

(U) Information Operations in Afghanistan

Lessons and Observations from 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) as MEB – Afghanistan and I Marine Expeditionary Force (Fwd) as Regional Command – South West

March 2009 through October 2010

18 January 2011

This unclassified document has been reviewed in accordance with guidance contained in United States Central Command Security Classification Regulation 380-14 dated 13 January 2009. This document contains information EXEMPT FROM MANDATORY DISCLOSURE under the FOIA. DoD Regulation 5400.7R, Exemption 5 applies.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Handling Instructions for MCCLL Electronic Media and Paper Products

Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) authorizes official use of this MCCLL product for operational and institutional purposes. This product has been furnished for official defense-related purposes only and is marked “UNCLASSIFIED, For Official Use Only [FOUO]” in accordance with DoD 5400.7-R, Freedom of Information Act Program.

Official military and civil service/government personnel, may paraphrase, quote, or use sentences, phrases, and paragraphs for integration into official products or research. However, integration of “UNCLASSIFIED, For Official Use Only [FOUO]” information into official products or research renders them FOUO, and they must be maintained and controlled within official channels and cannot be released to the public without the expressed written consent of MCCLL.

This product may be placed on protected UNCLASSIFIED intranets within military organizations or units, provided that access is restricted through Department of Defense Common Access Card (CAC) authentication means to ensure that only properly accredited military and government officials have access to these products.

When no longer needed, all MCCLL “UNCLASSIFIED, For Official Use Only [FOUO]” paper products and electronic media will be shredded or destroyed.

To allied and coalition personnel (when applicable):

This information is furnished with the understanding that it is to be used for defense purposes only, that it is to be afforded essentially the same degree of security protection as such information is afforded by the United States, and that it is not to be revealed to another country or international organization without the written consent of MCCLL.

Executive Summary

(U) **Purpose:** To inform Deputy Commandants (DCs) Combat Development and Integration (CD&I), Plans, Policies, and Operations (PP&O), Aviation, Installations and Logistics (I&L), Commanding General (CG), Training and Education Command (TECOM), Director of Intelligence, operating forces, and others on results of a Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) collection conducted in September and October 2010 to document lessons and observations from former members of the 2d MEB as MEB-A staff, and I MEF (Forward) as Regional Command -Southwest (RC(SW)) staff regarding planning and conduct of information operations (IO) in Afghanistan.

Bottom Line Up Front:

(U//FOUO) **The effective employment of IO to influence primary target audiences, including the population, local leaders, host nation security forces, government officials, and insurgents, is a key component of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations.**

(U//FOUO) **MEB-A and later RC(SW) intent was that all operations be planned, coordinated and executed within the framework of gaining influence among the target audiences. Three key elements of the approach employed by MEB-A were:**

- **to frame activities and operations in the context of influence,**
- **consistency of coalition force activities with IO themes and messages: “it is not only what you say or what products you hand out, it is what you do,” and**
- **“the principal voice [for IO themes and messages] is really the Afghan voice.”**

Colonel Michael Killion, G-3, MEB-A ¹

(U//FOUO) **Emphasis on integration of IO and other operations continued as the I MEF (Fwd) staff prepared for their deployment as RC(SW). “Information operations is a strategic weapon you can use to get your message across ... it cannot be an afterthought.”**

MajGen Richard Mills, Commanding General, RC(SW) ²

(U//FOUO) **IO themes and messages developed at the RC(SW) level were nested within strategic communications messages from higher headquarters, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Messages were also broad-based to allow tailoring for local conditions. Examples included successful actions of the government or Afghan security forces that build credibility or the perception of security.**

(U//FOUO) **A general theme expressed by interviewees was, “IO is tactical.” Much of the contact with the population is at the small unit level, and the Marines need to understand (1) the importance of their interaction with locals, and (2) that their actions must match the words they use. This theme relates to three areas: (1) allocating sufficient capabilities and resources to the battalion level, e.g., attaching sufficient, appropriately sized tactical psychological operations (PSYOP) elements, combat camera, and Radio in a Box (RIAB) transmitters; (2) assigning capable individuals to IO billets, and (3) training in employment of IO for small unit leaders.**

(U//FOUO) **[MCCLL Note: In December 2010, as this report was being prepared, the Secretary of Defense directed the use of the term military information support operations or MISO to replace the term PSYOP. “The definition and all current policy, legal, organization, practical and doctrinal guidance previously applied to PSYOP will remain in**

effect for MISO.” In view of this change, and the fact that PSYOP was the term used during the period covered by this report, periodic reference will be made to PSYOP (now MISO).]

(U//FOUO) RIAB transmitters, hand crank radios obtained through civil affairs or stateside charities and distributed to the locals, and word of mouth were the primary means of disseminating IO messages. Use of the RIAB and talking points were effective in reinforcing the impact of actions on the ground. [MCCLL Note: The effectiveness of RIAB as an IO tool has been repeatedly mentioned in previous MCCLL reports and after action material.]³

(U//FOUO) Shortfalls included limited PSYOP detachments available for support of tactical units, a lengthy timeline for approval of PSYOP products, and assignment of battalion level IO billets as a collateral duty for fire support coordinators, artillery liaisons or others whose primary duties, particularly when kinetic operations were ongoing, would overshadow their IO roles.

(U//FOUO) **Key Points:**

- *“IO should be integral to all operations...its effects, if properly pursued, can be as productive for the operational commander as any of his combined arms effects.”*
CAPT Jeffrey Robinson, USN, IO Officer, 1st Marine Division (Fwd)⁴
- There is need to educate all levels on their roles in IO, from the individual Marines who interface with the population, to commanders and staff at battalion, regiment and higher headquarters who will interact with key local leaders. Training for those filling IO billets must include duties and scenarios that an individual will encounter.
- IO billets need to be manned by individuals trained and experienced in IO and an in-depth knowledge of COIN, and should not be a collateral duty.
- IO and operations staff emphasized the importance of developing a strategic communications plan and proactive IO talking points in order to quickly exploit or mitigate a significant activity (SIGACT) incident by “being first with the truth,” and countering enemy propaganda.
- Public affairs office (PAO) formed a “flyaway team” or media quick reaction team of Marine combat correspondents or preferably, independent external media that were in the area to conduct independent reporting on an incident or event. The combat camera section also had an on call quick reaction capability.
- A USMC expeditionary PSYOP capability is under development by the Marine Corps Information Operations Center (MCIOC), with the first detachment deployed in support of I MEF (Fwd) as of September 2010.

(U) Recommendations suggested by content of interviews and questionnaires include the following topics and associated doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) pillars.

Recommendation	D	O	T	M	L	P	F
1.(U//FOUO) Provide training on employment of key IO tools (e.g., RIAB, tactical PSYOP (MISO) detachments), and coordination of IO with supporting (e.g., combat camera, counterintelligence) and related capabilities (public affairs, civil affairs).		X	X	X	X		

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Recommendation	D	O	T	M	L	P	F
2.(U//FOUO) Provide IO training for Marines appropriate to functions performed at their level and likely scenarios they will encounter (individual Marines at tactical/battalion level, operations and IO personnel at regimental combat team (RCT) and Marine air ground task force (MAGTF) headquarters, commanders). [MCCLL Note: A list of courses available as of November 2010 appears on page 28 of this report.]			X			X	
3.(U//FOUO) Ensure sufficient IO resources are allocated to the tactical level, to include PSYOP, combat camera detachments and RIAB equipment.		X		X	X	X	
4.(U//FOUO) Continue to incorporate IO and development of strategic communications themes into predeployment preparations, training and exercises.	X	X	X	X	X	X	
5.(U//FOUO) Continue efforts continue to develop a standardized means of transmitting images for combat camera, and formalize that practice in instruction and procedures.	X		X	X			
6.(U//FOUO) Continue efforts to streamline and or decentralize the process for approval of PSYOP products, to make it more responsive.	X	X	X		X		
7.(U//FOUO) Broaden awareness of MCIOC functions and support capabilities.		X	X		X	X	

(U) The remainder of this report contains more detailed background and rationale on the above and other topics.

Table of Contents

NOTE: CONTROL/CLICK ON THE HEADINGS BELOW TO GO TO THE RESPECTIVE SECTION OF THIS REPORT.

Executive Summary3

Background.....8

Organization and Personnel.....10

Relief In Place/Transfer Of Authority (RIP/TOA).....10

Shortfalls12

Operations.....13

Key Leader Engagement17

Operations Security19

Military Deception19

Electronic Warfare.....20

Psychological Operations (PSYOP) (Now MISO)20

Public Affairs22

Combat Camera23

Civil Affairs (CA)25

Computer Network Operations25

Intelligence Support of IO25

Training.....27

Equipment.....28

Leadership and Education29

Recommendations30

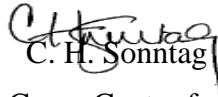
Summary30

Endnotes.....31

Prologue

(U) This report is one of many publications addressing a wide array of topics assembled and produced by the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. The MCCLL library is not to be considered a sole or authoritative source, was not designed as such and doesn't purport to be. MCCLL provides a vehicle to inform the operating forces in the queue for subsequent deployments, the DOTMLPF stakeholders, and the advocates of the unvarnished experiences of Marines engaged in operations. Reporting or relaying these experiences may provide the impetus to effect a change in any or all of the DOTMLPF pillars.

(U) MCCLL relies on the individual Marine and commands to provide their hard learned lessons in order to disseminate them throughout the Marine Corps. The goal is to get these knowledge jewels into the MCCLL Lesson Management System in order to disseminate them in such a timely manner as to make them invaluable to the next Marine in the deployment queue.



C. H. Sonntag

Director, Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned

Background

(U) This report is a continuation of the focused collection effort on units supporting operations in Afghanistan, as directed by the Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration. MCCLL conducted a collection to obtain lessons, observations, and recommendations from members of the I MEF (Fwd) command element as RC(SW), its subordinate units, and former members of 2d MEB as MEB-A, on how they organized, trained and equipped to conduct information operations (IO) in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan. A total of 32 interviews of commanders and staff were conducted in the continental United States (CONUS) and at Camp Leatherneck, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, from 14 September through 18 October 2010. Questionnaires were administered to another five former members of MEB-A and its subordinate units.

(U) Information operations (IO) are described in joint doctrine as: “the integrated employment of the core capabilities of electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, military deception, and operations security, in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own.” Also called IO. Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, JP 3-13⁵

(U) IO include all action taken to affect enemy information and information systems while defending friendly information and information systems. IO are conducted during all phases of an operation, across the range of military operations, and at every level of war.⁶

(U//FOUO) Figure 1 depicts core, supporting and related IO capabilities. Those in red font were capabilities primarily employed by MEB-A.

