



# JCISFA

Joint Center for International Security  
Force Assistance



## SFA Case Study - Mosul, Iraq

## Foreword

It is our hope that this important case study which analyzes the creative, agile, and adaptive work of our professional service men and women in Mosul, Iraq, will be beneficial to others wanting to learn more about the challenges facing our leaders today. The lessons from Mosul highlight broader security force assistance imperatives from the contemporary operational environment in an attempt to advise combatant commands and military departments on appropriate doctrine, practices, and proven tactics, techniques, and procedures. The goal of this, and other case studies, is to help America and our allies prepare for and conduct security force assistance missions more efficiently.

Security Force Assistance requires a comprehensive approach to generate, employ, and sustain local, host nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority. This assistance is a key component of our national strategy in this era of persistent conflict. America faces a period of protracted confrontation among states, non-state, and individual actors increasingly willing to use violence to achieve their political and ideological ends. Partnering with our allies to protect shared interests and values has never been more important.

This timely case study will help leaders determine how to achieve unity of effort in this complex operational environment. We must always maintain our core competencies, but success in this environment will also require cultural astuteness, and the application of soft power. Success also requires a willingness to empower junior leaders to take initiative and make choices. Many of these critical lessons are discussed in this case study from Mosul, and highlight the challenges of modern warfare. Our military will never again fight by itself.

I'd like to personally thank those interviewed, and especially those outside the military who voluntarily contributed to the writing of this case study. Future success depends upon collaboration and cooperation amongst our experts in uniform, as well as with our partners from other institutions like the Department of State, the Department of Justice, and Academia just to name a few. We are slowly changing a culture, and realizing that every professional, regardless of which agency they work for, has a role in resolving conflicts and winning the peace.

These are historic times, which demand that we mobilize and apply every facet of our National power in a comprehensive approach. "*E pluribus unum*," Latin for "out of many, one," is not only the motto found on the Seal of the United States; it is an imperative for the United States government's success as we meet the challenges of full spectrum operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With vision, and a unity of effort, our Nation will remain the greatest force for good this world has ever known.



William B. Caldwell, IV  
Lieutenant General, US Army  
Director, JCISFA

## **Executive Summary**

### **Preface**

Major Thornton of JCISFA in coordination with Dr. John Fishel from the University of Oklahoma, Dr. Marc Tyrrell of Carleton University, and Mr. Mark Lauber also of JCISFA sat down to write the Mosul Case study with the goals of considering the requirements generated in the pursuit of policy and military objectives in complex conditions, and making some observations and recommendations about how DoD might better address those requirements. To this end the Case Study is built around a specific place, Mosul, Iraq over a short period of time, 2006-2007. The Case Study is designed to give the reader both an understanding of content and context of the environment, and of the objective and the subjective nature of the participants.

Within the study we found there are areas across DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leader Development and Education, Personnel and Facilities) that might be adapted in such a way that reduces risk at the tactical, operational and strategic levels, as well as risk to the institutions which must consider the broad range of roles, missions and capabilities required of them. Principal to this is the understanding that you can not improve our capabilities to conduct these types of missions by simply addressing one aspect of DOTMLPF. In fact, to attempt to do so usually results in unintended consequences in other areas, some of which may not be known until they have manifested themselves as critical deficits.

The Mosul Case Study raises some questions about the nature of how we see ourselves as an institution, what we value, and how those values translate into enabling capabilities. One of the questions the study considers is the value of individual personalities and skills apart from context of collective leadership. The Case Study and the interviews show that one size does not fit all, cookie cutter solutions and approaches generally produce problems not solve them, and that personality may matter as much or more than other skills and attributes.

This study challenges that in order to do this better, we must find ways in our personnel system to not only recruit, train, educate and retain the best talent, but given the element of human dimension we must consider that not all leaders of a given rank are equally suited.

This is not simply a convention change, but a cultural and philosophical one. It should not be taken lightly, for at its core it is about how we view our ability to provide relevant and ready military power to achieve political ends.

### **Summary**

- Chapters 1 – 3 - Chapters 1, 2 and 3, provides the reader with an overview of the environment, U.S. operational history, and then provides an understanding of SFA as it pertains to the environment, and how it relates to broader issues. The methodology used to organize the case study chapters employs a stair step approach which progressively builds understanding in order to give the reader a set of tools with which to better evaluate the larger ideas.

- Chapter 1 gives a detailed list of the case study's origins, the concept behind it, its objectives, and some descriptions of those interviewed so the reader can better relate where they fit in the broader framework.
- Chapter 2 provides the reader definitions and explanation on just what SFA is, and how it relates as an enabling capability to objectives and lines of operation.
- Chapter 3 offers the reader insights into Mosul as an operating environment. This not only means an overview of geography, history and culture, but also an appreciation for its significance to U.S. military and policy objectives through a brief recount of events beginning in 2003.
- Chapter 4 (To be published at a later date) - In Chapter 4, Dr. Marc Tyrrell examines the experiences contained within the case study from an anthropological perspective, i.e. the study of man and how people interact. This chapter orients the reader on the human dimension, providing the reader gains an appreciation for why we have an "Art" component to war, versus strict adherence to a "Science" of war.
- Chapter 5: John Fishel looks at SFA in terms of selection of advisors, training, organization, and application and places those functions in several historic contexts. In each, he compares the past with the present using counterpoints from the Mosul Case Study. A number of important consistencies arise, some bad - like the "hey you" method of selection - some good - like SF and FAO training practices - which can and, possibly, should be adapted when using GPF in a SFA role.
- Chapter 6: Major Rob Thornton provides a Battalion level advisor perspective of how decisions and actions across the levels of war produce a range of consequences, some of which create new conditions and unanticipated outcomes.
- Chapter 7: What did we learn from the Mosul Case Study? This chapter explores a broad range of observations and recommendations drawn from the study. More specifically it serves as the start point for a discussion on the rationale for change, and the need to understand how the requirements should drive our ability to generate capabilities.
- Appendix A: These are some of the most relevant source interviews which were conducted in support of the SFA Case Study. The participants include BCT leadership and staff, PRT leadership and team members, MiTTs at all levels across the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA Division in Mosul and a DOJ contractor working at Badush Prison just outside Mosul. These interviews provide additional perspective on the role of personality in facilitating unity of effort.
- Appendix B: Mark Lauber explores the reasons why SFA should be added to our lexicon, how it fills a gap and how it enables existing terms to better fulfill our military and political objectives.

Rob Thornton  
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## Acknowledgments

JCISFA would like to extend its thanks to those interviewed in support of the Mosul Case Study. In every case, the participants' primary concern was to make their experience available to others and to improve the institutions and our ability to prepare those who conduct missions on behalf of U.S. policy objectives in the best possible manner.

The conclusions and observations contained within the body of the case study are neither exclusive to JCISFA, nor are they reflective of the points of view of any one participant. They are not meant to be indicative of service or position. As will be shown in the case study, there are many different perspectives that evolve along with the understanding of the complex, interactive environment where these activities take place.

While I've tried to portray the essence of the challenges associated with operating in this environment to broaden understanding, each reader is encouraged to consider what they read against their own experiences. Behind the body on the electronic editions of the case study, the full transcribed text of the interviews will be included in an appendix. While there are some holes in the transcriptions because some interviews were conducted over the telephone, the vast majority of relevant insights are preserved for the reader's reference. In that vein, there was some discussion about whether to include the interviews with the case study. As we conducted more interviews, we realized that there was value in both and each one provided relevant context to the other's content.

I'd also like to acknowledge the use of other people's hard work and ideas outside of the participants. Either directly or indirectly, there is an existing body of SFA related knowledge and an emerging body that the community is applying existing knowledge in new ways to help us find better ways of doing things.

Special thanks to Dr. John Fishel, and to Dr. Marc Tyrrell for volunteering their time and talents to this effort. Both have helped me a great deal and continue to be of service to the community at large through their personal work and their public activities on Small Wars Journal. Marc was my "anthro- reach back" while I was deployed to Iraq as an advisor, and John has forgotten more about advising than many will ever know. The chapters these two professionals authored provided a great deal of context to the overall study, and will provide the reader with the relevant tools to consider the cased study as a whole.

We'd also like to thank the **Small Wars Journal** (SWJ) for publishing the Case Study. SWJ is a forum that is accessible in a way that builds new knowledge and truly flattens the curve of adaptation. SWJ provides a community where content can be considered against the context of policy, all the levels of war, and the institutions that support them.

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## Strategic Context

**“We can expect that asymmetric warfare will remain the mainstay of the contemporary battlefield for some time. ... Success will be less a matter of imposing one’s will and more a function of shaping behavior — of friends, adversaries and most importantly, the people in between.”**

**Secretary of Defense Robert Gates----2007**

Developing Foreign Security Forces and building partner capacity (BPC) as a component of a broader and balanced approach have emerged as a tenet of our 2008 National Defense Strategy. While we have incorporated aspects of these into our activities in the past, events in the world have changed the way the United States sees its role and responsibilities with regard to the global community, and this has increased the value of BPC. While the moral basis that defines our vital interests for our grand strategy remains rooted in the principles upon which our republic stands, the scope of our policies and commitments continues to grow.

There are perhaps two principal reasons for this. The first is that the advance of freedom is in itself a U.S. vital interest, and is listed as such in successive National Security Strategies. It is through assisting others in securing fundamental freedoms that we increase the opportunities available for all, decrease the potential that power is consolidated in a dictatorship or like body, and create conditions where governments can meet their responsibilities to both their citizens and their neighbors. America characterizes this first principle as the one upon which all other interests, to include its own security, might be best achieved.

The second reason has to do with the changes in the way the United States has come to view its own security, and the range of threats to it. 9/11 is often cited as a watershed event with regard to this change given its traumatic impact, visibility, and the decision to go to war following the attack. However, the threat of terrorism is only one of many reasons we view the ability for partners to govern responsibly across the breadth of their recognized borders, and to cooperate in addressing regional issues of paramount importance to our own security.

Building partner capacity is an investment that increases the ability of governments to create the conditions that make domestic and international terror and insurgency movements less likely. It increases the ability of governments to create climates that are at the same time better able to meet their international requirements as recognized states or organizations, and can better create and sustain the fundamentals of civilization such as belief in the future, leisure, and surplus wealth. None of the latter three are probable without security.

