



Civilian Casualty Mitigation

Summary of Lessons, Observations and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures from Marine Expeditionary Brigade – Afghanistan (MEB-A) January – April 2010

Quick Look Report

29 July 2010

This Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) report provides an "initial impressions" summary identifying key observations or potential lessons from the collection effort. These observations are not service level opinions. Observations highlight potential shortfalls, risks or issues experienced by units that may suggest a need for institutional change or corrective action. The report is provided to DOTMLPF stakeholders and those who contribute to the Marine Corps fulfilling its statutory requirements. 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. - C. H. Sonntag, Director MCCLL.

Executive Summary

(U//FOUO) **Purpose:** To inform Deputy Commandants (DCs) Combat Development and Integration (CD&I), Plans, Programs, and Operations (PP&O), Commanding General (CG), Training and Education Command (TECOM), Director of Intelligence, operating forces and others on results of a January - April 2010 collection relating to mitigation of civilian casualties (CIVCAS).

(U//FOUO) **Background.** Civilian casualties resulted from U.S. close air support in Farah, Afghanistan on 4 May 2009. In order to help prevent future instances of civilian casualties and mitigate their effects, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) requested that U.S. Joint Forces Command's (USJFCOM) Joint Center for Operational Analysis (JCOA) capture lessons learned, and analyze incidents that led to coalition-caused civilian casualties during counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in Afghanistan. ¹ This MCCLL summary of 16 interviews of Marine Expeditionary Brigade – Afghanistan (MEB-A) and subordinate units, Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron (MAWTS) 1, and Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group staff members, questionnaires and after action material is published in support of the JCOA study.

Bottom Line Up Front:

(U//FOUO) **Fully understanding the imperative to balance employment of fires to defeat the enemy with the necessity to protect civilian lives, the Marine Corps has modified the training / education of ground commanders, aviators, forward air controllers (FACs), joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs), and others in the fire support approval chain. This incorporates lessons and guidance contained in the USJFCOM investigation into the Farah incident and the Commander, International Security Assistance Force (COMISAF) tactical directive issued in July 2009.** ²

(U//FOUO) **Marine Corps units and individuals preparing to deploy to Afghanistan are trained on theater specific directives and measures to prevent civilian casualties, to include rules of engagement (ROE), considerations for use of air to ground and indirect fires, and requirements for collateral damage estimation and battle damage assessment (BDA).**

(U//FOUO) **Training for forces deploying to Afghanistan is tailored for that threat and environment by monitoring events in theater, reviewing intelligence summaries, after action reports, e-mails, information provided by recently redeployed Marines, and MCCLL products. Instructor staff at Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group (TTECG) and Marine Aviation Weapons Training Squadron (MAWTS) 1 maintain situational awareness through periodic 'lessons learned' trips to Afghanistan and participation in video teleconferences with deployed forces.**

(U//FOUO) **Observations and best practices to mitigate potential for civilian casualties identified in this summary are consistent with counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine relating to proportionality in use of force to achieve military objectives, discrimination of targets, and determination of acceptable risk to noncombatants.** ³ **Understanding the long term effects on operations and mission success, avoidance of CIVCAS must be integrated into planning and operations.** *"There's got to be a CIVCAS theme that goes through every aspect of planning and operations we do."* Col Michael Killion, G-3, MEB-A ⁴

(U//FOUO) **Throughout its ongoing procurement and fielding initiatives, the Marine Corps is investigating, procuring and fielding technologies that can aid in reduction of civilian**

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casualties. These include non-lethal weapons systems currently employed in Afghanistan by I MEF (Fwd) and systems to be fielded over the next six years.

(U//FOUO) Capabilities/missions supported by currently fielded systems include vehicle check point (VCP), crowd control and entry control point (ECP) operations. Future systems will provide additional capabilities for these three missions and address functions of convoy security, conduct cordon, clear facilities, urban patrolling, establish and secure a perimeter, conduct search and detain personnel.

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

Recommendation	D	O	T	M	L	P	F
1. (U//FOUO) Review and where necessary revise doctrinal publications to ensure consistency in addressing civilian casualty and collateral damage prevention across functional areas, e.g., counterinsurgency, fire control, close air support, artillery, military police, etc.	X						
2. (U//FOUO) Employ tools such as economic, political intelligence cells (EPIC), human terrain teams, key leader engagements, and partnering with host nation security forces to aid in gathering historical information relating to area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people and events (ASCOPE) and build pattern of life situational awareness.		X	X		X	X	
3. (U//FOUO) Continue to incorporate current theater specific directives, friendly and enemy TTPs, scenarios and technologies in use into content of training for forces preparing to deploy.			X	X	X		X
4. (U//FOUO) Continue to explore non-lethal technologies fielding and training for use in circumstances with potential for collateral damage.			X	X			
5. (U//FOUO) Ensure staff judge advocates are integrated into planning and operations, particularly regarding fires. Ensure unit leadership is directly involved in ROE and fire control training and preparation.			X		X	X	
6. (U//FOUO) Reinforce current theater escalation of force (EOF) procedures, ROE, law of war, collateral damage estimation and battle damage assessment reporting during predeployment site surveys and reception, staging, onward movement and integration training.			X		X		
7. (U//FOUO) Validate the number of JTACs and JFOs required for tactical level units to facilitate the avoidance of civilian casualties in performing kinetic missions.		X				X	
8. (U//FOUO) Transiting units can avoid unnecessary escalation of force or other potential for civilian casualties by contacting/coordinating with battlespace owner to gain situational awareness of patterns of life, and areas to avoid.			X		X		
9. (U//FOUO) Develop proactive information operations (IO) talking points and a strategic communications plan to be prepared to quickly exploit or mitigate a significant activity (SIGACT) incident by “being first with the truth,” and countering enemy propaganda. Provide IO capabilities to battalion level.	X		X		X		
10. (U//FOUO) Field a dedicated organic USMC airborne signals intelligence (SIGINT) platform, whether it be Scan Eagle, Shadow or a	X	X	X	X		X	

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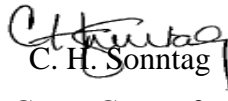
Recommendation	D	O	T	M	L	P	F
new unmanned aerial system, to aid in providing positive identification (PID) for Marine forces and in collecting data after an event occurred.							
11. (U//FOUO) Include low collateral damage weapons in programming, aviation ordnance allocations, mission planning and requests, and aircraft munitions load outs.	X		X	X			
12. (U//FOUO) In mission planning, address bomb damage assessment (BDA) reporting requirements and how BDA will be gained. .	X		X		X		

(U) The remainder of this report contains observations, insights, lessons, and TTPs relating to the mitigation of civilian casualties. Perspectives include members of the MEB-A staff, maneuver battalions, and flying squadrons as well as those of service level policy and training staffs.

Prologue

(U) This MCCLL report, Civilian Casualty Mitigation, is one of many publications addressing a wide array of topics assembled and produced by the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL). The MCCLL library is not 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 and disseminate them in such a timely manner as to make them actionable and invaluable to the next Marine in the deployment queue.



