordinate do when he or she has little control over the situation because the leader — that subordinate's commander — is creating the toxic environment?



I faced this exact question as a brand new “butterbar” lieutenant arriving to my first company in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The lessons I learned from that deployment forever changed and molded me into the leader I am today and made me realize the importance of bringing awareness to the issue of toxic leadership at company levels and below. Toxic leadership continues to distress those affected well after the source is gone from a unit, and as an Army, we are failing our Soldiers if we do not take the necessary action to rectify this problem and remove the poison from our ranks.

According to Jennifer Mattson’s article “Battling Toxic Leadership,” the Army defines “toxic leaders as those who put their own needs or image above their subordinates, who micromanage their subordinates, and who are insecure in their own positions.”¹ Similarly, “in response to a Secretary of the Army tasking in 2003, U.S. Army War College faculty and students stated that toxic leaders ‘are focused on visible short-term mission accomplishment... provide superiors with impressive, articulate presentations and enthusiastic responses to missions... [but] are unconcerned about, or oblivious to, staff or troop morale and/or climate... [and] are seen by the majority of subordinates as arrogant, self-serving, inflexible, and petty.’”² Not all of these characteristics individually make a toxic leader, but together or even a combination of the aforementioned can be signs of toxic leadership.

In LTG (Retired) Walter F. Ulmer Jr.’s article titled, “Toxic Leadership: What Are We Talking About?” he refers to a U.S. Army War College study to define toxic leaders as, “self-serving, arrogant, volatile, and opinionated to the point of being organizationally dysfunctional...very persuasive, responsive, and accommodating to their seniors.”³

As a leadership major at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), I had my fair share of lessons, briefings, and lectures on what it meant to be a good leader. Many outstanding leaders from across the military branches came to visit, give their testimonies, and share their experiences. Most of the testimonies focused on how they reacted in a situation or how they were able to overcome a traumatic event in their unit.

They were excellent speakers portraying good leadership: what to do and what not to do — how not to be “that guy” when an officer is new to a unit. Looking back, though, I realized that all of our briefings and lectures only portrayed good leaders, never the opposite. My leadership instructor and class discussed the signs of toxic leadership or a toxic environment, how to recognize the behaviors of those affected, and how to make a transformational change as the leader coming into a platoon or smaller unit who had been affected by previous toxic leader. However, none of these discussions ever addressed the realities of coming face-to-face with toxic leadership while it was still in the unit.

I had served as an assistant logistics officer for approximately six months when, one morning, we learned a company downrange had an incident with an improvised explosive device (IED). Two hours later, my battalion executive officer pulled me into his office and asked, “Is there anything that would keep you from deploying right now?” I was stunned, sitting there trying to figure out if I had just heard the words correctly. The split second it took for me to answer seemed to

take a while, “No, sir; I can deploy.”

He explained that one of the platoon leaders had been injured in the IED attack, and she and her husband, who is the company executive officer, were en route back stateside. “I am sending you and 2LT K. to fill in their slots,” he continued. “You have approximately two weeks to go through individual readiness training, situate your lives here, and deploy. There will be more to follow.”

When I heard I was deploying, I thought about how I would survive the Afghan summer heat, patrolling the streets in downtown Kandahar, and what I would do if faced with a deadly situation in combat. All of my survival scenarios dealt with the enemy. Never did I think I would have to ask myself how I would survive my commander, but it soon became apparent that surviving the toxic leadership that had infiltrated my gaining company would be the hardest struggle I would have to endure.

Other than the three-month training I had received at the Military Police (MP) Basic Officer Leadership Course at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and the condensed, one-week individual readiness training for pre-deployment augmentees, I had no experience to take with me to meet my platoon downrange. The only individual I knew was my battle buddy accompanying me, 2LT K. Knowing some of my anxieties, a couple of lieutenants reassured me that I was going to fall under the best company commander in the battalion. They had been platoon leaders in his company when he was a commander stateside and told me he was very energetic, technically sound, and a great mentor. Their news came as a relief, but as I soon learned, the man they described had drastically changed. Although he was energetic and tactically competent, as they said, he was far from a great mentor. The commander I faced was a toxic leader.

During my short, four-month tour, I served as a platoon leader conducting both MP and Infantry operations in the city of Kandahar. Since we were the only company in the city, we were actual land owners, responsible for everything that happened in Kandahar. To put it in perspective, our MP company had approximately 160 people; our unit alone covered the second largest city in Afghanistan and its outskirts (population of about 500,000). Our missions were so vast and our Soldiers spread so thin that when we left, five companies came to replace and take over what our one company had done. Our main mission while deployed was to embed and conduct joint patrols with Afghan National Police units to train them on military police tactics and bring stability to their city. My platoon was in charge of four police stations in the heart of Kandahar.

Along with the platoon leader whom I replaced, the company had also suffered the loss of an NCO in a firefight and others had been wounded. The Soldiers were tired and ready to go home. When I first arrived, there was a noticeable despair in the air. At the time, I could not quite put my finger on it and attributed it to the amount of stress and fatigue the unit had been enduring. It only took a week for me to start seeing the underlying issues. Soldiers didn’t seem to trust each other, specifically from one platoon to the next; they were constantly on guard and were almost fearful to say anything in case it could be used against them.

All of the Soldiers and NCOs in my new platoon had been there for eight months already and were proficient with the ins and outs of daily operations. They had built strong relationships and bonds, formed from a rigorous train-up and their subsequent deployment. Now they had just lost their platoon leader, and I was the “cherry LT” coming in to replace their beloved leader. How in the world was I supposed to fill those shoes; try to build up the morale of my platoon after losing someone they loved, they admired; earn their trust and respect; and get the remaining Soldiers and NCOs back home safely?

Within the first week, my commander and I had a one-on-one discussion about personal relationships and the toll the Army can take on them. I explained to him that I was engaged, and my fiancé and I were planning a wedding upon my return. My commander, who was married with children, told me, “the Army can put a strain on your relationship, and it is up to you as to how much you are willing to sacrifice.” It seemed like pretty decent advice. He continued to talk about relationships and how he was affected by the loss of the lieutenant I had replaced. He explained how much effort he had put into mentoring the lieutenant, and hearing him say that gave me hope that he might do the same for me. I was wrong.

The next day, during one of our meetings in the tactical operations center (TOC), my commander brought up our relationship discussion in front of everyone. He did not bring it up in a manner that was positive or jovial, but rather condescending and teasing me for even wanting to marry. He made comments like, “it won’t last,” “you don’t really want to get married,” and “are you even old enough to get married?” A light switch had flipped. The night before, my commander appeared very personable and approachable, but today he had become a different individual. He betrayed my trust by using facts about my personal life against me while I said nothing about what he shared the night before. LTG (R) Ulmer’s toxic leadership attributes of being opinionated and possibly petty were beginning to surface.⁴

From that point on, my fiancé and other facts about my life became objects of his ridicule. His demeanor toward me began turning volatile, and he was unpredictable with his behavior, another sign of toxic leadership.⁵ I never knew if he was going to harass me or, hopefully, not even notice I was there. No one spoke up for me; no one responded to his taunting. It was as though they were afraid to speak up for fear that they, too, might become his whipping dog. No one wanted to be on his bad side. He immediately ostracized me, ensuring that even my battle buddies would eventually come to neglect me for fear of reprimand. He continuously belittled me during meetings, pointing out that I knew nothing. I had only ever heard talk of what toxic leadership was, but encountering it face-to-face was a whole other matter. The signs of toxic leadership, as described by the U.S. Army War College study, were becoming more apparent with each passing day: arrogant, volatile, self-serving.⁶

My Soldiers and I were tasked as escorts to brief VIPs including several high-ranking officers and multiple reporters. Acknowledging that this was a high-profile event, I listened to what my commander wanted from my platoon. At first, he was reasonable in allowing me to make decisions, but then as

he had done numerous times, he directed me on how to do everything for the VIP visit. Instead of mentoring and walking me through the steps of the operation as he would have done for his previous lieutenant, he micromanaged; he showed his inflexibility to allow me to conduct my own missions. Although I did everything required and asked of me, nothing I did was ever good enough in the eyes of my commander.

My only reprieve was actually going on patrols in sector with my Soldiers to embed with the local ANPs. It was not until one month after being with my platoon that the Soldiers began to trust me and see the leader that I was, not the leader the commander made me out to be. Living with my Soldiers out in sector, conducting everyday operations, and showing them I genuinely cared for their well-being allowed my platoon to understand my leadership style. Once they began to trust me and open up, I began to understand what had actually happened in the eight months before I arrived. The more stories I heard, the more I pieced together the realities of living in this environment for so long.

A couple years later, I asked now-CPT K about his feelings of the company when he first arrived in country; he explained:

It was horrible. There were a lot of different sidebar things going on. You had some sexual misconduct stuff occurring in the company, drug issues not being enforced. The first sergeant and the commander did not talk to each other; they were not on same page. The commander tried everything he could to avoid his responsibilities in the rear by going out in sector nonstop. One of the worst company environments I'd ever seen.⁷

In his description alone, multiple signs of a toxic environment jump out: sexual misconduct, drug problems, leadership not on the same page. Identifying the issues was easy in this case, but how does one go about fixing the problem if the leadership is allowing it? In “Battling Toxic Leadership,” Mattson lists tools that leadership can use to receive feedback such as command climate surveys, open-door policies, and sensing sessions.⁸ All of these are excellent ways for a leader who is willing to receive feedback and criticism. However, narcissistic, toxic leaders do not believe anything is wrong with their leadership style and are unwilling to take any criticism.

As weeks went on, I noticed how differently I was treated compared to my peers. When I conducted a shura — a task required by the battalion commander — my commander accused me of trying to throw my peers “under the bus” because they had not been able to schedule shuras yet in their timelines. My commander would speak to my peers with respect and talk to me like I was a child, literally speaking down to me from his 6-plus foot stature (I am only 5 feet, 4 inches tall). He would hang out with the other lieutenants and one platoon sergeant (PSG), laughing at inside jokes and playing around, but the second I accidentally stumbled upon them, all jokes turned to me.

As one Soldier who has since retired from the Army put it, “From what I saw, his leadership as a whole was better than some but worse than others. He played favoritism a lot.”⁹ LT K, too, noticed the difference in the way the commander treated his inner ring compared to others. “He was very different to different people. I thought he was very unfair to certain individuals and picked on people,” he said. Because LT K

came with 15 years of prior service, the commander basically said, "Here are the reins, go do your thing," but because I was new, he trusted me with nothing. He would micromanage many of the daily operations as opposed to mentoring and showing me how to conduct them properly.¹⁰

As I observed the unit, I noticed that the moral compasses of everyone seemed to have lost bearing. It seemed as though the toxic leadership had spewed over into the platoons and created an environmental wasteland. For instance, infidelity and fraternization occurred quite frequently among the Soldiers and NCOs. When I asked those in my platoon about it, they shrugged it off as if it were a normal occurrence. The Soldiers and NCOs made it seem as though the chain of command knew of this behavior within the company but, obviously, had done nothing to stop it. There appeared to be a complete lack of discipline, which is another sign of a toxic environment.

I could not wrap my head around it. Is this normal behavior

in all units? The signs of a toxic leader and toxic environment were evident all around. I thought of going to higher to tell them what was happening in this unit, but LT K best described the issues with taking that route:

*If you're allowed to talk to higher, you can, but then you have to walk on eggshells because it could backfire in your face. [The commander] had friends in high places. He was best friends with the brigade commander. Who do you go to? There were known issues that the commander completely ignored, such as investigations, but what do you do?*¹¹

Our commander had been very accommodating to his seniors, an attribute of toxic leadership as described by LTG Ulmer, which made him appear like an extraordinary leader.¹²

In "Battling Toxic Leadership," 1SG Michael Lindsay said that, "general education, professional development programs and mentorship programs... can significantly reduce the number of leaders who are toxic to the unit."¹³ This approach involves the leadership of the toxic leader mentoring and



counseling him/her directly and can be effective when used properly. Unfortunately, in my case, my commander's leaders thought he was already an outstanding leader, and even when a survey conducted after the deployment revealed some issues, the decision was to get rid of my commander as soon as possible instead of investing time to possibly transform him.

While I tried my hardest to maintain my integrity, I was not immune to the effects of this toxic environment. By the second month, I was already questioning my beliefs, looking inward at myself and wondering if there was something wrong with me.

As I began to question my own morals and leadership capabilities and after endlessly seeing a toxic environment around me, I realized that this poison was spreading through the ranks. The commander set the tone, and if I were not careful, I would begin to follow his leadership, good or bad. Toxic leadership does not stop with just one individual, even though others like myself continuously tried to shield our subordinates from it.

It was on one particular occasion, when I was reprimanded for doing the right thing, that I realized that I was completely isolated in this deployment. On our forward operating base in Kandahar, we had a rule that no matter where we went, Soldiers would wear their M9s at all times. This was a direct result of someone losing his M9 earlier in the deployment. It was obnoxious, especially while having to use the port-potties, but we all did what we were told, save one person: LT K's PSG. I had noticed his PSG walking around the FOB without his weapon strapped to his leg on a couple occasions, and my Soldiers, too, were wondering why he was not following the rules. While passing LT K on the way to the TOC, I mentioned to him, "Hey, I've noticed your platoon sergeant doesn't always wear his M9, and my Soldiers are starting to notice, too. You might want to let him know to set a good example." That was the end of that conversation, or so I thought.

Later that evening, I got word that the commander wanted to see me in his office, so I went without hesitation. Even though I would rather not be in his presence, I could count the number of times he requested me by name on one hand and all were for important matters. After I knocked on his door and entered his office in the TOC, he immediately began scolding me for "calling out" this PSG. I could not believe I was being reprimanded for upholding and enforcing the commander's own rules. Once he was finished letting me know yet again how I screwed up, I walked out and asked my buddy what happened.

From LT K's account, he took his platoon sergeant aside to let him know that others were noticing how he was not following the rules. My buddy said his PSG walked off in frustration straight to the commander's office to complain that Soldiers from my platoon needed to mind their own business. I heard the news and was dumbfounded. How was this sergeant just allowed to march into the commander's office to gripe, and more importantly, why had my commander not scolded the PSG for not upholding a standard that everyone else in his company was?

LT K, too, admitted that he encountered firsthand how the commander's leniency toward his platoon sergeant only fed

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the PSG's toxic leadership style. One evening, LT K, who was clearly in the right, brought an issue concerning his PSG to the commander. Instead of defending LT K, the commander scolded him in front of his PSG. Once the NCO left the office, LT K said that the commander told him, "I know you're right, but I had to do that in front of him. It's just the way he handles things."

The commander's toxic leadership enabled LT K's PSG to continue spreading the toxic environment down to the lowest level. Recently, an NCO who served under that PSG during the deployment revealed the bipolar nature of the PSG, another sign of toxic leadership:

He would treat us NCOs like crap one second, and then told us how much he loved us the next. It was hard dealing with him and with the intensity of the deployment at the same time... there were many tense situations with him getting in people's faces that I personally witnessed.¹⁴

Even though the situation in the platoon was horrible, the NCO explained why he and many of his peers avoided going to higher to address the issue of his PSG's toxicity.

The unfortunate thing about that kind of situation was that most of my peers and supervisors were scared of that person, not only physically, but their careers would be affected if they said something to someone.¹⁵

Fortunately, for this NCO, he said that he was helped tremendously by his squad leaders and team leaders to get through the deployment; they relied on each other to help everyone make it through. Even though the remaining Soldiers did make it back alive, for many, the toxic environment of the deployment continued to haunt them.

The effects of toxic leadership can last for a while and sometimes be permanent, even after the toxic leader is gone. For instance, after we had been back stateside for a couple months and our commander had left the unit, I was sitting in my office when out of nowhere I heard his laugh. I froze in my seat. He had come back to visit for a few minutes with LT K and other Soldiers. At the sound of his voice, my stomach dropped, heart stopped, and the fear and dread of just knowing he was in the same vicinity as me made me sick. I stayed glued to my office chair until I heard him leave. I suffered from physical, emotional, and psychological effects from my commander's toxic leadership, but what I did not realize until later was that

others had suffered from the toxic environment as well.

Upon returning home, the company shuffled Soldiers around so I lost some and gained some from other platoons within the unit. I had an NCO come over from the platoon with the toxic PSG, and this NCO performed outstandingly well while in my platoon. A year later, this NCO was needed back in the former platoon because of expertise, and as I relayed the good news, or so I thought, this NCO broke down and immediately had a panic attack. I had no idea sending this NCO back would cause a traumatic event. Just the thought of going back to the other platoon, even though the toxic PSG was long gone, caused a terrible, physical reaction. The NCO explained to me some of the experiences from the toxic PSG, and I, in turn, explained that I fully understood and had gone through the same problems but with the commander; it was a rather unique, bonding and healing experience for the both of us. I convinced the NCO that going back to the platoon would not be the same experience as before. After going back, the NCO again proved to be a valuable asset and blossomed into a tremendous leader.

That incident opened my eyes that I had not been alone in suffering from the toxic environment created by the commander and perpetuated by the toxic PSG. Over the years, Soldiers revealed more stories about our deployment, and some began to open up about how the toxic environment had affected them. Fortunately, all of those I talked to who were directly affected by the toxic environment were able to cope with any issues they had and continued to have successful careers. However, those Soldiers should never have had to cope with those issues to begin with. As an Army, we must be able to stop toxicity within our ranks.

A good leadership development program that already exists is the Mission Command Conference held annually at USMA in West Point, N.Y. Over a couple days, senior cadets from USMA, ROTC, and midshipmen from the Naval Academy engage in a series of briefs, discussions, and leadership challenges from operational leaders who have recently returned from deployment. The leaders include officers and NCOs who openly discuss the issues and lessons learned from their experiences to the cadets and midshipmen. This conference is an excellent opportunity to highlight good and bad leadership and possible ways to handle toxic leadership.

