



Army



Insights from operations

Serving our Nation



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ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	after action review
AATTI	Australian Army Training Team Iraq
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AO	area of operation
ARES	army reserve
AS	Australian
C2	command & control
CAL	Centre for Army Lessons
CFTS	continuous full time service
CIMIC	civil military cooperation
CIS	communication information systems
COIN	counter insurgency
CSS	combat services support
CTC	Combat Training Centre
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ECM	electronic countermeasures
HUET	helicopter underwater escape training
HOTO	handover / takeover
HUMINT	human intelligence
IED	improvised explosive device
ISTAR	intelligence surveillance target acquisition and reconnaissance
LAV	Light Armoured Vehicle
LO	liaison officer
LPB	logistic preparation of the battlefield
MEAO	Middle East Area of Operations

MRE	mission rehearsal exercise
MST	mission specific training (usually sub-unit, attachments & detachments to units prior to CTC)
NFE	night fighting equipment
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OBG	overwatch battle group
OFOF	orders for opening fire
OMD	Operational Manning Document
ORBAT	order of battle
OSB	Operational Support Battalion
PAR	post activity report / Performance Appraisal Report
PDT	pre-deployment training
PPC	population protection and control
PRR	personal role radio
QRF	quick response force
ROCL	remote out of country leave
ROE	rules of engagement
RSO&I	reception, staging, on-forwarding and integration
RTA	return to Australia
RW	rotary wing
SOP	standard operating procedures
SPR	soldier personal radio
TTP	tactics, techniques and procedures
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
VCP	vehicle check point



Introduction

This book is a collection of insights gathered from analysis of operations the Australian Army has undertaken since 1999. The aim of this publication is not to prescribe how or what to do, rather it seeks to provide material for your consideration to inform how you may approach future operations. The content of this book has been proven, on multiple operations, to be relevant and applicable across the span of time and operations. Therefore I commend to you this reading as part of your ongoing professional military education.

| **Insights** from Operations |



Capability generation

■ **Distributed operations in the contemporary operating environment.** The Army will continue to face an elusive enemy that employs asymmetrical tactics to mitigate the coalition's vast advantage in technology and firepower. Enemies will avoid large force concentrations, opting instead to blend into urban and rural sanctuaries to negate military strengths. Some soldiers have indicated that a suitable counter can be to employ distributed operations tactics. Small units with well-trained and educated commanders spread throughout the battlespace can be effective at finding and fixing small groups of enemy while simultaneously providing more distributed security to the local populace. Operators also indicated that providing these small teams access to indirect fire support – especially close air support – has provided soldiers with a critical tactical advantage on operations.

■ **Information actions.** The presence of dedicated Aust Int Corps personnel in your ORBAT is a capability not to be under-estimated when configuring the OMD. The ability to provide Information Actions/Operations into the AO and negate the influence of opposing forces is the key to maintaining a positive presence within a COIN environment. This builds on the efficacy of the HUMINT and channels the information flow to and from the patrol elements you direct. Dedicated, professionally trained operators make entree into other coalition compartments easier and this will enhance your ability to maintain focused operations and ensure force protection levels. Intelligence operators, just like other attachments and interagency personnel, need to be given the opportunity to demonstrate ('show and tell') their wares as part of the pre-deployment 'forming and storming'.

■ **Modifications to equipment.** Personnel highlight numerous examples where items of equipment, ranging from PRR through to add-on-armour and shields for vehicle windows, are being made in theatre because the current design of these items are not suitable to the theatre or requirements of task. These modifications are given 'tentative' approval in theatre and may offer Army an opportunity to see innovation and best practice in action. A database could be developed of all these modifications and explored so as not to lose innovative ideas that have been tested and tried in theatre.

■ **More non-lethal force options.** Operators from various operations have highlighted instances where the availability of less than lethal weapons would have simplified situations with complex ROE considerations. Non-lethal weapons offer flexibility between complete restraint from using force to the use of lethal force. Under some ROE conditions where non-lethal weapons are discounted, operators perceive that there are very few escalation of force options. CAL comment: This was identified as an issue for FE during

the AS deployment to Somalia in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994/5. It has also been reinforced through observations from personnel recently returned from contemporary operations.

■ **MRE considerations.** MREs are considered a very effective evaluation tool prior to the commencement of an operation and should ensure realism and high tempo wherever possible. Considerations to ensure an effective MRE include training for the worst case scenario, utilising linguists to act as role players, using in-theatre location names and requesting redeployment support of an in-theatre liaison officer to oversee the MRE to ensure accuracy of current conditions. CAL comment: It is recommended that wherever possible realism and current in-theatre conditions are reflected in all aspects of pre-deployment training.

■ **Planning for detainee operations.** Planning for detainee operations needs to be conducted prior to operations where possible, especially where operations will include personnel not normally involved with detaining and handling persons of interest. Indoctrination of such force elements needs to include detainee operations policy / SOP, equipment for restraining and temporary holding of detainees, and knowledge of legal rights and processes. Soldiers suffer significant frustration when they lack working knowledge of the management and handling of detainees.

■ **Pre-deployment training.** One of the largest areas for note is PDT. There are many facets (OMD, PDT, MST, MRE, logistics and synchronisation) to this conundrum and it is easy to see how little pieces dealt with (or not) in isolation contribute to the frustration of a commander's intent to get to theatre in the best shape possible for the mission at hand.

Each commander needs to work closely with the mounting HQ to ensure that he has the staff formed early enough to digest the mission, the OMD and resources he is provided with and the nature of the tasks it is envisioned he will contend on arrival. The timely identification of task competent personnel (from within the unit as well as attachments) is fundamental to being able to form the team and conduct individual and collective training at various levels of complexity. It is important to involve all members (including logistic staff) in the mission specific training so that this does not hamstring your operations on arrival. The fact that logistic personnel are overburdened preparing stores for deployment and therefore cannot attend training is cold comfort when you have arrived in theatre with CSS soldiers who are not competent on crew served weapons and unfamiliar with SOP/ TTP for convoy movements.

The ability to form an 'R' Group to conduct an in-theatre recon can be supplemented by video-conference with your counterparts but timely provision of relevant information down to your subordinates is key to enabling them to prepare.

The vagaries of deployment logistics, access to training areas, phasing of advance parties, main bodies and the ability of facilities to absorb surge capacity during handover

is part of the challenge. The staged return to AS via decompression is another facet that must not be overlooked.

The ability to provide early interaction with attachments (Int, linguists, RW, logistics, AFP, DFAT, and aid agencies) ought to enable informative 'show and tell' demonstrations to and from all groups and assist in breaking down myths, potentially divisive issues and providing greater insights into the various cultures to be encountered.

The composition of a force within a coalition interagency will have many challenges - varying ROE, equipment (NLW & cryptographic) capabilities, language and cultural barriers to list but a few. If commanders are able to achieve weapon competencies within their unit for all personnel then that may be better than having to trickle feed personnel through 39 OSB - this is something that needs dialogue and negotiation between the mounting HQ and 39 OSB.

Where possible the use of recently deployed personnel to provide briefings ought to be facilitated in conjunction with 'updates' from theatre.

Commanders are ultimately responsible so they must ensure regular liaison with the superior HQ and ensure that guidance and resources match.

■ **Sequence of pre-deployment training.** When planning pre-deployment training it is more effective to conduct all individual training components, such as weapons certification and HUET, prior to commencing collective training. This allows personnel to achieve deployment certification early in the pre-deployment phase prior to focusing on combined training objectives. CAL comment: It is recommended that all individual skills training is completed prior to commencing collective training.

■ **Suggested patrol size.** Patrols need to be capable of generating the key effects of manoeuvre, firepower, situational awareness and C2 in any terrain. These small teams need to be able to disperse to cover a large area, be networked, able to concentrate at a time and place to control populations, and manage perceptions. The commander must be able to extend his or her footprint and create the illusion that he or she is everywhere without requiring extensive 'boots on the ground'.

■ **Who decides to employ less than lethal weapons?** Commanders on the ground need flexibility to decide on appropriate responses to tactical situations based upon sound ROE, including employment of non-lethal options. There have been situations where force elements carrying less than lethal weapons were only allowed to use them after gaining higher HQ authority. Commanders on the ground can make the most rapid decisions and timing could be the difference between non-lethal and lethal responses in some situations. Waiting for a decision could have a critical influence on strategic objectives as well as the tactical situation. CAL Comment: This is an example of the direct linkage between ROE states and applying mission command.



Command and management

■ **Access to alcohol on operations.** The zero alcohol policy produces quite emotive opinions amongst personnel. Most soldiers suggest that some access to alcohol (two beers per man periodically) should be allowed, citing reasons of social interaction, normalcy, and relaxation. However, there are others who believe that the current policy is appropriate and keeps personnel focused on the mission, and minimised health and administrative problems that is observed in other nations who have a more liberal alcohol policy.