C. H. Sonntag

Director, Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned

Key Points

(U) Material in this summary is organized by functions of “prepare, plan, employ, assess, respond and learn,” the approach used by JCOA in organizing their collection on CIVCAS mitigation, and who designated the functions as a “comprehensive approach” to CIVCAS.⁵

Prepare

(U//FOUO) Training for MEB-A units prior to their March/April 2009 deployment included an overview of ISAF escalation of force (EOF) procedures, ROE, and law of war. These subjects were reinforced during reception, staging, onward movement and integration (RSO&I) training lectures that also included COMISAF tactical directives in effect at that time.⁶

(U//FOUO) The COMISAF tactical directive issued in July 2009 (see unclassified version at attachment 1 to this report) and the Farah incident investigation have been fully integrated into the Marine Corps training and education continuum from entry level training, through follow on institutional training, to service level predeployment training. This approach ensures that ground commanders, aviators, terminal attack controllers and all others in the fire approval chain understand and consider the strategic environment when conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations.⁷

(U//FOUO) From the MEB-A G-3’s perspective, there is no single “silver bullet” means of solving CIVCAS. The approach lies in specifically understanding patterns of life and the operating environment that forces are entering, ensuring subordinate organizations understand the implications of civilian casualties and the long term effect on operations, ensuring that they have the technical ability and resources for them to understand the operating environment, principally from an intelligence perspective, and then plan operations accordingly.⁸

(U//FOUO) In depth knowledge of the political, economic and human environments of the area of operations (AO) can help to mitigate CIVCAS. For forces initially entering an area, as MEB-A did in Marjah for Operation Moshtarak, the economic, political intelligence cell (EPIC) and human terrain team (HTT) were helpful in gathering historical information relating to area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people and events (ASCOPE), to build pattern of life situational awareness. For forces living amongst the population, key leader engagement was a means of developing awareness of the pattern of life in a given area.⁹

(U//FOUO) ASCOPE is used at the battalion and company level as an important planning tool. Each company level intelligence cell develops information and data on area compounds, structures, hospitals, identifying what capabilities the people have, and functional organizations such as community councils. This provides the battalions with a thorough understanding of the human terrain and enables them to mitigate CIVCAS and damage by identifying areas that have a high potential for CIVCAS.¹⁰

(U//FOUO) Partnering each unit with Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) improved understanding of the operating environment: *“No matter what a human terrain team (HTT) or some sociologist tells you, you’ll never be an Afghan. ... Everyone is partnered, and we hold [ANSF] to the same standards [for CIVCAS response].”* Col Michael Killion, G-3, MEB-A¹¹

- (U//FOUO) ANSF partners are a key source of human intelligence and insight into the people as they speak the language and *“as an Afghan, walking down the street or in the bazaar is going to see, hear and understand things that [an American] can’t.”* They can often discern who is enemy and who is not, more readily than coalition forces.^{12 13}

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- (U//FOUO) *“The best mitigation we’ve seen so far for CIVCAS is having Afghan police and soldiers [partnered with Marine units].”* LtCol Joseph Lore, Staff Judge Advocate, MEB-A. When Marines cordoned off a compound with enemy inside, Afghan soldiers or police would instruct the enemy to come out.¹⁴

(U//FOUO) [MCCLL Note: Use of the ASCOPE methodology and Afghan partnering were among key points of COMISAF/U.S. Forces – Afghanistan COIN training guidance issued in November 2009, and directed for DOD implementation by the Secretary of Defense in May 2010.]^{15 16}

(U//FOUO) Maneuver units need to train for target acquisition, target discrimination (shoot, no-shoot scenarios), and advanced marksmanship at unknown distances and use fleeting targets in order to realistically simulate actual combat conditions. Ranges need to be established where targets are obscured and not obvious, and train individual Marines that are not assigned a Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) as designated marksmen.¹⁷

(U//FOUO) MEB-A distributed hand-crank radios to local nationals and “Radio in a Box (RIAB)” broadcasting support to areas that didn’t have it. These were employed as a means of *“... getting the word out that we’re going to be operating in an area, trying to get as much noninterference as possible; educate the populace on how to interact with us and ... where they need to go...”* CPT Ryan Wright, USA, Officer in Charge, Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment, 2d MEB¹⁸ [MCCLL Note: Effectiveness of the RIAB as an IO tool and means of communicating with the Afghan populace was noted in an infantry battalion after action report on their 2008 deployment. Available at: <https://www.mccll.usmc.mil>]¹⁹

Plan

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A public affairs office formed what they referred to as a “flyaway team” or a media quick reaction team. When a significant incident occurred or they heard initial reports of one, such as civilian casualties, they would quickly assemble either a Marine combat correspondent (MOS 4341) team to quickly get on a flight to the area, or preferably identify independent external media that were in the area and draft a plan to get them to the site in order to conduct independent reporting on the incident.²⁰

(U//FOUO) Close coordination by the battlespace owner with special operations force (SOF) task forces’ operational planning, particularly as it pertains to application of fires, was important in order to decrease the likelihood of CIVCAS. Coordination included working out clearance, control and coordination of fires and ensuring the battlespace owner knows SOF intent, their plan, and ensuring fires are going to be well managed and safely employed. MEB-A fires addressed plans viewed as overly aggressive with the SOF fire support officer. MEB-A also determined whether SOF forces planned on interacting with local nationals and what their IO plan was. There were several instances in which MEB-A withheld approval of SOF operations until SOF had a more detailed plan and provided explanation on how they were going to meet MEB-A concerns.²¹

(U//FOUO) MEB-A used IO proactively, both pre and post operations to support strategic communications talking points and to counter enemy propaganda, including that pertaining to CIVCAS or civilian damages. The IO cell developed and disseminated messages and information to the regimental and battalion level, and the MEB-A IO planner made periodic visits to the provincial reconstruction team (PRT) to share information. Because much of the information on the population was generated at the tactical level, he said it would have been preferable to have a more robust IO capability at the battalion level as well as a cell at the PRT.²²

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(U//FOUO) For aviators, radio contact while approaching the target area or “checking in” with FACs was viewed as the most significant contributor to a pilot’s situational awareness while in the air. This check in provided real time local condition updates in the objective area. ²³

Employ

(U//FOUO) ISAF directives drove the clearance of fires procedures. The process was not considered different than the Marine Corps process: Positive identification (PID) based on observation of hostile intent or action and accurate target location were imperatives. When calling for fire the requestor had to be ready to provide more information, e.g., civilians present; enemy composition, disposition, strength; ten digit grid, right and left lateral limit, lead trace; other friendly units in the area. The timeliness of the support could be impacted but avoiding civilian casualties was the concern. To mitigate the time consuming aspect, requestors often attempted to anticipate enemy positions and then developed targeting data. ²⁴

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A G-2 said the Marine Corps needs an organic airborne signals intelligence (SIGINT) platform, whether it be Scan Eagle, Shadow or a new unmanned aerial system. This capability would have applicability across functional areas, but would also aid in providing PID for Marine forces, or in collecting data after an event occurred. The G-2 recommended fielding of a dedicated organic USMC airborne SIGINT platform. ²⁵

(U//FOUO) From the maneuver battalions’ perspective, battalion staff judge advocates should be integrated into operations, especially pertaining to fires: “Make him available to advise on the use of close air support and indirect fires.” ²⁶

(U//FOUO) MEB-A deputy fires and effects coordinator (FEC) perceived that they used restraint in the application of fires, as frustrated as they sometimes were in bringing timely fires on the enemy, but such restraint aided the MEB in mitigating CIVCAS and damage, as well as facilitated gaining support from the populace.