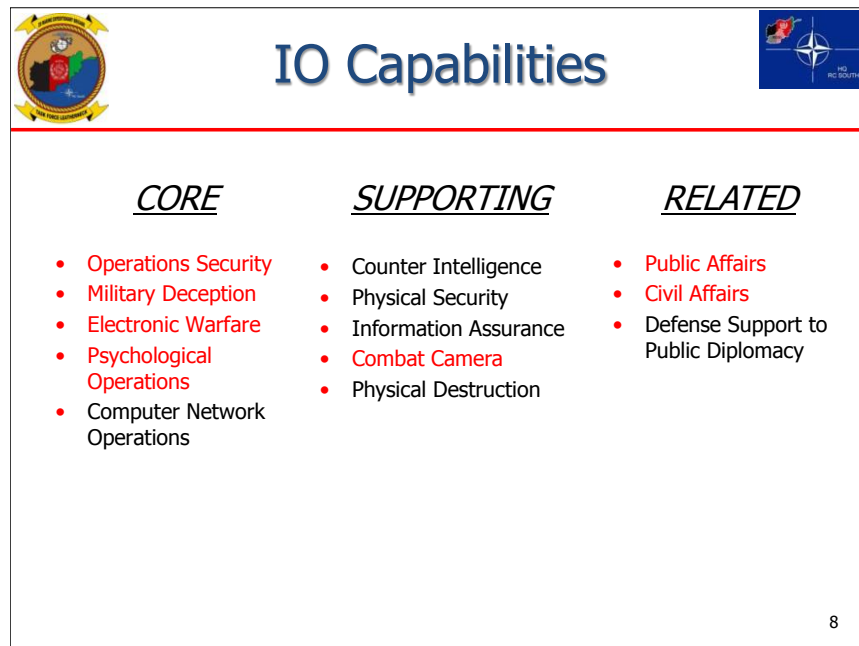


Figure 1: Core, supporting and related IO capabilities.

Marine Corps Information Operations Center (MCIOC)

(U) The MCIOC was established in 2008. Its mission is to provide MAGTF commanders and the Marine Corps a responsive and effective full-spectrum IO planning and psychological

operations (PSYOP – now MISO) delivery capability by means of deployable support teams and a comprehensive general support IO reach-back capability in order to support the integration of IO into Marine Corps operations.

(U//FOUO) MCIOC IO and PSYOP (MISO) support teams deploy in response to supported commander requirements and provide staff assistance to integrate IO into MAGTF operations. These support teams deploy with specialized communications and equipment for their specific functional tasks, but rely on the supported commander for the remaining operational, administrative and support requirements. Depending on the deployment location, the teams may require augmentation by cultural and linguistic experts.

(U//FOUO) MCIOC's general support reach-back capability enables collaborative IO planning through information sharing, modeling and simulation. [MCCLL Note: For further detail, see MCO 3120.10, "Marine Corps Information Operations Program, viewable at: <http://www.marines.mil/news/publications/Documents/MCO%203120.10.pdf>] ⁷

(U//FOUO) Material in this report includes IO activities of 2d MEB as MEB-A from their deployment in May 2009, the MEB's relief in place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA) in April 2010 with the follow-on I MEF (Fwd) staff as it transitioned to become the RC(SW) headquarters and its subordinate units, through the interviews in October 2010. Planning for IO aspects of the deployment began in January 2010, with IO planners participation in the predeployment site survey (PDSS).

(U//FOUO) Those interviews cited as endnotes in this report are available in the search enabled MCCLL database at www.mccll.usmc.smil.mil, and can be located by doing a MCCLL database search (Action Menu on left of screen) on the individual's last name. Additionally, binder #648, entitled "Information Operations in Afghanistan 2009 2010," on the SIPR website contains material related to the content of this report, including the following:

- "Information Operations Plan," a classified 2d MEB report ⁸ prepared in June 2009 that depicts how Marine Corps information operations in Helmand Province were conducted during the OEF-09 rotation. Its purpose was to provide continuity and help future IO planners understand the planning and intent of the IO effort that was originally implemented prior to the MEB build-up.
- "Response to ISAF Required IO and PSYOP Audit," a classified RC (SW) spreadsheet prepared in late July 2010 to identify to ISAF Joint Command, the IO capabilities organic to forces within what was to become RC(SW). ⁹

(U//FOUO) Binder #1833 on the NIPR website includes the following:

- "Countering Insurgency," an unclassified United Kingdom (UK) Army Field Manual (Vol 1:10), is a short guide to insurgency, and the principles and approaches needed to counter it. As Marine forces will continue to operate in Afghanistan with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) / ISAF forces, this publication will provide a basis for understanding coalition partners' outlook on influence operations. Chapter 6, "Influence Operations" offers a wealth of IO tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs).
- "Information Operations Turnover File," 2d Battalion 3d Marines, 16 October 2009. This unclassified document summarizes daily, weekly and monthly tasks, immediate actions/battle drills, lessons learned and points of contact, from a battalion level IO perspective.

- "Information Operations AAR MCIOC OEF 09 2 Dec 2010." This after action report by a member of the collection team, an IO subject matter expert from MCIOC, contains more detailed IO material gathered and developed during the MCCLL collection.

Organization and Personnel

(U//FOUO) A general theme expressed through interviews was "IO is tactical." Much of the contact with the population is at the small unit level, and Marines need to understand the importance of (1) their interaction with locals, and (2) that their actions must match the words they use. This theme relates to three areas: (1) allocating sufficient capabilities and resources to the battalion level, e.g., attaching appropriately sized tactical PSYOP detachments, (2) assigning capable individuals to IO billets, and (3) training in employment of IO for the small unit leaders.¹⁰

(U//FOUO) The former MEB-A IO officer said early IO efforts were "*learn as you go*," that the RCT and battalions "*did a great job with what they had*," but because formal table of organization IO billets do not exist at the battalion level, they were manned as a collateral duty to the company executive officer or the artillery liaison. Those assigned IO billets had received little training, and when kinetic operations were ongoing, IO duties tended to be overshadowed by their other responsibilities. The MEB-A IO officer recommended training for those assigned IO duties, such as the four week long Joint Information Operations Planning Course he had attended, more involvement of IO in exercises and training prior to deployment, and more "*emphasis at the tactical level for execution*" of IO.¹¹

(U//FOUO) With assistance from the MCIOC, the MEF (Fwd) staff planned for deployment, identified requirements for the IO cell and assembled a manning document. IO billets for senior captains and majors were filled instead with first lieutenants without the appropriate level of clearance. The former MEB-A G-2 recommended that the IO officer and at least a couple of his assistants have a TS/SCI clearance so they could have unfettered access to intelligence reporting, and understand the collection means and source of a report in order to assign it a relative value in comparison to other information they receive.¹²

(U//FOUO) Planning for the expansion of the staff to what became the RC(SW) headquarters, the IO personnel were "front loaded" to the extent possible in the deployment timeline, to begin planning for the IO aspect of operations, and the RC(SW) fires and effects coordinator (FEC) recommended a similar approach to the follow-on RC(SW) staff that would be formed by II MEF. "*Get them in early, and get them in as many schools as possible*," to provide a foundation for on-the-job training of the less experienced members of the staff.¹³ For those individuals without previous experience in IO, the FEC said they shifted their deployment dates to attend IO, kinetic and non-kinetic fires training at Expeditionary Warfare Training Group, Pacific (EWTGPac).¹⁴

Relief In Place/Transfer Of Authority (RIP/TOA)

(U//FOUO) RIP/TOA with the MEB-A staff began in late April 2010, with I MEF (Fwd) initially as a task force under RC (South) assuming responsibility for what had been the MEB-A area of operations (AO). Over the following six weeks, the staff expanded with the arrival of follow on increments of the deployment. The larger staff then integrated Task Force Helmand (British coalition force) as a major subordinate command (MSC), and assumed responsibility for the RC(SW) area of operations, approximately double the size of the previous MEB-A AO.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U//FOUO) On 1 June 2010, their AO was expanded to include Nimruz Province formerly assigned to Task Force Helmand, and AO Tripoli, consisting of three districts from Farah Province.¹⁵ On 14 June, RC(SW) was established, with just under 30,000 coalition troops; 19,000 were USMC, and the remainder comprised primarily of British, Georgians, Estonians, and Danes.¹⁶

(U//FOUO) One of the RC(SW) IO planners, an intelligence officer (military occupational specialty (MOS) 0202) augment from MCIOC, worked for the FEC. Because IO, particularly in a COIN environment is such an integral and critical function of operations, he stated the view that IO should work directly for the operations officer (C-3) vice the FEC, and the rank of the IO officer should be a lieutenant colonel, which would permit more visibility and input to operational planning.¹⁷ The C-3 however said IO was appropriately positioned as part of the fires and effects coordination center (FECC), and that he and the commanding general were updated on IO during twice weekly briefings and as required, by the FEC. Briefings included the chief of staff, C-2, C-3, staff judge advocate (SJA) and IO personnel.¹⁸

(U//FOUO) Task organization and manning of the RC(SW) IO cell were assessed as adequate, in part due to augmentation of the staff by coalition personnel (British), and an IO field support team provided by the higher headquarters, ISAF Joint Command (IJC). That augmentation permitted RC(SW) to address limited coverage of IO at subordinate commands by providing school-trained IO personnel and MCIOC representatives to the division and regimental levels for mentorship, as well as reinforcement of the single individuals working IO at those locations. The field support team initially consisted of a Navy captain, two lieutenants and a staff NCO, and was assigned to division.¹⁹ The division IO cell as of October 2010 totaled four planners and a combat camera liaison.²⁰

(U//FOUO) Task organization for IO at the battalion level varied between units, but similar comments were made by one battalion commander and another battalion's IO officer about assigning a "power player," a capable writer and communicator, with a strong understanding of Afghan culture, to the primary duty of battalion IO officer. In 1st Battalion, 5th Marines (1/5), the fire support coordinator (FSC) was assigned as the IO officer. As part of the operations section, he was well positioned to provide input and integrate IO with other operational planning, and assisted in determining where the battalion's limited PSYOP capabilities were positioned to best advantage.²¹ *"IO transcends and supports all of the war fighting functions. Keep the IO cell at the battalion closely tied to the S-3 shop."* Maj Matthew Danner, IO Officer, 1/5²²