■ **Challenges to battling complacency on operations.** The day-to-day grind of prolonged deployments can dull soldiers' edges and provide a false sense of security. Complacency can slip into the ranks, putting missions and soldiers at risk. Complacency has many causes and reveals itself in many forms, but at its core, complacency can be defined as a feeling of confidence or security that is unwarranted because it overlooks actual shortcomings or threats. Battling complacency begins through awareness and leadership.

■ **Coalition data sharing.** Generally, there is only limited ability to transfer operational data between coalition information systems during operations. Manual transfers usually involve CDs and take time. On many occasions, these coalition contingents have created a data transfer database and then utilised CIS support staff to complete the data transfers. CAL comment: While there are mechanisms for manually transferring data between coalition partners, each has been designed in an ad hoc way. There is great scope to build a genuine coalition data / information sharing system to support operations.

■ **Commitment to a sound work/rest cycle for specialist personnel.** Commanders and planners need to ensure that key specialist personnel, such as mechanics, signallers, medics, intelligence, and other similar roles, are given an opportunity to have as balanced a work / rest cycle as operational tempo will allow. Observations have highlighted that this is a perennial issue for these personnel, exacerbated by a limited redundancy. Concerns are raised as to the effect that overworking these specialists will have on their capabilities to perform for the entire deployment.

■ **Common communications planning ability.** There needs to be a general understanding of communications planning across all corps, especially in those corps that are likely to deploy and operate a communications node on operations. Terrain, operational security, organisation of assets, and equipment can each have an effect on communication plans and capabilities. A general understanding of communications planning considerations will allow scarce RASigs assets to concentrate on technical communications management duties and planning.

■ **Considerations for maintaining a sound work / rest cycle amongst manoeuvre personnel on operations.** Manoeuvre personnel have quite diverse roles in the contemporary operating environment, and an imbalance of the work / rest cycle can occur when commanders and planners are not sure of these roles and the effect that they have on these force elements. Observations highlight that manoeuvre personnel are regularly struggling with this imbalance on operations, particularly when driven by external variables such as climate, the urban terrain, and insurgent TTP.

■ **Considerations for maintaining and improving morale in units.** Soldiers have outlined many activities that they believe are crucial to maintaining or improving morale in units. Operational tempo is said to be having an adverse effect on morale, as soldiers feel as though they are either on operations or preparing operations. Past activities conducted in units, such as sports days, adventure training, and social events, are examples of the activities that have been lost as a result of this tempo. These activities were crucial in assisting in developing a sense of belonging and esprit de corps. The neglect of these activities from the calendar is viewed as a massive loss for Army amongst soldiers.

■ **Considerations of the AIRN.** The AIRN is a sound concept with which to manage a large force. However, observations highlight that it becomes defunct at times of operations, if personnel who are non-compliant with one or more components of the readiness notice are then given waivers to deploy, range practices are re-done during pre-deployment training, and brigades often have their own additional requirements. These deficiencies are compounded in the administration of ARes personnel deploying for operations.

■ **Creative handover/takeover approaches.** Personnel are employing creative approaches to ensure that information passed across in a HO/TO is effective and ensures that the most relevant and important information is included to better prepare oncoming personnel for their roles. Examples have included video footage of routes, nursery runs and allocated roles. Watch for the increasing use of digital story telling tools such as Microsoft Photostory™ which is a free download to synchronise photographs and imagery, voice and sound to provide a concise, low end and simple electronic record.

■ **Decisiveness.** Decisions need to be well-considered, conveyed confidently and the plan needs to be followed without major deviations, except where a changing situation forces adjustments to the plan. Conversely, frequent and last-minute changes to tasks without explanation cause soldiers to lose confidence in commanders. CAL Comment: Commanders need to be decisive. Any changes to plans should be precise and have arisen due to changes to the situation. Take the time to explain such changes.

■ **Development of orders delivery processes.** Observations suggest that operations have identified a requirement for greater focus on the methodologies for orders delivery. This process needs to be less ad hoc, but rather a regimented and formal process, where

all personnel are provided with situational awareness and understanding of events in the battlespace. This also provides an opportunity for personnel to share effective techniques and apply lessons learnt.

■ **Drug use by insurgent forces – considerations for commanders.** It is likely that Western militaries will continue to deal with the effects of the presence of drugs on the battlefield. Over time, this will likely pressure defence establishments to reconsider their current approaches. One way such reconsideration may occur is under the new imperatives to come to grips with the dynamics of asymmetric warfare and the nuances of conducting counterinsurgency operations. The use of drugged combatants by non-state groups lends itself to asymmetric approaches to counter the superior technical firepower and skills of Western militaries.

■ **Effect of complacency on orders development and delivery - 'actions on'.** Observations highlight that one area of orders delivery where there is room for improvement concerns the 'actions on' element. There appears to be an element of complacency or supposition whereby 'actions on' are left out or minimised during the orders development and delivery phase vis-à-vis statements like, 'Actions on in the case of separation from the main body is per SOP'. This can be problematic for less experienced soldiers or soldiers from other corps attached to patrols, who are not familiar with the SOP for every 'actions on', and therefore, needs to be included in every orders. Commanders at all levels need to ensure that all members understand all relevant 'actions on'.

■ **Effect of operational tempo on leader development.** Observations highlight that the sustained operational tempo that the Australian Army has endured for the last five years and can expect to face into the near future is having a detrimental effect on aspects of leader development. It is acknowledged that leaders of all levels are gaining significant exposure to command and corps specific tasking on operations; however they do not get the opportunity to develop basic leadership and soldier management skills normally acquired in barracks because time is spent either on operations, preparing for the next operation, or recovering from operations. It is suggested that this is to the detriment to all personnel.

■ **Excessive weight load carriage.** The current weight bearing equipment used by Australian soldiers requires consideration, as there is significant evidence to suggest that weights carried by soldiers are increasing to a point that will not be sustainable. A reduction in the weight carried by dismounted soldiers is required.

■ **Friendly information action (IA) campaign force.** Commanders must talk to the media, with particular emphasis on the local media. Failure to do so in the COIN environment may concede critical battlespace to the enemy. IA must be based on building trust and relationships with local leaders and influencers. The focus must be on earning respect and credibility.

■ **Ground of the Enemy's choosing.** One of the challenges facing commanders fighting in an urban environment is that engagements with the enemy tend to be on the ground of the enemy's choosing, impacting on the ability for commanders to plan and rehearse for contacts. They will engage by using terrain and infrastructure to their advantage. Commanders need to consider this in their planning and utilise force protection capabilities (i.e. vehicles), etc to their advantage to counter the attack.

■ **Harbour and halt routines.** It is becoming a regular theme within observations that harbour / halt routines are not fully understood by many soldiers, and as such still require further practice prior to deployment. Specific parts that could be further improved include: the overall deployment of defensive weapons; patrol discipline; the attentiveness of soldiers whilst manning weapons; basic drills such as stand to, and the positioning of sentries and weapon pits. It is often suggested that the Platoon SGT and section COMDs need to continually enforce these routines within their platoons / sections.

■ **Handover/takeover.** There are indications that a standardised HOTO protocol is warranted that can be tailored to purpose at each level of command. Material forming the basis of this HOTO needs to be placed in readily accessible partitions / folders (hard copy or electronic) with an over-arching table of contents.

The HOTO requires considerable choreography to coordinate the staggered arrival between R group, advance party, main body and repatriation of outgoing forces within the theatre transport assets and operational tempo.

Where it can be afforded within operational demands there needs to be an early establishment of liaison between incumbents and designated replacements.

It appears that the actual process for relief in place is best achieved through a progressive insertion of new personnel into patrol activities starting at 50% inclusion, then stepping to 75%/25% and finally 100%. This enables better mentoring and risk minimisation as on-coming personnel blend into the new human terrain.

Having a staggered HOTO / relief-in-place may affect your ability to project the same level of force presence within the AO and opposing forces will be keen to observe changes and exploit potential weaknesses, absence from the AO or indecision.

■ **Impact that media coverage has on force morale.** Media coverage of deployments has a significant impact on the morale of soldiers and their families. Observations suggest that soldiers and their families are appreciative of honest representations of operations, but become fiercely resentful of misrepresentations or generalisations, or when the media wildly fuel or propagate negative stories. Even more frustrating is when operations are seen to be ignored completely by the media.

■ **Importance of attempting to communicate with others in their language.**

Personnel need to make every attempt to communicate with others, both local nationals and other forces, in their native language wherever possible. Observations indicate that even the most basic and bumbling attempt is generally looked upon favourably, and shows a willingness to engage on their level.

■ **Improving coalition cohesion.** Where it is within AS control, coalition operational headquarters should incorporate membership from as many representative agencies as possible. This helps with the development and maintenance of coalition cohesion as well as overall coalition operational effectiveness. If a coalition HQ is not under AS control, previous experiences have proven it wise to embed LO and other staff support the overall effectiveness of the coalition while also controlling perceptions of parochialism.

■ **In theatre ROE training.** Personnel require regular refresher training on the Rules of Engagement (ROE) and Orders for Opening Fire (OFOF) whilst deployed. It has often been suggested that ongoing scenario-based ROE training can assist personnel to make the right decisions when confronted with immediate dilemmas on the scene.