- (U//FOUO) *“I can’t think of a case where fires were used irresponsibly or where not warranted. In fact, MEB-A uses fires with so much restraint, it’s to their detriment because MEB is not getting the desired effects on target fast enough and in most cases the enemy gets away, which is frustrating. However, a measured approach to application of fires has allowed the battalions to earn the trust and respect of the people that we’re trying to win over, such as was the case with the people of Garmsir and Nawa during Operation Khanjar. It’s unsettling to have stuff blowing up all over your neighborhood and I think that the civilians have really appreciated our restraint in application of fires.”* Maj George Robinson, Deputy Fires and Effects Coordinator (FEC), MEB-A ²⁷
- (U//FOUO) *“In order to reduce civilian casualties you have to accept risk. On-scene commanders who make the determination and aren’t comfortable with ability to engage the enemy with fires without damaging buildings or incurring CIVCAS, relegate the unit to fighting the enemy man to man, direct fire to direct fire, and not using all the ‘tools in the toolbox’ such as supporting arms and air power. This incurs more risks, however, our objective here is [winning support of] the people and if you don’t incur risk, you’re going to cause civilian casualties and you won’t win the population.”* Maj George Robinson, Deputy Fires and Effects Coordinator (FEC), MEB-A ²⁸

Miscellaneous MEB-A CIVCAS Mitigation TTPs

- (U//FOUO) MEB-A aviation combat element (ACE)

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- Potential CIVCAS issues have resulted in revised TTPs, requiring the entire flight section to have concurrence that what they are witnessing is in consonance with the ROE and tactical directive. Further, daily discussions with the squadron commanding officer at duty officer shift changes were implemented to ensure understanding and execution of his commander's intent.²⁹
- Coordination with the ground combat element (GCE) is one of the most critical steps to avoid CIVCAS issues. Pre-mission pattern of life development as well as telephone and MiRC debriefs have been highly effective measures of CIVCAS avoidance. The squadron also routinely digitizes mission tapes to be used by the GCE as an additional resource to aid in determining whether a target is valid or not. During execution, integrating intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) sensors in concert with on-board sensors and GCE sensors, e.g., Ground Based Observation and Surveillance System (G-BOSS), has provided redundancy and assuredness that the target is valid. This reassurance has expedited the approval process as well as more effective weaponeering.³⁰
- Aircraft systems aid in maintaining PID of the target. For example, the UH-1Y Britestar Block II forward looking infrared system enables aircrew to maintain sensors on "cold passes" over the target prior to engagement. This helps build the situational awareness of the section, and has prevented instances of CIVCAS. Aircrew were well versed on collateral damage estimation and mitigation, (informal/hasty) prior to any engagement.³¹
- The capability provided by BriteStar Block II on UH-1Y and Night Targeting System Upgrade (NTSU) on AH-1W SuperCobra aircraft were extremely useful when determining engagement criterion. Often, these systems were the determining factors for establishing and maintaining PID on a potential target.³²
- Aircraft load outs include low collateral damage bombs (LCDBs, such as GBU-38 version 4 or GBU-51) to provide an employment option that reduces potential for collateral damage. Additionally, Marine Attack Squadron (VMA)-231 altered TTPs to maintain situational awareness of activity in and near the potential target area to provide an abort capability up until the last possible moment before weapons release.³³
- Following SIGACTS, aircrew debriefed with JTACs via phone or email. Aircrew and JTAC interaction was extensive. Daily AO updates from each battalion were sent to VMA-231 for S-2/aircrew review, to keep aircrew engaged with atmospheric at the battalion level and throughout the flight.³⁴
- Current close air support procedures and doctrine are adequate in addressing CIVCAS risk when properly followed and interpreted correctly. Additionally, knowledge of local enemy TTPs and comparing that knowledge to the observed situation may provide pertinent information to all involved in the prosecution of the potential target.³⁵
- (U//FOUO) MEB-A GCE:
 - A combat logistics battalion (CLB) convoy, while driving through a bazaar conducted an EOF on a male on a motorcycle approaching too fast and fired a round. The round did not hit anyone, but it ricocheted off a building and shrapnel from the building hit

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an individual in the head causing a minor injury. After that incident, 2d Battalion, 2d Marines (2/2) began escorting transiting coalition units through the bazaar, and eliminated military traffic during the heaviest day for civilian bazaar traffic.³⁶

- Scout snipers would observe individuals emplacing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in order to determine their TTPs prior to engaging them.³⁷
- Falcon View and Precision Strike Suite Special Operations Forces (PSS-SOF), computer based programs conveyed imagery of what buildings and compounds were near the target area for air delivered or surface-to-surface fires, and 2/2 used unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to discern what was on the ground, which enabled them to mitigate CIVCAS.³⁸
- The battalion operations center during engagements cleared fires, managed the units in contact, and worked closely with the battalion's air officer to give specific guidance to the pilots to ensure they were shooting, particularly during strafing or 'gun runs' at the planned target, and that they were not affecting adjacent structures.³⁹
- *"The two key questions these Marines ask themselves in training and in practice, in combat is first "can I shoot?" and the second and most important question is "should I shoot?"* Maj John Giannella, S-3, 2/2⁴⁰
- *"The primary challenge with ROE is understanding. ROE is a commander's issue, not a lawyer's issue. Commanders on the ground, from the squad leader on up, have to have a complete understanding of the ROE. The ROE answers the question 'Can I do this?', but then you have to ask 'Should I?' Just because I can, doesn't mean I should."* LtCol Christian Cabaniss, Commanding Officer, 2/8⁴¹
- Effective January 2010, the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) specifically prohibited the use of warning shots as a direct result of CIVCAS. The MEB-A SJA said that prohibiting warning shots in more urban areas where potential for ricochet or hitting an unintended target were much greater was reasonable. In the largely rural MEB-A area of operations with dirt roads and open areas, potential for CIVCAS from an intended warning shot is considerably less, and the prohibition eliminated an intermediary step prior to firing shots intended to be lethal. *"We found use of warning shots very helpful in getting people's attention and I think there's a lot of people alive today because we were allowed to use warning shots."* LtCol Joseph Lore, Staff Judge Advocate, MEB-A. The SJA suggested the authorization of warning shots should be a matter for commander's discretion.⁴²
- Leaders and individual Marines of 4th Light Amphibious Reconnaissance (LAR) Battalion were completely committed to following the rules of engagement (ROEs) as written. Significant differences of opinion existed however, on the extent to which the ROEs affected operations. Comments included the recommendation that ROE and EOF guidelines be drafted so they are simple to understand and can be realistically applied by operating forces.⁴³ [MCCLL Note: Observations regarding the complexity of ROE in the coalition environment have been noted in three previous MCCLL reports over the past year. The essentiality of training for and understanding both the dynamic and deliberate targeting procedures and how they are impacted by the process for approval of concept of operations, other ISAF SOPs, the COMISAF tactical directive, collateral damage evaluation (CDE), and ROE were repeatedly emphasized.⁴⁴

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- It was important to understand clearance of fires procedures and their relation to the ISAF SOPs, directives, and ROE prior to deploying. Regimental fire support coordinators (FSCs) must be prepared to lead the targeting/assessment process for all fires, applying the methodology of the kinetic to the non-kinetic process. ⁴⁵
- All personnel need to be familiar with the ISAF ROE and SOPs that are used in daily operations. ⁴⁶
- The mission rehearsal exercise (MRX), MCTOG's Spartan Resolve, was viewed as an outstanding and effective training and education opportunity for the combat operations center (COC) and staff to fully appreciate the ISAF SOPs, ROE, national caveats, concept of operations approval process, and the subtle nuances of the operating environment. It prepared the regimental combat team (RCT) for the daily battle rhythm, operating on the in-theater systems, refined SOPs and COC processes, and added a degree of realism that almost duplicated the current operating environment.] ⁴⁷

Non-Lethal Weapon Systems

(U) Non-lethal weapons are defined as those that are explicitly designed and primarily employed so as to incapacitate personnel or materiel, while minimizing fatalities, permanent injury to personnel, and undesired damage to property and the environment. Non-lethal weapons are intended to have reversible effects on personnel and materiel. ⁴⁸

(U//FOUO) Ongoing procurement and fielding initiatives include investigation, procurement and fielding of technologies that can aid in reduction of civilian casualties. These include non-lethal weapons systems currently employed in Afghanistan by I MEF (Fwd) and systems to be



Figure 1: VENOM mounted on gun turret of an up-armored HMMWV.

fielded over the next six years. Capabilities and missions supported by currently fielded systems include vehicle check point, crowd control and entry control point operations. Future systems will provide additional capabilities for these three missions and address functions of convoy security, conduct cordon, clear facilities, urban patrolling, establish and secure a perimeter, conduct search and detain personnel.