While there remains a strong requirement to have a “direct” component to our security such as the ability to project and sustain overwhelming military power across the globe to deter aggression, or to remove regimes whose conduct and actions have become intolerable by recognized standards and a threat to U.S. security, our policy also requires the USG to have the capability and capacity to secure objectives beyond those immediate military objectives. This may include working to bring a former enemy back to a useful member of a regional framework; securing a friend or defeated enemy against predatory neighbors; or increasing an existing or new partner’s ability to govern, or be an international partner. This has been called an “indirect” approach, and it should be viewed as complimentary to our “direct” approach capabilities. For a state with such broad and enduring principles such as the United States, both the direct and indirect approaches are needed to not only achieve its immediate policy goals, but to secure them for the long term. Civilian and military leaders have a need to understand the environment in which these capabilities co-exist.

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## Chapter 1 Background

*“Our strategy emphasizes building the capacities of a broad spectrum of partners as the basis for long-term security. We must also seek to strengthen the resiliency of the international system to deal with conflict when it occurs. We must be prepared to deal with sudden disruptions, to help prevent them from escalating or endangering international security, and to find ways to bring them swiftly to a conclusion.”*

### **From the June 2008 National Defense Strategy**

1. This case study on the Security Force Assistance (SFA) effort in Mosul came about from the need to portray the complexity involved with conducting SFA activities in full spectrum operations, in this case during a major counterinsurgency effort against a resourceful and adaptive enemy.
  - A. The goal of this case study is to take a contemporary SFA example and make it relevant to future SFA activities.

The intent of this case study is to help leaders, units, agencies, and personnel involved with SFA to:

- I. facilitate an effective transition to HN security forces by helping to flatten the “Adaptability Curve” between planning and execution
- II. recognize and overcome organizational complexity and friction in the SFA environment such as:
  - A. stovepipe communications that don’t facilitate shared situational awareness and understanding
  - B. how the various levels of command and various agencies involved with SFA interact and how each might see the operational environment differently in terms of METT-TC
  - C. by identifying the roles, culture, and values of disparate JIIM organizations within the AOR
  - D. how to overcome initial operational preconceptions – e.g. “fighting the last rotation”
  - E. how to recognize and leverage opportunities for synergy

The concept was to create a contemporary SFA case study on a specific geographical location over a six month period (Mosul, Iraq 2006-2007) to accomplish the goals and intent listed above by identifying and interviewing key SFA participants to include:

1. 4/1 BCT (Brigade Combat Team) who provided a level of resourcing, synchronization and integration for the different lines of operation and lines of effort, two of its squadrons (a battalion level organization) and its support BN.
  - a. 2-7 Cavalry from 4/1 BCT who ran day-to-day U.S. operations within the area of Mosul and the surrounding area, and was also a key player in working by, with, and through Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), from conducting combined security operations to working in support of the greater SFA mission.

- b. 1-9 Cavalry who received an in-theater fragmentary order (FRAGO) which placed them in the role of ISF support – both providing additional forces to the various transition teams operating in the area, as well as a direct assistance role in supporting Iraqi security operations.
  - c. The 4/1 BSB was tasked to provide both area and direct support not only to organic members of the 4/1 BCT, but also to the many disparate organizations operating in Mosul, some of which were of the Coalition FOB MAREZ and had irregular support requirements, but increasingly the requirement to support the ISF as their capabilities and operational tempo (OPTEMPO) increased.
- 2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Military Transition Teams (MiTT) which included 13 x 11 men teams (1 x DIV MiTT, 3 x BDE MiTTs, and 9 x BN MiTTs) of which the DIV team, two BDE teams and six BN level teams lived and operated either in Mosul, or in close proximity to Mosul. Some of these teams lived off of FOB MAREZ, location dependent on the location of the unit to which they were advising. These MiTTs were largely dependent on the BCT and other sustainment services located on FOB MAREZ and operated under the relationship of OPCON (Operational Control) with caveats refined by the Iraqi Assistance Group (IAG) located in Taji, Iraq and the MNSTC-I located in Baghdad. The MiTTs were also dependent on the BCT for resourcing of ISF projects such as force protection improvements, etc. Given the nature of the command relationship, both the various MiTTs and the BCT had to work to achieve unity of effort. The subsequent rotation placed the MiTTs in an attached command relationship and as such achieved unity of command, but not necessarily unity of effort.
  - a. For the purpose of this case study, the 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV MiTT Chief, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> BDE MiTT Chiefs and a BN MiTT Chief from 4<sup>th</sup> BDE and an advisor from 1<sup>st</sup> BN, 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE MiTT were interviewed.
- 3. Four members of the Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) were interviewed – the Department of State (DoS) PRT Chief, his military deputy, and two other key DoS members. The PRT was tasked with building institutional capacity, and is a significant SFA player given its role in the greater context of Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Rule of Law (RoL) capacity building. In many ways like the MiTTs, the PRT was also dependant upon the BCT for some of its resources; they were also a tenant of FOB MAREZ, required assistance in force protection issues as they moved through Mosul and Ninewa to conduct their missions. The PRT could also potentially benefit the greater intelligence picture based on their observations and interactions, and enhance their own mission by being briefed on the information collected.
- 4. A member of the DoJ contingent responsible for advising the Iraqi Prison Systems at Badush Prison, approx. 20 minutes West-North-West of Mosul by Tal-Afar Road. Many times ISF from Mosul (primarily the 1/2/2 IA) and patrols from the BCT had to respond to events at the prison. The DoJ advisory contingent had to pass through coalition and Iraqi battlespace almost daily as they made their trips

from FOB MAREZ/DIAMONDBACK to Badush Prison. Several riots at Badush required heavy ISF and BCT assistance to regain control of the prison. The relationship between both the IA advisors at 1/2/2 and the DoJ advisors was ad-hoc and incidental, i.e. they sought each other out and made it happen. This is roughly the same relationship between the Badush Prison Warden and the 1/2/2 IA CDR. Communications between the advisory efforts was by UNCLASS Internet and cell phone, and the communications between Iraqi warden the 1/2/2 CDR was strictly by cell phone as the radio linkages were inadequate given the distances and non-line of sight. Including the DoJ contingent not only reflects the breadth of SFA operations, but also illustrates the ways the various SFA players identify and create point to point ad-hoc networks that while better than nothing, don't facilitate a "common" operational picture between all members of the SFA community.

5. MND-N - The 25<sup>th</sup> ID ADCM BG Bednarek, was asked to participate to broaden the scope and depth of the case study. MND-North made key decisions about SFA Development in Mosul, and interacted with the ISF senior leadership and senior coalition leadership. As such they allocated and synchronized resources, approved requests, influenced ISF direction, issued orders, etc. Including MND-North into the case study extends the operational bridge between the tactical SFA actions inside Mosul and the Strategic level decisions made in the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Defense (MoD), the U.S. led MNSTC-I, MNC-I and MNF-I.

The reader should understand that even with the method used to show as many potential causal relationships as possible, there are going to be limitations. It is specifically because of the nature of these interactions and the follow-on actions they generate towards a steady progress on SFA, in this environment it can still be very difficult. SFA can often feel like it is taking "two steps forward one step back," but can just as quickly go to "one step forward and two steps back" because events outside of the immediate control or purview of key players take place, or because the gravity of an assessment takes on new meaning too quickly to affect or change. An example within the study is the clear knowledge of all the SFA players that the IP in Mosul were being heavily targeted by the AIF (Anti-Iraq Forces) because they were more vulnerable. The AIF understood that by setting back the development of the police while they were at an immature stage, they were achieving multiple objectives such as challenging the legitimacy of the local government, increasing the burden on other components of the ISF, and building up their own status in the process. However, there were different perspectives on the causes of the weaker development of the IP, what steps could be taken to advance their development, and which courses of action should be adopted. There were also issues with related resources and authorities, so while a given command or leader might have had the right answer, authorities might not have been in place to allow them to implement it. The design of the Case Study itself is to provide the reader with a "stair step" approach where each chapter builds on the last to increase the reader's understanding and to equip them with the relevant tools for considering how to approach tough challenges such as "achieving unity of effort" in these complex, interactive environments.

## Chapter 2 SFA in Context

*“In collaboration with interagency and international partners, we will assist vulnerable states and local populations as they seek to ameliorate the conditions that foster extremism and dismantle the structures that support and allow extremist groups to grow. We will adopt approaches tailored to local conditions that will vary considerably across regions. We will help foster security and aid local authorities in building effective systems of representational government.”*

**From the June 2008 National Defense Strategy in the context of winning “The Long War.”**

### SFA Context for the Mosul Case Study

As a contemporary example of SFA, Mosul offers some lessons for future SFA efforts. The following chapter details some of the definitions, imperatives, and considerations for future SFA efforts. They are introduced now so the reader can compare and contrast them against the case study. While keeping in mind that SFA in Iraq has been of an ad-hoc nature, the challenges of implementing an SFA plan during full spectrum operations should remain valid. For a more complete description of SFA, see either the *U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07 Stability Operations* or the *Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance Planner’s Guide*.

The following SFA terms and definitions are provided in the case study so the reader can consider how they were applied or not applied by the participants in the case study.

**SFA** – Security Force Assistance is unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority. It is integral to successful stability operations and extends to all security forces: military, police, and border forces, and other paramilitary organizations. This applies to all levels of government within the host nation and other local and regional forces. Forces are developed to operate across the spectrum of conflict-combating internal threats such as insurgency, subversion, and lawlessness; defending against external threats; or serving as coalition partners in other areas. It is critical to develop the institutional infrastructure to sustain security force assistance gains; host-nation security forces must have the capability to perform required functions across the stability sectors. They must exist in sufficient numbers to have the capacity to perform these functions wherever and whenever required. Finally, they must have the sustainability to perform functions well into the future, long after external forces are no longer engaged. Successful SFA evolves thorough and continuous assessment and includes the organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding, and advising of the forces involved.

#### 1. SFA Phases

- a. **Plan and Resource** – In this phase, critical questions regarding the requirements of the state or organization of whose security force we are assisting must be asked. These questions ensure that the correct SFA is provided that achieves both the objectives of the state or organization and those of the United States. The resourcing should be mapped out so that as capacity and capability is developed in the security force, the resources keep pace.