■ **Inheritance of unserviceable vehicles.** There is a growing trend in observations, particularly stemming from operations in the Asia-South Pacific theatres, that major equipment items such as vehicles, are not being maintained at a high enough standard relating to the unavailability or delayed procurement of parts and equipment. Oncoming commanders are finding that they are inheriting a large number of unserviceable vehicles, which is impacting upon the capabilities of the rotation.

■ **Inter-unit relationships.** There is a general consensus that when multiple forces deploy with differing roles, a certain amount of discord and disharmony exists between these units. Observations suggest that this occurs when units don't have an understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. Examples include between AATTI and OBG, or ADF and AFP. This could be improved through liaison officers or information sharing as part of force preparation in order to eliminate the knowledge deficit.

■ **Junior leadership.** The standard of junior leadership is generally considered to be quite effective although there can be greater consistency of standards. Observations specifically indicate that greater emphasis is required to ensure field skills (such as orders and field signals), leading by example, and fault correction are of a consistently high standard. CAL Comment: There are many examples where effective leadership such as immediate fault correction has been exercised by NCO, resulting in a significant improvement in the performance of the soldiers. There are also plenty of documented examples where this has not been done.

■ **Leadership.** Where possible junior leaders need to be empowered and made accountable as early as practicable since that faith and experience will be beneficial later

when that junior leader may be faced with considerable challenges, danger and very little time or recourse for higher assent.

Junior leaders relish the responsibility and challenge.

Dealing with complacency whilst on operations is an issue that arises from time to time. One way of combating this threat to good order and discipline is that all ranks are exposed to on-going in theatre training, briefings on threat and HUMINT actions and engagement in compiling AAR/PAR on their actions. Relevant training sessions at all levels revising first aid, weapons drills, quick decision exercises and immediate actions all contribute to keeping personnel focused.

Command and Leadership is not a popularity contest and for new junior leaders the relocation into a totally new section can serve to avoid familiarity and provide the new leader a clean break from his peers.

■ **Length of deployment.** Observations provide mixed thoughts on the most appropriate lengths of deployments; however there is unanimous support that these deployments lengths need to be theatre and role specific. Operational theatres that place personnel under fewer demands, such as Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, could have extended deployments of up to 12 months, whilst higher intensity deployments (such as Afghanistan) should not exceed 6 months. This may assist in minimising the descriptions of burn-out and exhaustion cited in specialist roles, for which there is minimal redundancy.

■ **Liaison officer characteristics.** Liaison officers require flexibility, good interpersonal skills, and are people who look for 'linkages'. Liaison officers need to have the experience and standing to represent their own organisation appropriately as well as the ability to sufficiently understand the host organisation. CAL Comment: This may seem straightforward but the criteria described are not consistently applied. When the criteria are consistently applied, excellent liaison results.

■ **Liaison Officers.** To receive the benefits of high quality liaison with coalition and other agencies' commanders must be prepared to invest in providing a quality officer that can act in accordance with guidance. Ensure that the OMD has adequate provision and that the positions are filled. Soldiers have commented on the apparent excess of officers in theatre that do not appear to have a purpose.

■ **Local nationals' exploitation of ROE.** Local nationals across a range of theatres are exploiting the AS ROE through their knowledge and understanding of the limitations to the escalation of force. Personnel express great frustration at this, but suggest that greater training during the force preparation phase may assist to prepare personnel for this.

■ **Management of an effective QRF.** Effective and clear SOP are required for the management of a QRF in any theatre. Commanders need to understand how and when to utilise the force, and personnel assigned to a QRF also need to ensure that they have clear and transparent roles and boundaries. Observations highlight that these SOP must also extend to communication systems and processes.

■ **Managing expectations.** Managing expectations is a critical factor in leading successful change. Managing expectations involves the commander seeking out and building effective communication bridges to his / her stakeholders, and then using those bridges to understand, and to help the constituents understand the change process.

■ **MAP.** The current MAP is widely considered as a very effective and adaptable planning tool that should be comprehensively understood by commanders at all levels. It is through the comprehensive knowledge of the MAP that enables it to be adapted to suit any situation. Inexperienced commanders may consider it a lengthy and unyielding tool, however with understanding it has been found to be effective throughout the entire operational spectrum. CAL Comment: It is recommended that regular training be conducted at the junior command levels encompassing scenarios from all current operational theatres.

■ **Morale and continuity of effort on operations.** Morale of forces engaged in operations against insurgent forces presents some planning considerations not encountered in other types of combat. Operations against a force that seldom offers a target, disintegrates before opposition, and then re-forms and strikes again where it is least expected may induce strong feelings of futility among soldiers and dilute their sense of purpose.

■ **Perceptions concerning a risk minimisation culture.** There is significant perception amongst the soldier body of a risk minimisation culture. Soldiers view that their leaders of all levels are reluctant to make mistakes, not so much because of the outcome of the mistake but for the ramifications it is perceived to have on their careers. As a result, there is a perception that commanders take the 'softest' COA rather than the best COA. This is reported to be demonstrated in both the training (weapons training policy, leadership) and operational environments (ROE, night operations).

■ **Perceptions of 'battlefield tourism'.** Observations are unanimous in their negative perception of 'battlefield tourism', whereby supernumerary personnel and visiting dignitaries are taken on tours throughout the AO. The increase in footprint and force protection measures, combined with the administrative burdens imposed by these visits is viewed as unnecessary and unwelcome by soldiers.

■ **Periodic assessment of force frameworks.** Force composition, force element missions, posture and disposition need to be reviewed periodically to ensure they match

the evolving operating environment. This review has been occurring consistently on many operations but the function must be promoted through policy, doctrine and training to ensure it is routine for future operations.

■ **Personnel tracking system / mechanism.** Army needs a reliable and efficient personnel tracking system or mechanism due to command accountability, and sustainment planning for each location. This will also provide an auditable trail for items such as payment allowances in AO specific, nation specific, and further field and hard lying allowances. CAL comment: This insight was first identified by CAL in 2001, as a part of Timor Leste operational lessons research.

■ **Placement and use of snipers.** Snipers are amongst the most reliable intelligence tool that the on-ground commander has at his disposal. They constantly observe, memorise, record, and analyse enemy habits and routines to target and exploit their vulnerabilities. Appropriate placement and use is critical and should not be underestimated. Observations note that there are occasions where snipers are not being used in their corps role; however, it is important to note that this is not a trend across operations.

■ **Potential for ISTAR overload.** While quite capable in terms of its collection capabilities, Army is challenged when it comes to timely processing (or 'fusion') and dissemination of accurate and relevant value-added information from these burgeoning sources. In fact, the plethora of information generated from the various ISTAR assets undertaking collection, commanders today face information overload at a time when clarity of thinking and understanding is of the utmost importance.

■ **Provision of welfare needs for deployed forces.** The provision of accessible and plentiful welfare services (internet access and phones) for deployed personnel is essential for maintaining morale of the force. Personnel note that these facilities provide much needed opportunities to connect with loved ones at home, particularly important for personnel who have had multiple deployments.

■ **Soldier field discipline.** Soldiers have indicated some key areas of personal discipline and basic field craft skills that require consistency regardless of trade and unit. Specific areas include maintaining concentration whilst on sentry, wearing webbing and weapon whilst walking around the area. Maintaining consistency in these and related areas is a responsibility of leaders at all levels and this is reinforced both by reports and by perspectives offered during interviews. CAL Comment: There were observations made indicating that some leaders confuse being liked as being respected. Leaders need to understand the difference and the primacy of leading to maintain standards.

Let there be no doubt, success or failure in battle will be influenced by the standards and conduct of our junior leaders.

Mansford, G. Junior Leadership on the Battlefield, 1994, Australian Army, page 74

■ **Soldiers and the media.** Soldiers generally do not trust direct media interactions to support their operations. Whether or not soldiers are cleared to be interviewed during operations, they still require a good understanding of media elements in their AO and the nature of those elements. If media elements are required to work closely with Australian soldiers, prior exposure is critical to building effective teaming prior to operational activities being conducted.

■ **Split / trickle rotation systems.** The 'split rotation' concept (where the force does not deploy as a full body, but rather is split to enter theatre at different time intervals) is described as highly effective in ensuring a continuation of corporate knowledge. Observations indicate that where it is conducted currently, it is proving successful.

■ **Strategic battlefield of the MEAO and situational awareness of soldiers.** The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are highly scrutinised. If the tactical battlefield is those countries' highways and roads, the strategic battlefield is the television screen, the Internet, and the covers of newspapers and magazines around the world. These wars are fought at the company level and below, and the only way to win them is to educate junior leaders and soldiers about the kind of war they are fighting.

■ **Terrain effects on communications.** Observations continue to highlight that the terrain effects on communications capabilities must be factored in to planning and SOP. The effect that this has on command and control cannot be underestimated and contingencies must be in place to allow for alternative means of communications.

