



A flag representing one of this year's USMC Ground Safety Awards now flies at the MCCLL Headquarters. See the article on the [Department of the Navy 2007 Safety Excellence Awards](#).

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Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL)

Inside this issue:

Featured Articles

[From the Director: Upgraded Text Editing Features Incorporated in the MCCLL Lessons Management System!](#) When you add lessons to the MCCLL repositories, you will now find new, more powerful text editing features including a spell checker!

[Department of the Navy 2007 Safety Excellence Awards:](#) One of this year's Marine Corps Ground Safety Awards was presented to MCCLL in a ceremony hosted by the Secretary of the Navy. MCCLL was cited for "incorporating safety and operational risk management as top priorities in planning and executing its mission, resulting in . . . far-reaching achievements . . ."

[Pocket Guide for Company Commanders:](#) Two versions of a recent MCCLL report are now available that provide observations from ground and logistics combat element company commanders who have recently served in Iraq: (1) a hip-pocket version that can be carried in a cargo pocket, and (2) a standard page size report that is more suitable for viewing online.

[World-Wide Joint Training and Scheduling Conference:](#) During this semi-annual conference, MCCLL provided an update on the status of the Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS).

[Are There Issues Associated with the M16 Magazine?](#) MCCLL recently conducted a review of recent lessons and observations in our system and also surveyed representative Marines in Iraq concerning potential problems associated with the M16 rifle standard issue magazine.

[Biometrics Update:](#) A number of available biometrics resources are highlighted this month, together with ongoing efforts to provide future enhanced biometrics capabilities.

[3D Marine Aircraft Wing Headquarters Lessons Learned:](#)

As the aviation combat element (ACE) for Multi-National Force West (MNF-W) from February 2006 to February 2007, the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) learned valuable lessons that should be passed on to future ACE headquarters elements.

[Professional Reading Program Survey Results:](#)

The opinions of over a thousand Marines (ranging from private first class to four-star general) concerning the Marine Corps Professional Reading Program are summarized in this report, with many comments and observations that are bound to stimulate further discussion.

News

News items and recently acquired documents are summarized this month that address such topics as: (1) the [various mine-resistant, ambush-protected \(MRAP\) vehicles](#) being purchased by the Marine Corps and U.S. Army, (2) an informative [guide to Shiaism in Iraq](#), (3) implementation of a [longer and tougher infantry school](#), (4) a recent agreement for [California firefighters to train with Marines](#), (5) an evaluation of [en route care training](#), and (6) positive [political/religious developments in Iraq](#).

[Reading Lists and Book Review:](#)

This month, three books on Marine Corps reading lists are highlighted: (1) We again feature *First to Fight* by LtGen Krulak, the "marquee title" on the Commandant's Reading List, with a Discussion Guide for Chapter 4, (2) *Welcome to the Green Zone*, an article by William Langewiesche on the II MEF (Fwd) recommended list, and (3) *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs* by David Pryce Jones, also on the II MEF (Fwd) recommended list.

[Updated List of MCCLL Representatives:](#) This roster provides updated information on the individuals assigned at major Marine Corps and Joint commands and organizations as MCCLL representatives.

The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) newsletter, like other MCCLL products addressing a variety of topics, is an "initial impressions" summary that identifies key observations and potential lessons from collection efforts. These observations highlight potential shortfalls, risk or issues experienced by units that may suggest a need for change. The observations are not service level decisions. Your comments on any topics addressed in this newsletter (or on our website) are welcome. Questions can be directed to: harry.t.johnson@usmc.mil or michael.jones@usmc.mil
 Telephone: 703.432.1279 DSN: 312-378-1279

From the Director: New Text Editing Features Added to MCCLL LMS!

What would we do without the spell checkers and other text editing features that are incorporated in today's word processing software applications? Those of us who are spelling challenged would be "up-a-creek without-a-paddle." The text editing features that we have come to rely on whenever we are called upon to demonstrate our writing prowess have become ubiquitous. (I checked and this is spelled correctly.)

Unfortunately, up until now users of the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) Lessons Management System (LMS) did not have the luxury of access to spell checking or many other text editing features when they entered lessons or observations into the system or attempted to build after action reports (AARs) with the AAR Builder. Now this situation has finally been rectified. Incorporation of a spell checker and other text editing features throughout our website will not only help external site users, but also our own staff here at MCCLL. The new text editing bar is shown here, with the spell checker located at the far right. Other editing features include the capability to change background colors and text colors, conduct searches, use existing templates, and easily add classification markings to paragraphs.



In particular, these features should assist unit lesson managers (ULMs) and others as they enter lessons (observations and recommendations) into the system. They can check the spelling and perform other editing functions before they pass the lessons on to their command lesson managers (CLMs). Then, the CLMs can perform their own spell checks and ensure that the lessons are as grammatically correct as possible. In addition, users who employ our AAR Builder will find the same editing tools available to assist in developing their AARs.

*Comments on any of the topics in this newsletter can be addressed to the
MCCLL Director, Col Monte E. Dunard, USMCR, at monte.dunard@usmc.mil*

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Department of the Navy 2007 Safety Excellence Awards

At the presentation of the Department of the Navy 2007 Safety Excellence Awards on October 16th at the Naval Heritage Center, twenty-two commands and installations received awards for their safety programs. Among the recipients was a new player on the scene that may appear to be an "atypical" choice, the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL). However, Marines and sailors who are regular recipients of the [MCCLL Safety Corners](#) will likely not be surprised at the choice. Unlike most of the other Marine Corps and Navy safety award winners, MCCLL was not recognized for implementing a new safety program within its organization or achieving an exemplary record of accident avoidance. Instead, MCCLL was awarded for its efforts to foster safety consciousness throughout the Marine Corps. At the awards ceremony, the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), the Honorable Donald C. Winter, noted that safety

"... is one of the highest priorities that I have within the [Department of the Navy]. . . A failure or two of observed safety could compromise people, could compromise equipment, could call to question our procedures. Any one of those will have —not could have — but will have a significant impact on our ability to conduct the mission."