Although there is no clear-cut guidance or foolproof way to discover toxic leadership and rectify the situation, there are some possible solutions. LTG Ulmer mentioned a couple approaches: establish a system for regularly scheduled command climate surveys and provide supplemental information from subordinates for selection boards. Although command climate surveys do occur, having them more frequently and determining who can see them would provide better detection and early warning if a toxic environment does exist within a unit. The Army's Multi-source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) 360 process is a good tool to receive feedback from superiors, peers, and subordinates alike, but it is for that individual alone receiving the 360 assessment and not used for the selection process. LTG Ulmer suggested using feedback from subordinates during selection boards to determine the true capability and quality of potential leaders.

Currently, general officers have the ability to write anonymous feedback about any other general officer and likewise receive anonymous feedback from any general officer; this information is used by their superiors to determine who would best serve in available positions. Because of its anonymity and wide scope of potential feedback, this tactic proves valuable at their level to weed out any underperforming leaders. If used at lower levels, this process could help detect possible toxic leaders and change the situation for the better. Another suggestion I recently received on how to detect toxic leadership would be to modify the 360 assessment tool. Instead of the individual picking out whom he or she wanted as superiors, peers, and subordinates for the feedback, that individual would be directed by his or her direct chain of command as to whom to pick. Once the feedback was completed, the individual would discuss the results with his or her chain of command to determine just exactly how to improve, sustain, or if a toxic leader, be dismissed from that position.

It all begins with leaders providing that good environment for Soldiers to excel and feel like they can communicate with their leadership, using an open-door policy, should any signs of toxicity arise. This open communication needs to begin at the lowest level because toxic leadership is not limited to higher ranking Soldiers, and as discussed in this article, it affects Soldiers at all levels within the unit. There is no 100-percent solution to ridding the Army of toxic leaders, but by making people aware of the issues, signs, and providing them with solutions, the Army may be better equipped with identifying any toxic issues that could be in a unit and ensuring a positive transformation.

Notes

¹ Jennifer Mattson, "Battling Toxic Leadership," *NCO Journal*, June 2012, 12-13. Accessed online at http://www.army.mil/article/82622/Battling_toxic_leadership.

² LTG (Retired) Walter Ulmer, "Toxic Leadership: What Are We Talking About?" *ARMY*, June 2012, 48.

³ Toxic Leadership, 48.

⁴ Toxic Leadership, 48.

⁵ Toxic Leadership, 48.

⁶ Toxic Leadership, 48.

⁷ Personal Interview.

⁸ Battling toxic leadership, 1-2.

⁹ Personal Interview.

¹⁰ Personal Interview.

¹¹ Personal Interview.

¹² Toxic Leadership, 48.

¹³ Battling toxic leadership, 2.

¹⁴ Personal Interview.

¹⁵ Personal Interview.

¹⁶ Mission Command Conference.

¹⁷ Toxic Leadership, 50,52.

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OE CONDITIONS FOR TRAINING:

A CRITERION FOR MEETING “OBJECTIVE TASK EVALUATION” REQUIREMENTS

MARIO HOFFMANN

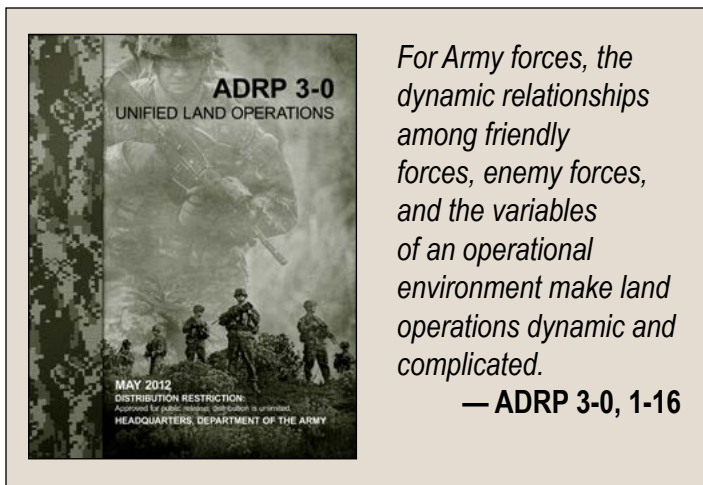
The Army Operating Concept directs us to “win in a complex world.” To accomplish this directive, the Army must develop leaders who can innovate and thrive in “complex and dynamic” environments that reflect conditions we will likely face. To that end, unit commanders leading a seasoned force must train in such operational environment (OE) conditions and against an uncooperative opposing force (OPFOR), making their scrimmage as hard, or even harder, than any anticipated real-world fight. By understanding the process of creating training conditions that introduce increasing levels of OE complexity, commanders will challenge the next generation of Army leaders to learn, be agile and adaptive, and figure out a way to win!

This article seeks to expand the concepts established in Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, in easily understood language by defining terms that describe required OE training conditions (*complex, dynamic, simple, and/or static*). It serves as a guide to assist leaders, units, and training developers until FM 7-0 and other training doctrine are updated, based upon Army efforts to improve training and readiness. Applying these definitions will help leaders present the minimal required conditions needed to develop leaders, achieve training objectives, and build unit readiness.

Illustration of OE Training “Conditions”

In the early stages of the war on terrorism, a training unit conducted an out-of-sector mission at one of the Army’s premier Combat Training Centers (CTCs) to destroy an improvised explosive device (IED) manufacturing facility with an insurgency training camp. The camp was located in high mountainous terrain, accessible only through a tough steep climb or via an air assault movement; the unit chose the latter. The training camp consisted of a fortified defensive position in which the training center directed the OPFOR to fight in place with no special weapons or environmental circumstances. The unit’s objective provided “simple and static” training conditions in that the OPFOR and environmental circumstances were singular in nature and did not change throughout the execution of the task.

In a similar out-of-sector mission at a different CTC several



years later, another training unit conducted an attack against a similar IED facility with an insurgent training camp. However, to make the objective more challenging, the OPFOR held three hostages and were equipped with man-portable air defense systems. CTC trainers also directed the OPFOR not to fight in place, but rather create multiple dilemmas for the training unit on and off the objective. Finally, the CTC directed the training unit to incorporate local national forces into their operations process and coordinate their plan through the replicated host-nation government. This objective presented “complex and dynamic” training conditions in that the training unit had multiple variables to contend with while the OPFOR had the freedom to create a plan and change conditions in response to anticipated training unit actions.

Figure 1 — Objective Task Evaluation Criteria

Plan and Prepare				Execute					Assess		
Operational Environment		L U X	Training Environment (L/N/C/G)	% Leaders Present at Training/ Authorized	% Present at Training / Authorized	External Eval	Performance Measures	Performance Measures Critical	Leader Performance Measures	Task Assessment	
Dynamic & Complex	Night	Hybrid Threat	Yes	Proponent Establishes Training Environment (FTX, STX, CPX, STAFFEX, TEWT, etc)	≥85%	≥80%	Yes	≥90% GO	All	≥90%	T
	Dynamic or Complex				75-84%			80-89% GO		80-89%	T-
Static and Simple	Day	Regular or Irregular Threat	No	Proponent Establishes Training Environment (FTX, STX, CPX, STAFFEX, TEWT, etc)	65-74%	75-79%	No	65-79% GO	<All	<80%	P
					60-64%			51-64% GO			P-
					<60%			<50% GO			U

Task Dependent
Task Independent

These actual training events serve as ideal examples of how the Army is moving to create increasingly more realistic and challenging training conditions. Within the *task, condition, and standard* framework for training, creating appropriate OE conditions are becoming a critical criterion for training and unit readiness reporting. These OE conditions will serve as one of several criteria for achieving task proficiency ratings of “Trained, needs Practice, or Untrained” (T-P-U).

Complex: *Hybrid threat/OPFOR with multiple OE variables*
Dynamic: *Threat and OE change during task as a cause and effect*
Simple: *Regular or irregular threat with minimal OE effects*
Static: *Threat and OE do not change during execution of task*

Required OE “Conditions” for Unit Training

The Army spent several years contemplating the need for creating a more objective method for task proficiency reporting. After extensive deliberations, as part of the Army Training Summit in the summer of 2014, senior trainers from across the Army began to develop criterion-based standards for achieving task proficiency ratings with both task-dependent and independent variables. At the annual Army Training Leader Development Conference in July 2015, these were proposed to the Chief of Staff of the Army and the most senior Army leadership, who directed that these criteria be added to Army training doctrine.

For company and above level mission essential task list (METL) training events, task-dependent criteria, defined during the “plan and prepare” phase of exercises, include three sub-components, of which the first is the OE. The OE sub-criterion is further defined by operational variables, whether the task is completed during the day or night, and whether the OPFOR features a hybrid threat or a regular/irregular threat. Deliberate planning about each element influences a unit’s potential proficiency rating — the more complex, the higher the achievable rating if the task was completed correctly.

Defining OE Terminology

Each criterion sub-standard links its definition directly to ADRP 3-0. The ADRP dictates that it is the relationships among friendly and enemy forces, coupled with operational variables, which make land operations “dynamic and complex.” Hence, ideal training conditions needed to achieve “T” proficiency ratings should also contain “dynamic and complex” OE conditions. Conversely, the lack of such can be defined as “static and simple;” hence, the four terms

of OE criteria are: *dynamic, complex, static, and simple*. But before each is defined, trainers must understand what operational variables are.

Operational variables, as defined by the ADRP, include eight interrelated aspects: political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time (PMESII-PT). What makes these variables *complex*, is when multiple variables (four or more) influence

military operations or have a direct or secondary effect from the outcome of military actions. Both OPFOR and training unit leaders have to contend with these variables. Conversely, merely fighting an opposing force without any other environmental factors bearing on the task is a *simple* environment. *Dynamic* conditions imply that one or more of the operational variables and the OPFOR disposition change (freethinking) during the period of execution. In a dynamic OE, the disposition, composition, strength and/or tactics of the OPFOR might continue to develop as the unit executes its task. *Static* OE means that conditions do not change throughout the unit’s conduct of the task.

The second primary sub-criterion, other than day or night conditions that are self-descriptive, encompasses the type of threat a unit must “spar” against. The Army Operating Concept (as well as the Army Training Strategy) spotlights the need to train against hybrid threats, which combine regular and irregular with criminal organizations into mutually benefiting threats to U.S. forces. The term “insurgents” is purposely not used as it represents an irregular force with ideological aims, typically focused on the overthrow of a government, but is not a separate threat category. As displayed in the Objective Task Evaluation Criteria chart (Figure 1), units seeking a “T” rating in collective training **must** replicate the hybrid threat. Training Circular (TC) 7-100 provides detailed information for the construct and tactics of a hybrid threat for training purposes.

A hybrid threat is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, and/or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefiting effects. Hybrid threats combine regular forces governed by an international law, military tradition, and custom with unregulated forces that act with no restriction on violence or their targets.

— ADRP 3-0, 1-9

Army planners describe conditions of an OE in terms of operational variables. Operational variables are those aspects of an OE, both military and non-military, that may differ from one operational area to another and affect operations. Operational variables describe not only the military aspect of an OE but also the population’s influence on it. Army planners analyze an OE in terms of eight interrelated operational variables.

— ADRP 3-0, 1-9

Creating OE training Conditions

The theory is simple: create increasingly complex training conditions to achieve higher objective training evaluations (Trained). To achieve objective ratings for:

- **Trained:** Planners must create complex and dynamic training conditions against a hybrid threat during limited visibility (night). This is further defined as training

against a regular and irregular OPFOR within an environment that consists of multiple (four or more) OE variables (PMESII-PT) which change the task in a cause-and-effect relationship.

- **Trained (-):** Planners must create complex or dynamic training conditions against a hybrid threat during limited visibility (night). This is further defined as training against a hybrid OPFOR within

an environment that consists of *multiple* (four or more) OE variables that do not change, OR against a regular or irregular OPFOR with *minimal* OE effects, but that change during in a cause-and-effect relationship.

- **Needs Practice or Untrained:** Planners can create simple and static training conditions against a regular or irregular threat with minimal OE effects (three or less) that do not change during the execution of the task (typically used during crawl-walk stages of training).

For operational variables to be relevant, they must be linked to the unit's mission variables — known as METT-TC (mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations). Army doctrine states that incorporating the analysis of operational variables (PMESII-PT) with mission variables (METT-TC) ensures that leaders consider their OE in relation to their mission (see Figure 3). Therefore, to create complex training conditions, operational variables must be relevant to a unit's mission or task.

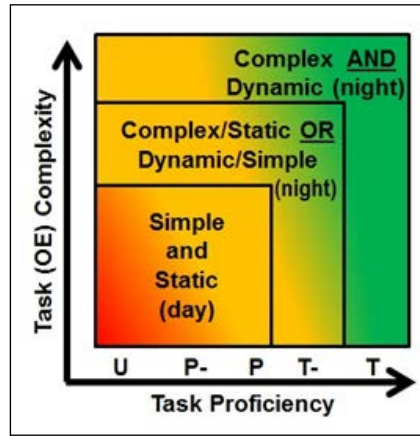


Figure 2

Upon receipt of a warning order or mission, Army leaders filter relevant information categorized by the operational variables into the categories of mission variables used during mission analysis. They use the mission variables to refine their understanding of the situation.

— ADRP 3-0, 1-9

Available Resources

The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) G2 is the Army's responsible official for understanding, describing, delivering, and assessing the OE. Leading an OE enterprise of key stakeholders to support the training, education, leader development, and concept & capability development communities, TRADOC G2 supports both the institutional and operational force. It achieves this through its Analysis & Control Element (ACE), with elements located at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and Fort Eustis, Va., and through the OE Training Support Center (TSC), located in Newport News/Fort Eustis, Va.

The TRADOC G2 ACE provides analytical support for understanding and describing the OE and its associated threats, working closely with the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth in support of training and education, and with the Army Capability Integration Center at Fort Eustis for future concept and capability development. The ACE Threats directorate at Fort Leavenworth provides training support products, such as the TC 7-100 series of hybrid threat manuals, as well as the Decisive Action Training Environment (DATE) for scenario design. This element also publishes the Regionally Aligned Forces Training Environment (RAFTE), the Exercise Design Guide (TC

Figure 3 — Examples of Relationship for Operational & Mission Variables

	Political	Military	Economic	Social	Information	Infrastructure	Physical Terrain	Time
Mission	Type and relationship to U.S. forces; influence or impact on local political, tribal, or religious order	Joint, NATO, or multinational partners required to accomplish task or mission	Impact on local and regional economic trade and influence; local manufacturing and farming/ranch	Local support for U.S. forces; cultural, religious, and language barriers	Public perception; availability of cellular, TV, radio, news, literacy, etc.	Housing and road network; electricity, water, sewage, roads, transportation	Mobility and restrictions, complex urban terrain/subterrain with cover/conceal	Mission timeline in comparison to civil consideration or perception
Enemy	Governmental relationship, support/control or influence on local leaders, including religious leaders	Conventional, unconventional, regular/irregular, armed criminal elements, other combatants?	Dependence and support to and/or from local populace for supply and services	Ability to camouflage into populace or coerce/control local opinion and actions	Use of local info infrastructure and resources for coercion, IO, and perception management	Use of local infrastructure to provide mobility, sanctuary, cover, concealment, and deception	Advantaged by known terrain, use of unnatural routes and extensive caches	Use of time against US mission timeline; trade space to buy time
Terrain & Weather	Is political/tribal structure terrain oriented or implicated; control/historic?	Impact of terrain and weather on Red, Green & Blue routes and actions	Trade routes, marketing and economic dependencies on terrain/weather	Historic, religious and social importance of certain terrain (burial)	Restrictive or void locations for information influence; weather degraded	Impact or limitation on local roads and infrastructure; impact of natural disasters	Availability or restriction of weather on natural terrain	Consideration for extreme or flash weather conditions
Troops & Support	Existing relationships; key leader engagements, local support/threats to troops	Coalition and cultural/language implications, maintenance and supplies	Localized battering relations to simulate or stifle economic interests	Populace support for U.S. and coalition; religious and cultural implications	Ability to communicate with locals via media/ other to promote inform/influence	Use of local infrastructure for movement and sustainment; knowledge of hidden areas	Knowledge of key terrain, choke points, limited routes vulnerability to IED/ambush	Available time to influence OE and defeat/remove enemy influence
Time	Time availability to stabilize, gain and/or influence political/ leadership changes	Red versus Blue timelines, Green perception of military actions over time	Key events and time for markets, trade events, crops, herding, etc.	Holidays, religious and/or special occasions and events	Activity level of social media, time needed to inform and influence	High vs low use of infrastructure resources (electric, rush-hour traffic, etc.)	Seasonal terrain and weather implications	Perception of time on mission and operational variables
Civil Considerations	Strength or weakness of current system and leadership to influence population	Civil perspective, influence, and support of U.S. and enemy military operations	Civil perceptions of U.S. influence on economic growth (CERP)	Perception and relationships of U.S. purpose and interactions (CREL)	Gained or lost trust in messaging, inform and influence efforts	Advantages and disadvantages of U.S. assistance (ASCOPE)	Impact on military ops on locality (farms, rivers, etc.)	Acceptable expectations of time management for military operations

7-101), and the Red Diamond Magazine. Additionally, ACE-Threats also provides a semi-annual five-day course on the OE and threat tactics, and provides mobile training teams for home-station training upon request. The TRADOC G2 ACE-Threats information is readily available via the Army's Training Network.

The TRADOC G2 OE TSC is the Army's primary delivery center for creating OE training conditions. The OE TSC, a restructured organization formerly known as the Training Brain Operations Center (TBOC), now also includes delivery capabilities of the Intelligence, Surveillance, & Reconnaissance (ISR) Directorate, the OPFOR Program Directorate, and an enhanced Modeling and Simulations Directorate, bringing to bear all OE delivery capabilities within one center. The OE TSC delivers innovative capabilities aimed at helping units to create operational manifestations of the OE at home station, particularly the information factor. These capabilities currently include those listed in Figure 4.

Conclusion

There is no cookie-cutter solution to creating complex and dynamic OE training conditions, just as there is no one "correct" solution for creating conditions necessary to achieve a "Trained" task proficiency rating. Trainers and exercise planners must understand the construct

and influence of operational variables (PMESII-PT) and relevance to the mission variables (METT-TC). Success in training will lead to success in combat — even under "complex and dynamic" OE conditions.