**Generate** - is not just about the generation of FSF structure, but the generation of FSF combat power relative to the threats in the FSF environment. Combat power is defined as Leadership + Protection + Firepower + Maneuver. If the defined endstate is to make the FSF capable of defeating or deterring external and internal threats to the legitimate authority the FSF serves, then the formulation of what that means in terms of FSF requirements should not only be considered against what you are trying to grow to in terms of capacity and capability, but in terms of what can be done to lessen the known threats via DIME, and what can be done to preserve existent FSFS and FSF combat power.

This may provide leaders and planners options with how they employ combat advisors throughout the campaign in specific LOOs (Lines of Operation) against a given threat. In example, if a conventional incursion by a hostile neighbor state is believed imminent, or is ongoing, advisors may be deployed directly to FSF units to increase their relative combat power against that threat, and leverage U.S. combat power in the form of air strikes or long range surface fires. This creates a condition where the losses suffered by the FSF may be less, and the damage inflicted on the threat greater. When and if U.S. ground force units (JTFs, divisions, BCTs, TFs) arrive to conduct operations be they major combat operations or stability operations, the conditions have been shaped by the preservation of more of the existing FSF and the supporting infrastructure. Additionally because the combat advisors were deployed ahead of U.S. units to increase the FSF combat power, the extant threat to which capacity and capability must be built to secure the policy objective has been diminished. In other words if the damage to a partner's security forces and infrastructure was reduced by a fraction that mattered with regard to the task of rebuilding, while the enemy's capability to conduct offensive operations were reduced to a point that created time and space to increase the FSF capability and capacity.

Understanding the environment and the other SFA imperatives help the leaders and campaign planners shape their environment and change the nature of the time and space constraints that policy often subjects them to.

- b. An example of how the SFA tasks of OTERA might be viewed as they apply to the Generate phase:
  - i. **Organize** – to either assist the host nation or regional organization in organizing its security forces to meet the needs of its security environment; or the need by those conducting SFA to understand the existing security organizations in order to better assist them.
  - ii. **Train** – to assist the security force in its development through training and education programs and institutions that fit the nature and requirements of their security environment.
  - iii. **Equip** – to assess and assist the security force with the procurement, fielding, and sustainment of equipment that is appropriate given the nature of the security force and its environment.
  - iv. **Rebuild** – to assess the existing capabilities and capacities of the security force and its supporting infrastructure, and then rebuild those

capabilities, capacities, and structures required to meet the needs of the security environment.

- v. **Advise** – establishing a personal professional relationship on a level where influence and advice regarding the security force’s development and employment is sought after by the foreign security force’s leadership.
- c. **Employ** – this marks an event or point in time where the security force transitions from force generation to mission employment in its operational environment. It is not contingent on the maturity of the force or supporting institutions as a whole. The requirements derived from the conditions will determine when it occurs. SFA participants and the foreign security force must assess the risk associated with early employment, and mitigate it where possible.
  - i. **Transition** – Transition was previously viewed as a phase, but is now considered inherent in the Generate, Employ and Sustain. It defines the transition between two security forces. It could be a transition of authority between U.S. forces (or a regional foreign security force) and the fledgling indigenous host nation security force, or it could speak to the transition between the established indigenous military force and a fledgling host nation police force.
- d. **Sustain** – in this phase, the institutional capacity of the foreign security forces has been developed to a point where it is self sustaining. It may continue to have SFA contact through combined exercises, educational opportunity exchange, intelligence sharing, and foreign military sales.

As can be read in the definition of the phases, there are not clear start points and stop points that allow for smooth transitions. There is in fact significant overlap, and the broader the SFA effort (in terms of scope or scale), the more likely the overlap as priorities are established and resources allocated.

## 2. SFA Imperatives –

- a. **Understand the Operational Environment** – the understanding of the OE as it applies to SFA is the imperative which provides flexibility and mitigates operational and strategic risk. It is also the imperative which allows for the design of a campaign that more correctly characterizes the nature of the SFA provided. There may be multiple threats to the authority which the FSF serves, and they may increase or diminish in importance based on conditions.
  - i. In example, a state may have had long term issues extending governance to a particular portion of it s population. That population then became susceptible to external influence and that created conditions favorable to

a foreign incursion by a power which had long been viewed as threat, but until that time was not immediate threat. At this point, a misunderstanding of the environment might identify only the most visible threat (the presence of a foreign enemy) as the one which characterizes the nature of the SFA, however, there the other threats must be addressed as well. They may include criminal organizations, insurgents, terrorists, foreign agents or Special Forces etc. The identification of the threats and their relationship to the environment is critical to developing a campaign design which achieves its objectives.

- b. **Provide Effective Leadership** – this applies to both those involved with SFA from the “assistor” side, and in regards to the development of capability and capacity of the FSF. Effective leadership means not only having the inherent leadership traits and attributes, but the ability to apply them to SFA. A solid understanding of the OE is paramount to being effective because it creates the basis for sound decisions, and in the case of the advisor the opportunity to demonstrate the relevance of his advice to the problems his FSF peer must contend with.
- c. **Build Legitimacy** – the perception of legitimacy of the FSF is linked to its sustainability and effectiveness in its environment. After it has established its own legitimacy, it may become the vehicle for broader legitimacy to a host nation government. Much of this is contingent upon an understanding of what constitutes legitimacy in operational environment. The requirements of legitimacy may change over time along with the perceptions of what a legitimate authority should be capable of providing or doing given the conditions.
  - i. In example, in a lawless environment where violence and crime is rampant, legitimacy may mean establishing a monopoly on the use of force, and the perception of punishing those who break basic laws. As society returns, the expectations increase and the concept of legitimacy may change with the conditions. New ideas such as due process, the establishment and protection of social rights, the reduction of graft and corruption, etc. may become the new standards for maintaining legitimacy.
- d. **Manage Information** – the management of information is also tied to the understanding of the OE. It is about understanding what information is relative to the changes in conditions and understanding who else needs to know to make decisions. It is about understanding how it is relative to the OE by considering what the effects of that information will be on the environment.
- e. **Ensure Unity of Effort** - Understanding the OE allows leaders and planners to consider how the various SFA participants to share a common vision for the effort. This requires effective and continuous communications to ensure that

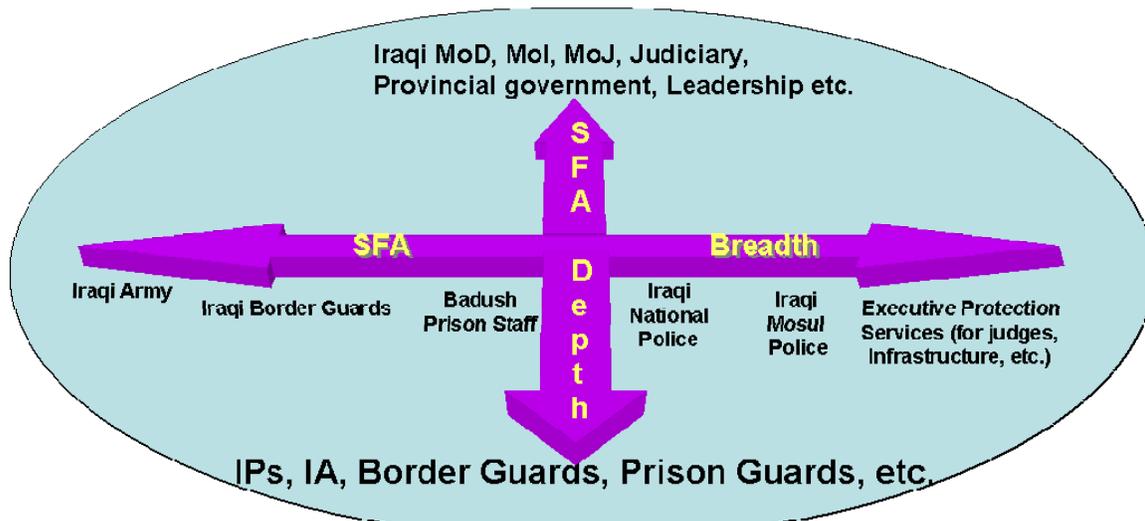
where possible the relationships between efforts remain identified and synchronized. The goal is to conduct SFA in support of broader U.S. military and political objectives in a tolerable amount of time for the U.S., its partners and the host nation or legitimate authority. This mitigates risk on a number of levels, and conserves resources that may need to be applied to other objectives.

f. **Sustain the Effort** – While ultimately this imperative is about getting the FSF to a point where it is self sustaining through the legitimate authority it serves, the road to this “enterprise” point requires the SFA regulate the nature and amount of assistance it provides in such a way that ensures the required amount of assistance is available while guarding against retarding development through a false dependence.

g. **SFA Goals** – develop foreign security forces that are: competent, capable, committed, and confident. **It should** also clearly support the U.S. Policy Objective

3. **The Scope of SFA** – SFA is not limited to developing foreign military forces, foreign law enforcement, or foreign intelligence services. It covers the broader security sector, and is often contingent on parallel development in the political and economic sectors as part of a broader effort. It can range from assisting in the development of frontline security personnel to the supporting infrastructure and ministries which sustain them.

## Scope of Security Force Assistance



**Note: There are both capability and capacity requirements along both the Breadth and the Depth Axis**  
 •Ex. 1. The technical requirements for building capacity in security institutions which sustain and maintain a particular function is different from training individuals to perform the security tasks for which that ministry or agency exists  
 •Ex. 2. The development of EPS (Executive Protection Services) for individuals or installation is different from the development of National Police, or National Intelligence Services, etc.

Fig 1A – SFA can be articulated in depth and breadth. The depth can be thought of as ranging from the individual soldier or policeman generated and sustained in the environment to the supporting institutions that provide policy, oversight and direction. The breadth can be thought

of as the security agencies, or functions which make up the security sector, from armed forces to local police.

4. **SFA as a frame work** – SFA provides the framework by which missions and activities such as Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Security Cooperation, Foreign Military Sales, and other developmental programs can be applied as an integrated plan vs. an ad-hoc effort.