(U//FOUO) Non-Lethal Tube Launched Munitions System (NL/TLMS) aka VENOM™

(U//FOUO) Capability. VENOM™ is a non-lethal tube launched munitions system that provides 360 degree coverage and employs a high volume of 40mm flash-bang grenades to hail/warn errant vehicle operators encroaching in a security zone.

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(U//FOUO) Concept of Operations. VENOM™ is intended to mitigate escalation of force situations, by providing operating forces with a capability to determine hostile intent and positive identification from a stand-off distance. The result is that Marines have additional reaction time to assess and respond to threats.

(U//FOUO) Concept of Employment. System will be coaxially mounted on the Marine Corps Transparent Armor Gun Shield (MCTAGS), commonly seen on top of High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWVs) and Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles or ground mounted on an M3 tripod. Both day and night, it delivers 120 flash bangs (40mm) from 30 tubes (4 bangs per tube) that are loaded into three cassettes of 10 tubes each. The payload range is 70 to 130 meters, but it can be seen as far away as 500 meters during the day, and a 1000 meters at night.

(U//FOUO) Fully Funded (\$16.8M). Fielding to USMC only in August 2010 (Qty 250) Fielding/Training:

- The low rate initial production of 25 systems and ammunition (8100 rounds) are produced. The munitions are in theater and the VENOM™ systems are scheduled to arrive in theater circa August 2010.
- Funding is in place for the full rate production of an additional 225 systems.



Figure 2: The non-lethal equipment in Escalation of Force-Mission Modules (EoF-MMs) comes in easily transportable, weatherproof military containers.

- The VENOM™ training package requires only a maximum of four hours classroom and four hours of range time.
- The system is easily mounted on the HMMWV in under one hour, using only the operators to install.⁴⁹

(U//FOUO) Escalation of Force-Mission Modules (EoF-MM)

(U//FOUO) Capability. These pre-packed mission specific modules are intended to aid in the reduction of collateral damage to personnel and property. Task organized into capability groups (VCP, ECP, and Detain Personnel; Crowd Control and Detain Personnel; Establish Perimeter, Urban Patrolling, Convoy Security, and Detain Personnel; and Conduct Search, Conduct Cordon, Clear Facility, and Detain Personnel), the modules are sub-divided into ten specific capability modules (VCP, ECP, Crowd Control, Detain Personnel, Conduct Search, Convoy Security, Clear Facilities, Conduct Cordon, Urban Patrolling, and Establish Perimeter).

(U//FOUO) Concept of Operations. EoF-MM is designed and primarily intended to be employed to support security, counter insurgency, peacekeeping, humanitarian, and security and stabilization operations.

(U//FOUO) Concept of Employment. MAGTF deploying units select one or more of the pre-packaged mission modules to execute their assigned tasks.



Figure 3: Marines open the EoF-MMs and prepare to practice escalation-of-force procedures for riot control.

(U//FOUO) Fully Funded (\$11.6M), Fielding to USMC only. Fielding begins third quarter FY10 (Qty 78). EoF-MM will eventually be fielded to each of the MEF's special operations training groups and Marine expeditionary units, and within III MEF, 3d Marines and 4th Marines. For reserve units, EoF-MM will be fielded to military police companies within 4th Marine Division and 4th Marine Logistics Group, and to Marine wing support squadrons within 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. Fielding is projected to be completed by September 2011.⁵⁰

(U//FOUO) Mission Payload Module (MPM) - Non-Lethal Weapon System (NLWS)

(U//FOUO) Capability. The MPM-NLWS will employ non-lethal, thermobaric, tube launched munitions. The non-lethal system will attach to the Marine Corps Transparent Armor Gun Shield (MCTAG), commonly seen on top of HMMWVs and MRAPs, and will traverse with the .50-caliber machine gun. This allows a machine gunner to quickly transition to a non-lethal option.

(U//FOUO) MPM-NLWS provides a non-lethal effect from ranges between 30 - 150 meters (Threshold), 30-500 meters (Objective) to incapacitate (disable, inhibit, or degrade) area targets from 30 seconds to 5 minutes with light and sound effects. The outcome is a disruptive action that provides a Marine time to assess and determine whether or not the "target's" actions are of hostile intent.

(U//FOUO) Concept of Operations. The module will be used for controlling crowds, denying/defending areas, controlling access and engaging area threats while providing increased standoff for protection of friendly forces.

(U//FOUO) Concept of Employment. Organic to active / reserve infantry battalions, mounted on the HMMWV MCTAGs, allowing the gunner to rapidly transition from non-lethal to lethal effects as the situation dictates.

(U//FOUO) Fully Funded (\$33.6M), Fielding to USMC only in FY16 (Qty 312)⁵¹



Figure 4: One prototype for the Mission Payload Module will be based on this multi-barrelled grenade launcher.

(U//FOUO) Ocular Interruption (OI) Device



Figure 5: Effects of an Ocular Interruption Device.

(U//FOUO) Capability. OI is a non-lethal, non-damaging, eye-safe, dazzling laser device used to warn (primary) and/or suppress (secondary) individuals with a 10 - 500 meter standoff (Threshold), 2-2000 meter (Objective).

(U//FOUO) Concept of Operations. OI will be used to warn vehicle operators and other personnel that they are entering a lethal force authorized zone. Primary role is to support the following missions: VCP, ECP, convoy security, urban patrolling, establish and secure a

perimeter, conduct cordon, crowd control and clear facilities of personnel. OI will replace currently approved dazzling lasers Green Beam Designator-III Custom (GBD-IIIC)/Laser-9/Portable) (LA-9P), and the 532P-M “Mini-Green.”

(U//FOUO) Concept of Employment. Used by ground forces, this small hand-held device with aiming scope can also be weapon mounted, and gives an individual the capability to deliver an eye-safe glare effect in order to warn and/or suppress targeted personnel. The glare creates an obstruction in the targets field of view allowing the Marine to assess the target's intent and then respond appropriately, and can be used for day or night operations.

(U//FOUO) Fully Funded (\$37.9M), Fielding to USMC and USN in FY 15-17 (Qty 1482 USMC) ⁵²

Summary of additional items currently fielded and future counter-personnel capabilities

As depicted in attachment 2 to this report, the Marine Corps has a range of options currently fielded to warn and/or suppress unknown personnel approaching a checkpoint/position, that cover the span of zero to 500-plus meters of stand-off distance. Capabilities above the horizontal red line midway down the chart at attachment 2 are fielded. In addition to the systems previously mentioned, currently fielded non-lethal counter-personnel technologies include the following:

- **Laser- 9/Portable (LA-9/P)** LA-9/P is the nomenclature for the Green Beam Designator-III Custom (GBD-IIIC) dazzling laser following the integration of the eye-safe infrared laser range-finding Safety Control Module (SCM). The GBD-IIIC is no longer authorized for USMC use (after 1 March 2010) without a SCM. When the LA-9/P is fired, the SCM interrogates the hazard area (from aperture to 65 meters) before releasing dazzling energy (engineering control vice administrative control). If the SCM does not detect an object within the hazard area, the SCM instantaneously sends a signal to the GBD-IIIC allowing the dazzling laser to send energy down range in order to communicate a warning signal to the target.
- **532P-M Glare MOUT “Mini-Green”:** The Mini-Green is a smaller/lighter (than the LA-9/P) dazzling laser and is the only other dazzling laser approved for use within the USMC. The Mini-Green relies on Administrative Controls (vice Engineering Controls) to mitigate the risk of inadvertent lasing. Although the Mini-Green has an effective range

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about one third the max distance of the LA-9/P (due to it being half as powerful, 125mW vice 250 mW), one advantage over the LA-9/P (other than size and weight) is that the Mini-Green hazard distance is shorter allowing Marines to engage targets at closer ranges (25 meters vice 65 meters).