(U//FOUO) In another battalion, 2/3, the headquarters and service company commander was assigned as the battalion IO, with the artillery liaison as his assistant. For the rifle companies, the executive officer or weapons platoon commander served as company IO officer at each position. An NCO or staff NCO was assigned as the Radio in a Box (RIAB) supervisor for each location, to perform frequent operational checks, maintain the equipment and update broadcast content.²³

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) FEC said those at the division, regiment and battalion, over time, realized the importance of IO and at those levels, it was a full time job. Assigning it as an additional duty to one individual did not adequately address requirements, including 24 hour operations.²⁴

Shortfalls

(U//FOUO) The tactical PSYOP detachment officer in charge, the former MEB-A G-3, the RC(SW) C-3 FEC and IO planner all identified a shortfall in the number of PSYOP teams required to provide adequate coverage of the RC-S and later RC(SW) AO:

*“We require more teams in this AO than my detachment currently has, with five teams, one of which we created. I still require a minimum of four additional teams to fully cover the area.”*²⁵

*“Unfortunately, we weren’t fully staffed with the required PSYOP detachments. We asked for them and I MEF, to this day, is still trying to get the PSYOP company to support operations in RC-Southwest.”*²⁶

(U//FOUO) The former NCOIC of the U.S. Army tactical PSYOP detachment (TPD) said the MEB should have been supported by at least two PSYOP detachments, and I MEF (Fwd) should have had a company of at least three TPDs in order to properly support the maneuver battalions in each respective unit. *“In Army doctrine, a PSYOP detachment supports a brigade. The MEB is a much bigger unit than an Army brigade.”*²⁷

(U//FOUO) As of early October 2010, the RC(SW) C-3 IO planner said tactical PSYOP company production capability remained short.²⁸ A tactical PSYOP detachment was assigned to each regiment, and division headquarters did not have a dedicated PSYOP capability at their level. An 11 man USMC expeditionary PSYOP detachment provided by MCIOC arrived later that month, and was assigned to division.²⁹

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A deputy G-9 said there is need of increased numbers of both civil affairs and IO personnel, particularly at the tactical level. *“Our greatest constraint was the lack of CA Marines to meet the requirements.”* CA was staffed to support three maneuver battalions, but shortly after the MEB arrived in theater, CA was tasked with supporting two additional units. CA was augmented with eight additional Marines, but only one was trained in CA. This forced a restructuring of the teams to train new members to support the CA mission.³⁰

(U//FOUO) PA staffing at RC (SW) headquarters and its MSCs was described as insufficient. The headquarters PAO was augmented by two coalition (British) officers that had little training or experience in PA, and *“since we are so short-staffed, there is little time to train them. This is really not an appropriate environment to train someone on working with media or serving as a spokesperson.”* The PAO suggested RC(SW) should mirror the adjacent RC(S) headquarters PAO structure, as shown in Table 1 and figure 2.

	Officers	Enlisted	Civilians	Total
RC (SW) HQ	6 * (2 untrained as PA)	11		17
RC (S) HQ	8	25	2	35

Table 1: Comparison of RC(SW) and RC(S) PAO structure

(U//FOUO) The key difference between RC(SW) and two of the adjacent regional commands was the presence of U.S. Army mobile public affairs detachments at those headquarters: *“Currently RC(E) has the 300th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment and RC(S) has the 16th MPAD, a 22-personnel PA team staffed as the media support center, which is a significant enabler to any media embed program.”*³¹

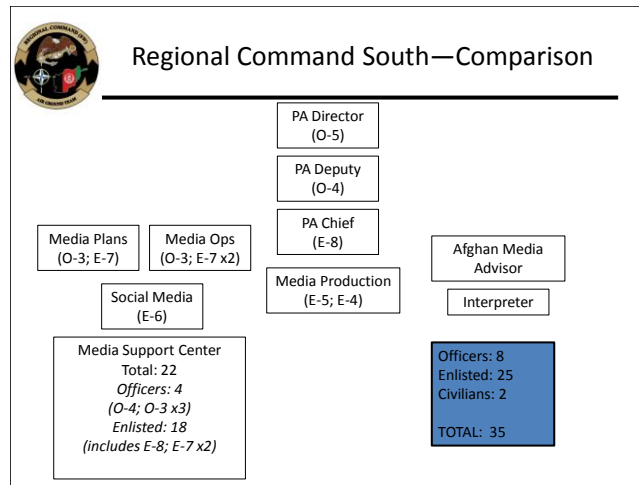


Figure 2: RC(S) PA staffing

(U//FOUO) The level of training and experience across the MSC PAOs was uneven. The Task Force Helmand PAO was robust and headed by a British colonel. Other MSC PAOs were lieutenants, three who arrived in Afghanistan having just graduated PA school. The RC(SW) PAO said the decentralized structure resulted in relatively inexperienced PA personnel operating independently, without benefit of training and mentoring by those more experienced in PA. *“We need to be consolidated at both the MEF and MEF (Fwd). It makes no sense to have new lieutenants as PAOs to general officers, when they have no training and experience beyond school.”* The RC(SW) PAO said they had already identified this to the MEF (Fwd) that would be replacing the current staff: *“Some way, some how, you need more people. [Also,] recognize that the coalition staff you get will probably not be trained.”*³²

Operations

“The goal of information operations is to convince a host nation population to support the U.S. side in a conflict.” Multi-service Concept for Irregular Warfare³³

(U//FOUO) As noted in doctrine, information operations are one of the primary logical lines of operation in conducting counterinsurgency, and IO may often be the decisive one. *“By shaping the information environment IO make significant contributions to setting conditions for the success of all other logical lines of operation.”*³⁴

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A commander’s direction that all operations be planned, coordinated, and executed within the framework of gaining or losing influence among the population set the conditions for information operations being a fairly significant part of the operational design by MEB-A. Three key elements of the approach were

- framing activities and operations in the context of influence,
- consistency of coalition force activities with IO themes and messages: *“it is not what you say or what products you hand out, it is what you do,”* or making words match actions on the ground, and³⁵
- *“the principal voice [for IO themes and messages] is really the Afghan voice.”*³⁶

(U//FOUO) While the MEB-A staff had an appreciation for the importance of integrating IO with the other lines of operation, the G-3 future operations planner said the six man IO cell had

limited planning capacity. The IO plans officer was also the current operations officer, and early efforts were more reactive than proactive, *“because they were busy in the day-to-day fight of IO for the MEB.”* But by January/February 2010, planning for tactical shaping of Operation Moshtarak (Marjah) included IO messages passed via RIAB positioned closer to Marjah, and use of printed handbills and talking points aimed at Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) as well as the population. *“It smoothed over some of the reactions of locals once we got on the ground.”* IO planning in anticipation of events and pre-assembly of talking points and messages were particularly effective in enabling the staff to quickly disseminate information after an incident occurred. *“Proactive IO is not waiting for something bad to happen so you can react ... it’s getting out ‘in front of’ events in order to quickly respond.”*³⁷

(U//FOUO) The former MEB-A G-3 described IO in advance of Operation Moshtarak as principally a shaping and influence operation that was focused on four of five different groups, including GIROA officials, local nationals who were unaffiliated, local nationals who were affiliated with the insurgency, and narcotics. *“The one target set we decided not to communicate with directly were the insurgents. We talked about them, but we never talked to them.”* The majority of the MEB’s tribal and religious engagements with local leaders were intended to generate social interfaces that would support coordination of rudimentary security and governance issues, viewed as critical in the first 60 days after the initial clearing of Marjah.³⁸

(U//FOUO) With Afghanistan’s national literacy rate estimated at 28.1 percent,³⁹ and likely much lower in the rural areas, verbal IO was the most effective. *“Everything is spread by word of mouth.”*⁴⁰ Development of simple talking points that were provided to small unit leaders for use during conversations with locals was one method of disseminating key themes and messages. Squads were instructed to focus on two to four specific talking points on each patrol. Talking points were repetitively used among the population to reinforce key themes.



Figure 3: Radio in a Box (RIAB) transmitter with laptop computer, and on top, a hand crank radio.

(U//FOUO) RIAB transmitters (see figure 3), hand crank radios obtained through civil affairs or stateside charities and distributed to the locals, and word of mouth were the primary means of disseminating IO messages. Use of the RIAB and talking points were effective in reinforcing the impact of actions on the ground. In addition to assigning individuals to operate, maintain and update programming on the RIABs, one battalion IO officer noted the importance of having Marines on patrol check the effective range of transmitters, and look for evidence that locals were listening to the broadcast. *“As fast as you physically*

can using the various media available to you, get the information out so that the enemy couldn’t come back with claims to say that we caused the injury or the death of an individual. The enemy cannot ‘tweak’ the truth.” Capt Brent Molaski, IO Planner, MEB-A

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U//FOUO) Much of the programming for RIAB transmission in Nawa was produced by the provincial reconstruction team (PRT), including appropriate music scheduled to play at times of the day that did not interfere with prayers, health information, tips on treating water or cooking. This was augmented by recording and broadcasting statements of local leaders or government officials.⁴¹

(U//FOUO) Paper products must be used judiciously. When given to appropriate people or placed in high visibility positions, they can be assets. *“When handed out to everyone they become litter on the streets,”* and a discredit to the messages they are intended to convey. Many locals do not want to take paper products because it physically identifies them as having contact with ISAF and makes them a target for enemy action.^{42 43}

(U//FOUO) Challenges to the MEB (and later RC(SW)) ability to conduct IO included the following:

- As noted earlier, assigning IO as an additional duty to one individual did not adequately address requirements at the battalion and regimental levels, including 24 hour operations.⁴⁴ IO at that level was assigned as an additional duty, often for a company executive officer or the artillery liaison officer. Many of these “double hatted” individuals had little IO training and minimal time for this additional duty, particularly when their unit was involved in kinetic operations: *“IO is simply going to take a back seat to whatever their primary duty is.”*⁴⁵
- Manning at the RC(SW), division, and to an extent the RCT levels improved as the Marine presence grew. However, as an RCT IO officer noted, *“90 percent of what IO is going on is happening at battalion level.”*⁴⁶
- Because the insurgents were amongst the population and word of mouth spread very quickly in each of the districts, it was difficult to counter Taliban IO messages, particularly early in the MEB’s deployment as they were in process of developing ANSF capabilities, and had not yet established a network of credible GIRoA and ANSF leaders to be the “Afghan voice” for IO messages.⁴⁷
- There were multiple localized and diverse sub-environments within RC-South’s AO, and IO messages produced by RC-South in Kandahar did not necessarily translate readily to Helmand or a specific district in Helmand. The MEB-A G-3 future operations planner said IO was employed as one component of a “single battle” concept. He described a bottom up process to develop products appropriate to the specific AO, but which were consistent with messages being used at other levels. Battalion level battlespace owners submitted proposed messages or products based on knowledge and understanding of their particular AO. These inputs were reviewed and revised to ensure consistency with messages being used by the MEB commander in interaction with his Afghan government counterparts at the provincial level, then disseminated back to battlespace owners for their use in key leader engagement (KLE) with district government officials. *“If everybody is talking the same [themes] across the width and breadth of your AO, then it starts to resonate. ... people start to believe that what you’re saying is true and your actions will support those talking points.”*⁴⁸
- With PSYOP capability spread thin throughout Afghanistan, and only one PSYOP detachment to cover Helmand Province, the MEB pressed to get PSYOP capability specifically for Operation Moshtarak. The challenge was managing limited assets to

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

provide support to the battlespace owners, where it was needed. The MEB employed an approach of weighting the main effort by providing assets for limited periods of time, and was able to arrange “part-time” PSYOP support from RC-South. The MEB’s assigned PSYOP planner, a U.S. Army sergeant first class (E7), advised IO planners on PSYOP capabilities, and was instrumental in arranging to “pull” assets from other locations to temporarily support MEB battlespace owners.