During the ceremony, MCCLL was cited for incorporating "safety and operational risk management as top priorities in planning and executing its mission, resulting in remarkable, highly successful and far-reaching achievements." MCCLL along with the other recipients was awarded a citation, plaque and the SECNAV's safety flag, which they are entitled to fly for a year.

The continuing importance of safety within the Department of the Navy has again been highlighted in the [Department of the Navy Objectives for FY 2008 and Beyond](#), promulgated by the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Safety is identified as number 4 on the list of six key objectives for the fiscal year:

Safeguard the People and Resources of the Navy - Marine Corps Team. Integrate Safety and Risk Management into all on and off-duty evolutions to maximize mission readiness and to establish DON as an organization with world class safety where no mishap is accepted as the cost of doing business.



Col Monte Dunard (left) accepts one of the 2007 Ground Safety Awards from Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Don C. Winter. Also represented at the ceremony was the editor of the MCCLL Safety Corner, Mr. William Richardson. Other participating officials included the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Patrick M. Walsh, the Director, Marine Corps Staff and Deputy Commandant of Installation and Logistics, LtGen Richard S. Kramlich, and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installation and Environment, the Honorable B. J. Penn.

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Pocket Guide for Company Commanders

As has been pointed out many times by experts on counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) is a small unit leader's war. The leadership of company commanders down to squad and team leaders is critical to achieving a successful outcome against Al Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) and other insurgents. If coalition forces are to succeed in containing the insurgency and bringing stability to Iraq, company commanders must have a profound understanding of the nature of COIN operations and must be able to pass this knowledge on to their small unit leaders. The knowledge already gained by Marine Corps officers who have served as company commanders in OIF is an enormous resource that needs to be captured and disseminated to those who will follow them into the theater. In an effort to ensure that this happens, the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) asked Marine majors and captains who had served as commanders of ground and logistics combat element companies in Iraq between 2004 and early 2007 to complete an online questionnaire concerning their experiences preparing and leading Marines in combat. Sixty-seven officers responded, and their comments and observations have been compiled into a report entitled, **Company Commanders' Observations: Lessons and Advice from Ground and Logistics Combat Element Company Commanders**. The report is available in two versions: (1) a [Cargo Pocket Guide version](#) that can be printed as a "hip pocket" reference and easily carried by company commanders and other Marines and (2) a [topical paper version](#) that is in standard page size format and is more suitable for viewing online. The content of both versions is identical.

Among the many insightful comments provided by these experienced company commanders are:

- *A solid knowledge of theory and doctrine are essential in order to understand the nature of the current conflict and to work with other services. Speaking the language of our profession is often taken for granted, but has to be learned.* Captain Andrew Del Gaudio, Company Commander, Headquarters and Service Company and Company K, 3d Battalion, 8th Marines



Maj Christopher Bronzi, Company Commander, Company G, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, confers with his Battalion Commander during a battalion zone clearing operation in Ar Ramadi, while a radio operator provides security.

- *Commanders need to learn and understand intelligence operations; specifically, how to develop a functional intelligence collection cell down to the squad level, and operationalize intelligence with raids, knock and talks, cordon and searches, etc.* Captain James Kimber, Company Commander, Company I, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, and Headquarters Company, Regimental Combat Team 1
- *It is vital to have a thorough understanding of all the weapons systems, optics and gear that your company will employ. The majority of this must be accomplished via self education. Get the pubs and then go down to your battalion armory and get your hands on the gear.* Major Ryan Hoyle, Company Commander, Delta Company, 3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion
- *Combat shooting for first round accuracy is essential training. . . Most engagements will take place in the 100 to 300 meter range, and Marines will get a very limited "target exposure" time following hostile intent/hostile act within which to strike and kill their target. They must hit their target on the first shot, period.*

Capt David Baas, Company Commander, Company C, 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion

- *As a company commander, you must be able to thoroughly understand the capabilities and limitations of your unit. This includes personnel, equipment and training. . . Combat is tiring and stressful as it is, but an overly aggressive commander who wants his company to enjoy some glory can easily outstretch and out pace his unit.* Capt Matthew Fehmel, Company Commander, Company D, 2d Tank Battalion
- *Study the New York and Los Angeles Police Departments. Digital cameras are everything. Every man should have one.* Maj Rory Quinn, Company Commander, 3d Battalion, 7th Marines
- *Every Marine is a collector — can't overstate this. Listen to and analyze what the Marines have collected. This real-time tactical intelligence was the most reliable and most accurate intelligence we had.* Maj Anthony Bango, Company Commander, Company A, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion
- *Make a company 'phone book' of your area of operations (AO). Instead of numbers it has names, locations and pictures of the house, their vehicles and the people. Build this immediately and update with every patrol.* Capt Christopher Roberson, Company Commander, Team Traveler, Regimental Combat Team 8



Capt Jason Freeby, Company Commander, Headquarters Company, RCT 2, briefs Marines and Iraqi leaders on the route to follow from Habbinyah to Fallujah to transport new armored HMWWVs being issued to the 2d Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Division.