■ **Third-country deployments.** Whilst personnel unanimously indicate that it is an honour to participate in third-country deployments because of the opportunity it affords to develop professionally and work in such close proximity to another nation's Army, a requirement exists for greater administrative support from Australia to ensure that this experience is as positive as possible. Observations highlight that there are deficiencies in the passage of information, supply of appropriate equipment and resources, as well as administrative issues, such as conditions of service and pay.

■ **Timely delivery of personal mail.** The timely handling of mail from home can have a major effect on morale. Personnel continue to highlight that mail handling needs to be consistently fast and reliable regardless of theatre. CAL comment: The effectiveness of mail distribution is usually dictated by the availability of transportation within the theatre.

■ **Timing of force element handover / takeover.** A suitable time ranges for a handover/ takeover is considered to be between eight days to four days, depending on the role and the need for detailed passage of information sharing. Anything less than four days is generally not considered thorough enough for most personnel in key roles. This is seen as an important time to pass on lessons learned, identify intricacies of the role to highlight work cycle issues, and provide adequate situational awareness without overwhelming the oncoming personnel with information.

■ **Trust and management.** Many soldiers and junior leaders perceived that their superiors needed to show more trust in subordinates by giving them greater flexibility. Junior leaders and soldiers in general believe they have greater potential to get work done with less prescriptive instructions and limitations. They believe there can be much less constant monitoring of performance, which would allow superiors to concentrate on coordinating between tasks or planning ahead. CAL Comment: This is one of the most consistent themes identified in all seminars conducted by CAL. In many cases, commanders (at all levels) are being tightly monitored by their superiors, reinforcing the perception of a risk-averse culture. The challenge for leaders at all levels is to provide flexibility to subordinates and accept some risk. It is essential for developing leaders to have freedom of action and risks to control.

■ **Understanding tribal organisation and leadership.** Understanding tribal organisation and leadership is critical to success in rural areas of Iraq and Afghanistan. Forces must make every effort to understand an area's tribal alignment and disposition in order to focus the appropriate combat, economic, and political power needed to defeat the tribe or change its position regarding the coalition.

■ **Use of the SPR (formerly PRR).** To be fully effective, SPR need to be properly integrated into equipped force elements. Operators indicated that this integration should include routine individual and collective training, and generating experience through regular application. Soldiers have indicated that one training focus should be on enhancing RATEL procedures and discipline. Planning staff should consider how to enhance operational plans using SPR capabilities.

Conditions of service

■ **Awareness of civilian issues for ARes personnel on CFTS.** The deployment of ARes personnel on operations presents its own unique conditions of service considerations. Observations unanimously agree that personal issues affect the soldier and his/her family when deploying, and that greater understanding from planners is required to ensure that member's needs are addressed promptly, correctly, and with compassion.

■ **Differing conditions of service for different agencies.** It is common to live and work alongside other government and non-government agencies while on operations. It is common for each to have different rules and standards that can have an impact on coalition cohesion if not managed. It is important to identify these rules and try to align them to a common minimum standard. Since AS soldiers commonly have more limitations placed upon them for off-duty periods than other people, it is important to explain the importance of the limitations and standards for soldiers to comply with. It is also important to ensure there are systems in place to minimise potential friction as a consequence of differing rules. CAL Comment: This is a significant leadership challenge specifically relating to alcohol consumption and off-duty recreation, amongst other things. There is potential for operations planners to negotiate standards prior to deployment. There is also scope for the operational plan to mitigate against friction caused by differing rules for different contingents.

■ **Equity issues concerning the payment of allowances for ARes personnel.** The deployment of ARes personnel on operations presents its own unique conditions of service considerations, particularly in relation to the payment of allowances for ARes personnel. Observations unanimously agree that equitable payment of allowances must be reviewed.

■ **Relief out of country travel leave (ROCL).** Soldiers welcome ROCL as an effective relief from deployment however critical trades within task groups need to remain effective during ROCL periods. Strategic planners must factor ROCL into future deployments and ensure sufficient capacity is available to commanders during those periods where regular key staff will be absent. CAL Comment: Staggered deployments have been suggested where some personnel deploy and changeover at different times to others. Similarly, deployment durations could be different for some trades.



Equipment

■ **Cold climate effect on equipment.** The harsh winter climates have an adverse effect on equipment, requiring adjustments to TTP and SOP. Personnel need to ensure that equipment that is sensitive to temperature (such as computer cables, vehicle engines, fuel lines, etc.) is 'winterised' (i.e. correctly stored and managed to minimise climactic degradation). Stockpiling those stores that are known to degrade rapidly in the winter climate is prudent, particularly given the impact that winter has on the logistic system.

■ **Effect of dust / sand on sensitive equipment.** Observations are highlighting that the extremely dusty/sandy theatre of operations can have a detrimental effect on sensitive equipment if not stored or managed properly. Personnel note that equipment items such as engines, computers and electronic items are commonly affected. Correct storage and management SOP, including facilities, of such items need to be implemented to minimise unserviceability and its effect on capability.

■ **Hot climatic effects on equipment.** Operating in extremely hot conditions has an adverse effect on equipment being used in the theatre, requiring adjustments to TTP and SOP. Personnel need to ensure that equipment that is sensitive to heat (such as batteries, etc) is correctly stored and managed to minimise climactic degradation leading to unserviceability.

■ **Requirement for climate specific clothing.** The timely issue of climate specific clothing is extremely important for maintaining the force in extremely cold theatres, such as Afghanistan. Examples are provided where cold weather gear was not provided to personnel until well into (or after) the winter season, and only partial issue of equipment was conducted. It becomes a morale issue of 'them and us' when this equipment issue is viewed as inequitable (provided in full to headquarter and support staff when combined arms staff do not receive their entitlement).

■ **Equipment Management.** Commanders must be proactive in affirming their equipment entitlement, serviceability and maintenance plan. Any significant capability deficiency requires notification and advice to the mounting HQ in order to get intervention and resolution. Access to resilient logistic maintenance agencies and their responsiveness are not always as expected.

When working with other coalition members you must be conscious of when privileged equipment (NFE and Crypto) must not be placed in their possession.



Force composition/Preparation/Role

■ **Adding realism in combat first aid training.** There is a perceived requirement for greater realism in combat first aid training. Combat first aid training scenarios need to include simulation of heavy enemy fire to better prepare personnel for treating casualties under fire on operations. The use of 'real' casualties (amputees, simulation mannequins, etc) also adds significantly to the training experience.

■ **Availability of body armour for pre-deployment training.** Mission essential equipment for deployment needs to be issued early – a soldier needs to train with that with which he will fight. Observations suggest that one mission essential equipment item that is perennially absent during pre-deployment training includes body armour. The observations suggest that this is a wide-spread problem that crosses operations and brigades.

■ **Availability of specialist equipment during pre-deployment training.** Mission essential equipment for deployment needs to be issued early - a soldier needs to train with that with which he will fight. Observations suggest that one mission essential equipment item that is perennially absent during pre-deployment training is the specialist equipment items that are used on operations. Examples of such items include the specialist computer and communications systems. The observations suggest that this is a wide-spread problem that crosses operations and brigades.

■ **Availability of up-armoured vehicles during pre-deployment training.** Mission essential equipment for deployment needs to be issued early - a soldier needs to train with that with which he will fight. Observations suggest that one mission essential equipment item that is perennially absent during pre-deployment training includes up-armoured vehicles. The handling characteristics (cornering, accelerating, and braking) are all significantly different on up-armoured vehicles, and require training. The observations suggest that this is a perennial and wide-spread problem that crosses operations and brigades.

■ **Availability of weapons systems during pre-deployment training.** Mission essential equipment for deployment needs to be issued early - a soldier needs to train with that with which he will fight. Observations suggest that one mission essential equipment item that is perennially absent during pre-deployment training is the suite of weapons systems that are used on operations. The observations suggest that this is a wide-spread problem that crosses operations and brigades.

■ **Cold weather training considerations.** Australian soldiers have a comprehensive knowledge of how to operate safely in hot weather environments and the same emphasis

should be placed on cold weather training prior to deploying to such an environment. As part of pre-deployment training, commanders should seek out military expertise to assist in cold weather and acclimatisation training.

■ **Combat training for logisticians.** Increasingly Australian soldiers are being exposed to logistical tasks away from combat arms support. The focus of incorporating generic war fighting skills for logistic soldiers develops confidence regardless of the situation. The nature of this training needs to be balanced with in theatre threat assessments and will allow logistic operations to have enhanced reach and mission outcomes.

■ **Cultural awareness training.** Where soldiers are expected to understand complex cultures such as those of Asia, Iraq and Afghanistan, cultural training should represent a significant proportion of the troops' pre-deployment training. Commanders should seek advice and plan effective training. Other key training ideas from operators include gaining a working understanding of: basic native phrases, a working understanding of relevant spiritual faiths, terrain, history, ethnicities, level of cooperation, and prior coalition activities in local AOs.