The following capabilities are projected to achieve IOC in FY-17.

- **Non-Lethal Disable Point Target (NL-DPT).** NL-DPT is a capability gap the USMC will address during a requirements Integrated Product Team (IPT) workshop in FY-11.
- **Indirect Fire Munitions (IFM).** Based on the novel-pyrotechnic payload for the Mission Payload Module, the Marine Corps requested assistance from the Human Effects Center of Excellence (HECOE) to conduct an analysis to determine the effectiveness of IFM for counter-personnel (CP) applications. Program initiation of the IFM will be dependent upon the results of the effects-based analysis. The ability to suppress many individuals in the open is the second highest counter-personnel joint capability gap.

Assess

(U//FOUO) Accuracy of BDA was emphasized: Approach BDA methodically and deliberately to get an accurate as possible first report to higher headquarters, which often entails getting forces to the site to complete an on-scene BDA. ⁵³

(U//FOUO) The MEB-A commander expanded the ISAF BDA reporting requirement to include a first impressions report on any civilian found wounded or killed, and to make an initial assessment of whether coalition forces had any culpability. When there was potential for culpability based on other activities in the AO, a preliminary inquiry would follow. ⁵⁴

Respond

MEB-A Command Element perspective

(U//FOUO) *“The most important thing we do is be the first with the truth,”* followed by condolences, suffering payments, key leader engagement, and media engagements. Col Michael Killion, G-3, MEB-A ⁵⁵

(U//FOUO) MEB-A units were required to report each civilian casualty as a SIGACT, with commander-to-commander discussion to get a rapid understanding of what actually happened. From that SIGACT, a first impressions report (FIR) was initiated within 24 hours. If coalition force activities or actions resulted in that civilian casualty, a second impressions report (SIR) with subsequent planned activities followed within 48 hours, and within 72 hours, a formal command investigation was initiated. In addition to reaching a conclusion, adhering to this process served as a model of “good business” practice in mentoring of the ANSF to avoid collateral damage, and supported efforts to promote rule of law among the Afghan population. ⁵⁶

(U//FOUO) The above process was effective in rapidly getting information to key Afghan leaders. *“In Marjah when we did have instances of CIVCAS, ... our ability to get rapid information about the context of the casualties caught in a fire fight, cross fire, whatever the case may be, and getting that information to the governor, we found that the governor and the Marjah elders’ counsel were our most vocal advocates and proponents.”* Col Michael Killion, G-3, MEB-A ⁵⁷ This was also a means of countering enemy propaganda. ⁵⁸

(U//FOUO) In response to the Taliban’s IO campaign of inserting falsehoods or doubt into the civilian population concerning actual or claimed coalition or ANSF CIVCAS incidents, the

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concept of a “truth commission” was developed during the planning stages of Op Moshtarak (Marjah), in coordination with the GIRoA. The truth commission was a group of government sponsored Marjah elders who would be flown to the scene of any actual or supposed CIVCAS or significant property damage incident, and provide their unbiased opinion on what actually happened. This was viewed as a sound program that should be leveraged more because it aids IO efforts.⁵⁹

(U//FOUO) The host nation investigation team or truth commission makes a determination of what occurred and culpability can be assigned. In cases where coalition force activity caused the CIVCAS, *“Accepting culpability is really the only thing you can do, so being first with the truth, even if it takes you 24 hours and there’s a local national stringer who puts something out in the local press. You have to have the discipline to be the first with the truth—even if it takes you a certain amount of time ... and then getting local national agencies to be the one to come forward with the truth.”* Col Michael Killion, G-3, MEB-A⁶⁰

(U//FOUO) The psychological operations (PSYOPs) community developed relationships with the elders, district governors, and the provincial governor to assist in delivering their message of regret and to inform the locals of precautions they can take to avoid becoming injured if there are operations in their areas. They also used these individuals to quell any fictitious or malicious messages that may be disseminated by the Taliban in regards to CIVCAS, in other words, to get the truth out about what actually happened.⁶¹

(U//FOUO) When a CIVCAS incident occurred, the MEB-A PSYOPs OIC said initial reports were viewed as potentially fractured, exaggerated or incomplete. Once corroborated, confirmed or more complete reports were received, PSYOPs moved forward with messaging specifically for that incident. Each incident was different; how it happened, who it happened to, where it happened, and tribal affiliations.⁶²

(U//FOUO) *“Key leader engagements (KLEs) have assisted us mainly getting the message out through both key leaders and RIAB and have been successful in keeping the populace at-large informed ... and to maintain their understanding of the situation. It’s unfortunate, but occasionally collateral damage happens. Working face-to-face with local nationals has been the [most effective in] keeping the families ... on our side.”* CPT Ryan Wright, USA, Officer in Charge, Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment, 2d MEB⁶³

(U//FOUO) MEB-A IO had two primary approaches when there was a CIVCAS: They were either exploiting a SIGACT or mitigating a SIGACT. Primarily, they would mitigate a SIGACT regarding CIVCAS caused by coalition forces. If the enemy caused the CIVCAS, MEB IO would make the population aware of the truth of how it was caused. This information was pushed down to the RCT and then to the battalions. The battalions used those two types of drills for CIVCAS and other SIGACTs. The first time MEB IO put a script together to broadcast via the RIAB and assembled talking points for the unit, they learned a valuable lesson. *“The first incident report since we’ve been here has never been accurate. Not one time have we had an accurate first incident report and that was a ‘lesson learned.’”* Fortunately, they did not disseminate over the RIAB or give out talking points based on the initial report. *“It’s something that we have incorporated; make sure that you get the facts before you go out with your message.”* Capt Brent S. Molaski, USMC, IO Planner, 2d MEB⁶⁴

(U//FOUO) MEB-A public affairs had to convince their higher headquarters that they should not necessarily go public with information in a CIVCAS first impression report if it cannot be corroborated through another means.⁶⁵

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(U//FOUO) The governor of Helmand Province was very helpful in responding to CIVCAS incidents in face to face meetings and at shuras. He promoted the message that “ISAF values lives.” The MEB-A IO planner said that on numerous occasions, the provincial governor went out of his way to help build credibility for coalition forces, emphasizing the security they provide and the steps they are taking to mitigate collateral damage or CIVCAS. ⁶⁶

(U//FOUO) MEB-A IO viewed solatia or condolence payments to the family the most effective mitigation measures following CIVCAS caused by Marines, along with key leader engagement of tribal elders and GIROA officials, and employing RIAB broadcasts to spread word of what transpired. ⁶⁷

(U//FOUO) One effective approach employed by MEB-A public affairs office (PAO) was to communicate with the governor’s press secretary, and have the governor of Helmand Province come out with a statement, travel to the location where the incident occurred or was alleged to have occurred, and to address the people directly. ⁶⁸ Other PAO related observations included the following.