Capt Nakoniecz's Must Hit List

1. Live fire situation based training
2. Learning the Iraqis language [Arabic]
3. Development of a company playbook
4. Weekly company level tactical decision games
5. Studying the area before you get there. Not just leaders, all Marines.
6. Combat conditioning
7. Study enemy TTP's and discuss ways to avoid/defeat them
8. ROE training and discussions: Instilling a mind set that it is cowardly to kill innocents but enforcing the absolute need to protect your fellow Marines and yourself.

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Worldwide Joint Training and Scheduling Conference

One of the major topics addressed at the recent semi-annual Worldwide Joint Training and Scheduling Conference (WJTSC) held in September at the National Guard Professional Education Center at Camp Robinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas, was the status of the Joint Lessons Learned Program (JLLP). (Note that the [September Journal of the Joint Center for Operational Analysis \(JCOA\)](#) provides an excellent history of the JLLP.) The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) is proud of its participation in this program and was pleased to be able to provide updates on the status of several components of the program during the conference. Lieutenant Colonel Scott Hawkins, the MCCLL Information Technology Branch Head provided an update on the Joint Staff J-7 approved Joint Lessons Learned Information System (JLLIS) Tier I baseline capabilities. He also reviewed the Combatant Command (COCOM) installation schedule and the resources that have been allocated for the JLLIS modernization and the Joint Lessons Learned Repository (JLLR) metadata tagging schema and linkage to other joint systems. Among the baseline JLLIS capabilities are many with which users of the MCCLL Lessons Management System (LMS) are already familiar:

- The ability to add structured records of lessons (observations and recommendations), with procedures for command lessons manager (CLM) vetting of the lessons.
- The ability to add unstructured records (after action reports (AARs), briefings, transcribed interviews, surveys, photographs, and other types of documents).
- The ability to perform “Google-type” searches of both structured and unstructured records.
- The inclusion of specialized features that are already included in the current MCCLL LMS, such as “My Binders,” “The Daily Digest”, and the “AAR Builder”.
- The ability to track the resolution of issues through the “Issue Management System (IMS).”
- The provision of a spell check capability (newly added to the MCCLL LMS [as highlighted previously in this newsletter](#)).

LtCol Hawkins provided a demonstration of the IMS and AAR Builder, as well as MCCLL Communities of Interest (COIs) that serve as both repositories of data and as online forums. He also provided a demonstration of the mobile LMS, which is under development to provide MCCLL users with a full spectrum of lessons creation and vetting functions during operations in low/no bandwidth environments. When the mobile LMS becomes fully operational, it will be highlighted in a future edition of the monthly newsletter. [Return to the Table of Contents!](#)

Are There Issues Associated with the M16 Standard Issue Magazine?

The M16 family of weapons is now the longest serving standard-issue rifle in U.S. history. As such, it has not been without controversy, beginning with reports of jamming problems during the Vietnam era. More recently, in earlier phases of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) there were reports questioning the combat effectiveness and stopping power of the M16 with the standard 5.56 mm, 62 grain “green tip” round. As a result, in 2005 the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) administered surveys and conducted interviews with senior NCOs and small unit leaders to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of the rifle and ammunition. MCCLL learned that there was a wide divergence of opinion on whether the M16 with the standard issue round has sufficient stopping power. However, among the common themes from the survey were many observations from Marines that marksmanship is the key to effective employment of the rifle, that the AA Special Ball Long Range 5.56 77 grain “black tip” round provides greater stopping power, and that it is essential to maintain a balance among rifle characteristics (accuracy, energy, expected ranges, and reliability), depending on the particular mission. The results of the survey and interviews were documented in the topical paper, [Effectiveness of the M-16 Family of Weapons](#).



Recently, there has been anecdotal evidence that problems have been encountered with the standard issue, Colt manufactured M-16 magazine. In some cases, Marines have reportedly purchased H&K manufactured magazines on their own after they had experienced or heard about jamming problems with the standard magazines. In an effort to document the facts associated with the M16 magazine, MCCLL conducted a search of its repositories and also obtained input from the 1st Marine Division (MARDIV) G4, 1st MARDIV Gunner, the Tactical Training Exercise Control Group (TTECG) staff, USMC Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC), and battalion gunners and operations chiefs from the following battalions: 1st Battalion, 4th Marines (1/4), 1st Battalion, 1st Marines (1/1), 1st Battalion, 3d Marines (1/3), 3d Battalion, 3d Marines (3/3), and 2d Battalion, 6th Marines (2/6). This research revealed that older magazines (with black followers) are being replaced with newer magazines (with green followers) due to a “potential” problem with the black follower “tilting” which could possibly cause a jam. The green followers corrected this situation through the addition of “stabilizer legs.” Although not all black followers have yet been replaced in Iraq, battalion gunners and armorers are aware of the issue and routinely replace the older magazines with the new ones. Another “potential” problem occurs when magazines are kept fully loaded for long periods of time (several months) with a resulting weakening of the magazine spring resulting in a failure to feed. It should be emphasized that MCCLL was unable to document any actual occurrences of failures associated with either of these potential problems. [Return to the Table of Contents!](#)

Biometrics Resources and Enhancement Efforts

The employment of the Biometrics Automated Toolset (BAT) in Iraq and Afghanistan has been a major element, not only of programs to positively identify detainees, but also to support such requirements as the screening of recruits for the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police and development of census information on individuals living in Iraqi neighborhoods. There continue to be efforts to improve the employment of existing biometrics tools and also to develop enhanced tools that provide improved transportability and speed.