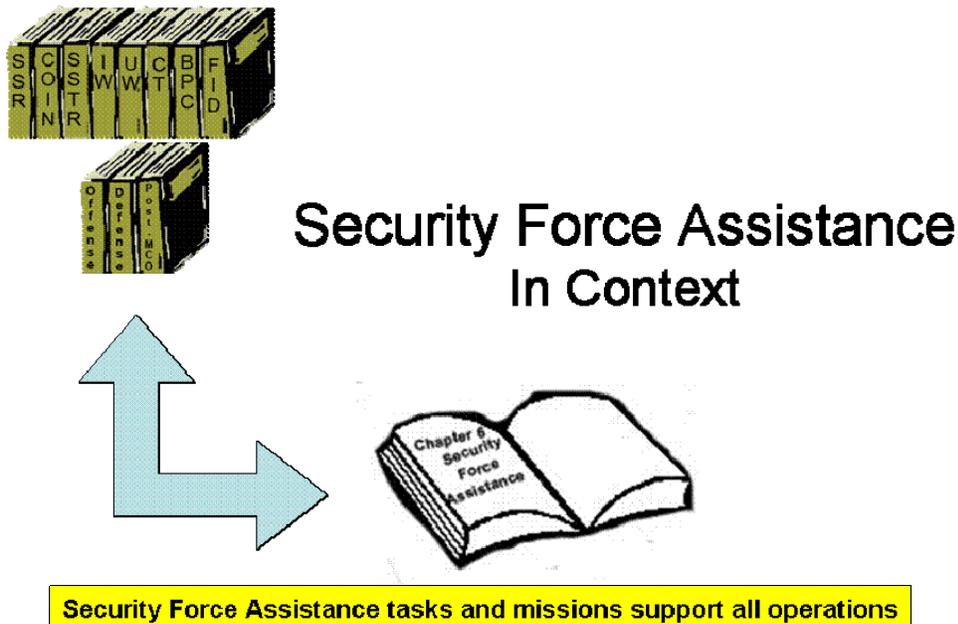


Fig. 2A – SFA can be thought of as a range of activities and capabilities that support a the full spectrum of operations and provides the holistic framework through where the various related and supporting programs, tasks, missions, and forms of security assistance can be grouped to achieve a policy objective.

#### **Conclusion:**

**Planning** - when considering what activities are required to achieve the objective, SFA is a policy and design framework that accounts for those JIIM functions in the planning that are required to build a partner's security capacity regardless of conditions.

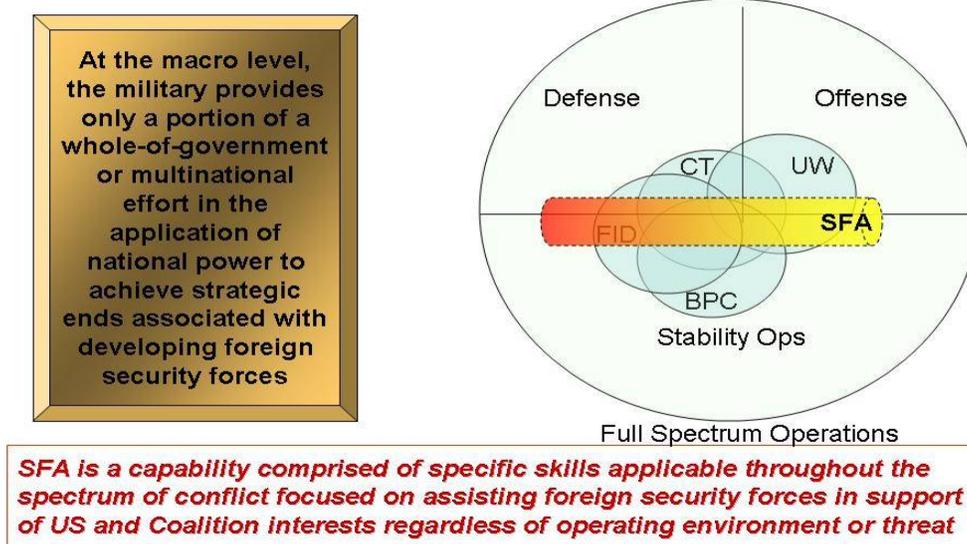
**Implementation** - during implementation, SFA is an objective driven, policy process that provides a framework for those JIIM functions required to build a partner's security capacity under any existing conditions.

Security Force Assistance can be thought of as a set of activities and capabilities that thread through phases, missions, or policy objectives over time and interaction; and it can be thought of as an overarching concept for implementing those SFA tools such as security assistance dollars, etc. What defines the activity is the policy objective. In this case study, the policy objective is oriented on Iraq emerging as a state capable of securing itself and providing for its citizens. Currently, the threat is largely an internal one, and so the predominance of SFA

activities supports FID (Foreign Internal Defense). As Iraq generates the capability to secure it against an internal threat, it will still exist in a region that has significant resources and competing interests, and one that many non-regional powers share long term objectives.

The primary threats at that point in time may range from an aggressive neighbor who uses a range of tools to coerce or influence, or one that threatens open warfare using conventional forces. This may come at a time where the U.S. policy objective involves having a capable ally or partner to provide regional stability through its example and influence. Eventually, the policy objective may support a regional security force which is able to support each donor state for the purpose of assisting one another or other states. This policy objective may call for assisting member states through the development of additional security capacity within their on security sector so they can sustain an external commitment. In this regard, the policy objectives determine the nature of the SFA.

## Security Force Assistance An integrated concept



**Fig. 3A – SFA viewed as an integrated concept**

In this way, SFA is an enabling capability to operations, campaigns and strategies to achieve military and political objectives. It should not be considered solely as a specialized capability, or as general capability, but as an enabling capability. Each set of conditions may have unique requirements based on the policy objective and the conditions which are likely to evolve and change some over time as interaction occurs from those with interests in the outcome. Because the conditions and objectives may produce unique requirements, getting SFA right at a given place, at a given time in support of a given objective means retaining its flexibility and resisting the natural impulse to categorize it, or align it with a particular agency, department, service or command to the point where it takes on the specific character of one thing, becomes rigid in its application and loses its value as an enabler.

**Mosul as an Operational Environment for this Case Study**  
**Mosul as a crossroads in history**



**Fig 4A – A snapshot of Mosul provided by Google Earth shows the Tigris River bisecting the city. There are five major bridges over the Tigris inside Mosul. The airport is identified by the blue airplane graphic (also provided by Google Earth). Leading south out of the city is Baghdad Road, to the west is Tal Afar, to the east is Irbil, and to the North is Dohuk in the region identified as Kurdistan. As you drive north into Mosul you ascend a plateau, and as you proceed north from Mosul you enter the foothills and mountains that eventually take you into Turkey. To the west things flatten out as you drive toward the Syrian border. The road network itself in Mosul is a mixture of more modern East/West and North/South roads, medieval spirals and alleys, and dirt roads created in the last decades as city planning and development has been disrupted by war.**

Understanding the operational environment means SFA participants must also look at it from the indigenous perspective. Mosul is the largest city in the Nineveh Province and the third largest in Iraq (an accurate census is still a long ways off and there are plenty of transients through the area). Mosul has a long and interesting history. Mosul was an ancient Assyrian capitol – and cultural marks such as statuary and other art forms still bear its influence. Not too

far from Mosul is the Tel Gomel. “Tel” means “large hill” or “small mountain” and “Gomel” means river. Combined together it means, “a small mountain overlooking the river.” Tel Gomel is very close to the location where Alexander the Great defeated the Persian Emperor Darius. In fact, it is not too rare to see a citizen from Mosul or the surrounding area with green eyes and red hair. With regard to religion, Mosul again has a prominent place in history. Mosul is the burial location of “Jonah” from the Old Testament, and there is a revered mosque in Mosul, known and pronounced as the “Abu Yuenis” Mosque on the East Side of Mosul. Nineveh itself figures prominently in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, with references to Nimrod and other well known figures.

Mosul has long been a critical contact point for East to West trade on the continent; as a result, it is more cosmopolitan than much of the rest of Iraq, and even has a flavor of the Orient. Mosul has resisted khanates, caliphates, pashas, and general heavy handedness with steadfast obstinacy over the centuries. It is of strategic importance to Coalition Forces, ISF (Iraqi Security Forces), and Anti Iraq Forces (AIF). That same importance is not lost upon the Kurds, the Turks, the Syrians, or the Iranians. It is an operational stepping-stone for parties interested in Kirkuk.

There are several important satellite cities around Mosul and within its area of influence. Tal Afar is west of the city, more or less halfway to the border with Syria. Tal Afar has a capable airfield in forward operating base (FOB) Sykes. Irbil is east of Mosul; it is a commercial contact point in its own right between Kirkuk and Mosul. Mostly controlled by the Kurds, Irbil is a halfway point between Mosul and Iran. To the north of Mosul, about halfway to the Turkish border, Dahuk is a smaller, Kurdish city that is growing due to its good security and courting of foreign investment. These cities are important because they affect Mosul. Understanding that influence is important to the SFA mission, just as any staff must understand the dynamics of the area of operations and the area of influence.

### **Climate and Terrain**

Mosul’s climate varies. From about April through October is the dry season when peak temperatures climb above 130 degrees Fahrenheit. November through March is the rainy season with torrential downpours, flash flooding, and even snow (although rare and quick to dissipate). To the west of Mosul is mostly open desert; to the north and east are the foothills of the mountains on the Turkish and Iranian borders.

The Tigris River bisects east and west Mosul and is spanned by five bridges within the city. The Iraqis number these bridges in the order they were built; Coalition Forces (CF) numbered them from south to north. The different conventions have been a source of confusion in exchanging information. A similar problem exists with the naming conventions for routes and terrain features. For example Tampa is well-known to U.S Forces as the route that spans Iraq; the Iraqis know it as the Baghdad Road. Telling an Iraqi to send a patrol to assist U.S Forces on the intersection of two U.S. named routes often resulted in delay or in misdirection. Giving them a grid was often equally problematic as many Iraqi soldiers could not read a map. And of course, this discussion assumes that they could either speak English or an interpreter is capable of translating such directions effectively.

### **Lines of Communication**

The city's lines of communication (LOC) are a mixture of ancient, old to modern construction. The former is characterized by radiating, hub and spoke style medieval construction where the markets are intermixed with communities, people live on top of each other, and combat vehicles must consider mobility lest they wound up in a dead end or a spot ideal for an AIF ambush. More modern areas have wider streets, generally unfinished. They run on east-west, north-south grids through less densely populated areas, making them favorite spots for larger improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Mosul has a rail system that was under utilized because of the security situation, but could one day serve as another important commercial LOC. It has a good air field that accepts medium to large aircraft and U.S forces used it as an air head. It was eventually opened back up as an International Airport (after the period of this case study). The Tigris is mostly a shallow draft river; it would take significant improvements to make it a commercially viable LOC in a modern sense.