■ **Cultural impacts of gender on operational effectiveness.** Regardless of how professional a soldier is, it is essential that the gender be considered in context with local cultural idiosyncrasies when assigning personnel to appointments. Gender may either positively or negatively influence the success of encounters with local nationals and allies. Some specific roles to be considered include CIMIC, military police, legal officers, health care workers, and positions of command. CAL Comment: Roles where particular consideration needs to be applied include CIMIC, military police, legal officers, health care workers, and positions of command. Personnel have observed that female soldiers sometimes gain little respect by local nationals in the MEAO and are ignored regardless of their worn rank.

■ **Deployment of 'right' personnel.** There is an increasing prevalence in observations to suggest that the 'right' personnel for the job must be deployed on operations. Examples highlight instances where underqualified or under skilled personnel have been deployed into technical roles (such as signallers, EW personnel) who were not able to complete their role without significant supervision or re-training in theatre. The 'right' person for the job needs to be identified before deployment. The MRE is the perfect time to undertake such assessment, but because specialist personnel are often involved in supporting the MRE rather than participating in it, these deficiencies are not being detected.

■ **Disparity of standards of deploying force.** It is important that there is a benchmark standard of military and weapons skills in the deploying force. This must exist across all three branches of services, as well as within the variety of Army corps that deploy. Observations suggest that there is a disparity in standards of the deploying force that is

not being picked up until RSO&I, who are then forced to retrain those personnel below standard whilst in theatre.

■ **Force concentration activities.** Force concentration periods must be planned to allow sufficient time for force elements from across Army to develop into cohesive, internally-understood task groups. Operational planners need to provide written authority well in advance to drive the concentration process. There have been numerous instances where personnel assigned to known task groups were only able to join the concentration late in the pre-deployment phase. Late force concentration can result in less effective force preparation training and administration, thus potentially increasing command challenges during deployments.

■ **Human dimension in training.** Training should incorporate the complexities of the human terrain. Training scenarios should include both simulated and real play of mission-relevant actors and civilians in the battlespace (including women, children, media, and private security firms where relevant). Some missions may include interactions with Special Forces and other coalition forces (that may or may not have specific national caveats that affect their ability to support AS forces).

■ **Importance of the Padre role.** The value of the Padre, often misunderstood by many, should not be underestimated, particularly in the supportive role that he/she provides to the commander. However, this role must be supported by appropriate facilities and opportunities to provide support.

■ **Integrated task group MST / MRE / PDT.** It is essential that mission specific training (MST) is conducted for all elements of a deploying force in a collective format prior to deployment. This is an important opportunity to test force elements, develop and rehearse collective SOP, and mission essential equipment. Comprehensive PDT is essential for developing relationships that enhance SOP. Specialist personnel, such as signalers, medical staff, padre, intelligence, and others, have previously identified that MST is often manoeuvre centric and does not cater for their PDT needs.

■ **Managing perceptions of ARes personnel on operations.** Perception management is needed so that ARes personnel do not get an incorrect impression of what operations are like. Mundane and routine activity is common on any operation. This needs to be briefed during pre-deployment training to temper expectations.

■ **Officers on operations.** Soldiers have a perception that there are too many officers on operations and they are unable to see how the quantity of officers present provides an equivalent benefit to mission success. Though most officers deployed on operations should have an important role, it is not always visible to soldiers. Furthermore, it does not help morale when some officers are observed to be without gainful employment on operations, often as a consequence of rest in lieu for working overnight shifts.

Commanders and staff can help soldiers to understand staff functions as part of their professional development and to help with group cohesion. The force structure should also be periodically reviewed to ascertain the relative worth of each position in the group. CAL comment: While much of the issue relates to perception management, this has a significant effect on the morale of subordinates. There ought to be more clarity on which these excess officers are. Are they really LO's just out and doing their business?

■ **Official passports.** There is an increasing requirement for personnel to hold official passports in order to deploy. Observations suggest that personnel who do not have official passports or whose are near expiration present an administrative burden during the force concentration period. It is suggested that all personnel leaving their IET should be in possession of an official passport in order to minimise impact on units.

■ **Operational Manning Document (OMD) for operations.** There are often changing operational circumstances that allow for force structures to be further optimised or enhanced. While manning caps are important for ensuring operations can be sustained, there are perceptions that they prevent valuable capability bricks from being added to task groups when needed. There have also been occasions where OMD changes have been recommended by the commander on the ground but not supported by superior HQ. Such requests should be very carefully examined since the task group commander will often have superior situational awareness as well as knowledge of the superior commander's intent. CAL comment: Operational commanders are the link between achieving strategic intent and maintaining effective tactical advantage. They should have the understanding to make logical recommendations to OMDs. Their recommendations deserve careful consideration and an explanation why recommendations are not accepted, if this is the case.

■ **Preparation considerations for deploying Padres.** Observations highlight that the administrative preparation provided for padres needs improvement. Issues such as security clearances and official passports are essential items that must be addressed in a timely manner. Notice to move affects official passports for those padres who have not deployed in the past. Additionally, Padres have deployed without adequate security clearances, which in turn affects their situational awareness on operations as they cannot be included in some briefings.

■ **Preparedness and training of re-roled personnel.** Personnel from arms corps (RAA, RAE, RAAC) are increasingly being re-roled to serve as infantrymen on operations. Additionally, personnel regardless of corps are expected to possess fundamental soldier skills (RATEL, field craft, weapons handling) to participate in the protection of the force in theatre. In order for this to occur smoothly once on operations, ongoing routine training needs to ensure that re-roled personnel are not disadvantaged or placed in situations in which they are significantly ill-prepared or untrained.

■ **Region specific language training.** There is a general consensus in the observations to suggest that language training provided to personnel prior to deployment needs to be region specific. Generic language training, whilst suitable for providing some degree of communication capability, is not always appropriate for the nature of many of the operations being undertaken, particularly in Afghanistan.

■ **Release for force concentration.** Units are sometimes reluctant to release personnel for force concentration due to internal priorities for personnel administration. Reasons for members arriving late to force concentration include leave and training. Late induction into the force can result in the inability to conduct specified force preparation training, making it considerably harder for the mounting HQ to prepare the deploying force elements when personnel were not under their command.

■ **Requirement for more realistic medic training.** Medics require additional hands-on training opportunities in Australia in order to better prepare them for the kinds of injuries, disease processes, and conditions that they will encounter on operations, particularly on short-notice humanitarian operations. It is acknowledged that the provision of exposure to significant injuries and wounds like those received in blast injuries is difficult to encounter in Australian hospitals, however every opportunity must be provided to improve the skills and development of medics.

■ **Requirement for specific language training for specialist personnel.** Specialist personnel who interact with local nationals on operations require a specific focus of language training to provide them with language skills to enable effective communication. For example, medics need to be able to communicate with locals about specific health issues, and therefore would benefit greatly from a sound knowledge of descriptor words (pain, body parts, symptoms, etc) to minimise reliance upon interpreters.

■ **Security clearances for operations.** The majority of current operations require members to hold a Secret security clearance or higher and this should be considered during initial contingent planning. Early notification of contingent positions provides security agencies time to process application and ensure that personnel have the requisite clearance to perform the full responsibilities of their position.

■ **Selection of appropriate ARes personnel for deployment.** The particular circumstances of ARes service make the pool of staff from which to select suitable candidates relatively limited. A system of mentoring during lead-up training may assist in improving leadership standards.

■ **Selection of personnel for force reconnaissance.** It is suggested in the observations that there are key specialist personnel who are currently not included in any force reconnaissance opportunities. Examples provided include engineers, intelligence,

logistics and RAEME elements. In-theatre reconnaissance is a perfect opportunity for force elements to prepare for unique challenges presented by deployments.

■ **Significance of linguists.** Linguists are a force multiplier. They are invaluable for helping forces avoid the escalation of force. Army needs to develop more soldiers with the linguistic and cultural skills to allow them to operate in the likely regional conflict areas. Some members have suggested that training in this area could be incorporated into existing curriculum.

■ **Staffing for interagency headquarters.** Where interagency effects need to be carefully coordinated, an appropriately staffed interagency operations, intelligence and communications centre is required to provide a focal point for planning and the passage of information. Its absence makes it difficult to synchronise and where necessary mitigate operational effects.

■ **Subject Matter Experts for cultural and language training.** Mission specific training should provide operators with an appreciation of the complexities of operationally-relevant cultures. Subject matter experts (SMEs) from outside Army can be employed to indoctrinate our soldiers on the dynamics and relationships between tribal and 'government' groups. Some of these dynamics are best explained by people who have experience with the issues. CAL comment: There is also potential to leverage technology to aid learning, as several countries now have CBL packages.

■ **Timing of language training.** The acquisition of a language is a skill that deteriorates when not being used. Whilst the learner might still recognise words and phrases years after the learning, active understanding and usage requires concentrated practice. Personnel have suggested that the timing of language training needs to be as close to the deployment as possible to minimise skill deterioration.