The use of the BAT in Multi-National Force West (MNF-W) is currently guided by the [MNF-W Biometric SOP and supporting documentation](#). The SOP provides guidance to units on billets, duties, responsibilities, training, and procedures for screening the local populace, enrolling them into the system, and badging individuals. The goal is for full and complete enrollment in the system and creation of a comprehensive and effective database that is used throughout all Iraqi Provinces on an everyday basis.

Other available biometrics resources include several "smart cards" from the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) that address the use of handheld interagency identification detection equipment (HIIDE) to obtain biometrics data for identification purposes. The smart cards provide detailed procedures for capturing a subject's iris image, fingerprint image, face image and biographic data. The available smart cards include a generic [Arabic HIIDE Smart Card](#), an [OEF \(Dari Version\) Smart Card](#), and an [OEF \(Pashtun Version\) Smart Card](#).



During Operation Alljah in July 2007, 2d Battalion, 6th Marines (2/6) set up police stations in Fallujah where Iraqi citizens could come to receive ID cards, food, reimbursements, and a chance to join neighborhood watch programs. Here, Marines from 2/6 set up the BAT in one of the stations.



The BAT NCO from 2/6 takes an iris scan of an Iraqi civilian in one of the police precincts in Fallujah. Originally fielded to identify individuals brought to military detention centers, the BAT has now become a valuable and widely applied system database used by units operating throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

In other developments, two recently completed studies by the Naval Research Advisory Committee (NRAC) have formed the basis for recommendations by the Navy's top acquisition executive, Ms. Delores Etter, concerning development of the ability to process biometrics data faster in theater and develop lighter batteries for Marines to carry. As noted in [an article from Inside the Navy](#) by Emelie Rutherford, the NRAC developed:

... one [study] on biometric technology, which identifies people by reading their physical characteristics, and another on lightening the load of gear carried by Marines. A formal briefing on the two NRAC summer studies was held at the Pentagon [in mid-September] . . . [in late September] Ms. Etter highlighted some of the findings during an interview with Inside the Navy. She said she will make her formal recommendations later this year on areas she wants the Office of Naval Research (ONR) to explore further.

Ms. Etter said the study on biometrics recommended developing ways to make biometrics work faster. She pointed out that fingerprint and iris-scan tools lose effectiveness in theater when they take more than a couple of minutes to match up

against existing records. "If we have a Marine at a guard post or we have people that are on a boarding party on another ship that are wanting to know if some of the people that they're interacting with are people that are known offenders or have past problems, you need to know that quickly," she said. She said the NRAC study recommends the service invest in developing systems that combine already developed wireless technology with biometric readers.

"The committee also recommends standardizing the way biometric data such as iris and face readings are stored, and suggests modeling them after the FBI's fingerprint database," Etter said. "I would really like to see some prototype demonstrations, particularly in biometrics, of showing some systems that have been put together to demonstrate how fast we can begin to share information and also that look at the various standards and how they are implemented in some of the systems," she said. Etter said her recommendations also will include direction for ONR to do more work with the Defense Department's Biometrics Task Force on hand-held biometric systems.

"The NRAC's lightening the load study is largely focused on reducing the weight of batteries Marines carry," Etter said. She said she plans to recommend continuing basic research into how to store energy in lighter systems that troops carry.

In late September, the committee presented a draft report on the two studies at the Pentagon, and is expected to deliver the final report to Etter next month. She then plans to sign a letter that directs action to follow up on some of the NRAC's recommendations on biometrics and lightening the load. Etter said she will ask for a status report in six to nine months on the research she recommends for ONR."

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3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward)



The 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 05-07 for a year from February 2006 to February 2007 as the aviation combat element (ACE) of Multi-National Force West (MNF-W). During this period, 3d MAW (Fwd) conducted aviation operations predominantly in Al Anbar Province from contingency operations bases at Al Asad and Al Taqaddum and contingency operations sites at Al Qaim and Korean Village. The average number of available aircraft during the 3d MAW (Fwd) deployment was 175, distributed among eleven squadrons, representing nine different type model series aircraft. Thirty-five of the aircraft were from two Army squadrons.

The large size of the area of operations (over 53,000 square miles in Al Anbar) and the long distances between MNF-W elements created a significant challenge in providing aviation support. Aircraft utilization rates were far above peacetime planning rates nominally defined by Weapons System Planning Documents (WSPD). In many cases, aircraft flew 2.5 to 3 times their WSPD rates.

A Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) team conducted interviews with key members of the 3d MAW (Fwd) staff to document lessons and observations relating to their pre-deployment training and experiences as the ACE headquarters element for MNF-W. The results have been documented in the MCCLL topical paper, [Marine Aircraft Wing \(Fwd\) Headquarters Operations: Lessons and Observations from 3d MAW \(Fwd\) in OIF 05-07](#).

Among the key points from the MCCLL topical paper are:

• Operations

- ⇒ Despite the high utilization rates, aircraft readiness rates remained high, due to the contracted depot level maintenance, the efforts of organization and intermediate level maintenance personnel, and the effectiveness of the Marine Aviation Logistics Support Program (MALSP).
- ⇒ Attendance at the regimental combat team's weekly intelligence fusion meetings assisted in the sharing of air and ground intelligence and building better common situational awareness of the ground scheme of maneuver and ownership of the battle space surrounding the airfield.
- ⇒ Sufficient time should be scheduled for relief in place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA) in critical functions such as air tasking order (ATO) development.