To "win in a complex world," as our Army Operating Concept directs, requires leaders who can innovate and thrive in complex and dynamic environments. Unit commanders must train in such conditions against an uncooperative and freethinking OPFOR, making their scrimmage as hard as the next fight. Understanding the aforementioned process for creating *complex, dynamic, simple* and/or *static* training conditions enables commanders to increase the intensity and realism of training, challenging the next generation of Army leaders to learn, be agile and adaptive, and figure out a way to win!

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Figure 4 — Example of OE TSC Capabilities to Support Training

Resource	Capability Description
Training Brain Repository - Exercise Design Tool (TBR-EDT)	Enables commanders and staffs to become better training managers and exercise designers. This web-based tool provides access to a growing repository of previously developed training products and scenarios for reuse, along with authoritative data sources to create new products. Next steps for the tool include integration of EDT capability into the Joint Staff J7 architecture, development of control tools to execute the training plan during the actual conduct of the exercise, and expanded data exchanges with mission command and simulation systems and architectures.
Opposing Forces Program	Provides commanders the programmatic means and expertise to "spar" against a replicated threat. This includes assistance for understanding and validating the application of threat doctrine, usage and assessment of replicated threat weapons and systems, and responsibilities of the TRADOC Project Office (TPO) for OPFOR Modernization efforts. This function, regulated by AR 350-2, also mandates the accreditation of OE/OPFOR replication at Combat Training Centers annually, Reserve Component Training Support Divisions semi-annually, and Army Centers of Excellence and Schools tri-annually.
Information Operations Network (ION)	ION is an HST capability under development that adds realism and complexity to exercises by replicating the social media. Content from Twitter, websites, blogs, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube that is in context with a specific exercises, will be emulated for the training audience. Exercise designers and trainers access the ION cloud via the web, where it can also be tailored and reused for subsequent exercises. The ION data manager tool allows content to become available to training audiences at the appropriate time as content is linked to exercise storylines and threads.
Network Effects Emulation System (NE2S)	Contributes to home station training of cyberspace operations, assisting staffs to plan, coordinate and integrate these operations into exercises. NE2S emulates and replicates environmental effects on both individual machines and the network itself. NE2S emulates actions from adversaries and friendly-force insiders, as well as actions to deny, degrade or disrupt command and control of systems or networks. The OE Training Support Center/TBOC deploys the NE2S on the unit network and manages it via a master control station in the exercise control cell.
Virtual OPFOR Academy	The OPFOR Academy provides a virtual, cloud-based, interactive, multimedia, and password-enabled learning experience for OPFOR counter-tasks. It will describe the tasks, conditions, and standards associated with each of the TC 7-101 listed OPFOR counter-tasks and present such within the Combined Arms Training Strategy (CATS). It will also provide multimedia presentation to expose users to specific descriptions in how to execute OPFOR tasks at HST, and allow to experience such in various preferred methods, including video, simulations, and constructive representations.
ISR Integration	The TRADOC Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Integration, also known as ISR TOP OFF, provides Joint/Theater ISR expertise to G27 OE delivery, setting training conditions by replicating Theater ISR processes, capabilities and application to OE-specific problem sets. ISR Integration also provides staff coaching and mentoring to deployed forces and at all CTCs, and as required, support home-station training requests.
Advanced Network Analysis and Targeting (ANAT)	Training simplifies analysis by enabling analysts to find quickly key nodes within a complex human network. By employing the Organizational Risk Analyzer (ORA) software tool and using the ANAT methodology, analysts are able to hone in on social networks formed by "people" nodes linked through resources, communications, or events. Analysts can apply social network analysis techniques using ORA to rapidly identify and visualize people with special characteristics that, if targeted, will affect the network based on the commander's intent.
System Integration, Modeling and Simulation (SIMS)	Visualizations and gaming products that are compliant with Army Learning Model (ALM) by replicating aspects of the OE via customization of gaming technology to fit a range of virtual, constructive, and gaming challenges. The visualizations and virtual practical exercises use real-world data to provide student-centric blended learning. Visualizations present complex information in a 3-D visual medium that is much more efficient than text or image-based media, while micro-simulations efficiently train the "walk" phase of the Army's "crawl-walk-run" paradigm.
Athena	An effects model (PMESII-PT) that assists commanders in understanding, visualizing, and conducting course of action analyses of complex OEs by anticipating the likely mid-term consequences of actions, both planned and unplanned. Athena runs in a stand-alone mode on a laptop but will likely migrate to the OE cloud. Enhancements to Athena that would enhance its usability and applicability include data exchange with mission command programs of record to facilitate course of action planning and improvements to the user interface to increase ease of use by non-experts.



EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR MCCC: *WHAT ARMY LEADERS NEED TO KNOW*

LTC CHRIS BUDIHAS
CPT THOMAS FLOUNDERS

As the Army has evolved over the last 14 years of war, so has the Maneuver Captains Career Course (MCCC). We are working to ensure we are producing captains who are prepared to meet the rigors of leading Soldiers and Army formations in an ever-increasingly complex world. A 22-week course of instruction, MCCC focuses on the necessary skills captains need to successfully lead within the operational Army, to include students building doctrinally and tactically sound plans for all types of operations and units. The purpose of this article is to inform Army leaders as to what their MCCC is teaching to ensure there is common understanding between the operational and institutional Army regarding where our captains are currently deficient in their skills and what MCCC is doing to educate them and close this intellectual gap.

"Plans are worthless, but planning is everything."

— GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957

As officers arrive at Fort Benning to attend MCCC, our expectations of students has not changed. We expect students to arrive with an understanding of operational terms and graphics, able to use proper doctrinal language, and well-practiced in troop leading procedures (TLPs) at the platoon level at a minimum. These three areas are the necessary foundation from which small group leaders (SGLs) teach to build successful students. However, a current trend is that, all too often, students arrive with little to no additional professional development focused on these three areas, and they cannot develop tactically sound and detailed operation orders

(OPORDs). Through a series of student surveys, MCCC has determined that the profile of an average class has the following experience:

- **A rudimentary understanding of TLPs:** Surveys reveal that around 50 percent of students have produced fewer than five OPORDs since their Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC). Many students have produced concept of operations briefs (CONOPs), but these typically do not contain details beyond a basic course-of-action (COA) sketch and statement.

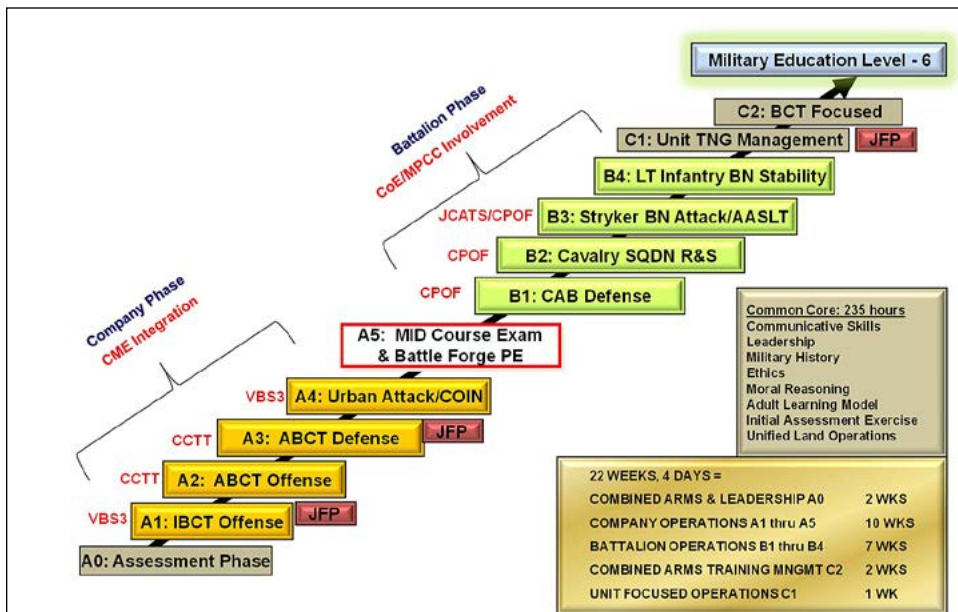
- **A limited understanding of the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process:** Fewer than 25 percent of students have produced five graphical terrain analysis overlay/modified combined obstacle overlay or situational templates since BOLC. CONOPs will typically display an enemy position but will not include any analysis other than templated, tentative positions.

- **A limited understanding of the military decision-making process (MDMP):** Fewer than 20 percent of students have conducted MDMP five or more times. Students who have served in a staff position, which is less than 20 percent



Photo courtesy of authors

Maneuver Captains Career Course students apply what they learned in the classroom in simulation.



Current Means: MCCC-Active Component Course Map POI FY15

of a typical class of 130 U.S. students, can demonstrate some general knowledge of the MDMP to any relevant standard. Most have little understanding in the process from COA analysis to orders production/rehearsals.

- **A limited understanding of reconnaissance and security operations:** Fewer than 50 percent of students have ever conducted a screen, zone and area reconnaissance, and/or passage of lines to the appropriate tactical standard. Most Armor officers have received instruction at Armor BOLC on the basic tenets of these enabling operations, but many have neither planned nor executed them while in their previous unit.

Understanding where the average student begins as they enter the course allows SGLs to best determine how to get each of their students to reach their fullest potential prior to graduation after 22 weeks of instruction.

The summarized major three course outcomes for MCCC are the following:

1. Mastery of TLPs across Armored, Infantry, and Stryker brigade combat teams using combined arms maneuver and wide area security tactical tasks.
2. Proficiency in using MDMP to plan offensive, defensive, and stability operations.
3. Understanding of the management of Army systems, to include unit training management, Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), ethics, written communications, and a rudimentary understanding of the Command Supply Discipline Program (CSDP) and company-level administration.

The course accomplishes its goals by organizing into three phases: Company Phase (individuals produce five OPORDs), Battalion Phase (groups produce four OPORDs), and Command Phase (students receive instruction on training management and unit-oriented electives).

Company Phase

Company Phase focuses on students learning and applying the TLPs and the IPB process to create a tactically

sound OPORD that is constructed in accordance with the latest Army doctrine. In the A1 module, students receive instruction on each major step of the TLPs. Captains use critical thinking to understand and apply mission command to build teams, establish shared understanding, issue clear commander's intent, demonstrate disciplined initiative, use mission orders, and accept prudent risk. The goal is to have captains who are precise and lethal in planning by employing and synchronizing direct fire, indirect fires, close combat attack, close air support, and other enablers on the battlefield at the company level to meet their commander's end state.

Students also receive module-specific instruction on the three different BCT types. Students develop OPORDs for an IBCT in Module A1, ABCT in A2 and A3, and an SBCT in A4. The culminating exercise for the Company Phase of the course is a practical examination that gives students eight hours to plan prior to formally briefing a SGL in detail for grade.

To expose students to the virtual and gaming dimensions of training, once they have demonstrated a grasp of the material at the end of each module, they then apply their plan in simulation. Virtual Battlespace 2 (VBS2) is used for the IBCT and the SBCT missions, and the Close Combat Tactical Trainer (CCTT) is used for the two ABCT modules. VBS2 is a computer-based first person shooter-style game that allows the students to input graphic control measures, plan and use indirect fires, and maneuver their squads and platoons to accomplish their mission. While there are limitations to the system, it demonstrates the complicated process of echelonment of fires and the necessity for clear, simple plans that can be quickly and efficiently executed. The CCTT serves two purposes for students: first, to execute their planned mission and second, to expose all students to mechanized and armored systems. For approximately 58 percent of the students, this is their first exposure to these systems. Each simulation receives an after action review (AAR) led by SGLs to focus students on the differences between the plan and the execution of the mission. In mid-2015, the Call-for-Fire Trainer (CFFT) was integrated to provide students a simulation to exercise their indirect fire plan. Joint Conflict and Tactical Simulations Environment (JCATS) and a new system — Linguistic Geometry Real-time Adversarial Intelligence and Decision-making (LG-RAID) — will be incorporated to allow students real-time feedback for their missions as well.

Lastly, this year more student captains are being incorporated into Infantry and Armor BOLC culminating field exercises. This provides valuable experience for MCCC students to interact with lieutenants and provide feedback on their OPORDs. This unique opportunity allows students to

physically exercise mission command over a company during a live field exercise.

Battalion Phase

Battalion Phase also consists of four modules that cover offense, defense, and stability operations, which includes an ABCT squadron zone reconnaissance mission. The course outcome is that captains are practiced in MDMP for battalion operations that seize, retain, and exploit initiative across the range of military operations. As in the Company Phase, students must demonstrate critical thinking to develop comprehensive and complete plans during the Battalion Phase.

The first module is constructed in a very similar fashion to Module A1, in which students receive instruction on all seven steps of MDMP and their subcomponents. Students assume staff positions, and the SGLs or other senior officers guide them through the modules. These senior mentors are either the seminar's assigned senior mentor (Fort Benning-assigned current or former battalion commanders) or lieutenant colonels who are currently attending the Maneuver Pre-Command Course (MPCC). These mentors simulate the battalion commander for one or more of the battalion modules. This integration provides students with a valuable realistic interaction that allows them to replicate the interface between an actual battalion commander and his staff. The Battalion Phase is highlighted by a collaborated exercise between Centers of Excellence that includes, via Command Post of the Future (CPOF) and Defense Connect Online (DCO), interaction with Engineer, Adjutant General, Signal/Cyber, Fires, and Aviation CCC students. The MCCC acts as the S3 section and provides the student battalion executive officer (XO) leadership to drive the MDMP process with input from the other CCCs in their areas of expertise. The last block of instruction exposes students to the Army Design Methodology, in which students learn and apply the basics of design to develop lines of effort as part of a stability operation scenario.

Command Phase

The final phase, Command Phase, consists of unit training management instruction and electives that focus students on the capabilities of their gaining unit. For example, students bound for airborne units receive instruction on airfield seizure; ABCT- and SBCT-bound captains receive classes on direct fire gunnery; and all students are exposed to maintenance and other standard operations for a company. Students also execute an important practical exercise in which every student constructs an eight-week training plan that moves a company from individual training to conducting a squad-level live-fire exercise (LFX). They plan this LFX using a range from the installation where they will command.

There is a current initiative to add 10 days to the MCCC program of instruction (POI) in Fiscal Year (FY) 17. Under this initiative, there will be three additions to the course: a fifth Company Phase module, an air assault component to a Battalion Phase module, and a combined arms live-fire exercise (CALFEX) planning exercise in the Training

Management module. In the fifth company module, students will receive troop reconnaissance and security (R&S) instruction and write an OPORD. With half of the Armor population taking command of Cavalry troops and about 20 percent of the Infantry officers commanding an HHC with an organic scout platoon, providing this valuable instruction will close the education gap that exists in our officer corps conducting R&S missions.

Truth in advertising, MCCC is not an all-encompassing course; there is only so much time and many tasks to train in a 22-week POI. There are many functions of a staff and unit that students do not receive instruction. Each unit is unique, and the individual tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), and shared understanding of every BCT and battalion cannot possibly be covered. The POI does not emphasize the development of non-MTOE (modified table of organization and equipment) staff officers. The CPOF is used in Battalion Phase, but students do not become experts in this system. The MDMP is mostly focused on S2 and S3 functions while the other staff sections and their warfighting functions concentrate on enabling the learning objectives that focus on the maneuver plan and the IPB process. The MCCC places primary emphasis on mission analysis, specifically IPB, and subsequently on COA development and analysis. Orders production, while important, is oftentimes not reached in every module due to SGLs focusing on achieving the learning objectives and sacrificing the technical aspect of orders production.

The MCCC's writ is to produce graduates who are masters of TLPs and familiar with MDMP. They should not be expected to be masters in CSDP, UCMJ, and non-MTOE/non-operations oriented staff positions. This includes the technical aspects of the Digital Training Management System (DTMS). There are several reasons for this, but it mostly centers on the amount of time we have to make students tactically and technically proficient in all three formations the Army has in only 22 weeks.

Daily, MCCC instructors do their best to produce captains who are immediately prepared to assume duties on brigade and battalion staffs and as competent company-level commanders when they assume command. The instructors' efforts, no doubt, provide Army captains who can execute operations on a modern complex battlefield by synchronizing and delivering lethal and precise effects to achieve their commander's intent.

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CPT Thomas Flounders currently serves as a small group leader with the Department of Training, Maneuver Center of Excellence, Fort Benning. He previously served as commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop and C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics and international relations from the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF TESTING: **THE SOLDIER**

CPT W. BRANDON SCHREINER

I could not believe my eyes. It was the summer of 2009, and I was just beginning my second tour in Iraq as an Infantry executive officer. I was in Al Taqaddum, known as “TQ,” and I had never been in a place more remote, desolate, and utterly hot. Yet, here in the middle of the desert, I was staring in disbelief at the latest answer to the improvised explosive device (IED). Organized in ranks and files that stretched for as far as I could see sat an enormous quantity of mine-resistant, ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles. I was there to sign for my vehicles and had just stepped inside the gated compound. The sight was astonishing and mystifying: how did these get here? Every one of the colossal 26-ton vehicles was fully outfitted and combat ready.

Over the course of my next two deployments, I watched with gratitude and amazement as I saw how well these MRAPs performed. They routinely defeated IEDs that would have surely crippled the original up-armored HMMWV I had used as a platoon leader. At the time, the magnitude of this success perplexed me. Now, several years later, I am an acquisition officer serving as an operational tester and have new insights. As a former Infantryman, I would like to share these insights with the Infantry community. This article provides an overview of the unique role operational testing plays within the large Army acquisition effort to get new products into the hands of Soldiers. Soldiers are the essential component in an operational test (OT). Soldiers provide critical feedback for new equipment development and simultaneously benefit from the peculiar perks of an OT.