- Collaboration with government counterparts and unity of effort with the PRT was complicated by their geographical separation. The provincial government and PRT were located at Lashkar Gah, and the MEB (and later RC(SW)) at Camp Leatherneck. In addition, corruption and ineffectiveness among government officials made it difficult to “make words match deeds,” and help legitimize the government in the eyes of the population. As an example, without an effectively functioning local justice system, it was difficult to remove detained local “bad actors” from the battlefield long enough to have positive impact on the perceived level of security.⁴⁹

(U//FOUO) After the I MEF (Fwd) staff’s pre-deployment site survey and during the mission rehearsal exercise, they worked on developing their communications strategy and how to integrate communications, with the intent of providing unity of message to the various target audiences, including the populace, insurgents, ANSF, and GIROA.

(U//FOUO) The operational environment as I MEF(Fwd) arrived in Helmand was described as an immature theater with a robust enemy threat. Operations were ongoing in Marjah, a critical node for the insurgents. The population appeared “*supportive of the insurgents, mistrustful of the GIROA, waiting to see how long the coalition would stay and how effective the coalition force would be in its operations against the insurgency.*” MajGen Richard Mills, Commanding General, RC(SW)

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) commander summarized his mission as the conduct of population centric COIN operations in order to protect the Afghan population, to disrupt the insurgent threat, and to support the development of governance and economic development within Helmand Province.⁵⁰

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) C-3 FEC was assigned oversight of the functions of airspace, information operations to include PSYOP, female engagement teams (FETs), and a shared supervisory role for strategic communications.

(U//FOUO) IO themes and messages developed at the RC(SW) level were nested within strategic communications messages from higher headquarters, ISAF. Example themes included successful actions of the government or Afghan security forces that built credibility or the perception of security, supported the effort to separate the population from the insurgency, and focused on contrasting the advantages of GIROA support, vice the excesses and abuses of Taliban oppression. Themes were broad-based to allow tailoring for local conditions. “*...Every village is different, so delivery of information is a bit different.*” Tactical level units also provided feedback on which themes or messages were particularly effective, as well as activities in their area that could be used in IO messages.

(U//FOUO) As MEB-A had previously, RC(SW) IO efforts continued to focus on influencing the target audiences.

“*Every plan, every FragO, everything we put out has an IO plan of support associated with it.*”⁵¹

Col John Gamelin, RC(SW) FEC

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

*"I don't distinguish between lethal and nonlethal. They're both means to an end and that end is influence."*⁵²

CAPT Jeffrey Robinson, USN
StratComm/IO Officer, 1st Marine Division (Fwd)

Key Leader Engagement

"The best person to get the word out is not the coalition force -- it is the Afghans themselves."
Capt Brent Molaski, IO Planner, 2d MEB⁵³

(U//FOUO) MEB-A worked to develop a network of strong personal relationships with key individuals such as GIRoA officials, tribal leaders, and other key influencers at the local, district and provincial levels.

(U//FOUO) From an IO perspective, the primary threat from insurgents was a persistent, localized propaganda campaign. Local insurgent leaders, being familiar with social dynamics in their areas, were effective in employing tribalism, social fears and religious propriety to influence the population. As MEB-A elements partnered with special operations forces (SOF) and began having success in targeting high value targets, claims emerged of coalition forces desecrating or burning the Qur'an (Islamic holy text), which negatively impacted relations between local nationals and coalition forces, at least short term. The MEB's network of Afghan relationships was employed as a means of countering insurgent propaganda. *"We learned pretty quickly [that] our best counter action was really to provide information, declassify information, provide evidence to the contrary of what the [insurgents] claim was, and then use that leadership to organize a shura,"* or "truth commission" of local elders or leaders to determine the facts of what had actually transpired. This network of Afghan leaders then disseminated their findings to the population, thus *"the principal voice was the 'Afghan voice.' ... We found when we didn't disseminate a message through Afghans, that that's when it got twisted or misconstrued."*⁵⁴

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A commander and staff interfaced with provincial leaders. A similar approach to interface with the local population was applied at battalion and regimental levels, focused on identifying and developing relationships with key individuals within the district. Development of such relationships, and providing them information to disseminate to the population was key in countering enemy propaganda and *"being first with the truth."* When a SIGACT occurred, the battalion would immediately arrange a KLE for the on-scene commander to meet with ANSF, GIRoA officials and local leaders to determine and disseminate the facts regarding an incident.⁵⁵ Similarly, the PAO would assemble a quick reaction team of correspondents, preferably independent external media that were in the area to conduct independent reporting of an incident or event. Combat camera also maintained photographers on standby, with their camera equipment packed and ready.⁵⁶

(U//FOUO) One battalion positioned its RIAB transmitter in the district center, where it was easily accessible by the district governor, the district administrator, or chief of police. When an incident occurred, they recorded comments by the district governor, and transmitted his comments via RIAB broadcast.⁵⁷

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) staff included an individual assigned to support and document KLE in the strategic communications section. He defined KLE as engagements by *"our key leaders, and who they engage with are key local nationals. My role is to organize and prepare our key leaders for those engagements, for them to exert influence over those particular [key local nationals], and thereafter, those individuals exert influence over the general populace."* The KLE officer prepared background information packages for the key leader, including

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

biographical summaries and photos of the key local nationals to be engaged, background on the issues or area to be visited, objectives for the engagement and likely outcomes. He also documented and uploaded results of the engagement to the Combined Information Data Network Exchange (CIDNE), as required by IJC and ISAF directives.⁵⁸

(U//FOUO) With the sheer number of engagements, the KLE officer supported a share of the those conducted by the RC(SW) commander and deputy commander, and some staff sections preferred to support engagements related to that section's functional area. *"One individual cannot cover all the engagements that the command deck have, and there will be people within the command who ... will want to keep control of their engagements."* For example, the G-9 would prepare, accompany and document KLE related to their oversight of the governance line of operations. To support all engagements would require a team, consisting of a major or lieutenant colonel, one or two other officers and a non-commissioned officer to assist with staffing, background preparation and documentation required. The KLE officer suggested the assignment of an individual with intelligence background to billets such as his.⁵⁹

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) FEC said the insurgents' murder and intimidation campaign, in areas where there was no government or organic security forces, had been a very effective, information centric tactic: *"Just the communication of a threat is sufficient with a population that's suffered from 30 years of continuous war..."* Over time, as coalition force credibility and relationships with reputable Afghans were developed and employed to disseminate facts refuting insurgent allegations of civilian casualties, Qur'an burning or desecration of mosques, such enemy messages became less effective in causing reaction from the population. *"You have Afghan talking to Afghan, and time and again it's been disproven anything like that happened, so it does not resonate as well with the population."* Campaign planning for future IO efforts included focus on how to set conditions over the winter months that would aid the population in resisting pressure to support the insurgents as the spring "fighting season" began.⁶⁰

(U//FOUO) IO shaping in some instances was simply passing information to the locals, for example, the timing, location and procedures for upcoming elections. Other efforts were more complex, such as those aimed at encouraging farmers to grow wheat instead of poppy crops. *"If you're going to successfully get somebody to choose not to put poppy in the ground that first week of December, last week of November, we quickly realized you can't start that process two weeks beforehand and think you're going to have any effect."* The battalion in the Nawa district began IO shaping related to curtailing poppy planting in August, when farmers even considering growing wheat would have to begin efforts to obtain seed and fertilizer. In addition to removing the overt threat of insurgents telling farmers that they had to grow poppy, IO efforts included multiple means of encouraging village elders and farmers to get linked up with GIRoA wheat seed and fertilizer distribution efforts: RIAB messages and face to face discussions, encouraging farmers to approach village elders to participate in government distribution programs.⁶¹

(U//FOUO) An IO aspect of partnering with ANSF was seeking opportunities to build credibility by putting "Afghans in the lead" and enabling them to visibly share the credit for positive developments in the eyes of the people. *"Even if the locals know those [student] backpacks came from the United States, it doesn't change the fact that it was an Afghan policeman that gave it to them; ... that it was an Afghan police patrol that went to the school and asked the teachers, 'Is everything okay?' ... The more we can get the police to interact [positively] with the people, ... that's going to build bonds of trust between them."*⁶²

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U//FOUO) One infantry battalion's IO officer turnover file noted other target audiences for engagement.

- Work with local leaders and ANSF to develop their own IO officer, to encourage Afghan National Army (ANA) and Police (ANP) personnel to interact with the local populace as well. The ANA leadership can be effective in putting out messages over the RIAB, but they don't always keep their soldiers informed. "Talk to the ANA soldiers. Periodically visit their compound and answer their questions. They will also "parrot" your talking points. Just make sure it is presented as favorable to what they already want (security and stability in the area)."
- Linguists: "While the IO officer is not their coordinator, make sure you talk to them regularly and keep them informed of what is going on. Make sure the companies are also talking to them regularly. They are just as susceptible to rumors out in town as locals are. ... They want to do well at their job, and they want to bring peace and stability to this country, so they will gladly tell the people what you want them to, so long as it doesn't violate any of their personal beliefs."
- Keep your Marines informed about successes elsewhere on the battlefield. "The actions of Marines will be one of your strongest IO campaigns because the people here judge you by what you do and say, not what they see on a sign somewhere." ⁶³

(U//FOUO) The division IO officer said ANSF units did not have a formal IO capability, but some had PA officers. Involving an ANSF partner, whether a PA officer or an operational commander, in IO efforts was of great benefit, because "*he can cut straight to the heart of the matter with the locals, speaking their language, thinking in their mindset.*" In an alleged civilian casualty incident, these Afghans aided in determining what actually happened, conveying that to the locals and avoiding potential reaction to enemy misinformation. ⁶⁴

Operations Security

(U//FOUO) Operations security (OPSEC) measures are designed to deny the enemy access to friendly critical information that would aid in accurately estimating the military situation. Units identify critical information and essential elements of friendly information that require safeguarding from disclosure to uncleared personnel, and all must be aware of what material is to be safeguarded and protected.