• Organization and Personnel

- ⇒ Manning issues included: (1) the need to man both forward and rear staffs, (2) the need to better align personnel transfers with unit deployment schedules, (3) unanticipated requirements after arriving in theater such as the need to source personnel for military, border and police transition teams, (4) non-traditional base operating support requirements such as communications integrator and senior airfield authority, and (5) the need for contracting and contracting oversight expertise.



Power converters purchased from local contractors by the fiscal section, MAG-16, 3d MAW (Fwd) are picked up by Army soldiers. The money paid to local contractors benefits both deployed units and the local economy.

- ⇒ There is a need to assess requirements to provide augmentation for installation management roles that are outside the core competencies of expeditionary forces, including infrastructure master planning and development, electrical engineering and management of power, water and other distribution systems, and telecommunications development and maintenance.

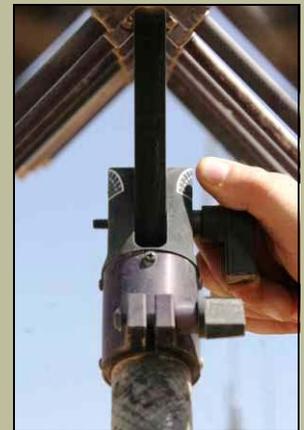
- ⇒ Sufficient detail should be provided in planning guidance to enable installation staffs to make efficient use of resources to be employed in long-term installation occupation.

• Training

- ⇒ Deploying ACE staffs should seek out opportunities to train prior to deployment on systems and processes that will be used in theater, including the Air Tasking Order Execution System (AES) and the Joint Intelligence Operations Capability, Iraq (JIOC-I).

• Contracting

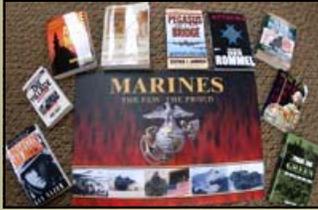
- ⇒ Consideration should be given to contracting non-tactical vehicles and forklifts for on base use by tenant units, including contracted maintenance support for these items.



An aviation radio Marine with 3d MAW at Al Asad adjusts the elevation as one of the steps in aligning a SATCOM antenna for relay communications provided for ground and air units.

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Marine Corps Professional Reading Program



For the past two years, the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) has made a concerted effort to highlight books and other publications that Marines might consider for their individual professional reading programs. Each of our monthly newsletters has [featured books and articles](#) that appear on the Commandant's Reading List or one of the other lists of required or recommended readings for Marines, especially those Marines deploying in theater.

Although every Commandant since 1988 has placed his personal stamp on the program, many of the books have remained constant through the years. The current CMC guidance for professional reading is contained in [ALMAR 030/07](#).

In an effort to solicit the opinions of Marines of all ranks concerning aspects of the Professional Reading Program, MCCLL administered an online professional reading survey from June through August 2007 to obtain feedback on the program from combat veterans. The results have been documented in the "Quick Look" Report,

[Professional Reading Program: Survey Summary](#), in order to provide a snapshot of lessons and observations on the program from Marines across the spectrum of ranks and military occupational specialties (MOSs).



An embark clerk with Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 29 spent his last moments before the Group deployed to Al Asad to conduct a turnover with MAG-16 reading the "Virtues of War" by Alexander the Great.

Some of the key statistics, observations and comments from the survey were:



A mortar man with the 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, reads during his free time inside the Veteran's Affairs Building at Ar Ramadi. He was one of a number of Marines who survived a mass attack by a suicide dump truck on an observation post.

• Popular Books

- ⇒ *A Message to Garcia* by E. Hubbard is the most popular and widely read book among Marines. Marines also found it most useful for professional development.
- ⇒ The other most popular books (in order) are Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 1 (*Warfighting*), the *Art of War* by Sun Tzu, *Rifleman Dodd* by C.S. Forester, *We Were Soldiers* by H. Moore, *Flags of Our Fathers* by J. Bradley, MCDP 1-3 (*Tactics*), *Band of Brothers* by S.E. Ambrose, MCDP 1-1 (*Strategy*), and MCWP 6-11 (*Leading Marines*).
- ⇒ MCDP 1 is also cited as the most useful professional book for counterinsurgency operations.
- ⇒ Marines typically read two professional books a year. Most Marines buy the books themselves, although some borrow them from other Marines or check them out of libraries.
- ⇒ Audio versions of books are gaining in popularity.

• Popular Periodicals

- ⇒ The vast majority of Marines read military periodicals. Most Marines prefer reading them in hard copy rather than online.
- ⇒ *Marine Times* is the most widely read periodical, followed by the *Marine Corps Gazette*.
- ⇒ Among senior officers, the most useful

periodicals are reported to be the *Marine Corps Gazette*, followed by the *MCCLL Newsletter*.

• Programs

- ⇒ One of every three units were identified as having a professional reading program. Nearly half of all units represented in the survey have a professional reading library for their personnel.
- ⇒ Almost half of respondents indicated that the senior enlisted Marine should lead the enlisted program and the commanding officer should lead the officer program. About one fourth of respondents thought the program should be self directed. The remainder believed the program should be led by a single entity in the unit (for example, the operations section).
- ⇒ About one fourth of Marines indicated that their unit leaders encourage them to actively read and discuss books on the professional reading list.

Comment from an active duty Marine Captain :

"It's a noble goal. Achieving the goal should be commended. . . Considering my duties, I read what I need to read, and train for my deployments. . . I've read only a small percentage of items I'm 'required' to read for my pay grade. I make an effort to read at least one book a year that pertains to my current position, not my pay grade. An example of this is that last year, I deployed on a transition team and consequently felt it important to read 'Arab Mind'. It was a good choice and [I] would read others if the demands of being in an expeditionary force were not what they are right now. . . ."