■ **Training to work with interpreters.** Working with an interpreter requires a select set of skills to ensure that the process is effective. Factors such as knowing where to place the interpreter, body language, communication processes, and use of voice and facial expressions require practice. Pre-deployment training is the ideal time to develop and refine these skills.

■ **Value of situational awareness during force preparation.** The value of situational awareness of the operation theatre during the force preparation cannot be undervalued. Seeking information at either the individual level or force level provides personnel with the perfect opportunity to develop SOP and begin rehearsals that are based on realistic scenarios that accurately reflect the operating environment. It is emphasised that this needs to be a push-pull action, where information is pushed back into force preparation to reduce the requirement for RFI into theatre.

Force role/Preparation/Composition/Support

(also see Force Generation)

■ **Combat indicators in an urban environment.** Observations provide a rich source of information relating to combat indicators, particularly in the MEAO. Observations generally highlight that a reliable sign of probable or likely enemy presence was the absence of women and children from a location (where one would normally expect them to be), men/boys talking on mobile phones when coalition forces are nearby, and unusual patterns of life (shops closed, local nationals running away from coalition forces).

■ **Conduct of searches of female local nationals.** Entry control points and traffic control points are typically manned by male soldiers. In Muslim society, non-family males may not search females, as it is particularly offensive. This constraint in not being able to conduct these searches (because of wishing to minimise offence) can be exploited by insurgents, who use women or men dressed in women's robes to move materiel, resources, and other devices through check points. The development of female search teams would eliminate this security limitation.

■ **Enhancing non-kinetic training.** Soldiers would benefit from more non-kinetic training to be included in pre-deployment training. Working with civilians and villagers, and trying to extract worthwhile intelligence from the local populous is something that soldiers need to focus more on in general terms at all levels from the junior soldier all the way up to the company commander level.

■ **Expectation management in IA.** Managing expectations is an important part of implementing any IA plan. Promises made to the local populace should be kept to a minimum. Indeed, only those promises that are likely to be kept should be made. Keeping promises is a good way to build trust and local population support but failing to keep them will have the opposite (and possibly more pronounced) effect.

■ **Importance of cultural awareness and understanding.** Understanding of cultural aspects, such as those described in the attached observations, is essential if one is to help the local nationals build stable political, social, and economic institution. Beyond the intellectual need for the specific knowledge about the environment in which one is working, it is also clear that people, in general, are more likely to cooperate if those who have power over them respect the culture that gives them a sense of identity and self-worth.

■ **Importance of deception operations.** Observations highlight that the value of deception operations cannot be underestimated. Placing energy into operations that keep the enemy off balance is important. Deviating from the norm keeps the insurgent who is watching your patrol nervous, and may disrupt an attack, or they may keep the enemy from focusing on winning the population. Attach unusual things to vehicles, pay particular attention to some otherwise uninteresting landmark, rapidly move to and search an abandoned lot for no reason, mass forces in unusual locations, leave unusual things in unexpected places. The list of examples is endless.

■ **Importance of detainee operations to COIN.** Rigorous detainee operations can assist COIN by removing dangerous persons from society, generating sources of useful information, and in some cases co-opting people who might otherwise remain opponents of the government.

■ **Necessary characteristics or traits for personnel working in a training or mentoring role.** Observations suggest that there are essential characteristics or traits required in personnel assigned to a training or advisory/mentoring role. Such traits include patience, cultural tolerance, language ability, flexibility, and extensive experience. It is suggested that not everyone is suited to such a role, and that some mechanism for assessing the qualities of the member is required to ensure that the best possible people are sent on this important mission.

■ **Planning considerations for humanitarian operations.** Observations stemming from humanitarian operations in support of Pakistani Assist indicate that the general short-notice nature of these operations requires particular approaches to planning. Considerations must be made of notice to move, equipment availability, climate / terrain and its impact on equipment, as well as geomatic support of the region. Many of the regions where humanitarian operations will occur are generally remote and present many challenges to logistical planning. Learning from operations such as OP Pakistani Assist will reduce similar challenges presenting to future planners.

■ **Preparation of CIMIC personnel.** Personnel deploying in a CIMIC role require relevant CIMIC training and development prior to deploying. Additionally, commanders with CIMIC force elements need to have a sound understanding of the CIMIC effects such force elements can generate to support the overall mission.

■ **Safety considerations in the training / mentoring role.** It is emphasised in observations that personnel must avoid complacency with regards to their personal safety when deployed in a training / mentoring role. Awareness of changes in mood of local nationals is essential, and observations suggest that situations can deteriorate extremely quickly. Personnel must remain alert and ensure that personal safety measures in the form of an SOP are understood and rehearsed.

■ **Significance of cultural understanding in a training or mentoring role.** Working in a training or advisory / mentoring role requires specific training and planning. One aspect that cannot be excluded from both training and planning is a detailed cultural awareness. Cultural and spiritual components influence many aspects of life for locals, and need to be considered in order to make best use of training and mentoring opportunities.

■ **Significance of the information effect provided by soldiers.** Soldiers on the ground are ideal for defeating insurgents at their own game through the use of diligent and timely information operations. For example, exploiting an event such as a terrorist attack or a coalition operation - through information and actions and gestures with local nationals - is absolutely critical in the COIN fight. In fact, the information effect that follows an action is often more important than the action itself.

■ **Under-utilisation of CIMIC function.** It has been reported by personnel who have served in an CIMIC function that the CIMIC capability is often underutilised or mis-used by commanders. It was felt that this was often as a consequence of commanders not fully understanding the CIMIC capability or not being aware of the full extent of the CIMIC capability. Others suggest that this is as a perceived lack of trust of the CIMIC personnel. This is a trend that transcends theatres.

■ **Untoward effect of reconstruction efforts.** Reconstruction is an important tool in COIN, especially when it is association in people's minds with the legitimate government. Unemployed and, more often, merely opportunistic young men are a primary recruiting pool for terrorists and insurgent groups as well as for militias. Therefore, in an effective COIN strategy, reconstruction projects and the windfalls of investment they bring to troubled areas must be carefully managed to prevent making matters worse through sudden infusions of cash (which can increase the prospects of local militias and insurgents by providing the youth pool with the resources to get mobile phones, DVDs etc, which can assist the insurgent's actions) and the establishment of a false economy.

■ **Value of situational awareness for effective HUMINT amongst soldiers.** With few exceptions, intelligence / information collection at company level and below will be from human sources or HUMINT. Our soldiers constitute an invaluable asset by what they observe on a daily basis. The value of their observations, however, depends on whether they know what to look for. Requirements will constantly change, so commanders should implement a routine of disseminating information requirements and reporting observations during and after the mission.

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Health

■ **Dealing with death on operations.** There are many circumstances where soldiers are exposed to dead bodies on operations, particularly during humanitarian and disaster relief deployments. Commanders should seek support to effectively prepare soldiers for such experiences. There are practical aspects such as using body bags and carrying bodies, and there are psychological and physical considerations that should be factored into training and SOP prior to deployment.

■ **Preventative health plan.** It is essential for the health of the force that a preventative health plan is instituted as early as possible during the force concentration period. This plan must include considerations for preventing and managing health issues such as the spread of infectious illnesses and facilities.

■ **Requirement for greater awareness in managing the repatriation of deceased personnel across ranks.** The repatriation of deceased Australian soldiers requires specific training, resources and procedures. Observations suggest that there is a need for greater training and development across all rank levels in managing the ceremonial and logistical aspects of the repatriation process. Personnel see this as a significant issue in bestowing a dignified and respectful honour on their deceased comrade, and needs to be better understood through transparent SOP and procedures.



Interagency aspects

■ **Administrative considerations for Ex Long Look.** Observations highlight that there are several administrative issues that need to be considered leading up to deploying on Ex Long Look. These considerations include security clearances, driver's licences, and passage of information.

■ **Barriers to interoperability on Ex Long Look.** Integration into the British units during Ex Long Look was described as generally positive. Some barriers to complete interoperability, however, included working knowledge of the UK weapons systems and vehicles, as well as timing of marching in.

■ **Coalition members' familiarity with the AO.** A coalition of cultures alien to an operational area is vulnerable unless it includes other coalition members from within that area.

■ **Considerations of differing ROE in coalition settings.** Counterinsurgency operations will usually occur in a multinational coalition setting. Accordingly, in both lead and contribution missions, an Australian commander must be able to overcome inconsistent ROE. Self-sufficient LOs and planned coordination meetings will help create an effective environment for comprehensive operations.

■ **Fostering relationships with NGO/OGO.** The best way to understand other government and non-government organizations (OGO and NGO) is to establish and maintain relationships with them before embarking on operations alongside them. This allows the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of each organization to be understood by other partners to ensure effective interactions. This can be effectively accomplished by including civilian agency personnel in selected training exercises, which are effective in developing working relationships based on trust and understanding.