(U//FOUO) One important OPSEC measure used in both Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and OEF was the imposition of communications restrictions for other than specified mission essential purposes, called "River City," an emissions control measure where access to internet and telephone connectivity is limited to only specific individuals for a period of time. This is intended to prevent the spread of sensitive information via informal, unsecured means.

(U//FOUO) A former MEB-A IO planner who was assigned OPSEC responsibilities said his duties consisted primarily of ensuring the incorporation of OPSEC into predeployment training, providing informal refresher training once the MEB deployed, and procuring and distributing OPSEC awareness posters for display in dining areas and computer labs, as a reminder of sensitive information that should not be discussed openly or transmitted over the internet. ⁶⁵

Military Deception

(U) Military deception is defined as "actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing

the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission.” Joint Publication 1-02⁶⁶

(U//FOUO) The MEB employed limited military deception to “telegraph” their intent for Operation Moshtarak. The enemy “*knew we were coming and what we were trying to deceive them on is when. ...That leaked out at some point. We just had to change some dates and times and we were fine.*”⁶⁷ IO was used to confuse the enemy regarding the size and disposition of the force.⁶⁸

(U//FOUO) The 1/5 battalion commander said as they moved into Nawa district center, an area previously held by 40 British soldiers, they deliberately created the impression that the battalion’s initial company reinforced of 300 Marines was the new force footprint for that area. Once the insurgents who previously controlled much of the surrounding area moved to locations they thought they were out of reach of the company, “*we came in with the remainder of the battalion in one night, an additional 800 Marines.*” At daylight the following morning, the battalion attacked Taliban positions in a large fire fight. Kinetic activity was followed by visits to a nearby village, accompanied by Afghan soldiers, to tell villagers what had happened. “*Those were the Taliban that did not want your police to have the [ability] to come down here. We’re with your police now and we’re going to give them the [ability] to come down here and make things better.*” LtCol William McCollough, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines⁶⁹

Electronic Warfare

(U) Electronic warfare is defined as “military action involving the use of electromagnetic and directed energy to control the electromagnetic spectrum or to attack the enemy.” Joint Publication 1-02⁷⁰

(U//FOUO) Two key observations from the radio battalion operations officer involved planning for their support of IO. First was that there is need of broadened awareness among those involved in IO, of releasability and source protection related to certain aspects of EW. Secondly, EW needs to be brought into planning early, to ensure sufficient lead time for due diligence related to sources and releasability of information. “*If you’re going to get into the technical realm then you should really understand the implications of what you’re doing and the rules that are involved.*” Early involvement in planning also gives EW planners awareness and understanding of IO endstates and messages.⁷¹ The operations officer suggested that scenarios involving support such as EW be developed and added to IO “playbooks.”

(U//FOUO) The 1st Marine Division (Fwd) IO officer said that EW is not well understood, in part because most believe that it’s more complicated than it actually is. “*EW continues to be the most underutilized IO capability in the battlespace. This is particularly unfortunate because the effects can be so important to the success of our operations.*”⁷²

Psychological Operations (PSYOP) (Now MISO)

(U) Psychological operations are “planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator’s objectives.” Joint Publication 1-02⁷³

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(U//FOUO) As noted earlier in this report, limited available PSYOP capability was spread thinly throughout the AO.

(U//FOUO) The NCOIC of the Army TPD served as a detachment headquarters, located at the MEB, and was responsible for compiling reports from the field and reporting on PSYOP activity within Helmand Province to both the MEB chain of command and PSYOP channels. He coordinated with other key elements of MEB IO in an effort to ensure that the PSYOP teams in the field were in concert with the other members of IO, and assisted in planning and execution of PSYOP support to the MEB.⁷⁴

(U//FOUO) The approval process for new PSYOP products, print or other form, during the MEB-A deployment was:

- The requesting unit would contact the PSYOP detachment headquarters located at the MEB, who would initiate an approval packet after creating an idea for a prototype.
- The packet was then forwarded through MEB IO to the FECC OIC for approval of the product or concept, then it would be routed via the G3, SJA, and chief of staff to the commanding general. *“All of this was done just to find out if we had a viable product.*
- *[The request] would then be forwarded to the PSYOP company headquarters to start the ISAF approval process. This was a very time consuming process that often left concepts no longer appropriate when finally approved.”* The PSYOP detachment NCOIC said giving the MEB/MEF commander approval authority would expedite the process, and that he understood that I MEF (Fwd) as RC(SW) now had that authority.⁷⁵ [MCCLL note: The 1st Marine Division (Fwd) IO officer, commenting on a draft of this report, said the lengthy timeline for PSYOP product approval remained a challenge, and recommended that efforts continue to streamline and or decentralize the process to make it more responsive. There is little or no PSYOP production capability at the battalion commander level, and *“to get PSYOP where the battalion commanders need it, the approval and production processes require change.”*]⁷⁶

(U//FOUO) Efforts early in the MEB’s deployment were described by one battalion IO officer as not well synchronized. Products passed to the tactical PSYOP team (TPT) by their higher headquarters, Psychological Operations Task Force – Afghanistan (POTF-A), did not seem to mesh with what the battalion supported by the TPT was doing on the ground, and the means of harnessing the resources that team had available was not apparent. In a post-deployment questionnaire, Maj Matthew Danner, IO Officer, 1/5 said that *“on only one occasion were we able to take advantage of the vast resources POTF-A had at Kandahar and other places. Every other product was produced by the MEB, which did not have a lot in terms of production capability.”*⁷⁷

(U//FOUO) The IO officer, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines, made the following comments regarding PSYOP products and employment of the TPT attached in support of his battalion.

- PSYOP products: Request them well in advance, be very specific and follow up daily on progress of the requests. Copy MEB IO on all product requests and ensure they are aware of progress on the products. These actions will aid in preventing requests being lost, forgotten or delayed to the point that the window of opportunity for their employment is lost.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

- Arrange a meeting with the TPT OIC and staff non-commissioned officer in charge for a capabilities brief, to aid in appropriately employing the TPT.
- Plan to attach TPT to one company for a minimum of ten days at a time so they can establish an accurate baseline for a given area and conduct useful assessments. The TPT was then attached to a company in another area.
- The TPT's Sound Commander tactical loudspeakers and category II linguist were their most effective capabilities, but *"don't be afraid to lean on them for more assessments, ideas and products."* The TPT was positioned at the ANP station, to be closer to the people and have ready access to patrols, but the IO officer set specific reporting requirements to maintain situational awareness of TPT activities.⁷⁸

Public Affairs

(U//FOUO) The relationship between PA and IO employed by MEB-A was the classic "coordinated but separate" functions, as outlined in joint doctrine. [MCCLL note: Although both PA and IO plan and execute public information activities and conduct media analysis, IO may differ with respect to audience, scope and intent. As such, they are separate functional areas. PA activities must be planned, coordinated and if required, deconflicted with IO, to include PSYOP, operations security and military deception activities.]⁷⁹ On the MEB-A staff, PA provided a planner to the IO working group.⁸⁰ Another approach was employed by 1st Marine Division (Fwd): The division IO officer was also "dual hatted" as the strategic communications officer, and coordinated activities of both the IO and PA cells, a relationship he said was the same as the strategic communications organizations at RC(SW) and IJC levels.⁸¹

(U//FOUO) Consistent with the intent of "putting an Afghan face" on information, the MEB established a media embed program as the primary means of disseminating information to the various publics interested in and affected by MEB activities. Video footage of ANSF operations and interviews with Afghans for use by Afghan national media was provided via the Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System. The former MEB-A PAO assessed the effectiveness of PA efforts as *"ensuring steady, accurate reporting from independent media sources during our deployment. Biggest success [regarding] IO was the embedding of Afghan media. ...The presence of Afghan media was a signal to GIRoA politicians and military officials that the media would be reporting on their actions, which would increase the need for transparency."*⁸²

(U//FOUO) Two examples of particularly effective PA and IO interaction included:

- The first was an incident in Delaram in summer 2009 in which insurgents claimed that coalition forces had killed a dog and placed its body in a mosque. Afghan media was used by the governor of Farah/Nimruz province to explain that the desecration had been staged by Taliban in an attempt to discredit NATO forces. The MEB-A PAO said timing of the reporting helped kill any momentum of rumors of misconduct by ISAF forces at the beginning of the MEB's mission in Helmand, which was a crucial time in terms of world support for the enlarged Afghan mission by coalition forces.
- The second was an incident in Garmsir involving alleged desecration of Qur'ans, in which IO had lead on setting the conditions and PA provided support only after a KLE and the Helmand government concluding that this was an insurgent act meant to stir up the populace, and subsequent issuing of a fatwa (religious ruling) by the Lashkar Gah ulema (council of Islamic scholars) condemning whoever was involved in burning the Qur'ans. Then, PA notified media that they should contact Helmand governor's office

for information on the incident. This sequence of events both (a) notified the world of the Taliban's actions and (b) kept ISAF out of the communication chain. In both events, KLE and local officials were the keys to actually taking action, not PA generating a press release or IO creating a RIAB message. The MEB-A PAO said this resulted in a clear message to the world audience that Afghans were the ones condemning the actions, which was a more powerful image than would have been provided by a NATO or ISAF press release.⁸³

Combat Camera

*(U//FOUO) "It became very evident to me that the pictures [combat camera] take often times told the precise story in a way that cuts across cultures. ... We can't overlook the visual part of the IO message which is sometimes the most powerful piece."*⁸⁴

LtCol William McCollough

Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A headquarters combat camera detachment consisted of a five man team. Early challenges included setting up the Tactical Imagery Production System (TIPS) that supports combat camera functions. The TIPS, typically operated with a detachment of ten Marines, was missing components upon its arrival, and required a concerted effort by the small detachment to obtain missing items and make the system operational. As mentioned previously, this limited capabilities early in the MEB deployment.⁸⁵



Figure 4: Tactical Imagery Production System (TIPS)