There are nearly 600 individuals who are devoted to operational testing in the Army, just a fraction of the 38,000 civilian and 2,000 military whom the Acquisition Corps comprises. Testers work alongside many other government

agencies to focus primarily on the performance of new equipment. Though a small part of the workforce, operational testers account for a majority of interaction between acquisitions and the end-user: the Soldier. The small team of operational testers routinely partners with units across the Army to conduct OTs. These tests combine Soldiers with new equipment in a “test-drive” using a scenario deliberately and meticulously designed to challenge the equipment under realistic conditions and provide Soldiers the best opportunity for feedback.

On the surface, an OT appears similar to a standard unit training event. However, the primary focus is not training. The goal of an OT is to gather Soldier feedback and determine strengths and capabilities of new equipment. An OT captures how Soldiers rate the effectiveness, suitability, and survivability of the equipment under test as it supports them in their accomplishment of the mission. Information collected from an OT goes to senior Army leaders, and along with other information, supports acquisition and fielding decisions.

OT events occur later in a product’s development. The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) initially determines new equipment requirements and then passes them to a Program Manager (PM) to develop and field. In the final stages of development before fielding, every new product must conduct the major OT event required by law: the Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E).

An IOT&E is normally the final gate for a new piece of equipment. There are also other OT events, such as a Limited User Test (LUT) or Development Test/Operational Test (DT/OT). These are similar to an IOT&E but not necessarily a final gate. PMs program LUTs and DT/OTs early in a product’s developmental timeline to incorporate

A shipment of MRAPs sits inside Camp Liberty in Iraq on 30 October 2007.

Photo by SGT Mark B. Matthews



Soldiers at key intervals to prepare for a successful IOT&E.

Every test has an assigned test officer — usually a captain, major, or GS-12 (a civilian roughly equivalent to an Army major) who is responsible for the success or failure of the test — and a test NCO in charge. Tests range in size and scope, from one day to three months in length and \$50,000-\$10 million in cost.

OT teams can comprise as few as three individuals or as many as 100 — including contractors — depending on the size of the test. Regardless of test cost or size, all OTs share the most important factor: the Soldier. A barrage of questionnaires, surveys, after action reports (AARs), and other methods are used to capture Soldiers' complete feedback during an OT.

During the test, Soldiers are asked specific questions on equipment performance and continuously encouraged to give their candid opinions. The effort to collect information from Soldiers — the eventual end users — is the crux of an OT. It is not out of the ordinary for one Soldier to answer more than 1,000 survey questions throughout an OT. Specifically trained individuals on the test team, operations research systems analysts (ORSAs), are in charge of this data collection and churn the mountain of raw Soldier feedback into quantifiable information.

The U.S. Army Operational Test Command (OTC) is located on West Fort Hood, Texas, and serves as the one-star headquarters for the community of testers. OTC's nearly 600 personnel are dispersed over seven test directorates (Airborne and Special Operations, Aviation, Fires, Integrated Test and Evaluation, Maneuver, Maneuver Support, and Mission Command), a headquarters, and additional staff sections specializing in design methodology, test technology, and integration.

The mission of OTC, the Army's only independent test organization, is to conduct "independent operational testing to inform acquisition and fielding decisions for the Army and select joint Warfighting systems." It has a one-of-a-kind mission I find replete with variety and intriguing problem sets. It also stays busy: last year OTC conducted 64 tests across the world. Test officers may conduct up to six major events in one year while simultaneously managing the planning requirements for another six the next year.

OTC and OTs represent a mere slice of the total acquisition effort to field the best new equipment to our Soldiers. Once TRADOC determines a new requirement, the timeline for equipment development can span years. An extreme example is the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, which took 17 years to develop.

There are also a slew of other concerned entities. PMs fall under 11 Program Executive Offices (PEOs), such as PEO Soldier or PEO Ground Combat Systems. PEOs and their subsidiary PMs oversee acquisition timelines and program life

During an operational test, Soldiers are asked specific questions on equipment performance and continuously encouraged to give their candid opinions. The effort to collect information from Soldiers — the eventual end users — is the crux of an OT.

cycles of the entire Army equipment inventory, ammunition, simulations, and more.

The equipment manufacturers, or "vendors," routinely solicit and compete for contracts from the PEOs and PMs to develop the required product. PEOs and PMs interface with Congress for funding and integrate contracting officers, engineers, budget analysts, ORSAs, and others to keep their programs on time and budget.

After a vendor manufactures a new material item, developmental testing must first demonstrate its reliability and safety before an OT puts it in the hands of Soldiers. DT is a complement of OT. For a new vehicle, such as the MRAP, DT entails driving thousands of hardball and cross-country miles at Aberdeen Test Track in Maryland as well as testing of live-fire survivability, extreme braking, maximum acceleration, speed, turning, and other performance factors.

DT subjects equipment like weapons and radios to extreme weather and operating conditions. DT is very objective and determines equipment performance parameters. DT occurs in specifically constructed environments; locations such as Aberdeen Proving Grounds, White Sands Missile Range (N.M.), and the Cold Regions Test Center (Alaska) offer dedicated resources for the controlled and repetitive conditions required. Together DT and OT account for well under one percent of a total product acquisition cost and life cycle.

OT is only required when new equipment will cause a significant change in Soldier interface versus existing systems. For example, the recently fielded lighter 240L and the improved M2 .50 caliber machine guns were both straightforward upgrades, so no additional OT was required.

TRADOC and PMs continuously work to upgrade the Army inventory as new technology becomes available or affordable. If you have ever questioned an antiquated piece of equipment on your modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE), trust that TRADOC (specifically for the Infantry: the Maneuver Center of Excellence) still considers it integral to the Infantry's infrastructure and/or there is not an alternative that is economical or feasible.

An estimated 12 Infantry companies and 1,000 11B Infantrymen (called player units) participated in OTs last calendar year. After one week into my first OT, I could assert that most Infantry Soldiers have no idea what to expect as a player unit during a test. However, all soon realize an OT is essentially just a company or battalion-level training event, depending on the size of the test.

The best units realize that an OT is an extraordinary training opportunity. The test team begins planning and resourcing months in advance. Intermittent progress reviews and test concepts are developed in conjunction with the PM, TRADOC, Army Evaluation Center, and other stakeholders; and briefed to OTC leadership for approval.

An OT is meticulously designed using the player unit's MTOE and mission essential task list (METL) against a robust and realistic threat, validated by TRADOC G2. The player unit also typically provides Soldiers to serve as opposing forces. At the start of an OT, the player unit walks into and executes thoroughly planned and intentionally challenging training scenarios. Upon completion of a good OT, the player unit will depart exhausted yet satisfied.

At my last test, the player unit's battalion commander positively described the scenarios as grueling and equivalent to back-to-back Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) rotations. In fact, senior leaders from player units routinely praise OT events as phenomenal experiences and training opportunities. Another favorable perk: OTC provides all required funding.

If you are identified as a player unit, fence off all the required Soldiers (plus a few reserve) for the test time frame and leave the week before and after the test open for preparation and recovery, respectively. Approach the upcoming test just as you would a gunnery or situational training exercise.

The test team is responsible for most of the resourcing, planning, and calendar; the player unit typically provides MTOE equipment, helps with range facility reservations, and parallel plans for live fires and range execution. The player unit also remains responsible for their Soldiers' safety assessment and composite risk management; the test team provides a safety release regarding the equipment under test. Two-way communications between the test team and unit are key. It not only facilitates a smooth test but decreases turbulence on a unit's schedule as well.

Before the test, an advance element from the test team deploys to the test site and establishes the team's footprint. During my last test, the team occupied more than 20 buildings, though sometimes a test required only a single trailer. There is typically a test headquarters, logistics cell, data management cell, and operations cell; the site is similar to a battalion or company tactical operations center (TOC) and fully furnished by OTC. The operations cell is complete with maps, radios, desks, projectors, and work/meeting spaces.

Immediately preceding an OT, the PM will host new equipment training (NET) for the player unit, delivered by the equipment vendor. Soldiers receive classroom and hands-on training on the piece of new equipment straight from the



Photo by Dennis McElveen

Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division set up a Spider networked munitions system for an operational test while data collectors record test data at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., in November 2012.

individuals who built it from the ground up. Soldiers regularly report that NET is a first class event.

After NET, the player unit will conduct a pilot test (PT). The PT is a dress rehearsal for the OT, lasting anywhere from two hours to two days. It allows the unit and other key stakeholders to gain experience and become familiar with all aspects of the test concept, particularly the aspect of data collection.

On the day before the OT with all concerned parties present, OTC conducts a final review of test readiness, referred to as the "record test." There are occasional circumstances, uncommon and irregular, where a major deficiency still exists with the equipment under test at the time of this review. This final check provides a means to postpone the test if needed or to make modifications to the test plan.

Data collection is what every Soldier will remember long after an OT is over. Data collection starts with a "hooah brief" at the beginning of every test to excite and inform Soldiers about their critical role in the test: providing candid feedback regarding equipment capabilities. Throughout the test, there are frequent periods of administrative time when Soldiers complete survey questions and provide their opinions. The chore is meticulous, challenging, and sometimes unexciting; test leadership frequently engages Soldiers to provide motivation. Soldiers receive, complete, and turn in their surveys to their assigned data collector.

Data collectors (DCs) are individuals that shadow the Soldiers and equipment, recording various aspects of Soldier and equipment interaction. DCs are typically experienced civilian contractors provided by the test team. They report to the test's lead ORSA and provide 24-hour coverage whenever Soldiers are operating the equipment under test, working

in 12-hour shifts if needed. They will occasionally reengage Soldiers to clarify feedback that is incomplete or unclear.

In addition to observing and making notes about Soldiers and the equipment, DCs also video AARs, take measurements, monitor special technology incorporated into the equipment under test, record objective measures of performance, and perform a variety of other actions. The size of the test and type of equipment being tested dictate the number of DCs required to fulfill this important data collection function.

Every DC action, measurement, and survey question is nested within the data source matrix (DSM). The DSM drives the design and conduct of the test, and occasionally requires the test officer to tweak concepts mid-test.

DCs pass all the raw data along to a special section of the test team for sorting, translating, and processing. Heaps of paper surveys, open-ended comment cards, and stacks of DC information are combined and organized in one location. The result is an unambiguous database that quantifies the ability of the equipment to support the Soldier's mission and opinion.

An OT's rigorous training scenario makes the player unit the guinea pig for the rest of the Army. A product spends most of its development time in a laboratory. Engineers inside a cubicle analyze 3-D designs and run simulations. DT examines an equipment's reliability, survivability under live fire, and safe operating parameters, but it is nearly impossible to prepare equipment for Soldiers.

The feedback is substantial. Soldiers expose equipment weaknesses and figure out new employment methods. Soldiers occasionally unintentionally induce and highlight major deficiencies. They can identify faults beyond the grasp of the developing engineers behind a computer screen. This experience is typical in an OT and significantly benefits the program and the Army.

Lessons learned during an OT improve equipment quality, Soldier interface, and effectiveness. Efficiencies learned from one small unit's experience are now available for implementation before the program scales. The small increases in reliability and quality will spread over enormous quantities and long life cycles, resulting in astronomical savings of cost and maintenance time for the entire Army.

An OT is also a chance for the individual Soldier to weigh in on new equipment. While every member of the product development team is deeply concerned with equipment performance, equipment performance is the sole focus of player unit Soldiers during an OT.

PMs must consider the program cost and timeline in addition to performance. TRADOC must consider how new equipment integrates into doctrine, training, and force structure. Congress must consider national agendas (recent ban on the Russian RD-180: a reliable rocket engine valued by the Air Force), their constituents (government contracts relate to jobs and other benefits), and can attach strings to funding.

Soldiers in an OT are the only entity free to focus solely on equipment performance in real-world conditions. The Soldier's voice is heard through the OT process. Operational

testers design every test to maximize a Soldier's chance for feedback, continuously urging Soldiers to be open and frank. Every survey or questionnaire comment from an OT — even if negative, profane, or seemingly nonsensical — is permanently recorded and stored in the program. OTC, by design, even reports up an entirely separate chain of command to avoid any disincentives to candid feedback.

Soldiers, even the newest privates, routinely provide insightful comments. The feedback from Soldiers is not only used on the existing equipment under test, it is also incorporated into the program design for future equipment. It is not unusual for a single comment to spur an evolution of equipment design or to steer the life cycle of a piece of equipment in a new direction.

One MRAP vendor, for example, provided a prototype in 2007 with a large back ramp that opened like a Bradley or M113, though much slower. The fundamental engineering of the ramp was undeniably sound, but Soldiers criticized the design, commenting that they would be engaged before they could even get out of the vehicle. This feedback prompted an immediate adjustment to the equipment design.

Many programs leverage OT events for this benefit early in the equipment development process. However, proposed equipment changes are not automatic; they are considered in light of engineering and other considerations. An OT is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for junior officers and NCOs to share in the shaping of their future equipment.

Years ago, as a junior Infantry officer, in that moment inside the gated MRAP compound, the magnitude of what lay before me was incomprehensible. Yet now, I understand I was simply a participant in the MRAP program, a massive program supported by countless individuals that was designed to counter increasingly lethal IEDs, and expedited in enormous quantities to our Soldiers on the front lines. The feat was nothing short of monumental and doubtlessly saved lives.

I am proud of the very small role I played in this, and now I am equally fortunate to participate in many other programs as an operational tester. Although one portion of a total acquisition effort, OT is critical. Further, Soldiers and their feedback make every OT successful. Participation in an OT is an uncommon yet rewarding experience; it's a unique chance for Soldiers to conduct a solid training event and provide valued input for a program's future. To partake in an OT is not simple and is by nature challenging.

Every day operational testers — to the Soldier the face of the large and professional acquisition community — are hard at work to marry the new equipment and the Soldier to make these critical test events successful.

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OPERATIONAL OR GARRISON: TARGETING IS TARGETING

CW2 TRAVIS E. SMITH

The purpose of this article is to outline a way to conduct the targeting process during garrison operations. Garrison targeting will focus the brigade combat team (BCT) staff on internal functions while training the staff to conduct targeting in an operational environment. A garrison targeting process follows the same structure as the operational process to alleviate work. Tasks developed during the process follow the same flow as it would in the operational process. This process will provide synchronization for the staff, assist with prioritization of tasks, and will lead your unit to mission accomplishment within a garrison environment.

Targeting in Garrison

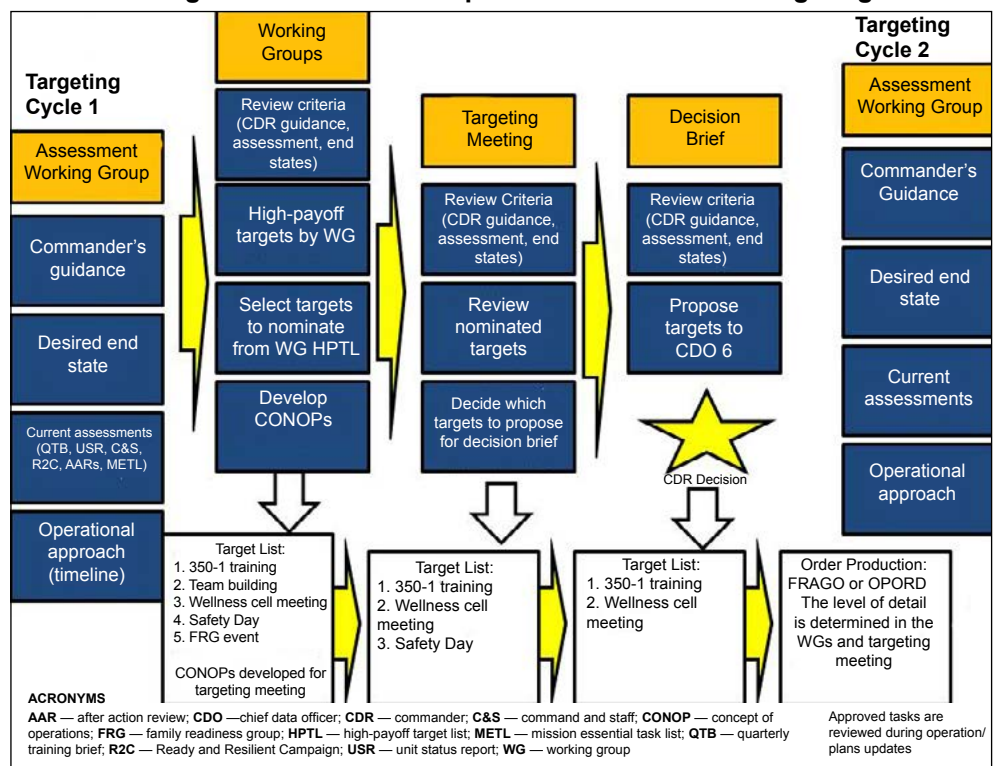
The targeting process is a science that relies on mathematical measurements which denote whether something has changed based on a pre-determined commander's vision and end state. The basis of this science resides in the **decide, detect, deliver, and assess (D3A)** framework. The critical piece of any targeting process is **assess**. Without a formalized method of assessing our actions in an operational environment, the overall process will fail due to decisions made on irrelevant data. If the targeting process is a work of art, how does the staff master the art? How can we develop a process months ahead of a Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation? Can a staff utilize a different way of conducting targeting that will develop the process earlier without a tactical order on hand? The answers to these questions are the same. Utilizing the targeting process during garrison operations will aid in staff development and will provide a tested process to use for CTC rotations and future deployments.