### **Economy and Services**

Economically, Mosul is returning to its agricultural and textile industry roots. It is also reemerging as a transfer point for merchandise from Iran, Syria, Turkey, and the greater Middle East. At the time of the study electric power lines were strung haphazardly across roads and buildings. Most locations do not have a hardwired telephone system; instead cell phones are the primary means of communications for all Mosul residents. The cell phone industry is huge and state of the art phones are sold almost everywhere. Television and satellite are available. Most residences that can afford a satellite dish tap into Turkish, Syrian, Egyptian, Iranian, Kuwaiti, and Arabian programming and the greater international media. The internet is a highly sought after capability, and will probably do well in the future. Services such as electric and sanitation are improving, but still far from adequate. During the period of this case study gasoline and propane were scarce commodities in Mosul as in the rest of Iraq. Long lines, frustration, high prices, and black marketeering plagued this commodity. Conspiracy theories abounded amongst Iraqis as to the cause of these problems ranging from Turkish profiteering in the petroleum refinement to government corruption and mismanaging. It was very frustrating for Iraqis because they know they are sitting on some of the largest natural gas and petroleum deposits in the world, but can not extract, refine, transport, and market these resources fast enough to meet the needs of the populace to promote economic growth and stability.

### **The People of Mosul**

*“As you know Ninewa Province is a very complex province, and I had to really sit down and figure out how I was going to attack this thing – not only from a tactical standpoint, but from a governmental and appeasement standpoint with the people. So a couple of things I’ll let you know that I had to take a look at upfront. Ninewa Province – seven ethnic groups. I don’t know if you know that. Out of the seven you have the Kurds, Sunnis, Sunni Turkmen, Shia Turkmen, Christians, the Yzidis and the Shubak.”*

**Col Steve Twitty, CDR 4/1 BCT on ethnic diversity and its effect on governance in Ninewa**

Nonetheless, Mosul is a city with potential. Within five to ten years in a secure environment, the city could look drastically different. Its people are primarily Arab Sunni and

Kurdish Sunni with a smaller population of Yazidi. Although Yazidi are ethnic Kurds, many prefer to be known for their religious beliefs. Small enclaves of Christians are dotted here and there. There are people who look very Arab, and there are also red haired, fair skinned and green-eyed people in Mosul – genetic proof of Mosul's historic importance as a crossroads for East and West. There are also Turkmen, and Arab Shiite who live in Mosul, or in the surrounding towns.

Mosul residents are generally friendly, emotive, and social people. They desire security, freedom and prosperity, but not at the price of their life, or worse - increased long term suffering. Job prospects were not good during the period of this case study, and corruption exists in almost every office or position where there is an opportunity. Most Mosul residents have a hard time getting beyond the bottom rung of the basic hierarchy of needs. The result is a population, which because of limited opportunities becomes a recruiting ground for AIF, particularly among disaffected young Sunni Arab males. In an emotive culture, AIF inflammatory propaganda that offers entry-level jobs in terrorism such as IED emplacer, look out, kidnapper, or others more easily sway some of these young men.

The comparison to urban gangland youth in the United States is worth considering. There were few youth outreach type programs here beyond the mosques, some of which can be further twisted by the AIF as a lever. Those young men who succeed as terrorists become role models and recruiting posters for future AIF as a means to get somewhere and an outlet for rebellion. That is a side of Mosul and understanding its operational environment is critical if advisors working there are to build ISF that are sustainable.

*“It’s a complex environment in Mosul. You’ve got Yazidi, you’ve got Christian, you’ve got Muslims, you’ve got Shia, you’ve got Sunni, you’ve got Kurds, you’ve got some Jewish population out there. I mean, you name it, it’s there. But that’s okay because that’s the history of Ninewa; it’s the history of Mosul. Mosul, they consider themselves Mosulis, and if you’ve got a collective group of people from Mosul, their original origin, and they can trace it back, is to Abraham, or to Christianity, or to Judaism, to Yazidism, to whatever it happens to be, or Shia or Sunni; and they work much like if you look at it in the context of New York City. You go to New York City and say, “Where are you from?” “I’m a New Yorker.” You don’t ask them if they’re Italian, you don’t ask them if they’re Jewish, or Greek, or whatever. I mean, they’re New Yorkers, and they have their own way of doing business, and so does Mosul. At one point, second or third largest city, depending on who you talk to; this city is very diverse, and it’s split by the Tigris river down the east and west sides. Going back from the early nineteenth century, you’ve got Kurdish influences, and if you trace it even further back, you’ve got Greek influences and great battles that happened there and on and on. But the people of Mosul still tie themselves to Mosul. “I am a Mosuli. I don’t see myself as Sunni, I don’t see myself as Shia, I see myself as an Arabic person,” and they work and get along.”*

**LTC Eric Welsh, CDR 2-7 CAV “on being Mosuli”**

## **Recent Operational History**

Operational Context – the transition of authority and responsibility for Iraqi Security to the ISF

### **The 101<sup>st</sup> – 2003**

- Initial occupation force centered in Mosul. The 101<sup>st</sup> was able to put a significant number of soldiers on the ground in Mosul at a time where conditions allowed the potential to shape the future.
- Rebuilding Iraqi Security Forces from the ground up began along with sorting out what that meant with regard to de-ba'athification while meeting the requirement to establish a host nation force.

### **3/2<sup>nd</sup> (SBCT) 2003-2004**

- Began to see the materialization of the insurgency. 3/2 was the first SBCT to be deployed into Iraq. This one BCT took on the battlespace, population density and responsibilities that had previously been those of a full division. As an SBCT 3/2 came with many capabilities not formerly organic to a brigade sized organization. With increased mobility and command and control through the Stryker platform than a comparable U.S. BCT, but with fewer soldiers and capabilities than the 101<sup>st</sup> as a division, it was required to approach the conditions differently. It was during 2003-2004 that the insurgency began to reveal itself as such.

### **1/25<sup>th</sup> (SBCT) 2004 – 2005**

- FOB MAREZ DFAC Bombing on 21 December 2004 kills 22 U.S. soldiers and wounds 72.
- 11/11/04 - a date many Iraqis remember as the low point of Iraqi Security Forces where insurgents conducted a series of attacks on coalition and Iraqi forces, briefly occupying many new police stations. The fledgling Iraqi National Guard together with U.S. Special Forces and 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT defeated the attack and began the rebuilding of the Iraqi Security Forces in Mosul. It is noteworthy that for many Iraqi Army and Iraqi Policeman, this was the day many of them formed a strong bond with U.S. forces. One such bond is the story of U.S. Army Special Forces NCO who the Iraqis remember passionately as “Big Tony.” Big Tony fought side by side with Iraqis that day hunting down insurgents and retaking ground. He was killed entering a concealed hide site inside an insurgent safehouse by an IED while telling his Iraqi counterparts “it was too dangerous for them to enter.” He is a part of their warrior mythology today, and his example is attributed to the courage

and skill of U.S. Forces. Men like “Big Tony” paved the way for better cooperation between U.S. forces and Iraqis on a personal level.

- Individually augmented military advisory teams begin to arrive in Mosul; 1/25<sup>th</sup> also working to train and equip Iraqi security forces.

### **172<sup>nd</sup> (SBCT) 2005 – 2006**

- Many of the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV BNs conduct Transfer of Authority (TOA) with their U.S. partner units. While the BN TOA ceremony does indicate a level of proficiency within the Iraqi Army Units, it also partly serves a political function. The coalition units still require no coordination with the Iraqi units who have “assumed” authority of the battlespace to operate there unilaterally, and in truth, those IA units were not fully capable of assuming the lead. The 172<sup>nd</sup> and the advisory MiTTs (Military Transition Teams) did some good work assisting the Iraqis in bringing up their capabilities, but the operational conditions remained such that the U.S. force had to remain the lead partner. The Iraqi Army battalions were beginning the transition from a static security force, to a counter-insurgency force that actually could conduct independent operations intermittently.
- This is where some of the study participants – the Military Advisors, and some of the PRT members – enter into the study.

### **3/2<sup>nd</sup> (SBCT) 2006 (ed. note – 3/2 SBCT received the mission to move to Diyala Province after only a short time in Ninewa and conducted a relief in place with 4/1 CAV)**

- Many of the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV BDEs conduct TOA
- 3/2 conducting most of the combat operations in the AOR, the ISF are still transitioning between mostly a static force, and one that can conduct counter-insurgency operations.
- 3/2 receives FRAGO for advanced timeline to go south as U.S. efforts to secure the population focus on Baghdad and the surrounding province.

### **4/1<sup>st</sup> CAV (2006- 2007) The IA turn the corner in Mosul**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV conducts TOA
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> BDE's of 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV really come into its own with regard to conducting some independent operations. They still require logistics support and receive some assistance in the form of Intelligence and Effects support, but are capable of conducting day to day patrolling, planning and executing raids, maintaining HUMINT sources, command and control of their respective units, coordinating with adjacent IA, IP and coalition units, and the basic admin functions associated with running battalion and brigade sized units. The MiTT teams still serve as a means to interoperate with coalition forces, identify, assess and address systemic problems, and provide intelligence back to the CF unit.

- 4/1 is still conducting combat operations and has extended its sustainment requirements to include the transition teams outside FOB MAREZ, and the Iraqi Security Forces particularly in terms of CL IX, CL IIIB and maintenance and medical support.
- The IP are now the least mature of the ISF. They are the focus of insurgent attacks, and are still not manned, equipped, or trained to claim the initiative against the insurgent and criminal forces.

### **Tactical Context – SFA efforts in Mosul**

The tactical focus of SFA Mosul evolved over time based on both the conditions at hand and the understanding of what role both the U.S. and the host nation forces would play in waging a counter-insurgency and bringing security and stability to Mosul. Like any complex interaction, there is no single causal explanation that helps chart the development of the IA and IP in Mosul. While a brief operational history was provided above, to give an appreciation for the various contributing METT-TC conditions which influenced ISF development requires an appreciation for the U.S. involvement in Iraq as whole, and the U.S. military's understanding of its role there. However it is worth considering a few of the possible contributing events which delayed or advanced ISF development.