- Media engagements, particularly local Afghan media, can serve to disseminate the truth to a wide audience.
- A best case scenario is coupling a key leader engagement with a media engagement, where leaders can meet privately first and come to an agreement about what happened and what is to be done from that point forward. Then, marry this up with an aggressive media campaign to have them then go public and speak about what they’ve just discussed, which is helpful in quelling the follow-on, second and third order effects of CIVCAS.
- Public affairs personnel were aware that civilian casualty reports in Helmand Province immediately ‘shot’ up the chain to COMISAF General McChrystal and President Hamid Karzai. PAO should be prepared to respond as quickly as possible to incidents, and “*be on the ground providing facts.*” Disseminating accurate information quickly was an effective means of averting violent public reaction.
- The deputy PAO said that when an incident occurred, they would receive phone calls from RC-S PAO asking if they had any additional information not contained in what was being reported officially through the MEB operations report to Regional Command – South (RC-S).
- When incidents occurred, public affairs communicated with RC-South and either met or conducted a conference call, to develop a coherent plan for response – what the facts were and how they were going to respond. To avoid confusion, MEB-A public affairs dealt primarily with RC-South’s public affairs office, and didn’t conduct direct communication with ISAF or IJC public affairs staffs. A press release was not the preferable course of action, however, they would be ready to release one if deemed necessary.
- As part of the planning for a media quick reaction team, public affairs maintained an external media embed program, so when incidents happened, they often had a reporter nearby and would initiate whatever actions they needed to get that reporter closer to the scene of the CIVCAS incident so that they could provide an “unbiased” or independent account of what transpired. Military public affairs staff cannot tell a civilian journalist where to go or what to report on. They have to bring the opportunity to the attention of

the journalist and encourage them to report: *“Hey listen, this is something that we think has happened. Can we move you there and would you report on it?”* Capt Abraham Sipe, Deputy PAO, MEB-A

Maneuver battalion perspectives:

(U//FOUO) In responding to a CIVCAS incident, 2/2 always tried to “put an Afghan face on everything they did.” They would hold a shura almost immediately to give the commander an opportunity to discuss what happened. The district governor attended and was very helpful. When making condolence or solatia payments, they would have the local commander from the ANSF, Afghan National Police (ANP) or Afghan Border Police (ABP) standing next to them as they made the payment so that the people would perceive the Afghans as being part of that operation.⁶⁹

(U//FOUO) The 2/2 operations officer said the most successful mitigation measures following CIVCAS were key leader engagement between ISAF and the ANSF and with the local elders, and then condolence payments.⁷⁰

(U//FOUO) When a CIVCAS incident occurred, 2/2 routinely called in a medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), regardless of how the injury came about - whether the local national was injured by the enemy or if someone fell into a canal and almost drowned. They used the same MEDEVAC process as was used for injured Marines.⁷¹

(U//FOUO) At the time of the interview with the battalion SJA, near the end of 2/2’s seven month deployment, the unit had conducted 21 CIVCAS investigations. Of these, three appear to have been legitimate CIVCAS incidents. They involved civilians being hit by accident when Marines returned fire, either due to battlefield geometry or Taliban tactics of hiding among civilians, and not because of a ‘trigger happy’ Marine.⁷²

Learn

Service Level Perspective

(U//FOUO) The Marine Corps has modified the training / education of ground commanders, aviators, FACs, JTACs, and others in the fire support approval chain to incorporate lessons and guidance contained in the USJFCOM investigation into the Farah incident and the ISAF tactical directive.⁷³

(U//FOUO) The following summarizes actions taken to reduce civilian casualties.

- Entry level training:
 - The Basic School’s Basic Officer Course identifies the local populace as the center of gravity. Recurring themes: Kinetic force must be used judiciously, with understanding of potential negative ramifications on support of the populace. ROE/law of war (LOW): Clearly identify and target only enemy personnel, use appropriate force, avoid collateral damage. “Three block war” and “strategic corporal:” Tactical decisions can have strategic level implications.
 - Infantry Officer Course includes Arab role players, tactical scenario is scripted to reward sound tactical decisions based on cultural, tribal considerations, sensitivity to civilian casualties and measured use of force. Supports both spirit and intent of ISAF tactical directive.

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- Field/Marine Artillery Officer Basic Course now includes detailed instruction on collateral damage estimation and increased precision required of all supporting arms, as described in the ISAF tactical directive.
- Follow-on institutional training and education:
 - Expeditionary Warfare School: A new class, “Fires in the Current Operating Environment,” includes collateral damage estimates, ROE, PID, considerations for application of fires in COIN operations, effects, roles of fires and risk vs. gain analysis. These themes continue during the Occupational Field Expansion Course fires preparation practical application and live fire events. For artillery officers, the course addresses advanced collateral damage estimates and precision guided munitions (PGM) employment.
 - Tactical Air Control Party Course now includes the ISAF tactical directive and events leading to the directive, a hazard report lecture, emphasis on use of non-kinetic support and minimizing collateral damage.
 - Joint Fires Observer Course includes fratricide prevention, case study of the Farah incident, other in theater and training incidents, and the ISAF tactical directive in detail.
 - Air Officer Development Course includes Farah case study, investigation and lessons learned as part of the collateral damage estimate and ROE class.
 - Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course includes Farah case study, investigation and lessons learned in the ROE class.
 - Infantry Unit Leaders, Infantry Company Operations Chief and Infantry Operations Chief Courses now include discussion on implications of the ISAF tactical directive in coordination and approval processes.⁷⁴

(U//FOUO) Services need to identify and address long term institutional changes that can mitigate CIVCAS, within the capabilities development pillars of doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel and facilities (DOTMLPF).

- Doctrine: The Marine Corps is reviewing service doctrine to identify areas that should be revised to address content and intent of the ISAF tactical directive.
- Organization: The Marine Corps is reviewing the number of JTACs and joint fires observers (JFOs) needed at lower echelon units to facilitate the avoidance of civilian casualties. Additionally, the Marine Corps is exploring concepts such as the counter-IED “Attack the Network” initiative for ways to modify current targeting and fire support coordination processes to reduce civilian casualties.
- Equipment: Throughout its ongoing procurement and fielding initiatives, the Marine Corps is investigating, procuring and fielding technologies that can aid in reduction of civilian casualties. These include lethal and non-lethal weapons systems employed by MEB-A and I MEF (Fwd).⁷⁵

MEB-A Command Element Perspective

(U//FOUO) MEB-A’s success in reducing CIVCAS can be directly attributed to having solid command and control procedures and the adherence to established procedures. The COMISAF tactical directive provides explicit guidance as it pertains to striking compounds but it does not

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cover the myriad other scenarios where indirect fires must be employed. The first three months of the deployment produced many lessons learned that have been passed to the major subordinate commands through additional guidance and refined procedures. In addition, MEB-A convened a fires conference after 90 days of operations in Afghanistan to vet lessons learned to all concerned. The MEB-A operations officer suggested that the predeployment site survey (PDSS) process and mission rehearsal exercise leverage the experiences of MEB-A units to develop vignettes from actual experiences. Vignettes could then be used to guide in-depth discussions between leaders and their subordinates that examine the complexities of applying indirect fires in a COIN environment, as a valuable form of training.