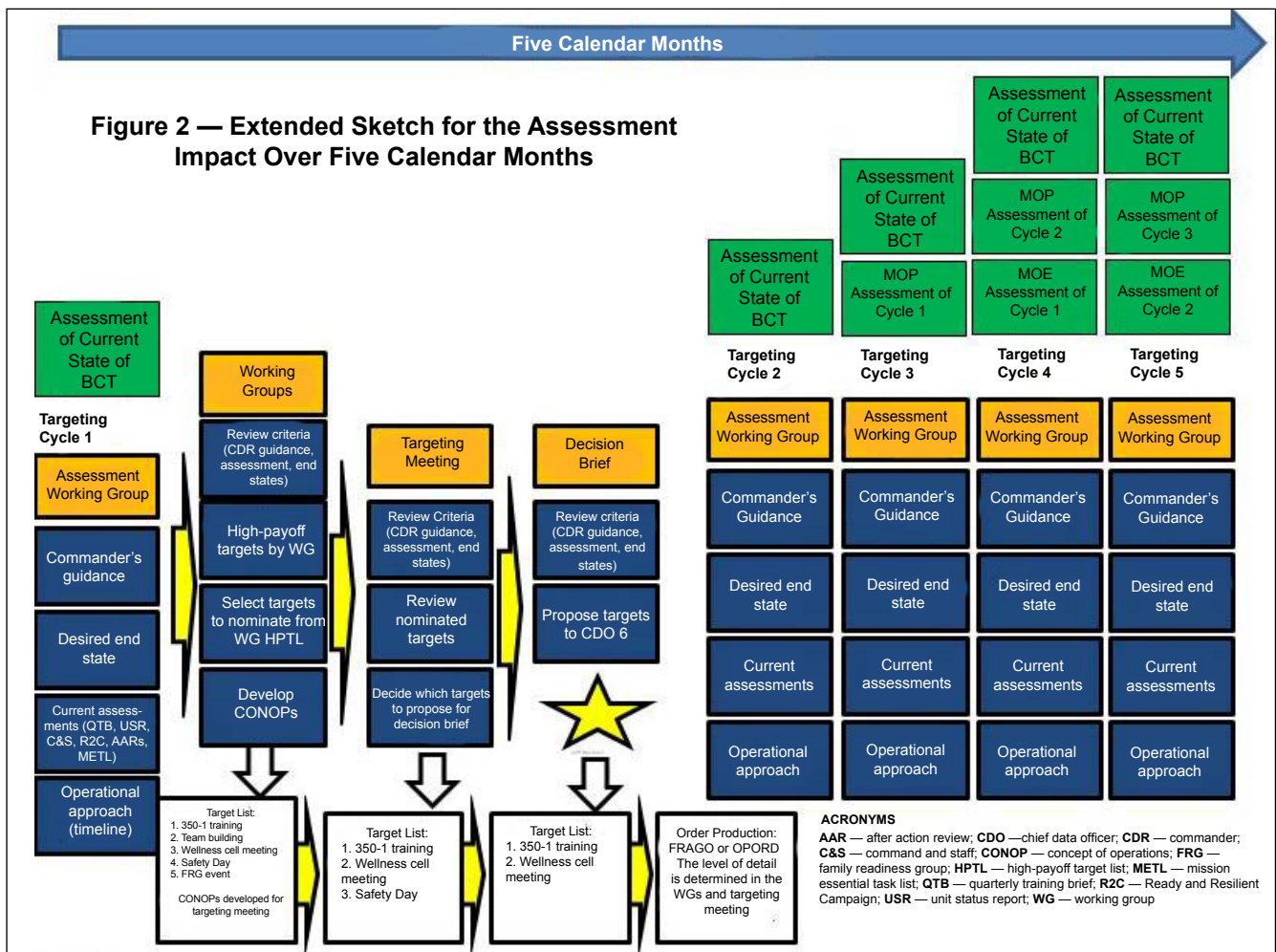
The staff can easily do this by applying the methodology of the targeting process to assess training, personnel, readiness, equipment, and other requirements during garrison operations. The garrison targeting process requires the adherence to the four targeting principles that are required to conduct operational targeting. The process focuses the staff to achieve the commander's objectives. The staff uses non-lethal means to determine desired effects and must participate across all warfighting functions. The staff conducts analysis and then prioritizes

and assigns an asset/enabler to achieve the desired effects. The assets/enablers become the garrison agencies that must synchronize in order to conduct military training events. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-60, *Targeting* (formerly FM 3-60, *The Targeting Process*), defines a target as an entity or object considered for possible engagement or other action. Garrison targeting uses this definition to identify the entities and objects as internal unit personnel and functions. To summarize, the only change to targeting from operational to garrison is the focal point — enemy (operational) to internal (garrison).

One of the main reasons for implementing a garrison process should be to work through as many targeting cycles as possible to perfect the process used in combat operations. Many units participate in a CTC's Leader Training Program (LTP) prior to a rotation without a fully developed targeting process. LTP is not for development of the targeting process; it is for the military decision-making process (MDMP) that will drive the operations during the rotation. Units operate this way not from a lack of understanding; it comes from a desire to use targeting only for operational purposes. Units tend to shrug off the process used during deployment, only to rely upon a lackluster system to track our training and readiness for the next deployment. Do we know if our unit training level

Figure 1 — Initial Concept Sketch for Garrison Targeting





meets mission essential task list (METL) requirements? Is the METL assessment formal and based upon quantifiable data, or have we based the assessment on false or subjective data?

Another reason for implementing a garrison targeting process includes the development of the assessments of garrison-related tasks. The staff at all levels must be able to provide the assessments of training other than the three letters T (trained), P (needs practice), and U (untrained). While conducting targeting during combat operations, measures of performance (MOP) ask the unit if the mission execution was according to standard. If the execution of the task deviates from the approved execution, the MOP is not accomplished. The staff designs the measures of effectiveness (MOE) to assess the desired effect of the training event on the end state. Conducting assessments in this manner provides the commander with an assessment of unit capabilities (MOP) and the projected impact on future operations (MOE). The unit's training proficiency during garrison operations prepares them for the eventual deployment to an operational environment. Adopting a formal system of assessment will enable the staff to identify critical shortfalls in training early enough to correct the deficiencies prior to deploying to a combat environment.

Utilizing the targeting process to drive operations in garrison could lead to several positive changes. The targeting process provides synchronization for the staff and forces the staff to practice the targeting process prior to a brigade field

training exercise (FTX), CTC rotation, or even deployment. The staff can alleviate a large percentage of the "everything is a priority" tasks. Additionally, when utilizing the MOP and MOE assessment criteria, the staff will truly assess the METL, overall strengths, and the team. This will also allow the commander to know his full formation for future decisions.

Additionally, the transition to operational environment targeting will become fluid. Units that apply this system will not have the slow start most units will feel upon arrival and instead can hit the ground running. Units can train on this process for several months prior to their CTC rotation and deployment. The only flaw at this point is the work to build and implement the process!

Implementing the Process

Prior to beginning the iterative process of targeting for operational environments, the staff conducts design and MDMP for the assigned mission. One of the slight differences between garrison and operational targeting is not necessarily conducting MDMP. The operational environment for garrison targeting is the brigade, battalion, or company so the higher unit mission and subsequent outreach to deployed units is not required. Development of a concept sketch will aid in developing understanding within the staff for the targeting process. At a minimum, the concept sketch should display task development through assessment (see Figures 1 and 2).

The garrison process will require elements of the design methodology to develop current assessments and initial commander's intent, to look forward into the future and project a desired end state, and to identify lines of effort (LOEs). The next step in developing a working process is developing the operational approach with LOEs and conceptual end states. The conceptual end states will develop further as the staff comes together and identifies the realistic LOE end states by warfighting function (WFF). In order to help identify the time frame for end state accomplishment, the design team designates a point on the long range planning calendar (LRPC). This point can be prior to a CTC rotation or deployment. The final assessment of the unit should provide the commander with a complete snapshot of the unit. The LOEs need to be broad enough to encompass the majority of garrison tasks normally associated with the defined subject but precise enough to limit ambiguity (for example, readiness, Ready and Resilient Campaign [R2C], or training). The LOE working groups could — and should — take the place of the normal meetings such as the training meeting.

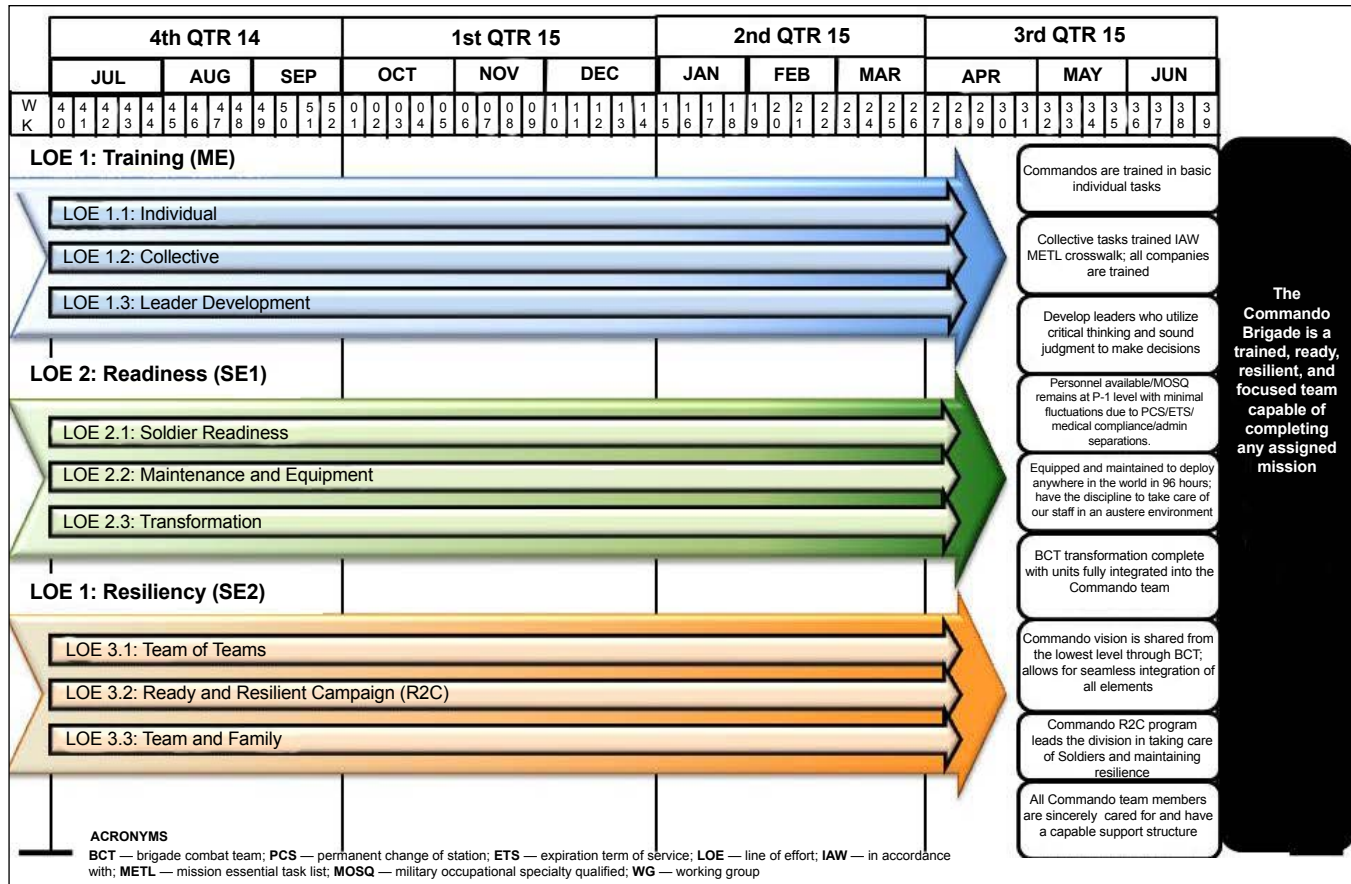
The unit executive officer (XO) will assign the staff responsibility over a developed LOE by WFF. The staff action officer for the LOE is required to determine a feasible/ accomplishable end state as outlined in the operational approach. Additionally, the staff proponent will need to conduct a pre-working group meeting in order to outline two to three steps necessary to attain their end state. These steps will provide initial decision points for the working group. These

steps are still somewhat broad, but each cycle the working group will propose tasks for the unit/units to conduct in order to provide assessments for the decision points (see Figure 3 for an example campaign plan with developed end states).

After developing the concept sketch and the campaign plan, the staff will present the process to the commander for decision. The staff will ask the commander to decide on the implementation of the process after reviewing the campaign plan and concept sketch. This can also be accomplished with a deskside brief to the commander with the XO and/or S3. After the commander approves utilization of a garrison targeting process, the next step is to place the meetings onto the battle rhythm. If a battle rhythm is not in place, be prepared to provide an example to the commander during the decision. The implementation of a battle rhythm is the decisive piece for sustaining the targeting process. Starting the process will involve developing assessments; each meeting will review the assessments to identify tasks that are required to accomplish the end state. The working groups will need a starting point.

Assessments are the primary driving force behind the garrison targeting concept. The assessments must incorporate using MOPs and MOEs. As stated in ADP 3-60, a "MOP answers (questions) such as are we doing things right..." In other words, did the unit accomplish the task assigned to it in the manner outlined for completion of the task? For MOEs, we are looking for the desired effect of the task. In garrison, we can look at increases or decreases in actions taken by our Soldiers. The garrison MOEs, much like non-lethal MOEs

Figure 3 — Example Campaign Plan



associated with operational targeting, will take time for the assessments to be reported. This does not make the assessments less important as decisions will require accurate and relevant data. Attempting to measure the impact of a training event on overall readiness will take time, but immediate results can be gathered through creative questions during after action reviews (AARs). Care must be taken to understand that the immediate results may or may not predict future performance. Immediate, near-term, and long-term MOEs can be developed to provide a comprehensive assessment.

For the 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain Division process, the MOEs have been broken down further to identify the indicators that build towards MOE accomplishment. In Figure 4, the MOE is developed by identifying the increase or decrease of the desired effect as compared to a similar time period. This is fairly simple for garrison targeting as the desired effects are changes to data points that are required for reporting. For instance, alcohol-related incidents are reported each month or quarter; a decrease in alcohol-related incidents would be compared to the same time period as the last fiscal year. MOEs and indicators should be tied to decision points for the commander. The indicators can also be tailored to answer specific questions. Were all subordinate units able to complete training during the allotted time period (additional time allocated on LRPC)? Was the training conducted in the proper facility/range? Did the task require outside agency support (mobile training team)?

A key aspect of developing the garrison process is that the products that are used for executing the process should be the same products that are used for the operational process. In order to continue to receive maximum support and target development for the operational process, ensure that changes to the products are minor and do not create confusion. The participants in the working group will come from across the staff to include subordinate unit liaison officers (LNOs), so simplicity in the process is important. This process does not require 50-100 slides; the working groups are more effective with discussion. The staff should not have to dedicate half of the duty day to get through one meeting. Keep the meetings as short as needed, and the process should be simple to understand to keep the staff functional and efficient.

As discussed above, LNOs are required from subordinate units. The operational process will require LNOs to ensure that the staff is not planning in a vacuum. The garrison process requires the same personnel. During the process, the staff will identify tasks that will involve subordinate units and will take time away from their training plans. Additionally, it will

	MOE	Indicators	Weight	Assess	Evidence/Reporting
SO4	MOE 2.1.1 — Increase in unit readiness levels in medical, physical, and spiritual readiness as compared to FY14	% of Soldiers meeting body composition standards			
		# of Soldiers MRC 1 and 2 categories			
		# of missed medical, dental, and BH appointments			
		# of master fitness/MAW-certified instructors			
SO5	MOE 3.2.4 — Decrease in high risk or negative behavior as compared to 4th QTR FY13	# of domestic child abuse cases			
		# of alcohol or drug abuse cases			3 alcohol-related incidents in 4th QTR FY 14, 10 incidents during 4th QTR FY 13
		# of suicide attempts or ideations			
		# of sexual assault cases			
SO6	MOE 3.2.5 — Increase in participation with transition and sponsorship programs as compared to FY14	% of Soldiers completes SFL-TAP program			
		% of Soldiers contacted by sponsor/mentor prior to arrival			
		% of Soldiers complete pre-separation counseling 12 months from ETS			
		# of Soldiers processed through IDES within 100-day standard			

ACRONYMS
 BH — behavioral health; ETS — expiration term of service; FY — fiscal year; IDES — Integrated Disability Evaluation System; MAW — Mountain Athlete Warrior; MRC — medical readiness class; MOE — measure of effectiveness; QTR — quarter; SFL-TAP — Soldier for Life — Transition Assistance Program

* Weight assigned to indicator = 2.5
 * To achieve MOE a total of 10 is required

Figure 4 — Example MOE Assessments

require the subordinate units to nest their operations within the construct of the garrison process. These two reasons are not detrimental to the process if the LNOs actively participate within the process and within their unit. Units that select their best officers to become LNOs will make the overall team better and will have a greater impact on the subordinate unit's operations. A targeting process without participation from the subordinate units may not function at full capacity.

The Meetings

The process begins with the **assessments working group** (AWG). During the AWG, the entire targeting team is present to review the consolidated assessments (MOP/MOE) to provide a current picture of the unit prior to task development for the cycle. This meeting identifies changes to previous cycle assessments, identifies staff section responsibility to provide updates to assessments, and prepares the staff for the cycle. Additionally, the staff will review the end states and the commander's intent for the current cycle. The working groups will meet, according to the battle rhythm, upon completion of the AWG.

The working groups for this process will be the driving force behind task (target) development. The working groups meet to discuss current and past cycle assessments, future recommendations for the quarterly training guidance, and tasks to complete to achieve the end state. The working groups become focus groups for their individual areas. For example, the training working group will focus primarily on the training proficiency of the unit in relation to the approved METL. Officers, NCOs, and other post agencies outside of the BCT staff participate in these meetings as LNOs or as subject matter experts. For instance, R2C has an abundance of subject matter experts at division level or at Army Community Service (ACS) who can provide vital information for task development. (These outside agencies compare to the interagency subject matter experts available during operations in theater or in a

joint environment). The working groups compile the targets/tasks in a concept of operation (CONOP) format for proposal during the targeting meeting. It is the responsibility of the working group lead to establish the assessment criteria for each target. If the assessment criteria fail to define the desired effect, the assessment will be subjective or open for interpretation. The results of inadequate assessments will reflect on multiple engagements of the same or similar task.

