

# Command and Toxic Leadership



Brisbane Cove Conference  
27-30 APR 21

# Content

- A Marine Corps Case Study as a mechanism to discuss Toxic Leadership
- Presentation/Pre-Reading and Group Discussion
- Context for Scenario (only slightly war stories)
- Operation Iraqi Freedom
- 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division Structure/ FSSG Restructure
- Sequence of Events
- Contributing Factors
- Discussion Points

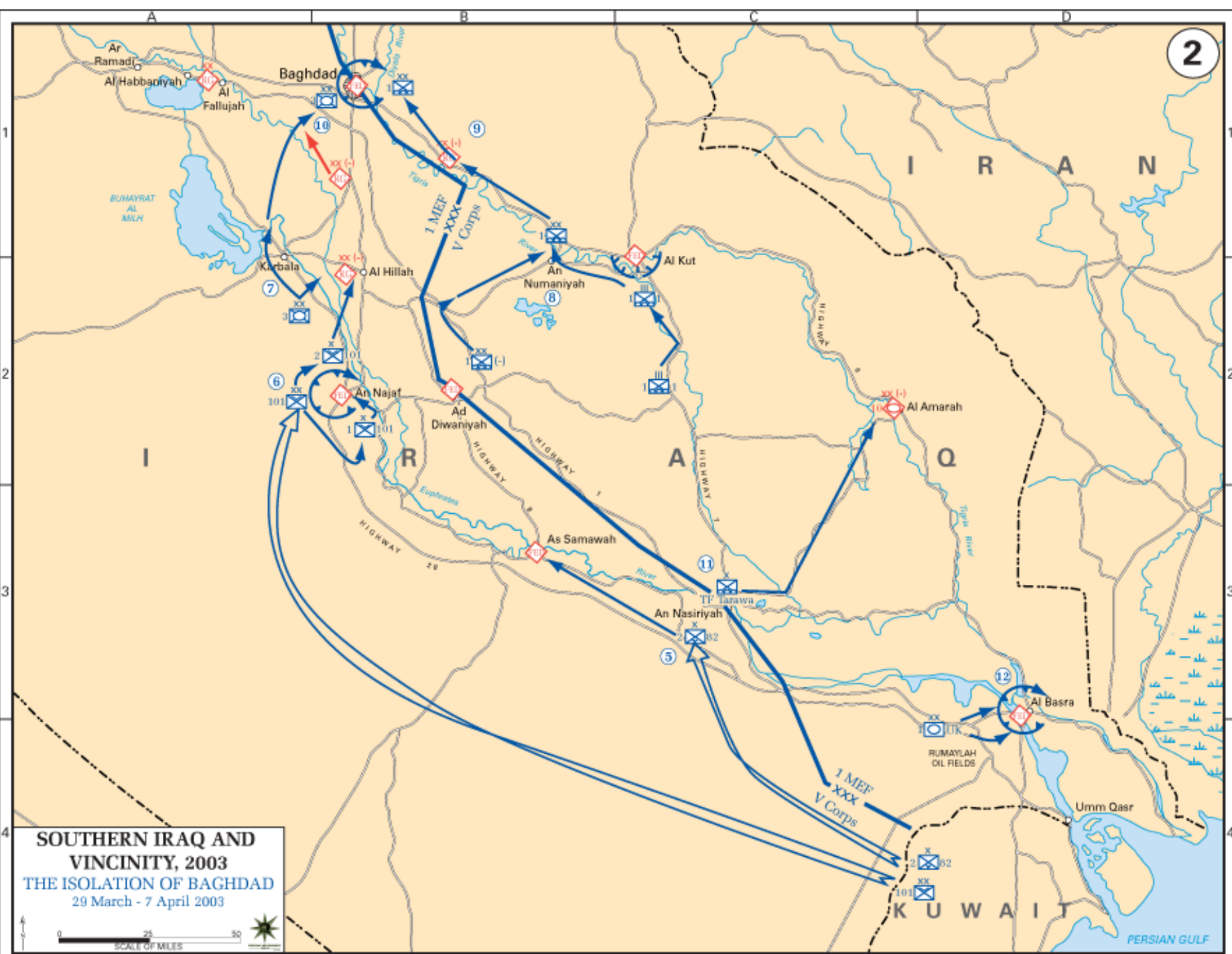
# Case Study Pre OIF Context

- Timeframe – Sept 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 to OIF-I
- USMC Background
- 1<sup>st</sup> Transport Support Battalion
- S3A
- Tajikistan
- Company Commander