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News

Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected (MRAP) Vehicles Are Not All Equal

Diversity Adds Depth to MRAP

By David Axe, Aviation Week, 22 October 2007

The requirements [for Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected (MRAP) vehicles] do not specify how a vehicle should meet them, so manufacturers take different approaches, with some embracing a monocoque style that combines the hull and chassis in a single piece, and others bolting an armored hull to a separate chassis, perhaps with a "belly plate" to protect the drive train. All hull designs are V-shaped, though some are flatter than others to maximize interior space.

The manufacturers give their vehicles model names like "Cougar" and "Alpha," but the MRAP program office tends to refer to them only by category. The three categories in the program each describe a different weight class and size and are intended for different missions. The roughly 7,800 vehicles ordered as of August are split between the four main military services and Special Operations Command.

The following is a summary of the categories, vehicle types, key performance specifications, design strengths and weaknesses, and mission information for the MRAP vehicles procured by the

Pentagon:

Category I: approximately 7-15 tons; at least 4 passengers, plus 2 crew; urban transport.

Category II: approximately 15-25 tons; up to 8 passengers, plus 2 crew; road escort, ambulance and bomb-disposal missions.

Category III: approximately 25 tons; at least 4 passengers, plus 2 crew; bomb disposal.

Review the [complete article at Military.com](#)

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Guide to Shiaism in Operation Iraqi Freedom

Leader's Guide to Shiaism: Optimizing Cultural Intelligence for Battle Command

Compiled By MSG John W. Proctor, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center

This guide from the U.S. Army is designed to educate commanders, staff officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers, and others on the impact of the Shiite religion on their operations in Iraq. "Sectarian strife is a reality in the contemporary operating environment (COE). Commanders and their

respective operational staffs must quickly collect information, analyze it and apply it to targeting efforts. This guide provides simple, fact-based analysis of Shiite theology, tradition, structure, leaders, and political activity. . . . The historic links between religious factors and military operations goes back to the beginnings of human existence. Understanding those dynamics in the present conflict would go far in aiding our Commanders. . . Iraq's influential Shiite clerics stepped into the power vacuum created by the toppling of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in 2003.

Operating largely outside of formal political structures, they retain the esteem of the Shiite population through religious activities. Coalition force commanders and staffs often misunderstand these activities; religion also connects Iraq's Shiites with the neighboring Shiite Sh'riah state of Iran."

Read the [complete guide on Shiaism](#).

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Infantry Schools Gets Longer — and Tougher

USMC Toughens Infantry School

By Kimberly Johnson, DefenseNews

Brand-new U.S. Marines fresh out of boot camp have a little bit more to look forward to as they head down the road to becoming riflemen: Infantry school is about to get longer.

The Corps is making big changes across the board in training for all its ranks, from reworking curriculum at its two recruit depots to stepping up

warrior ethics training at all levels. The Corps is adding seven full days to both the Marine Combat Training (MCT) and Infantry Training Battalion (ITB) at the two Schools of Infantry (SOI).

Once it's done, SOI graduates will walk out the door with beefed-up weapons and tactics training to better prepare them for Iraq - or whatever comes next. . . MCT's 22-day course annually graduates about 14,000 students who head to the fleet to be non-infantry Marines. ITB's 52-day

curriculum graduates about 4,300 infantry Marines per year. Starting in October at the School of Infantry-East, MCT will expand to 29 days, while ITB will go for 59 days. SOI-West will follow suit in January. Adding a week to both pipelines is meant to put training in its proper place, a top training official said.

Please review the [complete article from DefenseNews.com](#)

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News

California Firefighters Are Training With the Marines

State Firefighters Reach Deal to Train With Marines by Michael R. Blood, Associated Press.

The U.S. Marines agreed [on 1 November] to train with state firefighters, a move that could get more water-dropping helicopters into the air when wildfires break out.

As many as 100 Marines will train [beginning on 2 November] with firefighters from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection at the Marine Corps' Miramar base in San Diego. State firefighters train routinely with Navy and California National Guard helicopter crews, and they had

pushed the Marines to conduct similar drills. With training for pilots and crews, "we know we are going to be able to get a quicker response" if Marine helicopters are called in to assist on wildfires, said Mike Padilla, the state agency's aviation chief.

The agreement could help clear up confusion over the availability of military aircraft and flight rules that left some Marine helicopters grounded early on in last week's deadly blazes. The state had sought a training agreement with the Marines, but Padilla said in an earlier interview that the demands of the Iraq war made it difficult for the Marines to

commit to regular training with state firefighters.

Maj Jason Johnston, spokesman for the Miramar base, confirmed [the] training. . . The training will allow the Marines to work with helicopter managers, also known as spotters, who play a crucial role on flights coordinating water drops and communicating with firefighters on the ground. A shortage of the managers ruled out a chance some helicopters could get in the air quickly last week. . .

See the [complete article from the Associated Press Online](#).
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En Route Care Course Training and Operational Observations

The Naval Operational Medical Lessons Learned Center (NOMLLC) of the Naval Operational Medicine Institute (NOMI) has published an informative "Quick Look" report on the current status of en route care training that is based, in part, on observations from students who have recently completed the training. The report also provides background information on the Marine Corps response to changing warfighting concepts that resulted in development of the Forward Resuscitative Surgical Suite (FRSS) designed to provide a highly

mobile, rapidly deployable, trauma surgery unit requiring only a small logistics footprint. Since the small footprint of the FRSS makes it more dependent on tactical evacuation, the Marine Corps began an effort to develop an En Route Care System (ERCS) and identify equipment and consumable supplies required to provide care during tactical medical evacuations and to determine the skill sets and personnel requirements for the system.