The **targeting meeting** synchronizes all developed tasks from the working groups. Due to limited funding, enabler support, additional resources, and white space on the LRPC, synchronization and prioritization of the tasks must happen during the targeting meeting. Additionally, we review our overall end states, commander's intent, and current assessments. The team prioritizes the task proposals according to the impact towards the end state, the commander's intent, and available white space on the LRPC. Additionally, this meeting provides the XO and the deputy commanding officer (DCO) a current picture of the targeting cycle to aid in the delivery of the decision brief.

The **decision brief** is the forum for each LOE lead to present nominated targets to the commander for approval. The commander receives a review of the end states, the intent, and current assessments prior to the presentation of the targets. Assessments provided to the commander include analysis of the current state of the unit and troop-to-task ratios. The commander needs to know where the unit stands in space and time in relation to the end state and their intent. During the presentation of tasks to the commander, each LOE lead will provide the task's purpose. The purpose should reflect the impact that the task will have on the accomplishment of the end state. Upon approval, targets then move to the task tracker for execution, further planning (dependant on the complexity of the task), or awaiting timeline to publish in the weekly fragmentary order (FRAGO). The decision brief is also the forum to ask for commander's intent for the next targeting cycle. The current assessments could reflect a shift in direction, in which the commander could update the targeting team on the intent. This may also require a FRAGO to update all units involved on the shift in commander's intent.

Task Evolution

A task simply does not just appear on the training calendar. If assessments are clear and tied to decision points, identification of tasks will become second nature to the staff. The working groups must be meticulous when developing tasks. The targeting team must ensure that all tasks nest with the end state and commander's intent.

For example, during the AWG the staff identifies an increase in alcohol-related incidents across the unit. The R2C working group attendees acknowledge the trend and begin to formulate solutions. During the R2C working group, discussion focuses on tasks that can reverse the trend within the unit. These tasks can include increased emphasis on safety briefings, training events, and increased leader involvement. One task that the staff presented to the commander is a training event in which a person who has lost a family member by a drunk driver will speak to each subordinate unit. Another idea is to locate

a person who killed someone while driving drunk to speak during a one-hour time block. The working group assigns a task to an action officer to develop for the targeting meeting.

During the targeting meeting, the action officer presents the developed task and identifies enablers/resources required. This task requires the use of the post theater and outside agency support. The action officer ensures that the division Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) representative is present for the decision brief. The S3 identifies white space on the calendar and provides the action officer possible dates for the class. This task is given a date of 12 weeks out. During the decision brief, the commander receives the updates to the assessments with emphasis on the measurements that associate with the presented tasks. The ASAP representative provides emphasis for the task and individuals who will present their story. The ASAP representative reports that the speaker cannot access the installation due to felony conviction. The action officer then asks the commander for the decision on the presented task, and the commander either approves, disapproves, or modifies the task.

The assigned MOP/MOE for the task becomes available for assessment upon completion of the task. The MOE will measure the alcohol-related incidents for the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year (FY)15 as compared to the 1st Quarter of FY14. The staff determines that the MOP and MOE is complete for this task. The task is now a viable option to re-attack prior to historic alcohol-related incident windows. Additionally, the staff can now explore the next cycle assessments to determine the next task, which will move the unit to the end state. The same process described above can relate to every task associated with garrison operations to include M4 zero and qualification. The MOP is the percentage of individuals who participated in marksmanship training prior to qualification event. The MOE is the increase in expert/sharpshooter percentages as compared to previous 1st Quarter M4 qualification results.

Conclusion

Implementing the targeting process during garrison operations will enhance any unit prior to a CTC rotation or deployment. The simplicity of the process, combined with subject matter experts within each WFF, will alleviate the "everything is a priority" mode of operations. The targeting process accomplishes the commander's intent, provides a path to success for the unit, and keeps the staff focused on the end state. Prioritization of tasks ensures subordinate units are allocated time to accomplish individual and collective training without compromise. Implementing this process will be a win for your organization.

For example products or help in developing the process for your unit, contact travis.e.smith.mil@mail.mil. We will provide the products in order to alleviate some of the development work. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask.

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM AN IBCT WEAPONS COMPANY IN DECISIVE ACTION AT JRTC

MAJ RYAN R. DUFFY

In September of 2012, my company (Delta Company 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division) deployed to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, La., as part of a rehearsal rotation in preparation for an upcoming decisive action training environment (DATE) rotation for the 82nd Airborne Division. My company had not done a decisive action rotation in years due to frequent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. This rotation provided an excellent opportunity for my Soldiers to learn/re-learn skills such as analog battle tracking, “digging in,” and battalion-level operations.

Prior to this event, my company had completed section-level gunnery with built-in TOW (tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided) missile scenarios (simulated) as well as multiple Virtual Battlespace 2 (VBS2)-simulated platoon-level engagements based on a decisive action scenario that I had written with the help of the VBS2 simulator staff. These engagements incorporated “Red Air” (enemy aviation), armored threats, and defensive operations. My platoons used FM 3-21.12, *The Infantry Weapons Company*, as their cornerstone document.

The decisive action rotation incorporated a defense situational training exercise (STX) lane against an armored threat, a company-level offensive operation on “Jetertown” (a JRTC village), a second defensive operation against Geronimo “jumping in” (mostly light Infantry based with the majority of my company attached to another company commander), and a battalion attack, which had the three light Infantry companies attacking with Delta Company (augmented by the brigade Military Police [MP] platoon with .50 cal machine gun trucks) and an attached engineer squad.

Orders Process

Following my orders drop on the previous day, I immediately began mission analysis. Having been stationed at JRTC (as an observer-controller-trainer [OCT] previously),

Rehearsing digging-in prior to JRTC will help develop SOPs for positions and camouflage; this will also establish a working relationship with the engineers. Due to limited blade hours with the High-Mobility Engineer Excavator (HMEE), not all TOW vehicles were fully dug-in. Consider which crew members will not dig personal positions due to remaining in the up-armored vehicle during the fight.

Photo courtesy of author



I had a bit of a “home-field advantage” as I knew the terrain. A common-sense approach to what terrain is navigable by the opposing force (OPFOR) visual modification (VISMOD) vehicles (OPFOR surrogate vehicle [OSV] T-72s, BMPs, and BRDMs) will help leaders understand avenues of approach in the thick vegetation of Fort Polk. I used the same basic process I was taught at the Maneuver Captains Career Course (MCCC) and briefed my plan off of a butcher block in the field. I tasked my fire support officer (FSO) to direct my headquarters section in constructing my terrain model along with planning fires.

Takeaways: Use simple troop leading procedures (TLPs) that are taught in the Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course (IBOLC) and MCCC and you will do fine. Issue a complete order. Rehearse your order delivery prior to giving your operation order (OPORD). Consider having your executive officer (XO), first sergeant (1SG), or FSO watch a checklist of key points in the order during execution to avoid forgetting or skipping key points. I have seen a JRTC order that was meticulously constructed neglect to read the mission statement, even once. Also, the JRTC products are generally fairly simple. Look at the enemy situation template (SITTEMP) and plan your mission accordingly; don’t become so focused on the process that you forget to account for enemy weapons systems (e.g. putting your air assault helicopter landing zone [HLZ] next to a templated DShK heavy machine gun).

Defensive Positions (Mounted and Dismounted)

I spent a significant amount of my time in planning where to dig-in my mounted and dismounted assets. I knew that I would have limited “blade time” with my engineer attachments. I made an assumption that would prove to be problematic; I assumed my lieutenants and platoon sergeants would be reasonably familiar with standards for fighting positions. I found that Soldiers, NCOs, and my lieutenants did not know basic standards for positions despite having distributed cards from the Training Support Center with defensive position standards printed on them. One platoon was constructing a giant foxhole-type position, and some were putting the M240B in the center of the position rather than the corners as per doctrine to ensure flanking shots. Correcting these issues took significant time to correct. For mounted positions, the attached engineers with dig equipment had been instructed not to dig vehicle positions over fears of damaging their equipment. It took some finesse, but we talked them into digging some of our TOW trucks in to the wheels.

Takeaways: Rehearse digging in before arriving at JRTC. What looks simple and briefs simple can be a mess in a hot, time-constrained environment with few digging assets. I recommend scheduling a week of defensive operations training that incorporates engineers, setting in obstacles, and digging infantry fighting obstacles. Additionally, this provides the opportunity to work with the engineers and establish relationships that will help ensure mission accomplishment and tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP) sharing. We employed mines in our scenario, which were resourced through the simulated Class V yard at Fort Polk. Check

ahead of time if your scenario will incorporate mines as they are another device that will require rehearsals and training.

The new Fiscal Year (FY) 15 modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) for Infantry brigade combat team (IBCT) weapons companies puts the Laser Target Locating Module down to the platoon level. This equipment can give you distance, direction, and grids to points in your engagement area. This can help you rapidly select and mark target reference points (TRPs) and build platoon sector sketches in support of the company defense plan. I made my defense plan on the hood of my command HMMWV with a red lens on a butcher block. It was ugly but functional. I briefed my platoon leaders using the product after having my FSO conduct a sanity check on it.

Counter Reconnaissance

The 1st Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment — the JRTC OPFOR — has excellent recon capabilities. Geronimo Soldiers practice recon on every rotation, and relatively junior leaders in their organization (i.e. E-4s) often have a lot of experience leading recon patrols. Given the large signature of a delta company, I knew that it was likely that we would be easily observed digging in positions. I rotated a platoon at a time for counter-reconnaissance patrols ahead of the engagement area during defensive preparations. I had my headquarters element set up the AN/PRS-9 Battlefield Anti-Intrusion System prior to JRTC, but I had a malfunctioning system. However, there is value in that equipment as it can provide early warning for approaching forces down specific avenues of approach. However, I used another resource as part of my counter-recon fight. I coordinated for expendable-unattended ground sensors (E-UGS) for my rotation through the contractors who run the program. While it did not provide the analysis of “what” the threat was, it provided me with situational awareness (SA) as to the location of Geronimo probing our position. I had my FSO manning the “Toughbook” laptop that monitors the sensors, and due to the decisive action rules of engagement (ROE), I was able to call for fire on the acquired E-UGS hits. In speaking with the OPFOR after the battle (one of the enemy recon leaders was my next door neighbor at Fort Polk), I was told that my Soldiers were easily seen digging in, and that there was a low standard in terms of my crews scanning for recon.

Takeaways: I recommend clearly identifying a rotation for scanning using the TOW Improved Target Acquisition System (ITAS) and digging in. My 1SG ensured that we rotated Soldiers through the air-conditioned ITAS trucks to prevent heat casualties, which can mount quickly at JRTC. I only had one minor heat casualty through the rotation, which was a testament to my NCO leader checks and monitoring the work-rest cycle during brutal heat and humidity during the day.

I also recommend rotating one of your four platoons at a given time to the counter-recon fight. Disseminating the location and composition of your forces ahead of the forward line of troops (FLOT) is key; I have frequently seen recon

and counter-recon assets suffer fratricide at JRTC due to poorly disseminated recon and counter-recon plans. Use maps, overlays (printed products if possible) to ensure the location of friendly elements is known down to the lowest level. Counter-recon operations are another task that will be difficult to teach "on the job" during your defense; train them ahead of time.

Red Air (Enemy Rotary Wing) Threats

As a rotational unit in JRTC, there is both "blue air" (friendly rotary wing) and "red air" depending on the scenario. Reacting to air attack has not been a commonly discussed battle drill for Infantry units during the past several years. Thankfully, I had incorporated concepts involved in company-level air defense into a previous leader professional development (LPD) for the company and integrated red air (fixed and rotary wing) into my VBS2 scenarios. In this rotation, I was told that the OPFOR LH-72 Lakotas were simulating Mi-24 Hind-D helicopters. I instructed that no weapon system below .50 cal would engage enemy helicopters; and when they were engaged, that they would be fired on as "volley fire" on order. The OCTs adjudicated the helicopters as "damaged" due to our coordinated fires, thus limiting our losses to enemy red air.

Takeaways: An LPD with all platoon leaders and NCOs before the rotation will ensure that eager leaders do not compromise positions or waste ammunition on ineffective fires. For passive aerial defense measures, we used the herringbone formation at a halt and used the cover of trees when possible. In training scenarios, I trained platoons to be familiar with other air defense threats such as Mi-28 Havok and Ka-50 Hokum as the Mi-24 Hind is becoming less utilized due to age and obsolescence throughout the world despite its frequent inclusion in training scenarios. The M2A1 .50 cal armed with the MK211 multipurpose round would have significant effects on even armored helicopter fuselages in actual combat. At very close ranges the MK19 could be effective as well, however, the MK19 is not represented in JRTC rotations. The TOW missile is capable of destroying a slow-moving, low-flying helicopter as well, as is the Javelin. However, the employment of these weapons must be done judiciously, weighing the limited amount of ammunition in the basic load, the likelihood of scoring a hit, and the potential of highlighting the locations of a key weapons system to the enemy against the possible destruction of an enemy helicopter, which is one of the deadliest threats faced on the battlefield for a delta company.

Communication

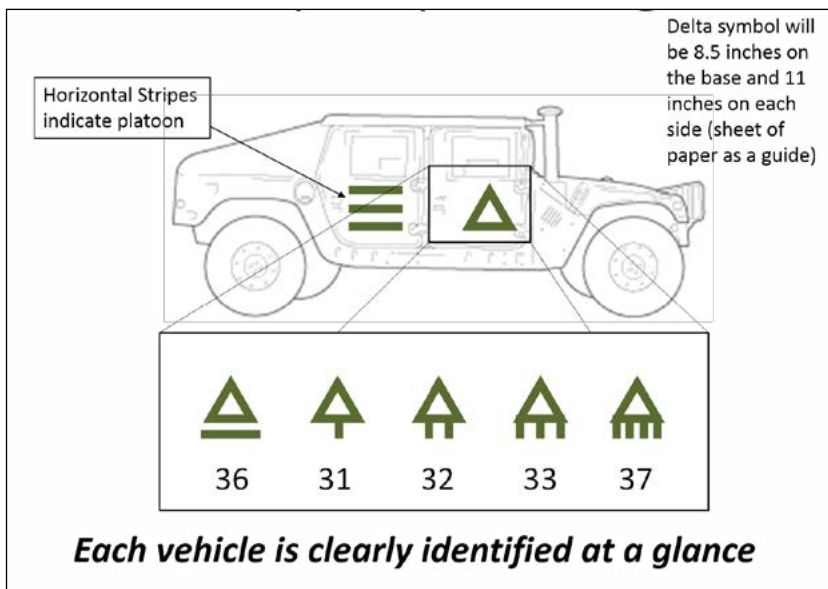
The dual power-amp capabilities of a delta company were instrumental in JRTC as units were widely separated at times. During the battalion attack, my company acted as a de-facto retrans for the battalion as man-pack radios lacked the range to communicate between the battalion tactical command post (TAC) and line companies as they approached their assault positions; the mounted

radios helped maintain communication and synchronization. Joint capabilities receivers (JCR) will be your best means of communicating long distances. The terrain at Fort Polk leads to terrible FM comms in general and a lot of dead space. My commo rep attached an additional section of radio aerial to the middle of the antennae on my power-amp vehicles (we called it a "super whip"), and it was instrumental in our ability to maintain communications with the elements in the woodline. The organic Harris Falcon II high-frequency (HF) radio was not used; the organizational knowledge was no longer present in our company or the battalion S6 shop on how to use HF frequencies. This represents a possible means of communication if you are able to research and get training frequencies for this radio system. I did not successfully employ this radio in my time as a weapons company commander. However, it would be ideal for operations and long-distance communication with the battalion tactical operations center (TOC) if the headquarters and headquarters company (HHC) commander employs his HF radio in the TOC as well.

Vehicle Markings

My company used a method of vehicle marking that, while somewhat unusual, allows for leaders and Soldiers to know at a glance which vehicle in the company that they are looking at. All vehicles are marked with 90-mile-per-hour tape. I utilized the Greek letter "delta" as the base symbol, which was represented by an equilateral triangle with 11-inch legs (chosen so a piece of copier paper could be used as a guide). The two "gun trucks" (M1025s) and TOW carriers (M1167s) had one to four vertical "tick" marks on the bottom of the triangle. Two ticks represent the section sergeant's vehicle while four represented the platoon sergeant's vehicle. Platoons were marked with one to four horizontal strips of tape on the rear doors, representing the four platoons. Just a technique, but it was easily identifiable on the battlefield. The company commander's and platoon leaders' vehicles were marked with Pink-side VS-17 panels on the roof with their

Figure 1 — Example Tape Markings



call sign. The rest of the trucks were marked with orange-side VS-17 with call signs, with the XO's vehicle having two VS-17s. This was to assist in "talking on" attack aviation. Consider creative ways of marking key vehicles with infrared chemlights and strobes; any visual cue to find your own vehicles in a swirling fight and possibly talk-on attack aviation can be key. If all of your vehicles have the same night markings, it may be difficult or impossible for aviators to figure out what you are trying to talk them on to. An LPD with your platoon leaders and NCOs with an actual pilot can help your subordinates understand the five-line close combat attack (CCA) request or at least understand basic concepts like talking "big to small," direction of attack, and the capabilities and limitations of aviation.