■ **Inter-agency doctrine.** It is essential for agencies (military and other) to work together prior to deployments to develop shared understanding of doctrine and TTP. It is common for different government departments to have different doctrine that is not readily translated across department boundaries. Past efforts to conduct combined planning and training activities have allowed mechanisms to be developed to allow different agencies to work together effectively on operations. Such efforts must be ongoing to provide a routine capability to assemble for future operations.

■ **Interagency planning training.** Major differences in interagency planning will remain a major challenge to overcome unless systemic approaches are taken to ensure effective connectors exist. Operational experiences have identified the need to focus on combined training and education for interagency planning.

■ **Soldier understanding of other agencies.** Soldiers need to be prepared to work as part of an interagency effort to achieve mission success. Soldiers need to be capable of negotiating with other agencies, they need to understand and appreciate other organisational cultures, and they need to be prepared to 'take a back seat' to support the other agencies' leading actions. Concentrating training on developing these skills is a key enabler for the contributing to interagency operations.

■ **Third country deployment - considerations for Ex Long Look.** Personnel who deploy on Ex Long Look expressed disappointment in not being permitted to undertake third country deployments as part of their experience. Observations from personnel who have previously undertaken third country deployments note that whilst there are some administrative obstacles, the experiences gained from this opportunity far outweigh any negative challenges, and provide an ideal opportunity to develop skills that can be brought back to the Australian Army.

■ **Interagency aspects.** It is important that attachments and interagency personnel, need to be given the opportunity to demonstrate ('show and tell') their wares as part of the pre-deployment 'forming and storming'. This is best done uniformly and widely within the PDT in order that all components have a common operating picture and expectation; it is a two way flow to everyone's potential benefit and best not left until arrival in theatre.

Various contributing attachments bring with them certain capabilities, cultures and behaviours that all ranks need to be aware of. Certain agencies are deployed under markedly different conditions of service, and this has the potential to seriously affect the morale of troops. In some theatres agencies may have more control and authority over assets than to the ADF so it is important that the rules, limits and protocols are understood from the outset so that actions are best configured and sustained.

Other agencies do not have the same distinct mission as does the ADF but it will be complementary to the whole of government approach and ought not to be seen as a divisive issue for command.

Where agencies have differing SOP, ROE and equipment commanders will have to ensure that such matters are understood by their staff and soldiers.

The provision of non-lethal weapons such as SCAT rounds, bean bag rounds and capsicum spray between elements needs to be factored into unit TTP, ROE and training; the latter is best done before arrival in theatre.

Location

■ **Importance of maintaining presence during stability operations.** Maintaining presence through the conduct of multi-agency patrols proved successful during stability operations in both Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands. These patrols denied adversaries freedom of movement and created a secure environment; both fundamental building blocks of COIN operations. These patrols also sought to make contact with outlying communities in order to pass on information, which gave the local people situational awareness and countered the rumour mill.

■ **Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) Location.** MRE locations should be sought to best replicate the operational theatre and environmental conditions once deployed. For deployments to Timor Leste and The Solomon Islands, High Range and Cowley Beach Training Areas in North Queensland, with their excellent urban and village training areas, are most suitable. For deployments to the Middle East, Cultana and Woomera Training Areas best replicate the arid and sparse environmental conditions. CAL comment; It is recommended that MREs be conducted in as similar environmental locations to the operational theatre as possible to ensure effective realism in training.



Mobility

Development of TTP with ECM. ECM is a solid platform that unquestionably enhances force protection, however TTP is required to manage intra-unit and inter-unit communications and convoy considerations. TTP developed during previous deployments needs to be incorporated into training and force preparation wherever possible. Soldiers need to have a working knowledge of ECM. Whilst personnel may not be sure exactly what they're going to use in theatre, some training before they enter the theatre assists personnel to get into the mindset of the procedures of turning it on, checking it, and developing TTP for managing its effect on communication systems.

Friendly situational awareness supported by UAV. UAV are often employed to provide greater awareness of friendly activities in addition to being used for ISTAR. The ability for commanders at various levels to receive live footage from UAVs, regardless of location, makes it easy for them to become involved in the control of activities. Local commanders should still make tactical decisions where possible since there are always considerations that are not captured through surveillance assets.

UAV frequencies. Since UAV require radio frequencies to operate, it is important to ensure sufficient radio frequencies are allocated for the use of UAV. Some UAV have pre-set radio frequencies built into them that could require significant time to change. There have also been instances where some frequencies have been allocated to multiple UAV operating in the same or adjacent areas and the resulting interference can result in the UAV becoming unserviceable. Ideally, dedicated frequencies should be assigned to UAV prior to deployment; therefore, ensuring that UAV taken on operations are pre-set with the correct frequencies.

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Protection

CSS convoys on operations. Planners and commanders of CSS convoys need to ensure that every convoy in the contemporary environment is viewed as a combat logistics patrol, with appropriate understanding of orders (including clearly defined 'actions on'), adequate force protection, and well-rehearsed and understood TTP. AS observations as well as coalition information suggests that this is a major issue for CSS and needs to be addressed with urgency.

Hardening of logistic nodes and installations. Force protection of logistic installations needs to have a greater consideration during planning and operations. Consideration is required to refine and document TTP in the hardening of logistic areas and access control measures for a range of threats includes ensuring that training regimes and the inclusion of force protection training objectives on exercises are put in place in order to expose more of the ADF to force protection issues in urban areas, and to use the opportunity to refine TTP.

Wearing ECBA whilst conducting trade tasks. Personnel have highlighted that wearing ECBA and other PPE whilst undertaking their trade tasks (such as repairing / maintaining vehicles, and construction work) is extremely difficult. Personnel need to wear this PPE at as many training opportunities as possible prior to deploying in order to develop individual techniques and skills for managing the challenges presented by this cumbersome equipment.

Wearing ECBA whilst undertaking mounted operations. Driving in some versions of ECBA can be difficult, particularly for cavalry mounted operations. Commanders must balance between force protection considerations and effectiveness of the driver in designating a force protection stance, accepting the limitations that are inherent with additional personal physical protective equipment. Further comment: This can be overcome by exploring the acquisition of PPE that is suitable for wearing inside the confines of vehicles.

Force Protection. Force protection measures can be perceived by some to be overbearing and irrelevant given certain circumstances however commanders need to ensure that they have protocols in place to permit timely and accurate confirmation of all of your members. A degree of routine reporting coupled with appointed coordinators that can track movement within and external to the FOB is important. Any such systems must be simple, routine and resilient to disruption of communications. The investment cost far outweighs the consequence of failure.

The presence of female soldiers on hours of darkness rosters in CPs can present challenges in some coalition base areas where visiting elements may take the opportunity

to prey on females moving about after hours. The provision of a male soldier as a 'buddy' or escort during changeover was cited as an example where simple measures can be emplaced to prevent any predation on AS female soldiers. Other forces have not been so lucky as to avoid this regrettable situation.

Where practical the physical force protection measures warrant continual inspection and improvement; hardening of facilities can be furthered, drills can be rehearsed and problems resolved.

When damage to vehicles is sustained it is important to conceal the exact nature of the damage to the opposition; when safe to do so have vehicle hulls covered with tarpaulins before recovering them for repair.

Support

Availability of support facilities in theatre. Facilities that meet the needs of logistics personnel are an essential element for consideration by planners and commanders. These facilities must provide a safe and secure environment for the effective and timely conduct of logistic tasking.

Considerations in the use of interpreters. The role of the interpreter is essential in the MEAO theatres. Their contribution to the force through the acquisition of information cannot be underestimated. Commanders must exercise caution, however, in the use of interpreters. Like the rest of the force, they require an appropriate work / rest cycle and access for personal protective equipment. Religious needs must also be considered in planning and tasking. Many take extraordinary risks to work with coalition forces, both personally and for their families.

Civil Contracts. Not all AOs are able to be resourced with dedicated ADF or coalition military air support. Commanders subjected to AME or operational air support from a contracted entity may find that this limits the ability to conduct operations during the hours of darkness.

Interpreters can be a force multiplier. The presence of quality interpreters are an essential force multiplier. Observations highlight that they can be used in a variety of situations, and if reliable, can provide exceptional information about cultural nuances and changes in perceptions in villages. They provide a consistency across rotations, and are able to assist in the development of grass roots relationships.

Keys for successful redeployment. The keys to successful redeployment of a force include the following fundamentals: conducting early interagency planning; establishing workable objectives, goals, and end states; providing for adequate intelligence and communication; ensuring unity of effort; harmonising the civil with the military effort; and establishing the appropriate post-conflict organisation.

Use of local civilians as interpreters. Observations suggest that the use of ordinary civilians in the role of interpreter is risky and should not be considered, unless in extreme circumstances or as a short term measure. Their interpretation skills can often be less than useful, and observations suggest that there can be issues with cultural sensitivities and tribal allegiances which can affect the quality of the interpretation.



Training

39 OSB Weapon Certification. Currently 39 OSB completes weapon certification for all deploying members. Where a complete contingent is deploying together, allowing the contingent CO the authority to conduct weapon certification would alleviate the time and resources required by 39 PSB during pre-deployment training. Weapon certification for tri-service individuals should remain with 39 PSB to ensure Army weapon standards are met. CAL comment: It is recommended that deploying COs be given the authority and responsibility to certify their contingent in order to alleviate the onus on 39 OSB.