(U//FOUO) According to the MEB-A operations officer, ROE and fires procedures training should be conducted by unit leaders and not relegated to the staff judge advocates. Marines will take the training more seriously when it is given by their unit's leaders. ROE should be viewed as a command issue and a code of conduct issue as opposed to a legal issue. This topic should be addressed by the commanders who share the burden of these decisions with their subordinates.⁷⁶

(U//FOUO) ISAF tactical directives directed BDA reports be submitted for all use of fires – 60mm mortars up to 2,000 lb bombs. This forced MEB-A to conduct BDA and develop new TTPs. For example: Simply ceasing fire during heavily kinetic operations and 'calling out' the enemy holed up in a compound, asking them to throw down their weapons and surrender, has worked on several occasions and should be a TTP considered by the on scene commander/small unit leader in order to reduce friendly casualties and mitigate CIVCAS.⁷⁷

(U//FOUO) MEB-A briefed 'lessons learned' and TTPs to each inbound infantry battalion PDSS team, for possible incorporation into their Enhanced Mojave Viper and predeployment training.⁷⁸

(U//FOUO) During reception, staging, onward movement and integration (RSO&I) of arriving units, MEB-A Fires held a conference of fire support coordinators, operations, artillery and ACE officers, to share best practices, lessons and observations, including those from CIVCAS investigations. Presentations and papers related to the conference were passed throughout MEB-A and to RC-S to share with adjacent task forces (TFs). MEB-A and the adjacent UK TF Helmand also routinely shared TTPs.⁷⁹

(U//FOUO) MEB-A was incorporating more air delivered munitions (GBU-38 version 4 or GBU-51) low collateral damage bombs into engagements than they had in the past. In the first seven months of deployment, joint and coalition aircraft were not frequently carrying these munitions in their standard combat load. In planning for Operation Cobra's Anger in Now Zad in December/January and Operation Moshtarak in February, MEB-A requested more low collateral damage bombs because they knew they would be operating in a built up environment and most targets were not going to need 500+ pound bombs. It appeared to the deputy FEC that ground forces did not really want them initially, however, after using them, generally decided they were effective in reducing potential for collateral damage. These bombs did not always have the desired effects on target, however, a second bomb could be dropped if necessary. It would be beneficial for JTACs and units at EMV to train with these munitions so they learn their effects and what they look like when detonating. There were a few cases where the ground force thought the low collateral bomb was a "dud" because of the small explosion compared to a 500 pound bomb.⁸⁰

(U//FOUO) Personnel filling information operations billets at battalion, regiment, division or MEF must have an understanding of how to respond to CIVCAS, the differences between

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CIVCAS caused by coalition forces, enemy forces or accident, and how to address each using the limited IO media available in Afghanistan, including RIAB, cell phones (if coverage is available) to reach GIROA officials, tribal or mullah village elders, or print capability.

“Incorporate all the tools that you have into addressing the CIVCAS. ... We were in the mindset of having a built up infrastructure like we do back home or in Iraq, and that infrastructure does not exist right now here in our AO in all the areas. Understanding that and the constraints with that are important.” Capt Brent S. Molaski, USMC, IO Planner, 2d MEB ⁸¹

Maneuver Battalion Perspective

(U//FOUO) Refinement of SOPs and battle rhythm sped up the fires clearance process. Commanders and members of the staff conducted post mission debriefs.

(U//FOUO) The commanders also talked after every engagement. A common understanding was gained about information and verbiage required for the process, based on ROE and other factors, before clearance was granted. ^{82 83}

(U//FOUO) In addition to reports required by the ISAF tactical directive after an incident involving CIVCAS, the battalion forwarded an after action report including a “story board” with pictures, diagrams, arrows, the direction of fire, depicting actions that were taken. ⁸⁴

Recommendations

1. (U//FOUO) Review and where necessary revise doctrinal publications to ensure consistency in addressing civilian casualty and collateral damage mitigation across functional areas, e.g., counterinsurgency, fire control, close air support, artillery, military police, etc. (**D**octrine)
2. (U//FOUO) Employ tools such as economic, political intelligence cells (EPIC), human terrain teams, key leader engagements, and partnering with host nation security forces to aid in gathering historical information relating to area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people and events (ASCOPE) and build pattern of life situational awareness. (**O**rganization, **T**raining, **L**eadership and education, **P**ersonnel)
3. (U//FOUO) Continue to incorporate current theater specific directives, friendly and enemy TTPs, scenarios and technologies in use into content of training for forces preparing to deploy. (**T**raining, **M**aterial, **L**eadership and education, **F**acilities)
4. (U//FOUO) Continue to explore non-lethal technologies for use in circumstances with potential for collateral damage. (**M**aterial)
5. (U//FOUO) Ensure staff judge advocates are integrated into planning and operations, particularly regarding fires. Ensure unit leadership is directly involved in ROE and fire control training and preparation. (**T**raining, **L**eadership and education, **P**ersonnel)
6. (U//FOUO) Reinforce current theater escalation of force (EOF) procedures, ROE, law of war, collateral damage estimation and battle damage assessment reporting during PDSS and RSO&I training. (**T**raining, **L**eadership and education)
7. (U//FOUO) Validate the number of JTACs and JFOs required for tactical level units to facilitate the avoidance of civilian casualties in performing kinetic missions. (**O**rganization, **P**ersonnel)
8. (U//FOUO) Transiting units can avoid unnecessary escalation of force or other potential for civilian casualties by contacting/coordinating with battlespace owner to gain

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situational awareness of patterns of life, and areas to avoid. (Doctrine, Training, Leadership and education)

9. (U//FOUO) Develop proactive information operations (IO) talking points and a strategic communications plan to be prepared to quickly exploit or mitigate a significant activity (SIGACT) incident by “being first with the truth,” and countering enemy propaganda. Provide IO capabilities to battalion level. (Doctrine, Training, Leadership and education)
10. (U//FOUO) Field a dedicated organic USMC airborne signals intelligence (SIGINT) platform, whether it be Scan Eagle, Shadow or a new unmanned aerial system, to aid in providing positive identification (PID) for Marine forces and in collecting data after an event occurred. (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Personnel)
11. (U//FOUO) Include low collateral damage weapons in programming, aviation ordnance allocations, mission planning and requests, and aircraft munitions load outs. (Doctrine, Training, Material)
12. (U//FOUO) In mission planning, address bomb damage assessment (BDA) reporting requirements and how BDA will be gained. (Doctrine, Training, Leadership and education)

Additional Resources

(U) Interviews cited as endnotes in this report are available in the search enabled MCCLL database at www.mccll.usmc.mil, and can be located by doing a MCCLL site search (action menu on left of screen) on the individual’s last name.

(U//FOUO) Binder 1711 on the unclassified website and Binder 613 on the SIPR website contain other information related to the content of this report, including the following:

- “Escalation of Force – Afghanistan,” Center for Army Lessons Learned Handbook
- “Joint Entry Control Point and Escalation of Force Procedures (JEEP)” Handbook
- COMISAF Tactical Directive (classified version), 1 July 2009 (SIPR)
- “Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan,” JCOA brief, 27 January 2010 (SIPR)
- “Incorporation of Civilian Casualty After Action Review Lessons Learned into Service Training Curriculums,” Joint Staff J-7 brief, 16 March 2010. (SIPR)

Summary and Way Ahead

(U//FOUO) The Marine Corps has modified the training / education of ground commanders, aviators, forward air controllers (FACs), joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs), and others in the fire support approval chain. Units and individuals preparing to deploy to Afghanistan are trained on theater specific directives and measures to prevent civilian casualties, to include ROE, considerations for use of air to ground and indirect fires, and requirements for collateral damage estimation and BDA.⁸⁵

(U) This report will be forwarded to advocates, proponents and operating forces in the interests of improving how Marine forces are organized, trained, equipped and provided to combatant commanders.

(U//FOUO) Collection team leader for this effort was Maj Lynn Wisheart, USMC, MCCLL Liaison to MEB-A command element. Other team members were:



- GySgt Russell Miller, USMC, MCCLL Liaison to MEB-A GCE, Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan

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- Maj Casey Campbell, USMC, MCCLL Liaison to MEB-A ACE, Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan
- CWO4 David Pabst, USMC, MCCLL Liaison to MEB-A LCE, Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan
- Mr. Craig Bevan, LtCol USMC (Ret), MCCLL Liaison to MAGTF-TC, 29 Palms, CA
- Mr. Jeff Miglionico, LtCol USMCR (Ret), MCCLL Liaison to 3d MAW and MAWTS-1

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

Attachment 1: COMISAF Tactical Directive, 6 July 2009



NATO/ISAF UNCLASS

Headquarters

International Security Assistance Force

Kabul, Afghanistan

HQ ISAF 6 July 2009

TO: See Distribution

SUBJECT: Tactical Directive

The Commander of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), General Stanley McChrystal, issued a revised Tactical Directive on 02 July 2009. The Tactical Directive provides guidance and intent for the employment of force in support of ISAF operations and updates the previous version issued by the previous commander in October 2008. This directive also applies to all U.S. forces operating under the control of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A).