One aspect of the delay in getting a full appreciation for the role and advancement of ISF may have to do with the rotational nature of U.S. forces into and out of Iraq, and it may be the rotational nature of our involvement. In Vietnam, a unit flag often remained in country, but individuals rotated in and out on a one year basis. In Iraq, we adopted a unit rotation that preserved unit effectiveness and cohesion by allowing it to return to its home station for regeneration and retraining. Upon return to Iraq or deployment elsewhere, the unit's personnel composition is relatively new, and although it may have combat veterans from other units, their experiences are from different points in time and possibly from different theaters or different parts of Iraq. With the exception of 3/2 SBCT, no unit rotated back into Mosul. Each rotation requires an adjustment as that unit reconciles its past combat and training experiences with the new realities on the ground. This takes different amounts of time, affected by a number of things including how the supporting institution has advanced in areas of Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF), and if there is overlap in units that help the incoming unit achieve situational awareness and understanding more rapidly before assuming tactical responsibility.

Another aspect is the enemy situation, and how it is perceived by U.S. forces. This is also impacted by U.S. domestic politics as pressure to demonstrate progress in a protracted conflict may make its way down to the tactical units. It impacts the development of host nation security forces also by the population's willingness to align itself with the legitimate government or occupational forces, the willingness of members of the population to join host nation security forces, and the ability of both U.S. forces to dedicate resources to organizing, training, rebuilding, equipping, and advising host nation security forces vs. its requirement to conduct combat operations and secure its own lines of communications against an aggressive enemy. The enemy situation and basic security must be at a certain level to allow U.S. forces to devote some time and other resources to the task, particularly if those forces are being stood up from the ground level.

This has also impacted the U.S. advisory effort in Iraq. Conditions varied and were not always permissive enough to commit sufficient resources to the task of rebuilding ISF. This is not just a question of willingness to switch the focus, but is also one of physics as getting sufficient amounts of personnel and equipment into theater to support parallel lines of effort require time. Time is also required to adapt institutionally to understand that building ISF was not just a “train and equip” mission, but would require a holistic approach that included a robust requirement to train, advise, and assist Iraqi security forces that included tactical combat advisors embedded with their Iraqi units and ministerial level advisors to shape the institutions which would provide oversight and accountability as well as sustain forces in the field.

What all this meant for ISF in Mosul was a slower road to capability and capacity, and some bias with regard to how U.S. forces at first viewed the commitment and competency of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi police forces there. While U.S. units saw “stages” of development, it was not always within their ability to see beyond the “current” stage of development and how it related to that deployment. Initially, ISFs were being used to support U.S. combat operations conducting tasks that were largely defensive in nature such as the manning of combat outposts on coalition main supply routes, or providing a few of their more competent bodies to go on patrol and provide cultural understanding. This is a two part problem. On one hand, tactical U.S. forces were not looking to advance the role of the Iraqis greater than what was immediately useful, and on the other hand it may have been all the ISF was capable of doing at the time. In my case, it was my good fortune to come in at a time where both the Iraqis and the U.S. were ready to move to the next stage of ISF development. Even at this stage, there were often friction points and issues of inter-operability as the ISF and U.S. forces failed to understand each other. In many cases there were capabilities and deficiencies that required the Iraqi units, the U.S. units, and the U.S. advisors embedded with Iraqi units to commit to working through issues and communicating in ways that none had trained for.

### **Generational Struggle – how some Iraqis view it vs. how we often see it**

There is another aspect to ISF development we often overlook based on our role. Too many Iraqis are an occupational force, and while we are partnering with the Iraqis, we remain foreign to the environment. This has multiple aspects but one that is pertinent to the development of ISF is their permanence in the environment versus our intermittent involvement at the unit level. We often lose sight by the nature of our own rotational schedule that Iraqi units have been fighting insurgents on a continual basis since 2003. There is no rotating out of theater for them. While individual Iraqi soldiers do take leave to go home and tend to their families and personal affairs, they are under constant threat as they travel or spend time at home. Their families are at risk, and they are often more vulnerable on leave than while in uniform conducting combat operations. This tends to change their outlook as year after year goes by. They see themselves fighting insurgents long after U.S. units come and go, and they see the security tasks that go with being geographically located in the Middle East as never ending. This has an effect on both the U.S. approach to SFA and the Iraqis reception to our efforts.

### **Conclusion**

As an operational environment, Mosul has many aspects to consider. From the ethnic and religious makeup of the population and the Iraqi Security Forces themselves, to where Mosul fits

in the broader context of Iraq and its history, Mosul requires a different approach than Baghdad, or Basra. Understanding Mosul (or any other operational setting) as more than just location for current operations is important to conducting security force assistance and may help advance or may delay the capabilities and competencies of the partner forces which allow the United States to achieve its policy objectives in a more effective and efficient manner versus potentially protracting conflict and risking the policy objective.

**Chapter 4: Anthropology and the Advisor (To be Published at a Later Date)**

**By Dr. Marc Tyrrell**

## Chapter 5 American “Advisors:” Yesterday and Today

### **Introduction: The Various Roles of American Advisors**

The U.S. military, as an institution, has been engaged in roles that are advisory, in a broad sense, for about a century. American diplomats have, perhaps, played that role only a little longer, although not in the same institutional manner. With regard to the diplomats, one thinks of the role played in 1914 by Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson in Mexico supporting General Victoriano Huerta, the usurper of the constitutional president, with advice and counsel.

The military began its advisory, security force assistance role in a significant way during the “Banana Wars” in the Caribbean with interventions that most often used the U.S. Marine Corps to establish, train, and equip constabulary forces throughout the region that performed the functions of both military and police forces. The Marines scrupulously recorded the lessons of the experience and produced their *Small Wars Manual* (SWM) of 1940. The Army, true to its desire to address big wars, did not record much of its advisory experience in Panama or the Philippines. In Panama, the experience resembled that of the Marines in the region while in the Philippines, the Army attempted to build a Philippine Army along with a separate constabulary police force.

During World War II, American advisors worked with the French *maquis* and other undergrounds in occupied Europe in OSS teams known as Jedburghs and Operational Groups. The OSS was also active in the Pacific working with American and Filipino guerrillas in the Philippines, the Kachin Rangers in Burma, and the Viet Minh in Vietnam. Following the war and throughout the Cold War, American military advisors, CIA civilians, and AID missions worked in such varied places as Greece, the Philippines, Bolivia, Venezuela, Vietnam, Laos, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, and Afghanistan, as well as others.<sup>1</sup> Today, the advisory mission continues as a major part of operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

This chapter will address the role of the American advisor thematically. It will focus on Advisor selection, training, organization, and application using examples from the past and juxtaposing those with experiences drawn from the interviews in the Mosul case study. The structure of the chapter derives from a Rand Corporation study of the American military advisor in Vietnam by Dr. Gerald Hickey.<sup>2</sup> The chapter concludes with a discussion of the “lessons that should have been learned.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Selection**

During the Banana Wars of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century the Marine Corps developed a role in security force assistance (SFA) that was akin to the role that white officers played in such “colored” regiments as the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. Marine officers and NCOs in Haiti and Nicaragua and other places established constabulary forces providing, at first, the entire officer corps and gradually drawing down. In Haiti, for example, beginning in 1915 the USMC provided

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<sup>1</sup> The author was personally involved in advisory efforts in El Salvador and Panama and to a lesser extent in Peru.

<sup>2</sup> G. C. Hickey, *The American Military Advisor and his Foreign counterpart: The Case of Vietnam*, Santa Monica CA, March 1965, The Rand Corporation.

<sup>3</sup> This is a favorite phrase of my colleague, Dr. Max G. Manwaring, and appears in a number of his works.

100% of the officers of the *Garde d'Haiti* until 1919 when 3 Haitians were integrated into the officer corps. This number increased through 1931 when the *Garde* had 109 Haitian officers of 196 total officers for 55.6%.<sup>4</sup>

The method by which these officers and their predecessor planners, here and in Nicaragua as well as other places in the Caribbean, appear to have been selected is by what may be called the “hey you” approach. Take anybody who was available. The USMC institutionalized this in its *Small Wars Manual* (SWM) which states that the members of the planning group will normally be constituted from the U.S. military or naval forces in the country concerned.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, the *Small Wars Manual* (SWM) suggests that there are certain characteristics to be sought among those Marine officers and NCOs called upon to lead a host nation (HN) constabulary.<sup>6</sup>

Officers and enlisted men of the United States forces appointed as officers of the constabulary should be acceptable to the local government and have the qualities considered essential for a position of similar importance in the United States forces. They must be physically fit to withstand arduous duty in the field and should be proficient in the language of the country concerned. A general knowledge of local conditions is an important requirement. They should be known for their tactful relationships, and should be in sympathy with the aspirations of the inhabitants of the country concerned in their desire to become a stable and sovereign people. They should be educationally and professionally equipped to execute the varied functions that they will be called upon to perform.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, the above aspires to what ought to be. In many cases, language was a limitation as were many of the other characteristics.<sup>8</sup> Thus, while the Marines recognized what was desirable in the selection of constabulary officers, they most often found that they could not get everything they knew they wanted.

Just as the Marines published their experiences in the SWM, the Second World War loomed. The Marines moved on to amphibious operations and raids while leaving behind their experiences in developing HN constabularies. American military advising in World War II was dominated by the “paramilitary” Office of Strategic Services (OSS). In Europe the OSS was closely associated with the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and concurrently ran three member Jedburgh teams to link up with the French resistance. Later, 15 man Operational Groups were inserted to train and assist the *maquis*. Nearly all the personnel selected for these units came from the ranks of the active military; all were volunteers. The only other criterion for selection was language ability – especially French.<sup>9</sup> In the Pacific the OSS operated in detachments of varying sizes, such as the 300 man Detachment 101, which trained and assisted

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<sup>4</sup> Walther J. Kretchik, Robert F. Baumann, John T. Fishel, *Invasion, Intervention, “Intervention,” : A Concise History of the U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy*, (1998: Fort Leavenworth, KS, U.S. Army Command & General Staff College Press) p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> USMC, FMFRP 12-15, 1940, reprinted 1990, Washington DC, p. 12-5.

<sup>6</sup> The term HN is, of course, modern. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the term used was “native.”

<sup>7</sup> SWM, p. 12-9.

<sup>8</sup> See Kretchik, et. al., Chapter I.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas K. Adams, *US Special Operations Forces in Action*, (1998, London: Frank Cass), p. 37.

guerrilla forces in Burma and French Indochina.<sup>10</sup> Again, language and professional military skills were major selection criteria for the volunteers.