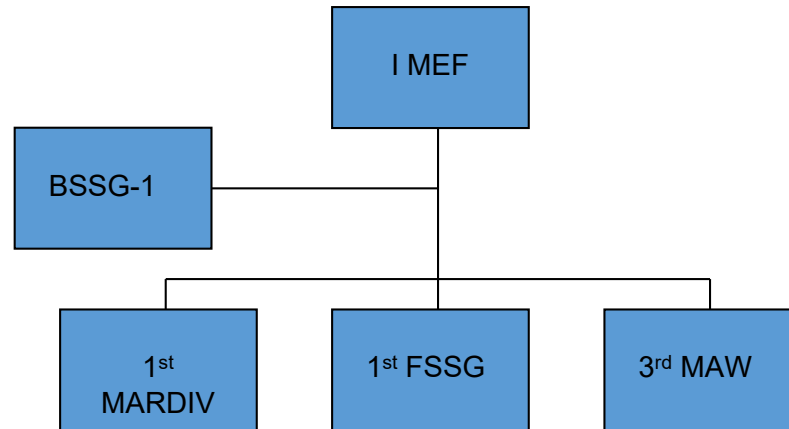


# Operation Iraqi Freedom: 21 March to 24 April 2003

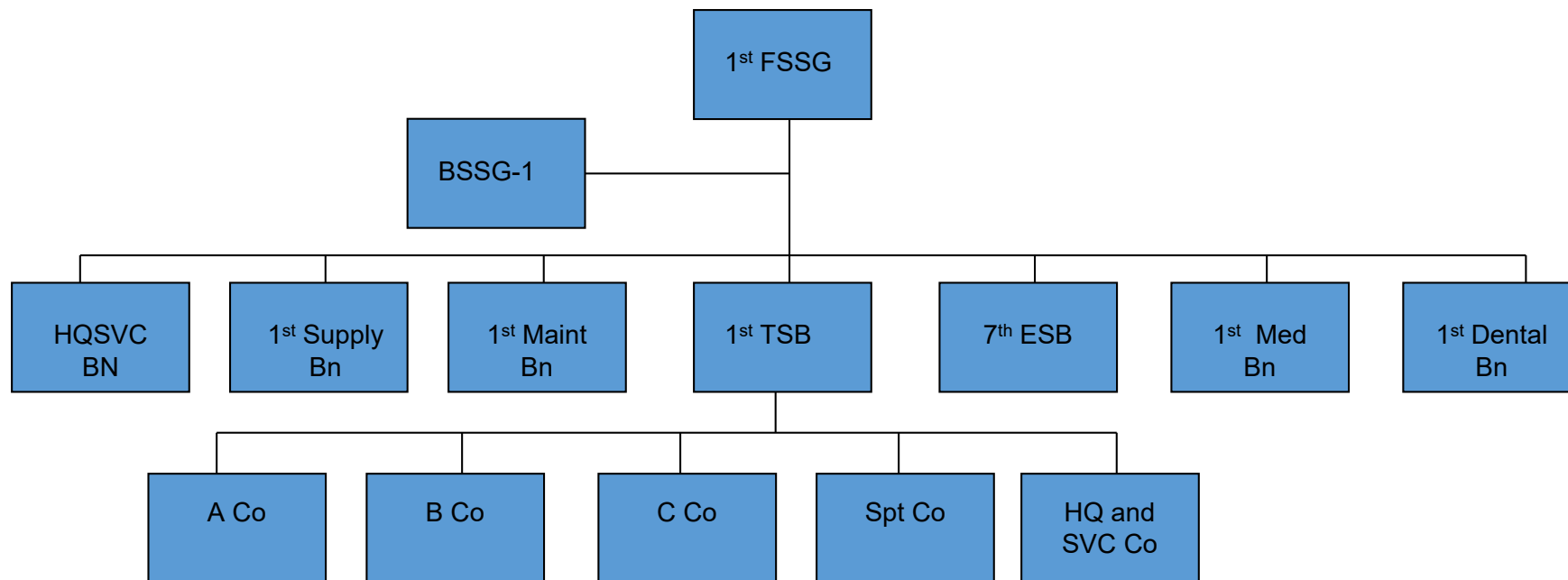
- Conducted the longest sequence of coordinated combined arms overland attacks in the history of the Marine Corps. From the border between Kuwait and Iraq, to the culmination of hostilities north of Baghdad, I MEF advanced nearly 800 kilometres under sustained and heavy combat.
- Destroyed nine Iraqi Divisions.
- 33 days of combat.
- Conducted four major river crossings.
- I MEF Total: 81,125
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division: 20,606
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing: 14,381
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Force Engineer Group: 10,504
  - 1 MEF Engineer Group, Task Force Tarawa, 15<sup>th</sup> MEU, 1 (UK) AD