The ERCS is being implemented with the Marine Corps Systems Command (MARCORSYSCOM) having the lead for

development of the en route care materials systems and NOMI the lead for developing and executing the training. NOMI worked closely with the Training and Education Command (TECOM) on the training plan and curriculum. Based on student evaluations, lessons, observations, and after action reports, NOMLLC has now published [En Route Care Course Training and Operational Observations](#) with a number of substantive recommendations for consideration.

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The Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani Meets with the Iraqi Vice President

Last month's newsletter referenced a [news article by Mr. Robert McFarlane](#), a National Security Advisor in the Reagan administration, that highlighted a major breakthrough among key Iraqi religious leaders that occurred in Cairo in August 2007.

Since then, there have been other positive developments in efforts to seek religious and political reconciliation. A meeting took place in late September between Iraq's top Shi'ite cleric, Grand Ali al-Sistani and the Iraqi Vice President, Tareq al-

Hashemi, a Sunni. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the new initiative referred to as the Iraqi National Compact, a set of 25 political principles unveiled by Hashemi's party aimed at removing deep mistrust among the leaders. "The meeting was profound and many issues related to the political process were discussed," Hashemi told reporters after his meeting with the highly influential Shi'ite cleric. "I briefed his eminence on the Iraqi National Compact, and he informed me he had already seen a copy and read, analyzed and expressed his remarks on the initia-

tive, he said." Hashemi said he had asked Sistani to provide his detailed comments on the principles. Hashemi said, "The true reason behind the difference of opinion originates in mutual fear, the lack of confidence and distrust not only between those involved in the political process and those outside of it, but primarily between those parties in the process."

Please review the [complete article from Reuters Online](#).

Reading Lists and Book Review

The Marine Corps reading lists from the [Commandant](#), the [Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command \(COMUSMARCENT\)](#) and the [Commanding General, II Marine Expeditionary Force \(MEF\) Forward \(Fwd\)](#) provide Marines with a wealth of reading material to support their professional military education. In addition, Marines may be interested in other military-oriented reading lists, many of which are identified on the public website, [Military Reading List](#), that includes reading lists from the other military services and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This month, the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) is pleased to feature the following publications from II MEF (Fwd) and the Commandant's list:

- **Welcome to the Green Zone**, by William Langewiesche. This article from the November 2004 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* is on the recommended II MEF (Fwd) Reading List for Marines deploying to OIF.
- **The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs**, by David Pryce Jones, is on the II MEF (Fwd) recommended list of "Culture/History" readings for OIF 06-08.
- **First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps**, by LtGen Victor H. Krulak, is the "marquee title" book on the Commandant's list and is required reading for all Marines. Previous newsletters have included the discussion guides for Chapters 1 to 3 of this book. This month, we include the Discussion Guide for Chapter 4 (beginning on the [next page](#)).

Welcome to the Green Zone, by William Langewiesche, *The Atlantic Monthly*

"The Green Zone is a little America embedded in the heart of Baghdad. It is the former preserve of Saddam Hussein and his favored associates - an uncrowded district of villas, palaces, and monuments set in a parklike expanse that spreads for four square miles inside a meander of the Tigris River at the center of the ruined city. During the thirty-five years of Baath Party dictatorship, it was neither gated nor strictly delineated, and it did not need to be, since the public's survival instincts were well honed, and people just naturally understood that special unwritten rules applied there. The Green Zone was the seat of Saddam's power. You could cross it along the three or four grand boulevards that were open to traffic, and you could reflect on the glory of the regime, but you could not safely linger or gawk. If you had a car and happened to blow a tire, you kept driving on the rims, and made a good show of it too. I know of one young man, the son of a high official in the former regime, who made a U-turn there, and was arrested for the indiscretion; he was held and questioned until his father intervened, and explained that he was innocent and just a bit reckless. Ah, youth.

Since then much has changed. In April of 2003, as the U.S. Army's Third Infantry Division fought its way into the Green Zone with heavy loss of Iraqi life, the once privileged residents fled in haste, emptying compounds and palaces - and indeed an entire district - that therefore seemed ready-made for American use. Later it became obvious that the decision to install the occupation government in the center of the city and to base it in the very same buildings that had been used by the recent dictatorship was a serious blunder - one of several such blunders rooted in the arrogance of Yankee know-how, and in the strange failure to anticipate the end of the honeymoon, and the hostility that even enlightened invaders would soon elicit. At the time, however, basing in the Green Zone seemed like an act of engagement with the Iraqi people. . ."

Read the complete article from [The Atlantic Monthly Online](#).

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The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs, by David Pryce Jones

Review by Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, the New York Times

"Why is the Arab world so troubled? Or to quote two Palestinians cited by David Pryce-Jones in *"The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs*: "Why has Arab society failed to modernize? Why have Arab countries failed to cope with some of the most basic social tasks? Why have the Arab people been unable to cooperate, to defend themselves, to organize, to unify? Why is Arab behavior emotional, unscientific, 'irrational'?"