(U//FOUO) The TIPS (see figure 4) is a self-contained, rapidly deployable system that supports imagery requirements to include map and geo-spatial imagery printing, imagery transmission, manipulation and production of hard copy products such as IO handbills, rules of engagement (ROE) cards and operational orders. The TIPS acquires, produces and transmits imagery via high speed interfaces, to

headquarters elements in real or near-real time. It also allows imagery to be organized and catalogued for rapid search and retrieval to support briefings, foreign material exploitation, action reporting, training, lessons learned, historical programs and general information during contingencies and operations.⁸⁶

(U//FOUO) Combat camera capability, as RC(SW) was established, increased to a nine man detachment at the headquarters that included two British members. An additional 45 combat camera Marines were attached to battalions, regiments, division and the wing, throughout the RC(SW) AO. Despite this seemingly robust presence, *"it's still not enough... We just don't have enough photographers, videographers and combat cameramen in general to support major operations."*

Capt Glen Lollar, USMC
Officer in Charge, Combat Camera
C-3, RC(SW)

(U//FOUO) The 1st Marine Division IO officer emphasized combat camera employment be focused on operational support to tactical units: *“We don’t have near enough combat camera out on patrol.”*⁸⁷

(U//FOUO) The four to six combat cameramen (MOS 46XX) with each battalion were attached eight months prior to their deployment, and participated in unit predeployment training. This allowed them to build cohesion with the unit. *“You train that combat cameraman ... to be up with that [operations officer] and find out what’s going on, and that rapport is built in early. Then the OpsO, especially when you get [to theater], he’s automatically infusing that combat cameraman in operations.”* This was viewed by the MEF combat camera OIC as effective employment and crucial to their integration with the unit. He recommended continuation of that practice, as well as formalizing the arrangement by establishing line numbers on the infantry battalion T/O and manning documents that are linked to the division headquarters T/O for those MOSs.⁸⁸

(U//FOUO) Combat camera provided the ability to influence and exploit friendly and enemy imagery, and to counter enemy misinformation. Photos or video of civilians injured by enemy IEDs or small arms fire was forwarded from the battalions where they were taken for medical treatment, to support IO products identifying the impact of insurgent action on the population.⁸⁹ Figure 5 is an example of an image used to convey the contrast between insurgent and coalition actions.



Figure 5: This photo depicts coalition medical treatment of a child injured by an enemy improvised explosive device (IED).

(U//FOUO) Imagery was also used to support operational assessments. One example cited by the RC(SW) combat camera officer in charge was sentiment in U.S. media reports on Marjah indicating that operations there may not have gone as well as reported early in the assault. Photo and video images from combat cameramen with the ground forces were used to illustrate the reality “on the ground” in Marjah, including small businesses and schools reopening that were

closed prior to and during the assault, and local Afghans returning to shop in the bazaars. These images were included in assessment of operations in Marjah.⁹⁰

Civil Affairs (CA)

“IO and CA work hand-in-hand like fires and maneuver to achieve desired effects. IO develops the overall themes and objectives, and it is imperative that civil military operations deliver on those themes and messages. In a COIN fight, I would argue that IO and CA should be lead considerations in operational planning.”

LtCol Curtis Lee, Deputy G9, MEB –A⁹¹

(U//FOUO) CA integrated with MEB-A current and future operations planning and execution through participation in operational planning teams (OPTs), and by positioning 5 of the 15 CA Marines with the PRTs to ensure interagency coordination and planning was taking place, and through weekly on-site meetings with the Helmand PRT prior to and during the Marjah operations. *“We had tremendous support from the G3 to ensure that CA was involved in all aspects of planning and execution.”*⁹²

(U//FOUO) Similarly, the division IO officer said civil military operations formed a majority of the “good news” in Helmand Province, and from the local nationals’ perspective, *“a new well, a new street and street lights, new schools – they’re keenly interested in that and respond to it well.”* Because both CA and IO efforts were aligned with similar guidance from the RC(SW) commander and operations, messaging was consistent and supportive. Similarly, PA and embedded media efforts publicized CA funding and construction efforts to the multiple global, regional and local neighborhood media audiences.⁹³

Computer Network Operations

(U) Computer network operations are “comprised of computer network attack, computer network defense, and related computer network exploitation enabling operations.” Also called CNO. Joint Publication 1-02⁹⁴

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A IO section did not focus on this functional area of IO because the battle space was not sufficiently mature. The MCIOC IO planning team that later supported I MEF (Fwd) as RC(SW) was able to employ some CNO capability. While this can be an effective IO tool, it would likely be employed at the RC and MEF levels, particularly in relatively undeveloped and expeditionary areas.⁹⁵

Intelligence Support of IO

(U//FOUO) The small MEB-A IO cell did not include intelligence analysts, but the cell had access to G-2 products, briefs, and analysts as needed. IO cell members’ primary interaction with intelligence analysts took place within the targeting working group and targeting boards supporting the FECC. The MEB-A G-2, as he reviewed intelligence reporting, was alert for material that would likely be of interest to the IO cell, and would pass it to them, along with any feedback on IO efforts. Human intelligence (HUMINT) was of significant value to IO efforts, supporting key leader engagement and assessment of the population’s perceptions and effectiveness of IO.⁹⁶ This remained the case for RC(SW), although links to the tactical PSYOP teams and radio battalion also were of value to IO efforts.⁹⁷

(U//FOUO) MEB-A G-2 included a four man economic and political intelligence cell (EPIC) that was designated as the non-kinetic targeting cell. EPIC focused on (1) identifying key resources within southern Afghanistan, including water, arable land, people and infrastructure,

and (2) identifying leadership within the primary groups involved in competition for power who often control the economic resources. These include GIRoA officials, civilian leadership, insurgents including the Taliban, and ISAF. EPIC applied a four step methodology to non-kinetic targeting that was considered effective in identifying key local individuals for engagement.

- Collecting and collating the names and locations of influential individuals throughout the MEB AO.
- Organizing the individuals into their respective geo-political provinces, districts and villages, annotating the source of their influence, for example, constitutional or traditional, and whether they were government, law enforcement or civilian.
- Assembly of an engagement project focused on identifying the key individual with influence that was best suited for engagement to assist in messaging of target audiences and achieving the MEB's desired effect. Once identified, detailed personal information was gathered for use in preparing key leaders for the engagement.
- A key leader engagement report was used to disseminate the specifics of the engagement and provide additional analysis regarding statements or specific areas of concern.⁹⁸

(U//FOUO) Availability of linguists was one of the primary challenges for the MEB. *"We were competing with everybody else in Afghanistan for a limited pool of folks."* The G-2 said efforts to gather media open source intelligence (OSINT) were largely ineffective until shortly before MEB-A's redeployment, when a linguist was assigned to the PAO to read Afghan papers, monitor news and assess what the local Afghans were saying. Such efforts were complicated by the distinctly different IO environments from one village to the next: *"You could be in a village and go down the road two [kilometers] to another village and the environment is completely different."*⁹⁹

(U//FOUO) Those being assigned IO duties need a familiarization with intelligence capabilities, functions and assets available, so *"they have a better understanding of what we can and can't get them or do for them."* Similarly, analysts and other intelligence personnel supporting IO efforts would benefit from some familiarization with IO efforts and themes. The MEB-A G-2 suggested an exchange of capabilities briefings between IO, G-2 and intelligence battalion personnel who support IO.¹⁰⁰

(U//FOUO) As the MEF (Fwd) staff and augmentees formed the more robust RC(SW) IO cell, the IO planner, an intelligence officer (MOS 0202) served as the team's intelligence interface with C2 and the C3 targeting cell for kinetic targeting of IO value. For non-kinetic targeting, he interacted with the stability operations information center (SOIC), EPIC and cultural intelligence team, and for military deception, the fusion officer at intelligence battalion. He assisted in defining and coordinating requests for information (RFIs), collection requirements, and information requirements for radio battalion assets.¹⁰¹

(U//FOUO) The division IO officer viewed intelligence support as vital in providing a means of monitoring for feedback on whether desired IO effects were being achieved, and making adjustments. Intelligence reports and command journals, including those of the RCTs and battalions, as well as situation reports from CA teams were monitored daily for events that potentially required consequence management or provided opportunity for IO. *"The enemy is very savvy with his media relations, and as soon as an event happens it has to be recognized that*

it has the potential to be used either in local or strategic media. Then it has to be acted on very, very quickly."¹⁰²

Training

(U//FOUO) Training for the MEB-A staff in general was limited due to the timeline for forming the staff and deployment, and included a *"very compressed MAGTF Staff Training Program (MSTP) workup. MSTP did absolutely everything they could do in the limited period of time we had [prior to deployment]."* Preparation related to IO benefited from the number of individuals assigned to the staff that had previously deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. These individuals were familiar with the role of IO, its implications for counterinsurgency, and the importance of engaging the population. Such institutional knowledge aided in the ability to rapidly develop plans.¹⁰³

(U//FOUO) The former MEB-A G-3 future operations planner recommended that predeployment training for the MAGTF staff incorporate the IO planners *"from the beginning, how are you going to institute IO, what's the strategic communications message, what's your TTP to do those things? In training you need to practice IO so it's not something you [have to] pick up along the way. That makes you more proactive [rather than] reactive."*¹⁰⁴ [MCCLL Note: Joint Publication 3-13, "Information Operations," contains guidance on design and content of IO training and exercises.]¹⁰⁵

(U//FOUO) IO training provided by Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group (TTECG) and Enhanced Mojave Viper were viewed by the former MEB-A G-3 as effective and complimentary preparation for leaders at the battalion and small unit levels. *"Basically every squad leader fully understood the implications of interface; figuring out who your key individuals are, who your key influencers are; and their ability to develop those relationships."*¹⁰⁶

(U//FOUO) One battalion commander said that Enhanced Mojave Viper provided an opportunity to develop and test their enduring IO talking points on the TTECG Afghan role players, who assessed the messages from an Afghan perspective and identified terminology that would resonate with the local population. This also familiarized Marines and Sailors with being the means of delivering those messages to the population, as well as talking points similar to those they would later use. Talking points were modified based on observations and feedback from Mojave Viper, and were later used in the battalion's district of Nawa. As the battalion engaged key leaders such as tribal elders, mullahs, respected merchants, or the local police chief in their district and developed relationships, these leaders were instrumental in conveying the IO message and explanation of what was occurring in the district. *"We found [that] carried a lot more weight, so we needed to incorporate them. They also gave great feedback on what the messages ought to be."* The local leaders became the "Afghan voice" for IO messages.¹⁰⁷