Considerations for in-theatre training. Personnel generally report that in-theatre training can provide a positive focus for deployed personnel. However it is stressed that planning for in-theatre training needs to consider the operational tempo and plan their training around this. Observations suggest that this can be achieved through the provision of modularised training packages.

Integral training staff. Training staff deployed within a contingent can help to minimise skills fade and they can manage training to match operational needs. Through coordinated training and rehearsals, training staff can also help commanders refocus task elements when they change roles within the mission. CAL comment: Daily routine must be established that allows time for effective training. If time is not afforded in routine then the training will not be effective.

In-theatre (language) training. There is potential to conduct in-theatre task-specific training packages to counter specific deficiencies such as language training, particularly where forces have deployed at short notice. There have been a number of other training packages delivered successfully in theatre, where that training has contributed to mission success. CAL comment: Daily routine must be established that allows time for effective training. If time is not afforded in routine then the training will not be effective.

Requirement for additional communications training. There is unanimous agreement in the observations to suggest that personnel require regular and ongoing training with the entire suite of communications equipment. It is suggested that waiting until pre-deployment training is ineffective, as often, this equipment is not available to train upon.

ROE training delivery. It is considered that where Legal Officers deliver ROE training, they need to explain legal detail simply and in context with specific relevant scenarios. This will limit the potential for soldiers to become confused. Many operators believe this training would be most effectively delivered by the platoon commander, platoon sergeant, RSM or CSM.



Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP)

Implementing climactic effects in the development of TTP. Observations have highlighted that climatic effects are instrumental in the development of TTP. Factors such as the presence of rain or snow, and time of day can influence both blue and red TTP, and need to be considered in their development.

Insurgents' use of IA. Insurgents are making communication systems (such as the internet, radio, TV, print) central to even tactical-level operations. Their propaganda videos highlighting ambushes of coalition forces vehicles have improved considerably during the 2006 – 2008 period. Commanders need to ensure that their IA capabilities can match or exceed their enemy.

Digital imagery. The proliferation of relatively inexpensive digital cameras and video devices offers unprecedented opportunities to force elements. There are challenges in the collection, filtering, organisation and distribution of the media. The passage of imagery collected from mounted and dismounted patrols appears limited to physical passage of flash drives. Some deployments have received technology insertions providing dismounted patrols with networked PDAs able to collect and report information quickly on return to their patrol base thus enabling timely briefing of other patrols and contributing to the S2 data and HUMINT. The aggregation and application of data / information is a challenge

The ability for commanders at all levels to utilise imagery, coupled with notes and narrative to serve as part of a HOTO brief and 'observation repository' is further enhanced by the availability of domestic quality laptops and programmes such as Microsoft Photostory™ which is a free download that enables rapid creation of such media that can then be shared within the group. CAL would be interested in receiving examples of such material and hosting content in the same manner as we do POR/PAR according to the security classification.

Soldiers have been quite innovative placing recording devices where they appear to be part of the vehicle.

Pattern setting. Whilst regimentation, routine and rhythm is second nature in barracks on operations it also is fundamental in providing local villagers with distinctive patterns of life and behaviour on ADF members and units; just like we try and establish on them. Care must be taken to conduct rehearsals and drills out of direct observation. Movement from FOB needs to be considered and patterns avoided or deception used. Care is needed

when occupying overwatch positions since the opposition is probably alert to its use and may consider leaving IED or booby traps if he suspects that it will gain him an advantage.

Population protection and control. Current Australian PPC drills are considered to be very defensive, ineffective for dispersing an aggressive large crowd, and lack an interim stage between defensive posture and lethal force. The Australian Federal Police and the New Zealand Army have very effective PPC doctrine that allows an aggressing threat to be targeted and disabled without resorting to lethal force. CAL Comment: It is recommended that Australian PPC doctrine, including PPC Rules of Engagement, be reviewed to allow soldiers to disable lightly armed aggressors without the need for lethal force.



Vehicle operations

Considerations of the rear hatch shooter role. The role of the shooter on the ASLAV/PMV has proven effective time and again in the MEAO through their provision of situational awareness and fire support to support the crew commander and gunner in the complex urban setting. However, it is essential that personnel who are given these roles are provided with appropriate training (particularly those personnel not from arms corps) and consideration (relating to fatigue, safety, equipment).

Realism in vehicle recovery training. Vehicle recovery training scenarios need to include simulation of heavy enemy fire to better prepare personnel for vehicle recovery procedures in theatre.



Weapons

Blue force weapons familiarisation. Personnel must be familiar with every weapon system in their task group, regardless of corps or role. Soldiers must know how to load, fire, clear and reduce stoppages of every crew served weapon.

Effect of pistol carriage in the MEAO. It is suggested that personnel in roles that have an interface with locals in the MEAO, such as CIMIC, soldiers manning VCP, and similar roles, should be issued with a pistol because of commanding effect that these weapons have on the locals. Local nationals do not tend to respond to a rifle with the same sense of fear and trepidation as they do towards the weapon used by the previous government's regime (assassination, intimidation etc).

Management of ammunition. Appropriate management and storage of ammunition on operations has been highlighted as deficient in deployed forces. Particular deficiencies surrounded SOP, appropriate signage, consideration of environmental effects, and accounting procedures.

Managing Steyr attachments. Soldiers are carrying an increasing number of attachments onto their personal weapon on operations, and have suggested that this is impacting on their capability. Training opportunities need to ensure that personnel conduct weapons training activities with these attachments to facilitate familiarisation and skills development to minimise impact on user capability.

Red force weapons familiarisation. Personnel should be familiarised with foreign weapons that they are likely to encounter in theatre and this should include handling of the weapons where possible. Some specific examples provided are AK-47s, RPKs, RPG launchers and warheads, and PKMs.

Weapon allocation according to role. Personnel are adamant that there are certain roles that should be issued a 9mm pistol as their personal weapon. Cavalry crewmen and tradesmen are two such examples of personnel who currently are issued the F88 Steyr as their personal weapon, even though their role makes carriage of such weapons cumbersome and, on occasion, dangerous. The issuing of headquarters personnel with pistols is viewed as unacceptable, when they are able to carry a larger weapon.



Welfare

Decompression post-operation. It is very important to have a well-structured post-operation decompression period. Soldiers have indicated that this provides a worthwhile conclusion to any operation but have suggested that it needs to better reflect normalcy in barracks. It is considered important to immediately get soldiers back into barracks routine, helping them to adjust to the hours and activities. CAL Comment: Access to alcohol is one consideration for decompression that has been raised during lessons seminars. Units should consider policy for alcohol consumption during decompression and how members are supported when given access after long periods of involuntary abstinence.

Decompression regimes on return from operations require careful consideration and planning well in advance by each Commander who must be alert to the conflicting emotions and views surrounding the RTA of all elements under command. Commanders need to be conscious of the implication and impact of the deployment/redeployment timeline set by the mounting HQ. Staging the phasing of elements, attachments and main body/advance/rear parties all need to be facilitated. The ability to afford all of the members time and amenity to relax, handover weapons and equipment and complete satisfactory after-action protocols is something that needs to be worked through with key PSO at the mounting HQ in order to ensure that RTA is not just a rushed exercise in logistics. Other nations have access to staging points where decompression occurs within a secure and pleasant environment and those examples may serve to provide stimulus for an Australian solution.

Managing welfare expectations. Commanders face an increasing concern of managing expectations, particularly of families, for frequent communication opportunities with loved ones whilst deployed. This has stemmed from previous deployments where communications with home were plentiful and generally uninhibited secondary to the less tactically demanding nature of the operation. Personnel acknowledge that when operational demands reduce these opportunities, there is a certain degree of friction from the home-front when the expectations are not met.

Military support of families on operations. Personnel unanimously agree that commanders must not underestimate the importance of the provision of support to families of those deployed on operations. Commanders and planners need to factor in opportunities for keeping family members updated with news and support options.



Conclusion

The intent of Insights from operations has been to present a collection of insights gained from commanders, staff and soldiers who have operated in the diverse environment that the ADF exists within. This booklet by the Centre for Army Lessons (CAL) presents real-world insights that can be used to shape the thinking of personnel as they plan for, prepare for and conduct operations.

CENTRE FOR ARMY LESSONS

CAL is a repository for army observations, insights, as well as lessons and links to pertinent army and professional knowledge. Although primarily focused on tactical knowledge, CAL assists current and future capability development. By sharing knowledge within army CAL induces and promotes a culture of learning.

Commanders can share their experience with the rest of army by submitting unit PORs and AARs to CAL for storage, analysis and dissemination.

By using the CAL website, commanders can find a wealth of information on lessons pertinent to tasks and missions that will help improve army capability.

To download lessons or submit PORs visit the CAL website: <http://ako.drn.mil.au/au/cal>