Another aspect of the selection process for the OSS that is only vaguely alluded to in the literature involved civilian acquired skills. Adams cites the strong link that the OSS had with psychological operations<sup>11</sup> from its inception as the Office of the Coordinator of Information with General William Donovan's expansive concept of Psyops. Major General Edward G. Lansdale, one of the historically great advisors, notes in his 1971 memoir, "In 1941 news of the attack on Pearl Harbor had caused me to quit my position with an advertising agency in San Francisco and join others in volunteering to defend the country. I served with the OSS for a time...."<sup>12</sup>

With World War II over and peace at hand, there was a lull before the Cold War and its hot conflicts began in earnest. The Greek civil war and Korea both involved U.S. advisory efforts. However, it is useful to focus for a while on General Lansdale as an advisor in both the Philippines and the early days in Vietnam. His story, perhaps more than any other, tells of successful opportunism and demonstrates the folly of relying only on that same opportunism.<sup>13</sup> Lansdale had finished World War II in the Philippines as an Army intelligence officer where he had made a number of highly placed Filipino friends. One of them was Filipino President Quirino who requested that the U.S. Government send Colonel Lansdale, USAF, to the Philippines as an intelligence advisor. Another Filipino friend was Congressman Ramon Magsaysay, a member of the defense committee. Lansdale was selected because of previous experience in country, and because he had the apparent confidence of the Filipino government leadership. Lansdale brought with him a small team, largely made up of former OSS and Army colleagues.

Lansdale's success in the Philippines led directly to his being sent to Vietnam to advise the new government. His position, within the Military Assistance Advisory Group – Vietnam (MAAG – V), allowed him significant freedom of movement but that was dependent on the confidence in which he was held by his MAAG and embassy superiors. Again, Lansdale brought a small team of his Philippines veterans. The principal conclusions about this early Cold War advisor selection process, was that it was largely informal and owed much to serendipity.

As these events were taking place, Colonel Aaron Bank, formerly of the OSS, founded the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) whose mission was to foment revolt behind Soviet lines in the case of war with the USSR. In other words, they were to advise partisan forces. Most of the volunteer officers and men of the new Special Forces (SF) were OSS veterans or new citizens from the satellite nations of central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, itself.<sup>14</sup> What distinguished the SF volunteers was their relative maturity and their ability with foreign languages – French and German for the OSS veterans and their native languages for the new US citizen volunteers. In fact, to this day, the two best predictors of success in SF training are Ranger training and the ability to speak a second language.<sup>15</sup>

Beginning in 1961, President John Kennedy sent advisors to Vietnam. At first, they were nearly all SF personnel. By 1963, there were around 18,000 advisors, more than the total number

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Chapter 2.

<sup>12</sup> *In the Midst of Wars*, (1971, New York: Harper & Row), p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> All discussion of Lansdale relies on his memoir previously cited.

<sup>14</sup> See Adams, Chapter 3, pp. 54 – 77.

<sup>15</sup> Dick Couch, *Chosen Soldier*, (2007, New York: Three Rivers Press), pp. 46 – 27.

of Special Forces. Thus, many advisors came from the ranks of the conventional army and, while a significant number were volunteers, many more were simply assigned. The “hey you” method was again the norm and would remain so throughout the war.

One other source of advisors during the Vietnam War, in the officer corps at least, was graduates of the Foreign Area Specialist Training program (FAST). These officers volunteered to specialize in a foreign area such as the Soviet Union, Middle East, Latin America, and Vietnam. Those selected went to language school, a civilian masters degree program, and were given the opportunity to use what they had learned in a year of overseas training or utilization. For Vietnam FAS officers that meant a tour as an advisor. Although the program was relatively small, it had a number of components that made for successful advisors – maturity of the officers selected (senior Captains or Majors), language, and the fact that they were volunteers.

The end of the Vietnam War greatly reduced the requirement for military advisors. In the mid-70s, the security assistance organizations (SAO) – MAAG, MILGP, JUSMAG, ODC, OML – were greatly reduced in size and the advisory function was largely eliminated. Then came El Salvador in 1981. The advisory function was back although the advisors were called trainers and were forbidden to accompany the Salvadoran military on operations. The US MILGP, El Salvador was staffed largely with officers and soldiers from the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group – especially in the brigade advisor teams known as OPATTs.

Contrary to the findings of the famous “Four Colonels” report, MILGP El Salvador was not staffed with the second or third team.<sup>16</sup> Every MILGP commander during the war met the Army criteria for career success. Each went on to higher command and/or promotion to general officer. John Waghelstein (the first to command the 55 man MILGP) returned to Fort Bragg to command 7<sup>th</sup> SFG (A); Joseph Stringham, his successor, was promoted to Brigadier General and was Defense Attache in Brazil. James Steele, who followed Stringham, was nominated for a star but fell victim to the Senate confirmation process from fallout due to the Iran-Contra scandal. John Ellerson retired as a Major General. All four were Latin American Foreign Area Officers (FAO) while Waghelstein and Stringham were both SF.

Among the so-called second or third team was one of the authors of the report, Colonel James Hallums, who had served under Waghelstein and went on to command the MILGP in Bolivia and Joint Task Force – Bravo in Honduras. Ellerson’s first deputy, Air Force Lt. Col. James Basile, who sadly was killed in a helicopter crash in El Salvador, was a highly qualified Air Force version of a FAO. The C3 advisor, LTC Lou Rodriguez, was called a “national treasure” by General Fred Woerner, the SOUTHCOM commander. The C5 advisor, LTC Dennis Walko returned to Fort Bragg where he commanded the 1<sup>st</sup> PSYOP Battalion and was later promoted to Colonel. Indeed, the El Salvador MILGP had a higher promotion rate in all grades than did the Army as a whole. What made MILGP El Salvador unique in the annals of American advisory efforts was that it was, from start to finish, not a pick-up team. It was primarily drawn from the ranks of the SF and FAOs and was mostly made up of officers and men who had volunteered for the assignment.

One last example from this period is the advisory mission undertaken by the U.S. Forces Liaison Group (USFLG) and the Civil Military Operations Task Force (CMOTF), in Panama in the wake of Operation Just Cause. The USFLG was an *ad hoc* initiative of Major General Marc

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<sup>16</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich, James D. Hallums, Richard H. White, and Thomas F. Young, *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*, (1988, New York: Pergamon-Brassey). The author, as Executive Officer of the USSOUTHCOM Combined ESAF Assessment Team, reviewed the draft of the report and then, as well as later, made the analysis of the MILGP discussed above.

Cisneros, Commander, U.S. Army South. Its mission was to establish, equip, and provide initial training to the Panama Public Force with primary emphasis on the National Police. To staff the FLG, Cisneros drew on members of his staff and active and reserve offices who were available from the SOUTHCOM staff or other assignments. The method of selection was a modified “hey you” with the requirement that the FLG members speak Spanish.<sup>17</sup> The results were significantly better than the usual “hey you” as the Chief was a Latin American FAO who had been, briefly, the Commander of the USMILGP, Panama; his deputy was also a Latin American FAO who had been the chief planner for post-conflict reconstruction operations; the intelligence advisor was a Spanish speaking USAR CPT; the operations and training advisor was a Latin American FAO who had been aide to GEN Woerner when he commanded SOUTHCOM; and the civil affairs advisor was a Spanish speaking USAR MAJ who had been one of the planners for post-conflict reconstruction. In addition, the U.S. Defense Attache in Guatemala was brought in on temporary duty because he had previously commanded the USMILGP, Panama and knew all the Panamanian military players. Several enlisted personnel and civilians also worked in the FLG – all spoke Spanish.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the FLG, the concept of Ministerial Support Teams was first executed in Panama. These were staffed by USAR Civil Affairs Officers from the CMOTF, most of whom were from the 361<sup>st</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade which had been supporting SOUTHCOM for a number of years and had conducted a civil affairs study of Panama and had provided most of the planning augmentation for the post-conflict reconstruction plan.

Tactical advisors to the new police were provided by teams of two active duty Special Forces personnel augmented by one Reserve Component SF officer or soldier who was a policeman in civilian life. All of the active SF police advisors spoke Spanish as did most of the Reservists.

Finally, advising the police was the interagency Department of State/Department of Justice International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP). Other than three full time ICITAP personnel (two FBI agents and one administrator from State) all of ICITAP’s advisors were contractors. All had been FBI agents or senior officials. Only one contractor was a Spanish speaker and he had worked in the USAID Public Safety Program in Latin America in the 1960s and 70s.

#### *Counterpoint and Conclusion*

*Major Rob Thornton, writing in Chapter 6 of this case study, notes that the MiTT to which he was assigned was clearly selected by the “hey you” method. It produced a mixed group of active duty and Reserve officers and enlisted. One of its most successful members was a Reserve officer from Puerto Rico who was particularly comfortable working across cultures. That the MiTT was as successful as it appears to have been due to a combination of serendipity in selection, military professionalism, mission orientation, and good leadership from both above and below.*

#### **Training**

When training is discussed, we need to be concerned with it in two different ways. First, there is training that is specifically focused on what an advisor needs to know and do with respect to the assignment. Second, there is the general education and training that imparts knowledge and skills that are useful and relevant to any host nation advising. With respect to the

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<sup>17</sup> There were a couple of exceptions such as the ARSOUTH G4, COL Norm Higgenthom who worked there briefly and was critical in establishing the organization.

<sup>18</sup> One civilian secretary, a dual US/Panamanian citizen, was a former Miss Panama.

first, there is largely a dearth in the historical examples. The few cases will be addressed below. As to the second, there are and have been limited examples of programs that seek to achieve those goals. Far more common are examples from general education, particularly at the graduate level, and, especially for the Reserve Components, civilian experience.

During the Banana Wars there were no training programs that focused specifically on the advisor role. In World War II, OSS training focused on combat skills and some exercises did simulate advising partisans; the main focus, however, was on survival. Adams quotes Colonel Aaron Bank, founder of Army SF, as saying of SF training, “I applied all of my OSS background to our training, doctrine, concepts, planning, standards, and goals. The OSS legacy was our bible.”<sup>19</sup> Couch quotes a founding member of the 10<sup>th</sup> SFG (A) about training, “The training was about fourteen weeks and was a lot like basic training, only we learned about sabotage and assassination techniques. We were training to go behind the lines if the Communists attacked Western Europe.”<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, there was nothing explicitly devoted to advising, any more than there had been in OSS training.