A common response to these questions is to blame poor leadership or Western imperialism. But Mr. Pryce-Jones thinks otherwise. He is an English novelist (*Shirley's Guild, The Afternoon Sun*) and nonfiction writer (*Next Generation: Travels in Israel, Paris in the Third Reich*) whose lifelong interest in the Arab world began with his childhood experiences in Morocco. He believes the root of Arab problems lies in the civilization's culture, which he defines geographically as stretching from Western Sahara to the Persian Gulf, although for the purposes of his discussion he includes Iran under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. In his near-polemical discussion, he blames the legacy of a tribal outlook that divides society into blood relations and strangers, and makes of any attempt to assert leadership a zero-sum game in which "pursuit of ambition by one family or tribe is necessarily loss and restriction to another."

Stemming from this tribalism is the Arab insistence on using 'concepts of shame and honor to sanction their conduct,' Mr. Pryce-Jones continues. 'Honor is what makes life worthwhile: shame is a living death.' In everyday life, 'actions are prompted and governed by the positive acquisition of honor and the negative avoidance of shame.' In whatever he does, 'the individual finds honor-justification in whatever will promote his career, and shame-justification for not compromising in anything that might lessen his advantages over other people.'"

Read the [complete review in The New York Times Online](#)

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Reading Lists and Book Review (continued)

First to Fight: Chapter 4 Discussion Guide

1. Identify LtGen Krulak's mission (task and purpose) in writing this section.

"Frugality was, in short, the Corp's way of life, at least until the onset of World War II. Of course, it was a terrible hair shirt to the rank and file, but it was a hair shirt that kept them warm" (p. 143). The author seeks, in this section of the book, to impress upon the reader the way in which the institutional practice of thrift and frugality impacted the Corps during the early part of the twentieth century. The positive aspects of these practices included (1) the establishment of a reputation of responsible stewardship of the nation's treasury resources, and (2) the imbuing of *"every Marine with a sharp sense of property value and an instinctive determination to husband resources of whatever sort" (p. 146).* The negative aspects of these practices included (1) an excessive emphasis on the material at the expense of the people (for example the requirement to pay for one's PCS move (p. 143), or the need for the Commandant to intervene with the Quartermaster in order to obtain hammocks with a built-in mosquito nets for use in the jungle (p. 148)) and (2) the development of 'creative procurement' practices by Marines in order to meet shortfalls—*"The Honorable Art of Institutional Theft."*

2. What part of the section was most effective in accomplishing LtGen Krulak's mission? What part of the book was least effective?

The author's knowledge of history and his relating of colorful anecdotes amply serve to illustrate and support his descriptions of the practices and consequences of thrift in the early twentieth century Marine Corps. His style of writing, as engaging as it is, comes across at times as almost naively nostalgic.

While Marines today are much better equipped than during the decades LtGen Krulak served, Marines still deal with funding shortfalls and frustrating delays in making tools available to the Operating Forces as quickly as everyone would wish.

Has this frustration resulted in any current cases of institutional theft?

3. What does LtGen Krulak assume in order to accomplish his mission? Does he validate these assumptions in the book?

The author writes to ensure the preservation of the heritage of the Corps. He is writing as an apologist. This assumes that the institution is facing some sort of threat. Both his introduction and conclusion address a number of perceived threats. The particular threats he is addressing in these sections are concerned with the existence of the Corps, both from outside agencies that do not see the need for a Marine Corps and from inside the Corps itself, lest it forget its core identity as an elite military organization. Chapter Nine addresses the external threat by highlighting how the institutional practice of thrift created a formidable reputation with those entrusted with the Treasury. Chapter Ten addresses the internal threat that comes from the consequences of scarce resources and bureaucratic lethargy.

4. The part of the book that is most relevant to what I/we do:

Considering every Marine contributes to the overall ethos of the Marine Corps, it is worth discussing the interesting argument regarding stealing under certain circumstances.

"There were a few unwritten rules. You stole for the outfit, never for yourself. You didn't steal weapons. Some poor fellow was signed up for every one. And, if you knew what was good for you, you didn't steal from the Quartermaster. He was mean, and he was merciless if you were caught. But the rules were more relaxed where the other services and the civilian world were concerned. With them it was pretty much open season, which gave rise to great ingenuity" (p. 151). This forces one to ponder when if ever is it ok to steal? What kind of command climate does it set when the commander tolerated or encourages such theft? What does one do if the commander says, "Wouldn't it be great if we had a...?" What does the commander mean? Is the commander venting or asking for something to be done? Is the commander creating a circumstance of plausible deniability should something be done? How are these actions consistent or not with a warrior's honor? The responsibility is the commander's. He or she is the one ultimately responsible for exercising due diligence with respect to the kind of moral climate they wish to create in their unit. When commanders make public utterances as Henry II did when he said, *"Who will rid me of this mettlesome priest?"* even if an emotional outburst, they ought not be surprised when loyal and aggressive subordinates take those words as commander's intent and commit a crime.

Please review the remainder of the discussion guide from the [Marine Corps University](#).

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Updated List of MCCLL Representatives

The latest roster of Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) representatives to major Marine Corps and joint commands and organizations is provided below. Note that there have been several changes since last month: (1) Major Tucker has replaced MSgt Sheaffer as our representative at the two Marine Regimental Combat Teams in theater, (2) Capt Watts has replaced CW05 Harty as our representative at Al Taqaddum, (3) Mr. Clark has arrived at 29 Palms as one of our representatives at TTECG, (4) Mr. Petroff has arrived as our representative at MARFORRES, (5) Mr. Larry Staak has been assigned as a representative at MAWTS-1 (with his contact information to be made available shortly), and (6) Col David Bunn has been assigned as another representative at MARFORCOM (with his contact information to be included soon).

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