Company Attack

The company attack was slated to be conducted at night. I employed six phase lines, each with an easy to remember progression (red, white, blue and purple, green, and gold, the last three being Mardi Gras colors). While I questioned if I had too many graphic control measures, it helped me maintain an accurate picture of my FLOT and coordinate with my platoons as the situation at night on the objective got hectic to say the least. I believe the new CS-15 communication (end-user device, which is like a "cell phone with a map") would have been great in this scenario, as maintaining SA of my elements (to include small fragments of surviving squads) was difficult at best. During the company attack, the OCTs had the majority of the company notionally "air assault" into a position south of the objective village. It was here that I saw that while we had trained well in mounted operations, our ability to move dismounted at night was poor. Formations were extremely close, and movement was noisy. I had to personally guide several elements in the direction of the attack despite the fact that we were along a linear roadway in the woodline. From this point forward, I utilized opportunities to train the platoons on night dismounted maneuver; for example, following a land navigation course, I would have the platoon practice moving through the woods with night optic devices (NODs) prior to bedding down. While mounted maneuver (day and night) is clearly the priority in a delta company (my battalion commander had told me "make sure Delta Company is good at driving and shooting"), it's good to take opportunities to

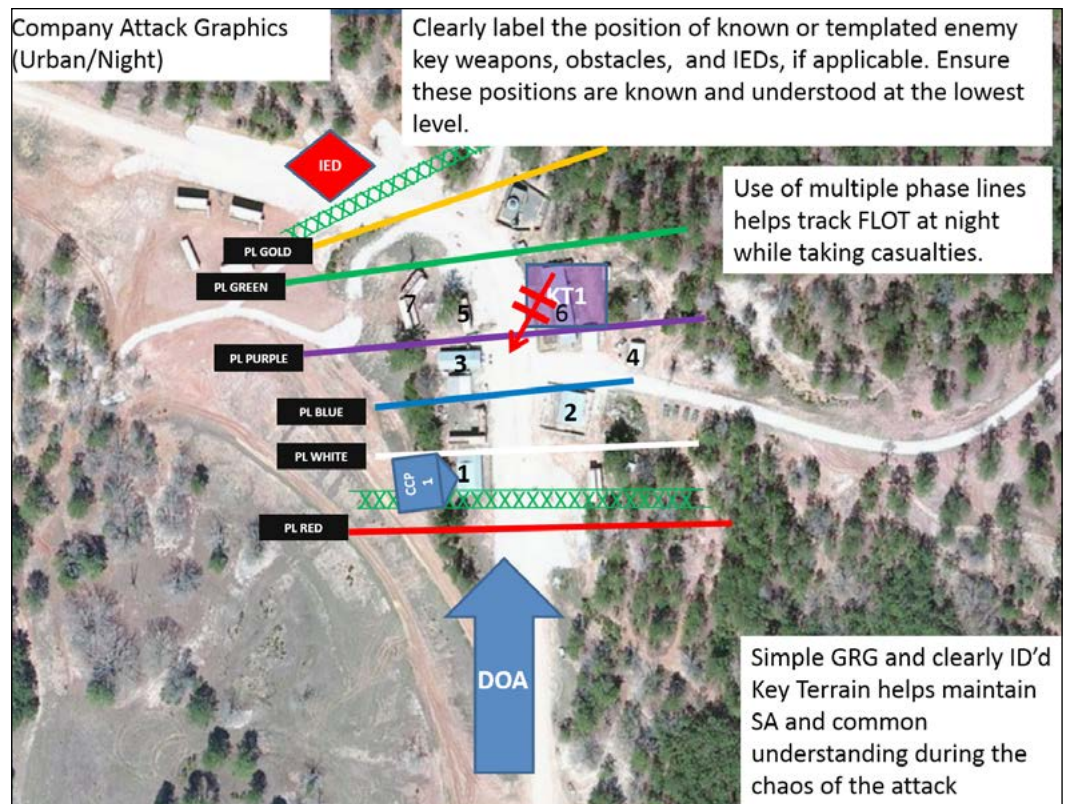


Figure 2 — Company Attack Graphic

ensure that they understand at least the basics of fighting as light Infantry, especially at night. This attack also highlighted the need for realistic TOW ITAS training. One ITAS gunner mistook a JRTC "hulk" vehicle on the battlefield for a tank even though the signature from a mildly-warm hulk vehicle and an operating tracked vehicle are quite different. Having TOW crews conduct "field tracking" training with actual vehicles (VISMOD OPFOR vehicles, ideally) will help build that proficiency. The Recognition Of Combat Vehicles (ROC-V) trainer available online is also a great resource for teaching crews what thermal signatures look like for friendly and enemy wheeled and tracked vehicles.

Another focus item during the company attack was the breach of a wire obstacle. The JRTC products showed a wire obstacle at both the north and south ends of the village. Identify a primary breach element but ensure all platoon conduct breach rehearsals. For suppression, we used a mounted element with gun trucks and a TOW ITAS truck to destroy armored elements. For obscuration, we used hand-thrown smoke. Securing and reduction were conducted by my second platoon with wire cutters (the obstacle was wire and angle iron and easily defeated). Use real wire and the equipment (i.e. wire cutters, smoke, etc.) you will use to breach with during your rehearsals. Due to the chaos of an attack, your breach element may be attrited and you will have to re-task another platoon to open a lane. Ensure that all elements know the breaching fundamentals (suppress, obscure, secure, reduce, and assault — SOSRA). I ensured that I was close enough to the breach point to see the progress of the breach element but not get myself killed

in the breach. Due to the intensity of the OPFOR fire and realistic pyrotechnics, my breach elements became timid. Being at the point of friction allowed me to direct them to continue with violence of action and pass platoons through the breach. Finding the point at which you are far enough forward but not bogged down in the 50-meter fight takes some finesse and patience.

Battalion Attack

The battalion attack was a particularly interesting training event, as I had never conducted a battalion-level offensive operation previously. Prior to the operation, my battalion commander conducted a reduced force rehearsal on Geronimo Drop Zone that incorporated phase lines, operation schedules (OPSKEDs) being called over the radio for all key events (i.e. A/B/C companies securing their assault positions), and fires. Delta Company headquarters drove several HMMWVs from phase line to phase line, helping the leaders at all levels visualize the attack. Having a full rehearsal like this really helped synchronize the operation. The attached MP company, while motivated, did not have a lot of familiarity with mounted operations. Unless you have an existing relationship with non-combat arms attachments and a thorough understanding of their capabilities, consider A) using them to plus-up your platoons (i.e. divvy them out) or B) maintain them as a reserve. I gave them specific tactical tasks during the operation; it would have been better maintaining them as a reserve than using them as a fifth platoon. Another key component of the battalion attack for a delta company was the breach of a wire obstacle on the road leading into the town. My attached engineer (sapper) squad made a simulated improvised Bangalore torpedo that was OC-approved (the charges need to be made to a certain standard to “work” in JRTC; they are depicted in the exercise ROE), and the squad rehearsed emplacing the charge and cutting the wire with wire cutters. Their extensive rehearsals and smoke from Field Artillery smoke missions at the north end of the town allowed them to open the breach and pass the company through. Your scenario may have mines “in play;” think through your reduction plan if that is a factor in achieving a successful breach.

My company was the last remaining element in Jetertown, which was unexpected. Although we had war-gamed many possibilities, we had not discussed the possibility of Delta Company occupying the town in depth following the destruction of the light Infantry companies. A 30-second contingency plan addressing this possibility would have helped my subordinates visualize dismounting and seizing the high-ground better.

Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES)

Prior to JRTC, ensure that you have an adequate supply of M240B blank firing adapters (BFAs) and discriminators. They are in short supply at Fort Polk, and you will likely just be down a crew-served weapon without it. Also, M2A1 .50

cals mount the BFA differently as well; talk to the Training Support Center about getting a long term loan on them and mount them well in advance of JRTC to ensure there are no issues. **Learn the MILES AT-4s and Javelins before JRTC.** OCTs are generally unhelpful in resolving your MILES issues, and the 1-509th PIR uses that stuff all of the time. If your Soldiers do not have the AT-4s and Javelins mated to the harness properly, they will not work, and you will be down more valuable anti-armor weapons. Also, ensuring you have adequate Anti-Tank Weapons Effect Signature Simulator (ATWESS) rounds for your TOWs is key also. TOW MILES installation is an involved process; research it prior to your arrival in the box, as it is your most important weapon system.

Recommendations

1. The delta company has six vehicles in the company which do not have crew-served weapons. Unless the admin vehicles are filled with Soldiers able to dismount with AT-4s or Javelins, the company and platoon HQ vehicles (minus the LMTV with an M66 ring mount) do not bring additional firepower to the point of friction. The addition of a Common Remotely Operated Weapons Stations (CROWS) equipment would greatly increase company firepower, as there would be an additional six machine guns (M240L at the least) to bring to the fight, along with additional optics capabilities. Literally, there is no recourse for the platoon leader to get into the fight without having to dismount, or even more illogically, fire from his vehicle with his personal weapon, in the close fight. The current mismatch of unarmored M1025 HMMWVs with M1167s creates a mismatch of protection and vehicle capabilities, as the M1025 can go in many places the 1167 cannot.

2. FM 3-21.12 does not address engineer planning in-depth. While it does provide a conceptual overview of the process required to dig-in a weapons company, along with a warning to the limitation of the pre-brigade engineer battalion (BEB) engineer company ability to dig in without augmentation, it does not provide the commander with any planning factors, example positions, or other resources to assist him in his defensive preparations. While tables for blade hours and other engineer considerations are easily found for tanks and Infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), they are absent for TOW and heavy weapons vehicles. This would only require an additional page or so added to the manual and be of great help in disseminating a standard that can be incorporated into a tactical SOP (TACSOP).

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Lessons from the Past



THUNDER IN THE ARGONNE! SGT ALVIN YORK AND MISSION COMMAND

COL DOUGLAS V. MASTRIANO

Argonne Forest, France — 8 October 1918. It was another cold and foggy morning along the edge of the rugged Argonne Forest where the 82nd U.S. Infantry Division prepared to launch an attack. Hidden among the trees and hills just a kilometer away from the Americans were four regiments of battle-hardened German soldiers who had orders to not only defeat the American attack, but to follow that up with a counterattack. This notwithstanding, at precisely 0610, the Soldiers of the 82nd Division began their attack. Among the men in this push was CPL Alvin York, a squad leader in the 328th Infantry Regiment. The mission for York's unit was to advance across a valley and then two kilometers into the forest to sever the German supply network in the Argonne. This would force the Germans to abandon their Argonne defensive line and give the Americans a chance to deliver a knockout blow against their stalwart foes.¹

Initially, the American attack seemed to go well as forward-deployed Germans seemingly retreated in the face of superior numbers. But, this was a ruse, as the Germans merely were falling back into prepared positions and waited

for an opportune time to draw the Americans into a brilliantly laid out kill zone. As the Americans continued their advance, they crossed an open valley that was surrounded by thickly forested steep ridges that contained more than 30 German machine guns and hundreds of infantry. Once the Americans were in the midst of the kill zone, the Germans opened fire. This was quickly followed by German artillery ripping gaping holes in the American line.²

Among the first to fall was York's platoon leader, LT Kirby Stewart, who was cut down when a spattering of German machine-gun bullets tore into his legs. Although unable to walk, LT Stewart crawled forward encouraging his men to advance. However, a second burst of German bullets hit Stewart, taking his life; he died with his face towards the enemy. As the casualties mounted, the American attack quickly foundered.³ With no way out, the Americans were trapped and doomed to complete defeat. Of this, York wrote:

"The Germans got us, and they got us right smart. They

American Soldiers manning a 37mm gun support an attack in the dense Argonne Forest of France. The German defenders had turned the forest into a veritable fortress.

Photos courtesy of Army Heritage Education Center



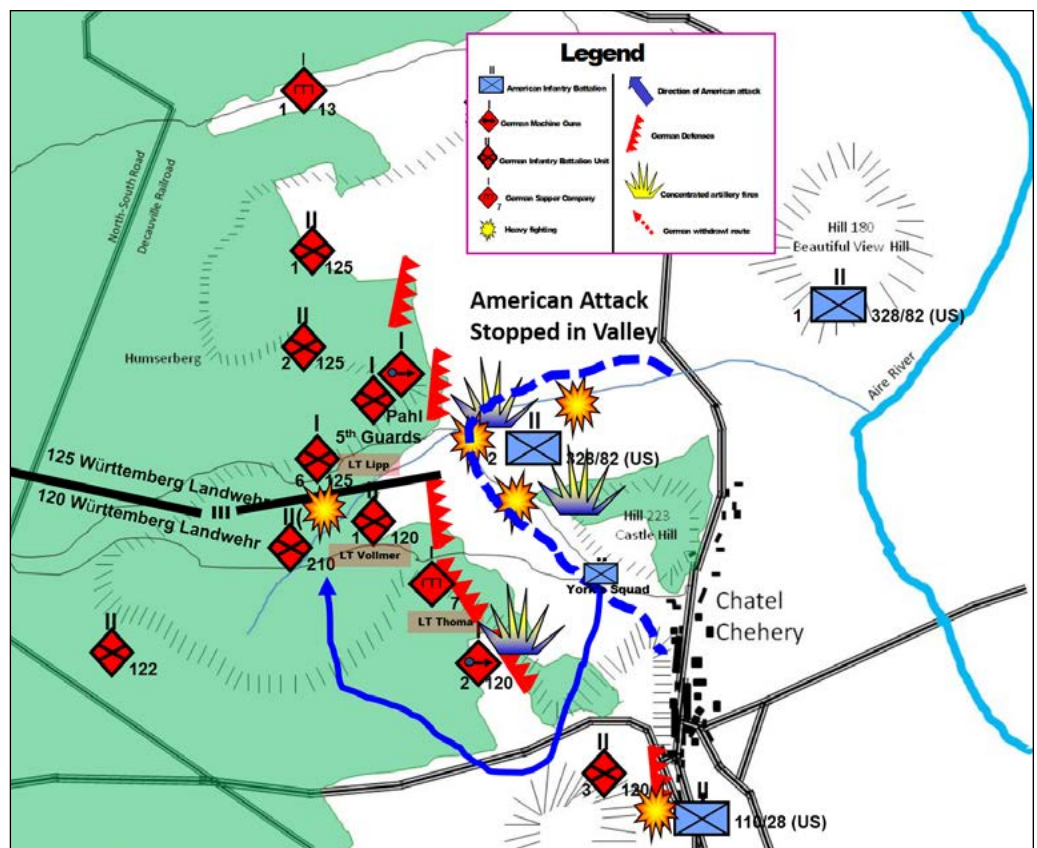
*just stopped us dead in our tracks. Their machine guns were up there on the heights overlooking us and well hidden, and we couldn't tell for certain where the terrible heavy fire was coming from... And I'm telling you they were shooting straight. Our boys just went down like the long grass before the mowing machine at home. Our attack just faded out... And there we were, lying down, about halfway across [the valley] and those German machine guns and big shells getting us hard.*⁴

The blistering German fire took a heavy toll on the regiment with the survivors seeking cover wherever they could find it. Something had to be done to silence the German machine guns. Remaining in the valley was not an option. With LT Stewart dead, SGT Harry Parsons assumed command of York's platoon. After surveying the situation, he ordered SGT Bernard Early, CPL York, CPL Murray Savage, and CPL William Cutting to advance with their squads to a defile to the south. From here, SGT Parsons surmised, that they just may be able to get behind the German lines and eliminate the machine guns that were holding up the advance.⁵

After dodging German fires, SGT Early steered his 16 men to the defilade, then up a cut in the valley that led behind the German positions. They slowly worked their way around the German infantry until they were spotted by two German soldiers, who were carrying large water containers. Upon seeing the Americans, the Germans dropped the containers and ran to their battalion headquarters to report that the enemy was behind the lines. The Americans instinctively followed.

Arriving on the heels of the fleeing water carriers, the Americans surprised and captured some 70 German soldiers, which included the battalion commander, Leutnant Paul Vollmer. Vollmer, a highly decorated German officer, had lived in Chicago before the war and spoke fluent English. While the Americans tried to line up their prisoners, a machine-gun crew on a nearby hill yelled to the captured Germans to take cover and then opened fire.⁶ The blast of bullets killed six Americans and wounded three. York was the only NCO not hit, placing him in charge of the remaining seven men.⁷

With the surviving Americans and German prisoners clinging to the meadow ground, York seized the initiative.



Map courtesy of Josiah Mastriano

American Attack in the Argonne Forest, 8 October 1918

He charged up the hill, outflanked the German machine gun and an infantry platoon, killing 19. Seeing a large group of German reinforcements arriving from further up the hill, York decided to go back to his men. As he trotted down the hill, he was spotted by a German officer, Leutnant Fritz Endriss, who ordered a bayonet charge to kill the American. Seeing a platoon of Germans charging, York slid on his side, pulled out his .45 Colt automatic pistol, and began picking off the enemy from back to front. York used this trick in hunting wild turkeys in the hills of Tennessee. There, he learned that if you shoot the lead bird, the rest will see him fall and scatter. By shooting from back to front, the lead Germans had no idea that their numbers were quickly dwindling. Within moments, Endriss was the last German still charging, with York shooting him at point blank range.⁸

Seeing this, Vollmer, who was captured earlier, slowly got up off of the ground and approached York. Standing behind York, he cautiously yelled above the din, "English?" York replied, "American!" In exasperation, Vollmer answered, "Good Lord! If you won't shoot anymore, I will make them give up." Endriss and Vollmer had served together in the German army for nearly a decade, and he was desperate to try to save his life.⁹ York shot Endriss in the abdomen, and Endriss was calling out for help. Vollmer saw this as the only way to save his friend's life.¹⁰

York was not sure what to make of this German officer offering a surrender and cautiously watched as Vollmer pulled out a whistle and blew a command over it. With that,

some 30 Germans dropped their weapons on the hill above and made their way down to York and the other prisoners in the meadow. York and his men quickly organized the 100 prisoners into a formation and began marching them out of the forest. During the march back to American lines, the Americans ended up walking into another group of Germans. York shrewdly secured their surrender as well and in the end came out with 132 prisoners. This saved his unit from destruction, thwarted the German counterattack, and allowed the 82nd Division to achieve its objective. As a result, the German army ordered all their forces out of their Argonne Forest fortress, a noteworthy setback for them.¹¹

For his heroism, York was promoted to sergeant, awarded the Medal of Honor, and would go down in history as America's most celebrated hero of the First World War. The U.S. Army has helped keep the memory of Alvin York alive by featuring his story in every leadership manual since the 1980s. There are several aspects of the York saga that the U.S. Army has celebrated, which has included his devout religious faith, his high moral standards, and his conviction to do the right thing. With such a foundation, from the U.S. Army's viewpoint, York is the epitome of what mission command looks like for the Soldier.

Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0, *Mission Command*, defines mission command as "...the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations."