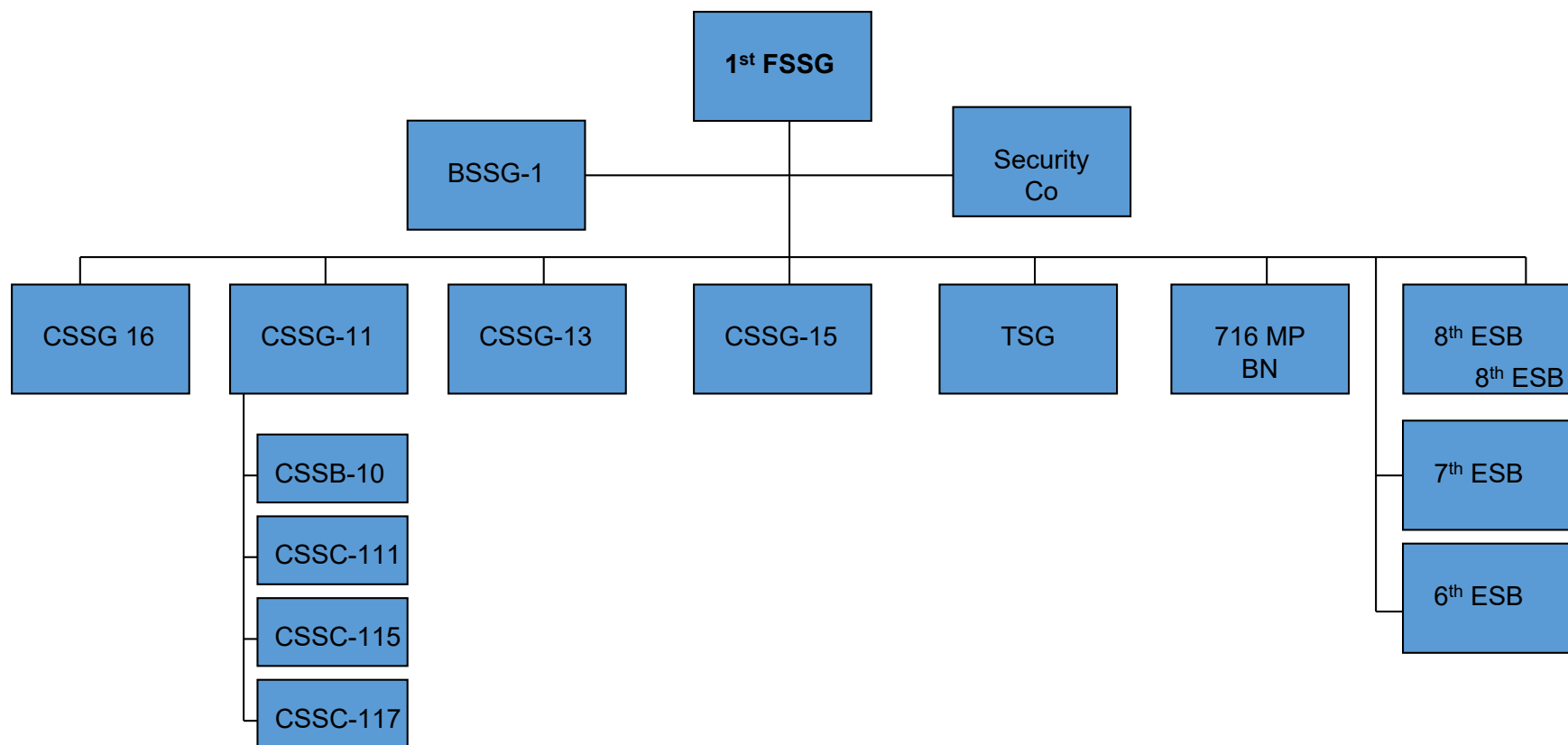
# I MEF



# Pre OIF 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG



# OIF 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG Structure





# Sequence of Events & Examples

- Planning Jan 02
- Stop Loss
- Request for Forces
- Assignment to CSSG-11
  - Request for Forces
- Movement to AO & lack of equipment
  - ATF West Depart Jan 03
  - Arrival in AO welcome

## Invasion

- Physical Dislocation
- Interaction with CO
- RCT-1 LO



# Post Baghdad

- Return to Talil and CSSG-11 Interaction
- Isolation – geographic and Communications
  - Between CSSCs
  - Between CSSG-11 and 1<sup>st</sup> FSSG
- No end date for deployment – Break up of CSSC -111
- What did I do? Protecting my Marines





# Epilogue



# Conclusion and Pre Discussion Points

- Moral Courage vs Practicality
- When is a commander simply 'hard' and when does it go to extreme?
- Spt to Command vs spt to Marines. When is enough is enough?
- A 'slow burn' realisation
- Resignation – only one shot
- Notification & Unsigned Letter – right thing to do?