Although the Tactical Directive has been classified for the protection of our own forces, portions of the directive are being made public in order to ensure a broader awareness of the intent and scope of General McChrystal's guidance to ISAF and USFOR-A forces.

What follows are the releasable portions of the Tactical Directive:

Our strategic goal is to defeat the insurgency threatening the stability of Afghanistan. Like any insurgency, there is a struggle for the support and will of the population. Gaining and maintaining that support must be our overriding operational imperative – and the ultimate objective of every action we take.

We must fight the insurgents, and will use the tools at our disposal to both defeat the enemy and protect our forces. But we will not win based on the number of Taliban we kill, but instead on our ability to separate insurgents from the center of gravity – the people. That means we must respect and protect the population from coercion and violence – and operate in a manner which will win their support.

This is different from conventional combat, and how we operate will determine the outcome more than traditional measures, like capture of terrain or attrition of enemy forces. We must avoid the trap of winning tactical victories – but suffering strategic defeats – by causing civilian casualties or excessive damage and thus alienating the people.

While this is also a legal and a moral issue, it is an overarching operational issue – clear-eyed recognition that loss of popular support will be decisive to either side in this struggle. The Taliban cannot militarily defeat us – but we can defeat ourselves.

I recognize that the carefully controlled and disciplined employment of force entails risks to our troops – and we must work to mitigate that risk wherever possible. But excessive use of force resulting in an alienated population will produce far greater risks. We must understand this reality at every level in our force.

I expect leaders at all levels to scrutinize and limit the use of force like close air support (CAS) against residential compounds and other locations likely to produce

Figure 1: COMISAF Tactical Directive, 6 July 2009 (page 1)

civilian casualties in accordance with this guidance. Commanders must weigh the gain of using CAS against the cost of civilian casualties, which in the long run make mission success more difficult and turn the Afghan people against us.

I cannot prescribe the appropriate use of force for every condition that a complex battlefield will produce, so I expect our force to internalize and operate in accordance with my intent. Following this intent requires a cultural shift within our forces – and complete understanding at every level – down to the most junior soldiers. I expect leaders to ensure this is clearly communicated and continually reinforced.

The use of air-to-ground munitions and indirect fires against residential compounds is only authorized under very limited and prescribed conditions (specific conditions deleted due to operational security).

(NOTE) This directive does not prevent commanders from protecting the lives of their men and women as a matter of self-defense where it is determined no other options (specific options deleted due to operational security) are available to effectively counter the threat.

We will not isolate the population from us through our daily conduct or execution of combat operations. Therefore:

Any entry into an Afghan house should always be accomplished by Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), with the support of local authorities, and account for the unique cultural sensitivities toward local women.

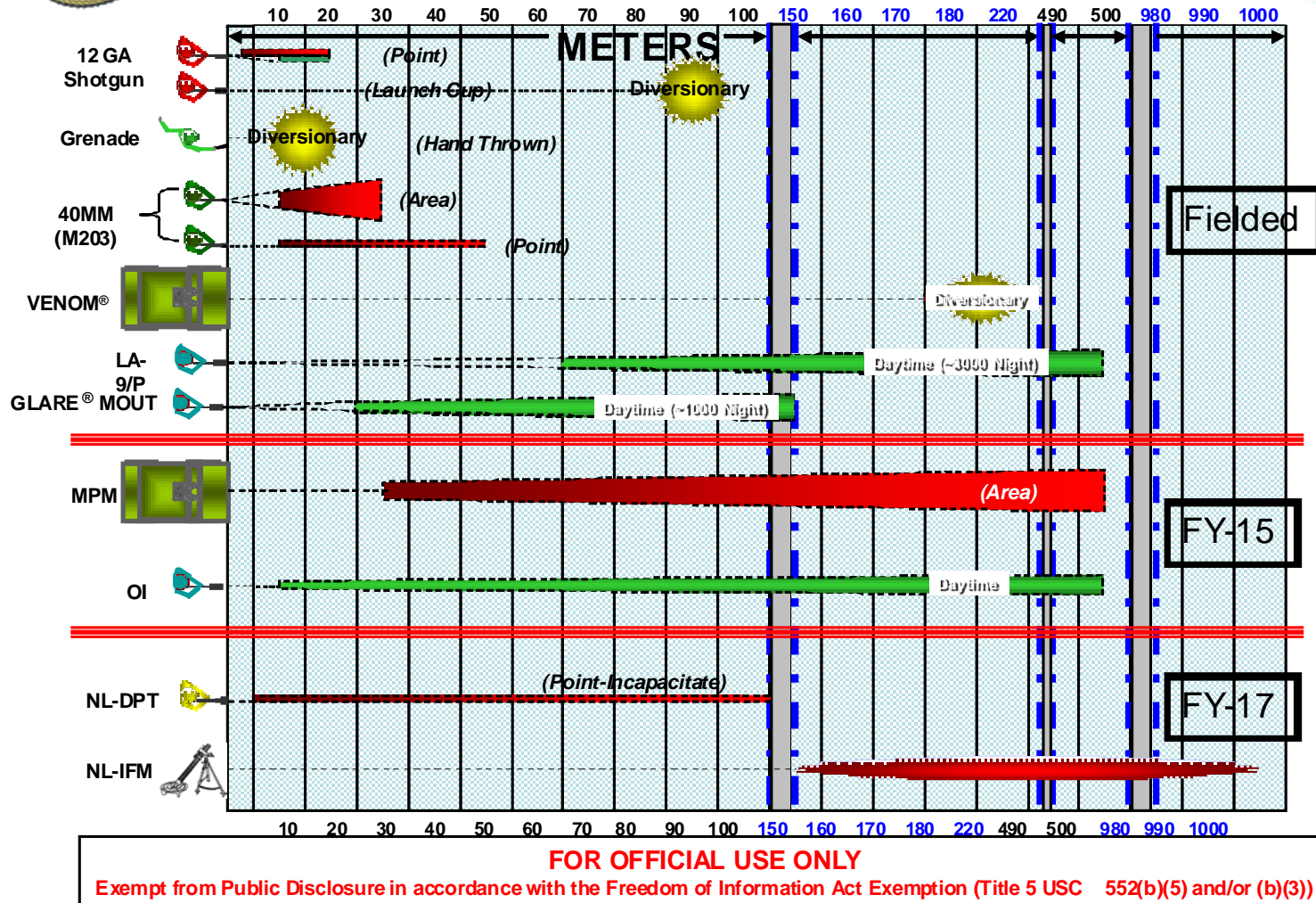
No ISAF forces will enter or fire upon, or fire into a mosque or any religious or historical site except in self-defense. All searches and entries for any other reason will be conducted by ANSF.

The challenges in Afghanistan are complex and interrelated, and counterinsurgencies are difficult to win. Nevertheless, we will win this war. I have every confidence in the dedication and competence of the members of our force to operate effectively within this challenging environment. Working together with our Afghan partners, we can overcome the enemy's influence and give the Afghan people what they deserve: a country at peace for the first time in three decades, foundations of good governance, and economic development.

Figure 2: COMISAF Tactical Directive, 6 July 2009 (page 2)



USMC Counter-Personnel Capabilities



Attachment 2: USMC Counter-Personnel Capabilities. Options to warn and/or suppress unknown personnel approaching a checkpoint or position cover the range of zero to 500 meters standoff distance, and NL-DPT and NL-IFM are additional capabilities being investigated for gap mitigation. ⁸⁶

Endnotes

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