(U//FOUO) For the IO planner in RC(SW) C-3, an augmentee from the MCIOC, preparation for deployment consisted of both formal training by the U.S. Army 1st IO Command as well as informal training by MCIOC subject matter experts and an exercise prior to the mission rehearsal exercise in which the IO team participated in several planning scenarios. In addition, personal preparation included reading on Pashtun culture, the tribe's recent history, as well as intelligence on enemy networks and current reporting. In retrospect, the training was focused more at the tactical level and required a shift to the MEF (Fwd) level functions of resourcing, directing and providing support to the subordinate headquarters, but the training was effective.¹⁰⁸

(U//FOUO) Identification of others assigned to the MEF’s organic IO cell occurred as late as one to two weeks prior to deployment, which precluded detailed training in their specific duties. Unlike the MEB-A’s IO personnel who had performed multiple functions including IO, MEF (Fwd) personnel were assigned IO as primary duties. ¹⁰⁹

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) FEC said his staff, in conjunction with MSTP, were working to include seminar material relating to communications strategy and integration for MEF commanders and staff in future MSTP exercises, to focus on how to integrate PSYOP, IO, key leader engagement, develop an initial strategy and commander’s messages. ¹¹⁰

(U//FOUO) MCCLL Note: As of November 2010, the following IO courses were available: ¹¹¹

- Joint Information Operations Planning Course (JIOPC), EWTGPac, Joint Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA, a four week course intended for captains (O-3 and above) or senior staff NCOs being assigned to joint IO billets at the combatant commands.
- IO Planners Course, MCIOC, Quantico, VA, a recently implemented two week course targeting newly assigned IO planners or NCOs.
- Information Operations Capabilities, Application and Planning Course (IOCAP), 1st IO Command, (Army), Fort Belvoir, VA, a two week, “very Army-centric” ¹¹² course open to all ranks, and those with no previous IO experience. The following one week specialty courses are intended for those who previously completed IOCAP, and require a TS/SCI clearance:
 - Military Deception Course (Army), Fort Belvoir, VA, a one week follow on course for those of any rank who have attended the IOCAP
 - PSYOP Integration Course (Army), Fort Belvoir, VA
 - Operations Security Course (Army/Navy), Fort Belvoir, VA [MCCLL Note: The former MEB-A OPSEC officer said he also attended a similar course conducted by ISAF Joint Intelligence Operations Center in Afghanistan.] ¹¹³
 - Electronic Warfare Course (Joint/Army), Fort Belvoir, VA



Figure 6: PTM-100 80 foot antennae significantly increased the range of RIAB transmissions.

- Basic Computer Network Operations Course (Army), Fort Belvoir, VA, a two week, “very technically oriented” course for those who will be involved with planning computer network operations at higher headquarters levels. ¹¹⁴

Equipment

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) IO cell expanded on the earlier efforts established by MEB-A. Enhancements included the following.

- Procurement of PTM-100 80 foot antennae (see figure 6) for RIAB sites that significantly increased the range of broadcast transmissions.
- Establishment of a recording studio, computer software and contracting for British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) satellite transmission of RIAB data that facilitated rapid transfer of time

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

sensitive files and permitted update of routine programming on RIAB computers at austere sites without the associated bandwidth issues.

- Vehicle mounted and man portable loudspeaker systems.
- Improved availability of category II interpreters that also served as cultural advisors, and provided an Afghan perspective on how to best articulate a given message or theme.¹¹⁵

(U//FOUO) The U.S. Army PSYOP NCOIC attached to the MEB-A staff said Army PSYOP units are typically attached with organic equipment, to be self supportive with the exception of food, shelter and ammunition. During the 2009 deployment to Helmand Province, this was not the case. PSYOP was equipped with up armored HMMWVs that were not as safe or survivable as the MRAPs used by the Marines they supported. The Marines provided MRAPs for PSYOP teams to use while deployed in support of the MEB. The PSYOP teams were also equipped with *“Vietnam era loud speaker equipment. Technology is so much advanced that the Army should find a way to replace the systems that PSYOP is forced to use. The Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) system is one that we field tested and was a resounding success.”*¹¹⁶

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A deputy G-9 noted the need for a civil information management (CIM) system to support Marine Corps CA efforts, and said that this capability gap was being addressed by their representative at Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC).¹¹⁷

[MCCLL Note: In a 9 December 2010 email to key members of the CA community, the CA capabilities integration officer at MCCDC said plans are to develop a USMC manual to provide TTPs and guidance in the March 2011 timeframe, and examine feasibility of using a U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) capabilities development effort, the CIM Data Processing System (CIMDPS) as the basis for a joint technical solution to address this gap.]¹¹⁸

(U//FOUO) The RC(SW) combat camera officer in charge reiterated the need for a standardized means of imagery transmission between locations. Aware that a Combat Imagery Searchable Archive Database (CISAD) capability was on hand in Afghanistan, he arranged for a week long training session for the combat camera Marines prior to deployment on how to archive photos, then worked to identify CISAD as the means by which they would upload images and obtain network permissions to transmit via modem card over high frequency (HF), very high frequency (VHF), or satellite (SATCOM) communications. In the past, combat camera has not had a standardized means of transmitting images. He suggested that efforts continue to develop a standardized means, and formalize that practice in instruction and procedures.¹¹⁹

Leadership and Education

(U//FOUO) There is need to continue education at all levels, from the individual Marines who interface with the population, to commanders and staff at battalion, regiment and higher headquarters who will interact with key local leaders. Training for those filling IO billets must include duties and scenarios that an individual will encounter at their level.

“What that Marine does, or doesn’t do out on the battlefield, as an individual, a team, ...a battalion, is going to send a message, impacts not only enemy perceptions, but also the indigenous population, and potentially [international] audiences.”

Maj Erik Eldridge, Branch Head, IO Plans, C-3 RC(SW)¹²⁰

“IO needs to be stressed in our schools. It needs to be taught ... from entry level all the way up, ... to prepare commands to go overseas into the fight ... [especially] in the COIN fight.”

MajGen Richard Mills, Commanding General, RC(SW)¹²¹

Recommendations

1. (U//FOUO) Provide training on employment of key IO tools (e.g., RIAB, tactical PSYOP detachments), and coordination of IO with supporting (e.g., combat camera, counterintelligence) and related capabilities (public affairs, civil affairs). (**Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education**)
2. (U//FOUO) Provide IO training for Marines appropriate to functions performed at their level and likely scenarios they will encounter (individual Marines at tactical/battalion level, operations and IO personnel at RCT, MAGTF headquarters, commanders). Include training on core IO functions as well as supporting and related capabilities. (**Training, Personnel**)
3. (U//FOUO) Ensure sufficient IO resources are allocated to the tactical level, to include PSYOP, combat camera detachments and Radio in a Box (RIAB) equipment. (**Organization, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel**)
4. (U//FOUO) Continue to incorporate IO and development of strategic communications themes into predeployment preparation, training and exercises. (**Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel**)
5. (U//FOUO) Continue efforts to develop a standardized means of transmitting images for combat camera, and formalize that practice in instruction and procedures. (**Doctrine, Training, Materiel**)
6. (U//FOUO) Continue efforts to streamline and or decentralize the process for approval of PSYOP products, to make it more responsive. (**Doctrine, Organization, Training, Leadership**)
7. (U//FOUO) Broaden awareness of Marine Corps Information Operations Center (MCIOC) functions and deployable support capabilities. (**Organization, Training, Leadership and education, Personnel**)

Summary

(U//FOUO) The effective employment of IO to influence primary target audiences, including the population, local leaders, host nation security forces, government officials, and insurgents, is a key component of counterinsurgency operations. *“IO should be integral to all operations...its effects, if properly pursued, can be as productive for the operational commander as any of his combined arms effects.”*¹²²

(U) Lessons and observations from this collection will be distributed to appropriate advocates, proponents, and operating forces in the interests of improving how Marine forces are organized, trained, equipped, and provided to combatant commanders.

(U//FOUO) The collection team leader for this effort was LtCol Walter D. Powers, USMC, Marine Corps Information Operations Center (MCIOC). Other team members included:

- Maj Louis D. Caporale, USMC, MCIOC
- GySgt William C. House, USMC, MCIOC

(U//FOUO) Content of this report was developed by MCCLL senior analyst, Mr. Al Luckey, LtCol USMC (Ret).

Endnotes

- ¹ Killion, Col Michael, USMC, G-3, MEB-A, interview with LtCol Walter Powers, USMC, MCCLL, 14 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Killion, Powers interview.
- ² Mills, MajGen Richard, USMC, Commanding General, RC(SW), interview with LtCol Daniel Coombes, USMC, MCCLL liaison to RC(SW), 16 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Mills, Coombes interview.
- ³ See MCCLL Lesson Management System entry 44800, "Radio in a Box," 12 December 2008. Also, MCCLL reports, "Marine Expeditionary Brigade – Afghanistan," "Special Purpose MAGTF – Afghanistan," "MEU Operations in Afghanistan," and "Infantry Operations in Afghanistan."
- ⁴ (U) Robinson, CAPT Jeffrey, USN, IO Officer, 1st Marine Division (Fwd), "MCIOC Lessons Learned," personal email to Mr. Bradley Lee, MCCLL Liaison to 1st Marine Division (Fwd) (CONFIDENTIAL), 11 December 2010. Cited hereafter as Robinson email.
- ⁵ "DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms," Joint Publication 1-02, Joint Staff, 12 April 2001, as amended through 30 September 2010. "Information Operations," Joint Publication 3-13, Joint Staff, 3 February 2006.
- ⁶ "Information Operations," Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-40-4, 9 July 2003.
- ⁷ "Marine Corps Information Operations Program (Short Title: MCIOP), Marine Corps Order 31210.10, 30 June 2008.
- ⁸ (U//FOUO) "Information Operations Plan," 2d MEB report, SECRET//REL USA NATO ISAF, 3 June 2009.
- ⁹ (U//FOUO) "Response to ISAF Required IO & PSYOP Audit," RC(SW), SECRET, July 2010.
- ¹⁰ Tenold, Capt Bryceson, USMC, IO Officer, 2/3, interview with Maj Louis D. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, 17 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Tenold, Caporale interview. Also Molaski, Capt Brent, USMC, IO Planner, 2d MEB, interview with Major Louis C. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, 21 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Molaski, Caporale interview.
- ¹¹ Molaski, Caporale interview.
- ¹² Derkach, LtCol Scott, USMC, G-2, MEB-A/2d MEB, interview with GySgt William House, USMC, MCCLL, 20 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Derkach, House Interview.
- ¹³ Gamelin, Colonel John, USMC, Force Effects Coordination Cell, C-3, RC(SW), interview with LtCol Walter Powers, USMC, MCCLL, 11 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ¹⁴ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ¹⁵ "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan," Department of Defense, November 2010.
- ¹⁶ Fitzpatrick, Col Barry, USMC, C-3, RC(SW), interview with LtCol Walter Powers, USMC, MCCLL, 11 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Fitzpatrick, Powers interview.
- ¹⁷ Taylor, Maj James M., USMC, IO Planner, C-3, RC(SW), interview with GySgt William House, USMC, MCCLL, 10 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Taylor, House.
- ¹⁸ Fitzpatrick, Powers interview.
- ¹⁹ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ²⁰ Robinson, CAPT Jeffrey, USN, Strategic Communications/IO Officer, 1st Marine Division (Fwd), RC(SW), interview with Major Louis C. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, 11 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Robinson, Caporale interview.
- ²¹ McCollough, LtCol William USMC, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, interview with LtCol Walter Powers, USMC, MCCLL, 16 September 2010. Cited hereafter as McCollough, Powers interview.
- ²² Danner, Maj Matthew, IO Officer, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, completed questionnaire provided to Maj Louis D. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, October 2010. Cited hereafter as Danner questionnaire response.
- ²³ Tenold, Caporale interview.
- ²⁴ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ²⁵ Wright, CPT Ryan, USA, Officer in Charge, Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment, 2d MEB, interview with Major Lynn Wisheart, USMC, MCCLL, 30 March 2010. Cited hereafter as Wright, Wisheart interview.
- ²⁶ Killion, Powers interview.