"Mission command is one of the foundations of unified land

operations. This philosophy of command helps commanders capitalize on the human ability to take action to develop the situation and integrate military operations to achieve the commander's intent and desired end state. Mission command emphasizes centralized intent and dispersed execution through disciplined initiative."¹²

It was the execution of disciplined initiative on that October day in 1918 by Alvin York that turned certain defeat to decisive victory. It is such disciplined initiative that the U.S. Army is calling its leaders to instill in our Soldiers, as ADRP 6-0 goes on to describe:

*Leaders and subordinates who exercise disciplined initiative create opportunity by taking action to develop the situation. Disciplined initiative is action in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise. Commanders rely on subordinates to act. A subordinate's disciplined initiative may be the starting point for seizing the tactical initiative. This willingness to act helps develop and maintain operational initiative used by forces to set or dictate the terms of action throughout an operation.*¹³

The key component to this description of mission command is "Disciplined initiative is action in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise. Commanders rely on subordinates to act."¹⁴ This is precisely what transpired when the German machine gun cut down all the NCOs, except York. Without receiving any further instructions, York knew precisely what to do and thereby changed the course of the battle. ADRP 6-0 does an excellent job describing

mission command, and the effects that we endeavor to achieve by it. However, it falls short in two areas:

- (1) How to develop a "culture" of mission command in a unit, and
- (2) What sort of foundation a Soldier needs to be mission command ready.

How to Develop a Culture of Mission Command

As ADRP 6-0 describes mission command, it is largely confined to the realm of tactics and combat. Although that is precisely where mission command is best suited, it should be practiced in all areas of Army life — from the front line to the administrative staff. Mission command should



CPL Alvin York's group of German prisoners march outside of Varennes-en-Argonne. The three German officers at the front of the formation each played a central role in the 8 October battle. At left is German Leutnant Paul Vollmer, the commander of 1st Battalion, 120th Württemberg Regiment who personally surrendered his unit to York. In the center is Leutnant Max Thoma, commander of the 7th Bavarian Mining Company; he refused to surrender unless Vollmer accepted responsibility. To the right is German Leutnant Paul Lipp, who commanded the 125th Württemberg machine gun that killed or wounded half of the Americans with York. The American in the center of the photo, just behind the German officers, is York.

be a way of life for the modern U.S. Army and not something left for a select few at the tip of the spear.

Most Soldiers in the Army tend to fear dealing with pay problems, corrections to assignment orders, and most any other administrative task as it seems the first words uttered by support staff is “no, we can’t do that.” I remember some years ago walking into the housing office at a post, having just arrived, and a staff member glared at me and my family, curtly saying, “What do you need?” The subsequent “support” was just as poor as the attitude of that Department of the Army Civilian: lackluster and frustrating.

Unfortunately, this is normal for some administrative and support offices throughout the Army, where work indeed seems to be a four-letter word. After expending much time and effort, the Soldier tends to get what they asked for earlier on, but was forced to navigate a time-consuming and frustrating bureaucracy confronting an admin staff blocking their every move. This is not what the Army should look like in the 21st century. Shouldn’t ADRP 6-0 be applied to every aspect of Army life? To include the administrative and support staff?

In a time where the U.S. Army is having its resources slashed and force structure reduced, should it not seek to replace unproductive and unwieldy bureaucratic admin staff with a group of energetic and dynamic Soldiers and Civilians who understand the meaning of customer service and exercise the spirit of mission command to provide the troops with timely support. In the spirit of mission command, the phrase, “No, we can’t do that” should be replaced with, “We will do all we can to support your request” and then back it up with positive results. Introducing mission command in the support and administrative realm will no doubt be a significant cultural change, but something that is well overdue.

Exercising mission command in the administrative and support functions, however, is not meant as an excuse to cut corners or to break regulations. There are reasons why rules and regulations exist. Yet, commanders often have discretion, and there are exceptions to the regulations that can be leveraged in certain circumstances. With this in mind, the spirit of mission command is not a license to break the law or to compromise safety, but rather a way to expect Soldiers throughout the Army, whether Infantry or clerks, to seek and exercise efficient ways to accomplish the mission. This will improve the effectiveness of the organization and replace the negative and sluggish attitude with a positive, “can do” view of the mission. This would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our entire force.

Developing your Character Muscles for the Day of Battle

The Alvin York story is compelling in so many areas. In him we have a person who went from a partier to a church goer, a bar fighter to Sunday school teacher, a hedonist to philanthropist. Of his years of rebellion, York wrote:

I got in bad company and I broke off from my mother’s and father’s advice and got to drinking and gambling and



CPL Alvin York nervously poses for the camera on the deck of the SS Ohioan after docking in Hoboken, N.J., on 22 May 1919. He had no idea that an April 1919 article in the Saturday Evening Post about his battle exploits had made him a national hero. York was officially welcomed by the Tennessee Society and whisked away to be feted in New York City and Washington, D.C.

playing up right smart... I used to drink a lot of Moonshine. I used to gamble my wages away week after week. I used to stay out late at nights. I had a powerful lot of fistfights.¹⁵

The turning point for York was in 1915 during a New Year’s Day church service. The change in his life was dramatic and he literally went from being a law breaker to a respected leader in his church in little over a year.

The change occurred in York’s life when his friends tried to persuade him to go drinking, but he continually refused. It took a lot of moral courage for York to remain firmly committed to his new life. Although this was not an easy time in York’s life, each time he declined to join his friends in their drinking binges, this sharpened his character and moral courage, directly contributing to his heroic deeds only two years later.

Character is like a muscle; the more it is exercised and used, the stronger it becomes. Every time we choose to do what is right, we build character and moral courage. York consistently chose to be faithful in the little things; he constantly made it his habit of choosing to do the right thing. As a result, he was able to accomplish unimaginable feats later in the heat of battle. Our challenge is to exercise moral courage in all of our decisions to develop personal character;

which builds our character muscles and enables us to do the right thing in times of distress. As Civil War General Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain said:

*We know not of the future, and cannot plan for it much. But we can hold our spirits and our bodies so pure and high, we may cherish such thoughts and such ideals, and dream such dreams of lofty purpose, that we can determine and know what manner of men we will be whenever and wherever the hour strikes, that calls to noble action. This predestination God has given us in charge. No man becomes suddenly different from his habit and cherished thought.*¹⁶

As Alvin York did, we must endeavor to build our character and moral courage “muscles” by choosing to do the right thing every day. This will prepare us for the day of battle that lies ahead. Certainly, York was physically courageous on the battlefield because he was morally courageous in his spiritual life. This is the key ingredient of exercising mission command and is personified today in the Army Values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.¹⁷ How else can a Soldier apply mission command unless they have made a daily habit of doing the right thing, of setting aside their selfish desires and instead exercising self-control? These are meant to be the guiding principles for Soldiers to build their character muscles in the manner of Alvin York, so that when the day of fire and trouble arrives, they will know what to do.¹⁸

Conclusion

Mission command is an idea borne forth by the fire of combat, refined by exercising it in peacetime, and has the potential to make our Army better and stronger as a guiding principle in all aspects of life. The “can-do” attitude personified by the actions of Alvin York in 1918 can likewise improve the effectiveness of Soldiers today, whether at the tip of the spear or in the support chain. Mission command should emerge as a modern-day philosophy for Soldiers across all career fields.

Yet, to truly be effective in the broad application of the ideals manifest in mission command, it takes commitment and a lifelong dedication to doing the right thing. In Alvin York, we see a man, although for a time living a life of dissipation and trouble. Yet, on that cold New Year’s Day in 1915, he decided to turn his back on wrongdoing and decided to live life in honor of his newfound faith. By daily choosing to do the right thing, York became a courageous and brave man on the inside. When he found himself alone and in command on that tragic day of 8 October 1918, York knew what to do.¹⁹

The world indeed seems on “fire” today. Much uncertainty exists, and the likelihood of another war or foreign intervention confronting our nation is a distinct possibility. Yet, there are actions we can take now individually to prepare ourselves for such an eventuality. The Army endeavors to develop Soldiers of character and honor in the manner of Alvin York. We have before us the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos serving as examples of how to begin the

process of exercising your character muscle, so that when that day arrives for you to make the difference, you will know what to do.

Notes

¹ Douglas Mastriano, *Alvin York: A New Biography of the Hero of the Argonne* (Lexington, KY; University of Kentucky Press, 2014), 81-85.

² G. Edward Buxton, *Official History of 82nd Division American Expeditionary Forces, 1917-1919* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1920), 54-58; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Md., 82nd Division, entry 1241, Records Group (RG) 120; NARA, 328th Infantry Regiment Records, entry 2133, RG 391; NARA, American Battlefields & Monuments Commission (ABMC) files.

³ NARA, 82nd Division, entry 1241, RG 120; NARA, 328th Infantry Regiment Records, entry 2133, RG 391; NARA, ABMC Division files, 82nd Division, RG 117.

⁴ Richard Wheeler, ed., *Sergeant York and the Great War* (Bulverde, TX: Mantle Ministries, 1998), 154-155.

⁵ Alvin York, *Sergeant York* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday-Doran, 1928), 221-222.

⁶ Gustav Strohm, *Die Württembergischen Regimenter im Weltkrieg 1914-1918, Band 25, Das Württembergische Landwehr Infanterie Regiment nr. 120* (Stuttgart, Germany: Belser, 1920), 163-172.

⁷ Mastriano, 88.

⁸ CPT Bertrand Cox, affidavit given on 21 February 1919, filed by the 328th Infantry Regiment Advocate General, with actual swearing of the affidavit on 26 February 1919; George Pattullo, “The Second Elder Gives Battle,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 9, No. 43 (April 26, 1919): 71-74.

⁹ Strohm, 163-172.

¹⁰ York, 229.

¹¹ Strohm, 163-172.

¹² ADRP 6-0, *Mission Command*, (Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC; 2012), 1-5.

¹³ *Ibid*, 2-4.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 2-4.

¹⁵ Mastriano, 98.

¹⁶ Alice Rains Turlock, *In the Hands of Providence: Joshua L. Chamberlain and the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 1992), 143.

¹⁷ The Army Values, available online at: <http://www.army.mil/values> (accessed 30 December 2014).

¹⁸ Mastriano, 22.

¹⁹ Mastriano, 20-23.

COL Douglas V. Mastriano, Ph.D., began his career along the Iron Curtain in Germany. Here, he witnessed the end of the Cold War, deployed to Desert Storm with the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, and subsequently served in tactical, operational, and strategic assignments that included the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), G2 of NATO Land Headquarters, and in the Pentagon. A veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, COL Mastriano currently teaches strategy and operational art at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa.

Book Reviews

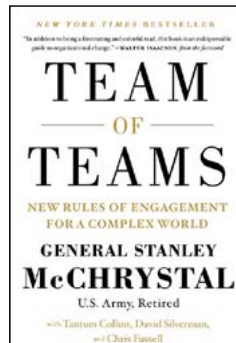


Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World

By GEN (Retired) Stanley McChrystal with Tantum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell

NY: Penguin Publishing Group, 2015, 304 pages

Reviewed by MAJ Justin Bakal



To lead an organization in the 21st century, GEN (Retired) Stanley McChrystal argues, requires a change in both mindset and organizational structure. McChrystal and his fellow authors recount the struggles of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) in the early stages of the war in Iraq and explain how the task force changed in order to meet those challenges. They sell the point that efficient, complicated organizations that dominated the 20th century are inappropriate for the 21st century.

McChrystal and his co-authors are not the first to assert that organizations must change to meet a new environment. In 1981, organizational theorist Henry Mintzberg explained the effectiveness of implementing an “adhocracy” to deal with complex and unstable environments. Military strategist Edward Luttwak also proposed this in his 1983 essay “Notes on Low Intensity Conflict.” The value of McChrystal’s perspective is that he built on these theories as a counterinsurgency practitioner. McChrystal and his writing team identify the problem set of a complex environment in the context of JSOC’s mission to defeat al Qaida in Iraq (AQI). What he discovered while leading a special mission unit with virtually unlimited resources, was that adaptability is the critical attribute of successful organizations in the new century. Regardless of how efficient JSOC was in 2003, it was not effective against al Qaida.

Although the book aims at demonstrating universally applicable concepts for contemporary organizations, McChrystal’s argument is especially relevant to military professionals. His real-world findings are derived from leading a military unit in a conflict that remains active today. He and his staff learned to make the necessary changes to “build the aircraft in flight” and meet the challenge presented by AQI. The types of challenges that AQI presented in the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom are becoming more familiar to the U.S. military. These adaptable, networked enemies are growing more ubiquitous and cannot be defeated by an organization that operates on outdated concepts.

Team of Teams does not advocate that these challenges are special circumstances that can only be dealt with by

special units. They are challenges that require cooperation and information sharing among a wide assortment of units that can bring different perspectives and capabilities to the fight. The universal applicability of McChrystal’s concepts supports the need for all military organizations to recognize the value of interaction and networking. Large, networked organizations can reach a common end state when subordinate elements abandon the urge to operate within their own, isolated silos. A comparison of McChrystal’s concepts with those in ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (May 2012), reveals that the U.S. Army already has the doctrinal framework to apply his recommended changes. U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commander GEN David G. Perkins and his staff are no strangers to organizational design theory and have already provided the U.S. Army with a plan for implementing the types of changes that McChrystal recommends.

In Silicon Valley, leading corporations are grasping for the kind of improved adaptability that McChrystal integrated into JSOC. Not by coincidence, McChrystal and his new company, the McChrystal Group, offer to implement these structural changes. That McChrystal is marketing a service to the business world through his book does not detract from the lessons learned from a counterterrorism expert of exceptional accomplishment. McChrystal is convincing in his assertion that there is a major shift in the global environment, and some organizations are already structured to deal with it while some are not. The effectiveness of each of his proposed solutions is debatable, yet he provides sufficient evidence to show that they are relevant to operating in a complex environment and that change is necessary.

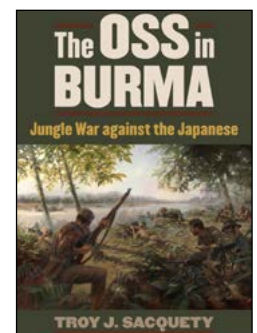
While this book is valuable to anyone looking to improve a large organization, it is not essential reading for the tactical leader. *Team of Teams* is more useful for a military professional assigned to operational-level headquarters. Any officer or NCO joining a major command would benefit from the ideas this book provides.

The OSS in Burma: Jungle War Against the Japanese By Troy J. Sacquety

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336 pages

Reviewed by LTC (Retired)
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There are relatively few windows of opportunity for authors to pursue



in regards to unexplored World War II subject matter. Yet, there are still some gaps existing in the body of knowledge. Troy Sacquety has seized on one available opportunity in his volume, *The OSS in Burma: Jungle War against the Japanese*. In it, he focuses on one of the organizations of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services), Detachment 101.

For those unfamiliar (perhaps, many) with the operations of Detachment 101, let me offer a brief synopsis. As part of the OSS, Detachment 101 operated in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater from April 1942 to July 1945. During this period, the tasks executed by the unit included gathering intelligence on the Japanese, conducting guerrilla operations, and being utilized in conjunction with conventional forces to assist them in accomplishing objectives. It was a unit which clearly was far more successful than anyone could have anticipated. It is also a unit which has seen little mention in historical accounts of World War II.

For prospective readers, you must know what Sacquety's volume "is not" and what it "is." In regards to what it is not, the title may be a bit misleading. As referenced earlier, the author has narrowed his focus to a unit within the OSS — Detachment 101. Those looking for a broader perspective will not find it in this volume (this is a good thing). This more overarching view is available in other volumes and resources.

Sacquety has also narrowed his focus in another characteristic. As he emphasizes in his introduction, the author keys on the organizational aspects of Detachment 101. Consequently, specifics on the tactical operations the unit conducted in the CBI Theater are minimal. This will disappoint some who were seeking a volume detailing the fascinating missions of Detachment 101. This is another gap that should be filled by another opportunistic author.

What Sacquety does achieve is providing readers with a comprehensive look at the organizational make-up of the unit during its existence. He obviously dedicates many pages to the formation of Detachment 101 and its early days in theater. However, Sacquety continues this in-depth analysis of the organizational structure until it was disbanded in the summer of 1945. In his introduction, the author states his aim is to present "how" Detachment 101 accomplished their missions. He has achieved this purpose in his volume.

There are many strengths within *The OSS in Burma*. Readers will find it highly readable, exhaustively researched and well structured. Perhaps, what will stand out most is the notes section of the volume. Sacquety has placed a meticulous 70-page appendix at the conclusion of the book. It provides details on the sources utilized and in many cases, tells the "rest of the story." Those searching for more information regarding Detachment 101 will undoubtedly find potential resources in this section.

As in most volumes, a reader will find areas that could have been improved upon by an author. In regards to the OSS in Burma, I feel the one weakness of the volume is its lack of maps and charts. Within the book, Sacquety has added only one organizational chart of the unit (November 1944) and one large scale map of the theater. In a book emphasizing

organizational structure, additional organizational charts would have added significant clarity and understanding. Moreover, the addition of further smaller scale maps would have been a great complement to Sacquety's verbiage.

I believe the value of Sacquety's volume lies in two areas. First, it is an excellent link between past and future studies tied to Detachment 101. In regards to the past, it provides a solid backdrop for those who have read some of the excellent personal memoirs written by members of Detachment 101. In reference to the future, I believe it will spark interest in other authors (or Sacquety himself) to study the tactical operations of the unit. As stated previously, there is a clear need for further examination of the missions of Detachment 101.

Second, Sacquety has provided an excellent case study of how an organization adapted its structure in combat. The author superbly describes how Detachment 101 leadership understood its environment and adapted to meet it. Sacquety's ability to articulate this makes it added value for leaders in both the military and civilian sectors.

In summary, Troy Sacquety has not rehashed the works of other authors. He has filled in one of those existing gaps in the study of World War II. In doing so, his volume also highlights that there still exists many holes in our understanding of the role of Detachment 101 in the CBI Theater. This combination makes *The OSS in Burma* a valuable contribution to current and future World War II scholarship.

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IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- *The 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Ia Drang
- * The Lost Art of Dismounted Land Navigation
- *The Concerning State of Army Counseling