-
- ²⁷ Davis, SFC Jeffrey, USA, NCOIC, U.S. Army 310th Tactical PSYOP Detachment in support of MEB-A, response to questionnaire, October 2010. Cited hereafter as Davis questionnaire response.
- ²⁸ Taylor, House interview.
- ²⁹ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ³⁰ Lee questionnaire response.
- ³¹ Chapin, Maj Gabrielle, USMC, Public Affairs Officer, RC(SW), "RE: RC(SW) PAO Staffing," personal email to Mr. Al Luckey, Senior Analyst, MCCLL and others, 20 December 2010.
- ³² Chapin, Maj Gabrielle, USMC, Public Affairs Officer, and MSgt Mark Oliva, USMC, Public Affairs Staff NCOIC, RC(SW), interview with LtCol Daniel Coombes, USMC, MCCLL Liaison to RC(SW), 1 December 2010.
- ³³ "Multi-service Concept for Irregular Warfare," U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Command and U.S. Special Operations Command Center for Knowledge and Futures, August 2006.
- ³⁴ "Counterinsurgency," Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-33.5, December 2006.
- ³⁵ Killion, Powers interview.
- ³⁶ Killion, Powers interview.
- ³⁷ Styskal, LtCol Michael, USMC, Future Operations Planner, G-3, MEB-A, interview with LtCol Walter Powers, USMC, MCCLL, 22 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Styskal, Powers interview.
- ³⁸ Killion, Powers interview.
- ³⁹ 2000 estimate cited in the "CIA World Fact Book, Afghanistan," last viewed on 12 October 2010 at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>
- ⁴⁰ Tenold, Capt Bryceson, USMC, IO Officer, 2/3, "Turnover File," 16 October 2009. Cited hereafter as Tenold, 2/3 turnover file.
- ⁴¹ McCollough, Powers interview.
- ⁴² Tenold, 2/3 turnover file.
- ⁴³ Danner, questionnaire response.
- ⁴⁴ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ⁴⁵ Bustin, Capt Brady, USMC, IO Planner, RCT-7, interview with GySgt William House, USMC, MCCLL, 10 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Bustin, House interview. Similar comments were also made by Thompson, 1stLt William, USMC, IO Planner/OPSEC Officer, MEB-A, interview with Major Louis C. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, 22 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Thompson, Caporale interview.
- ⁴⁶ Bustin, House interview.
- ⁴⁷ Styskal, Powers interview.
- ⁴⁸ Styskal, Powers interview.
- ⁴⁹ Taylor, House interview.
- ⁵⁰ Mills, Coombes interview.
- ⁵¹ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ⁵² Robinson, Caporale interview.
- ⁵³ Molaski, Caporale interview.
- ⁵⁴ Killion, Powers interview.
- ⁵⁵ Tenold, 2/3 turnover file.
- ⁵⁶ Lollar, Capt Glen, USMC, and MSgt Steven Rhodes, USMC, Media Operations Officer and SNCOIC, RC(SW), interview with Major Louis C. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, 10 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Lollar, Rhodes, Caporale interview.
- ⁵⁷ McCollough, Powers interview.
- ⁵⁸ Hutchison, Maj Timothy, British Royal Marines, KLE/IO Officer, RC(SW), interview with GySgt William House, USMC, MCCLL, 11 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Hutchison, House interview.
- ⁵⁹ Hutchison, House interview.
- ⁶⁰ Gamelin, Powers interview.

-
- ⁶¹ McCollough, Powers interview.
- ⁶² McCollough, Powers interview.
- ⁶³ Tenold, 2/3 turnover file.
- ⁶⁴ Robinson, Caporale interview.
- ⁶⁵ Thompson, Caporale interview.
- ⁶⁶ “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” Joint Publication 1-02, Joint Staff, 12 April 2001, as amended through 30 September 2010.
- ⁶⁷ Styskal, Powers interview.
- ⁶⁸ Nicholson, BGen Lawrence, USMC, MEB-A Commanding General, interview with Chris Wilk, MCCLL LNO to II MEF, 7 June 2010. Cited in MCCLL report, “Coalition, Joint, Interagency Operations: Operation Moshtarak (Marjah),” 25 October 2010.
- ⁶⁹ McCollough, Powers interview.
- ⁷⁰ “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” Joint Publication 1-02, Joint Staff, 12 April 2001, as amended through 30 September 2010.
- ⁷¹ Roper, Capt Jeffery, USMC, interview with GySgt William House, USMC, MCCLL, 22 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Roper, House interview.
- ⁷² Robinson email.
- ⁷³ “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” Joint Publication 1-02, Joint Staff, 12 April 2001, as amended through 30 September 2010.
- ⁷⁴ Davis questionnaire response.
- ⁷⁵ Davis response.
- ⁷⁶ Robinson email.
- ⁷⁷ Danner questionnaire response.
- ⁷⁸ Tenold, 2/3 IO turnover file.
- ⁷⁹ “Public Affairs,” Joint Publication 3-61, 25 August 2010.
- ⁸⁰ Pelletier, Maj William F., USMC, completed questionnaire provided to Maj Louis D. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, October 2010. Cited hereafter as Pelletier questionnaire response.
- ⁸¹ Robinson, Caporale interview.
- ⁸² Pelletier questionnaire response.
- ⁸³ Pelletier questionnaire response.
- ⁸⁴ McCollough, Powers interview.
- ⁸⁵ Parra-Milks, CWO3 Barbara, USMC, IO Planner/Combat Camera, 2d MEB, interview with GySgt William House, USMC, MCCLL, 22 September 2010. Cited hereafter as Parra-Milks, House interview.
- ⁸⁶ Source: https://www.marcorsyscom.usmc.mil/Systems/C7110_TIPS Last viewed on 15 November 2010.
- ⁸⁷ Robinson email.
- ⁸⁸ Lollar, Rhodes, Caporale interview.
- ⁸⁹ Lollar, Capt Glen E., USMC, Combat Camera Officer In Charge, C-3, RC(SW), “RE: MCCLL Collection on Information Operations,” email to LtCol Daniel P. Coombes, USMC, MCCLL Liaison to RC(SW) and others, 12 December 2010. Cited hereafter as Lollar email.
- ⁹⁰ Lollar email.
- ⁹¹ Lee, LtCol Curtis, USMC, Deputy G-9, MEB-A, completed questionnaire provided to Maj Louis D. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, October 2010. Cited hereafter as Lee questionnaire response.
- ⁹² Lee questionnaire response.
- ⁹³ Robinson, Caporale interview.
- ⁹⁴ “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” Joint Publication 1-02, Joint Staff, 12 April 2001, as amended through 30 September 2010.

- ⁹⁵ Caporale, Maj Louis D., USMC, MCCLL Collection Team, "MCCLL IO Collections After Action Report," 2 December 2010.
- ⁹⁶ Derkach, House interview.
- ⁹⁷ Taylor, House Interview.
- ⁹⁸ Massey, Maj Joshua N., USMC, Officer in Charge, Economic and Political Intelligence Cell (EPIC), MEB-A, completed questionnaire provided to Maj Louis D. Caporale, USMC, MCCLL, October 2010. Cited hereafter as Massey, questionnaire response.
- ⁹⁹ Derkach, House Interview.
- ¹⁰⁰ Derkach, House Interview.
- ¹⁰¹ Taylor, House Interview.
- ¹⁰² Robinson, Caporale interview.
- ¹⁰³ Killion, Powers interview.
- ¹⁰⁴ Styskal, Powers interview.
- ¹⁰⁵ "Information Operations," Joint Publication 3-13, Joint Staff, 13 February 2006.
- ¹⁰⁶ Powers interview.
- ¹⁰⁷ McCollough, Powers interview.
- ¹⁰⁸ Taylor, House interview.
- ¹⁰⁹ Taylor, House interview.
- ¹¹⁰ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ¹¹¹ Caporale, Maj Louis D., USMC, MCIOC, "RE: IO Questions," personal email to Mr. Al Luckey, Senior Analyst, MCCLL, 24 November 2010.
- ¹¹² Caporale, Maj Louis D., USMC, "RE: Course Lengths and Target Audiences," personal email to Mr. Luckey, Senior Analyst, MCCLL, 23 December 2010. Cited hereafter as Caporale, 23 Dec email.
- ¹¹³ Thompson, Caporale interview.
- ¹¹⁴ Caporale, 23 Dec email.
- ¹¹⁵ Gamelin, Powers interview.
- ¹¹⁶ Davis response.
- ¹¹⁷ Lee, questionnaire response.
- ¹¹⁸ Fears, LtCol Christopher M., USMC, Civil Affairs Capabilities Integration Officer, Fires and Maneuver Integration Division, MCCDC, "RE: CIM update +CIM TTPs," personal email to Mr. Al
- ¹¹⁹ Lollar, Rhodes, Caporale interview.
- ¹²⁰ Eldridge, Maj Erik, USMC, Branch Head, IO Plans, C3, RC(SW), interview with LtCol Walter Powers, USMC, MCCLL, 10 October 2010. Cited hereafter as Eldridge, Powers interview.
- ¹²¹ Mills, Coombes interview.
- ¹²² Robinson email.