Nevertheless, SF training evolved (and keeps evolving) so that by sometime in the 1960s the advisor role was included. This is particularly evident in the final exercise of the SF Qualification Course (Q-course), Robin Sage. Robin Sage harkens back to the origins of SF where the advisor role is one of UW – training partisan forces to operate behind enemy lines. It is not a FID exercise but that hardly matters as cross cultural advising and training present similar challenges regardless of the setting.

The other formal advisor training program to surface in the 1960s was the Vietnam War’s Military Assistance Training Advisor (MATA) course at Fort Bragg, NC.<sup>21</sup> This five week course included some basic instruction in the Vietnamese language and culture, a focus on training regional/popular forces (local militia), and tactical issues such as booby traps and Viet Cong tactics. It also stressed basic military skills such as weapons, and physical fitness.

Toward the end of the Vietnam War the MATA course became moribund. Due to the efforts of LTG Samuel V. Wilson, who was Deputy Commander of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center from 1969 – 1971, the MATA course was reincarnated as the fourth component of the new Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program. Two of the other components – graduate area studies, and in-country training – were part of the intelligence community’s Foreign Area Specialist program. Language training, the final component, was common to both FAS and MATA.

During the 1970 – 1987 period, the FAO program was well structured toward giving Army officers the basic tools they would need if thrust into an advisor role. Then, in 1986, the six month long FAO course – the successor to MATA – was eliminated from the program depriving FAOs of any education and training that focused explicitly on the skills and approaches required by an advisor. During this same decade and a half, the Army operated on a dual specialty assignment approach where the primary specialty was the officer’s branch and one of many secondary specialties was FAO. FAO was a good fit for Military Intelligence (MI), SF, PSYOP, and Civil Affairs (CA) qualified officers – many of whom carried Infantry as their primary branch.<sup>22</sup> At the end of the 80s and beginning of the 90s, the Army made SF a branch

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<sup>19</sup> Adams, p. 56.

<sup>20</sup> Couch, p. 38.

<sup>21</sup> G. C. Hickey, *The American Military Advisor and His Foreign Counterpart: The Case of Vietnam*, (1965: Santa Monica, CA,) Rand, p. 30.

<sup>22</sup> This allowed officers to acquire several functional area secondaries such as FAO, SF, PSTOP, and CA.

and began to single track officers' careers. This tended to preclude SF, PSYOP, CA, and MI (among others) from becoming FAOs. Moreover, it eliminated FAOs from many assignments in those fields, especially at the tactical and operational levels.

The Special Warfare Center and School, at Fort Bragg, sought to mitigate the negative effects of these changes by reincarnating the FAO course as a four month course called Regional Studies. This salvage operation, however, only affected the SOF community and did not give them the graduate education, in-country, or even the language opportunities available to the fully qualified FAO. As a result of all of these changes, training for advisors suffered. Partially offsetting these developments was the fact that nearly all Army officers are earning Masters' degrees and a significant number of them in full time civilian programs. In addition, the all volunteer force has produced a very well educated NCO corps with a fairly large minority gaining Masters' degrees.

As mentioned earlier, civilian acquired skills and training, particularly among members of the Reserve Components (RC), were critical in selecting and developing advisors in a number of situations. A case in point was the U.S. Forces Liaison Group (USFLG), established in Panama during Operation Just Cause, to help raise, equip, and train the new Panama Public Force.<sup>23</sup> Key members of the USFLG were Reservists – the Deputy Chief, the Intelligence Officer, and the Civil Affairs Officer. The Deputy, who oversaw much of the operation and, for a time, was the principal advisor of the Director of the National Police, was a Latin American FAO with a Ph.D. in Political Science and significant course work in cultural Anthropology – all this along with his language skills acquired as a civilian. The Intelligence Officer, a Captain, was a fluent Spanish speaker with skills acquired as a civilian. He advised the National Police chief of intelligence who later became the Director. Finally, the Civil Affairs Officer, a Major, was branch Civil Affairs who was a Junior High School Spanish teacher. He had also been one of the principal planners for post-conflict reconstruction prior to Operation Just Cause and had traveled extensively in Latin America as a civilian. (His CA specialty was, logically enough, education.) The key point here, is that in CA, PSYOP, and SF, to a lesser extent, RC members are often trained in skills that are critical to successful advising in their civilian education and careers. This observation harkens back to the case of Edward Lansdale, discussed above.

#### *Counterpoint*

*As Rob Thornton points out in Chapter 6, training for his MiTT was nearly all tactical and survival focused. Since that time there has been an effort to train for advising in both Iraq and Afghanistan with the training effort undertaken at Fort Riley, Kansas. On the surface, it looks quite a bit like the Vietnam era MATA course, however, one fairly common criticism has been that few of the instructors have ever been advisors.*

*Still, as one of the interviews makes clear, education and living in another culture are major keys to success in the advisor role. LTC Michael Boden, was the Deputy Commander of the 4<sup>th</sup> BCT in Mosul and in constant coordination with the PRT deputy, COL Mark Brackney. The rapport between Boden and Brackney made advising on local governance significantly easier. Boden stated, "I think a couple of things I did really helped me in dealing with that. The biggest thing was I did grad school and I taught history at West Point. I think the advanced civil*

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<sup>23</sup> The Public Force consists of the National Police, National Air Service, National Maritime Service, Institutional Protection Service, and the Judicial Technical Police. The first three organizations are part of the Ministry of Government and Justice, the Institutional Protection Service is under the Ministry of the Presidency, while the Judicial Technical Police fall under the Public Ministry (a separate branch of government). The author was Deputy Chief of the USFLG during its lifespan of several months in 1990.

*schooling, the immersion in working with higher education, specifically with humanities, government, political science, for me it was history. I think that leadership helped prepare me for something like this. It gave me some of the intellectual tools in the kit bag in terms of dealing with people, and studying that I think really helped me. The other thing was having an overseas assignment ... where you have to deal with another culture.”*

### **Organization for SFA**

The organization of the USMC for the establishment of a Constabulary in Central America and the Caribbean during the period 1915 – 1934 followed the standard lines of military organization with some adaptation to local conditions. In Nicaragua, Marines occupied the following positions in the National Guard/*Guardia Nacional* (GN): Director, Chief of Staff, GN-1 Personnel & Adjutant, GN-2 Intelligence, GN-3 Operations & Training, GN-4 Quartermaster, Paymaster, Law & Public Relations Officer, Communications Officer, Medical Director, Area Commanders (4), Area Executive Officers (4), Department Commanders (13), Managua Chief of Police, Commandant National Penitentiary, and Director Military Academy. The vast majority of these positions were filled by USMC officers whose GN rank was generally one or two grades higher than their rank as Marines. The Medical Director was a U.S. Navy officer and a few of the personnel who served as GN Area and Department commanders were USMC sergeants – in those instances their GN rank invariably was that of a junior commissioned officer.<sup>24</sup>

One common mission during this period was the supervision of local elections. This often entailed a USMC Electoral Mission. Its structure was not too different from that of a Constabulary with, however, a lesser number of Marines participating and, often, the senior leadership (i.e. the President of the Electoral Mission) being of higher rank (general or flag officer).<sup>25</sup> The President of the Electoral Mission usually doubled as the President of the local National Board of Elections.<sup>26</sup>

World War II takes us back to the OSS. In Europe it organized its advisor missions first with the British created Jedburgh teams. These were three member advising teams that parachuted into occupied Europe in civilian clothes to link up with partisans. Later, the OSS formed 15 man Operational Groups. These jumped into France in uniform to train and lead the French Resistance. All members were French speakers. They consisted of two officers and 13 enlisted men: infantry, signal (radio operators), engineers (demolitions), and medics.<sup>27</sup> While other OSS detachments operated in the Pacific Theater, their organizational structure was more ad hoc ranging from the 300 man Detachment 101 in Burma to the small detachment that saved Ho Chi Minh's life in Vietnam.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1950s, both in the Philippines and Vietnam, Edward Lansdale worked within the structure of the U.S. Security Assistance Organization (SAO) – in the former the JUSMAG, the latter, the MAAG. Nevertheless, his actual team organization was very much ad hoc but made up of officers he knew and trusted with the skills he felt necessary. Most important, Lansdale had a team and his team was there for the long haul. In the Philippines Lansdale arrived in 1950 and departed in 1953. He went to Vietnam in 1954 and departed in 1956. Both tours were longer than

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<sup>24</sup> Julian C. Smith, et. al., *A Review of the Organization and Operations of the Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua*, HQ, USMC, Washington DC, ca 1934, pp. 227 – 233.

<sup>25</sup> SWM, pp. 14-1 – 14-15.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Adams, pp. 36 – 37.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. p. 34.

the normal advising tour of duty. Tour length gave him the time to develop significant and effective rapport with the people he was advising.<sup>29</sup>

The early days of the Vietnam advisory expansion – 1961 to 1964 – were characterized by the deployment of SF Operational Detachment Alphas (ODA), or A-teams. This 12 man team, with two officers and ten NCOs, tended to mirror the OSS OGs. The ODA cross trained each group of two soldiers so that the team could easily work in a six man configuration. Like the OGs, the ODA had some degree of language capability and there had been some efforts to impart an understanding of the Vietnamese culture, society, and history. ODAs tended to be deployed for a relatively brief period of six months. Hickey argued that this was too short a time to really establish the needed rapport.<sup>30</sup> One proposed solution was individual rotation which, unfortunately, would have the effect of seriously degrading the effectiveness of the team approach that characterized the ODAs.<sup>31</sup>

By the end of 1964, the advisory effort had greatly outstripped SF numbers. Advisors were assigned individually for the, by now, standard one year tour of duty. Individual officer advisors were assigned to assist ARVN Corps, Divisions, Regiments, and Battalions. US military advisors were also assigned to assist at the provincial and district levels, and to train Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF) militias at those levels. This entailed having some NCO advisors as well as officers.<sup>32</sup> Beginning in 1967, the Pacification Program (as operations at the provincial and district level were called) was reorganized under the Military Assistance Command – Vietnam (MACV) under a civilian Deputy Commander for Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS). CORDS teams assigned to the provinces and districts were mixed organizations of military, USAID, and CIA advisors, all operating together under a single chain of command. Unfortunately, the CORDS stovepipe still was separate from the command stovepipe of the combat forces.

El Salvador was the first major American advisory effort after the Vietnam War ended. In organizational respects, it was a return to the early days of that war with the effort undertaken under the auspices of the SAO – in El Salvador called the MILGP. It was, in addition, mostly a SF show conducted by the officers and men of the 7<sup>th</sup> SFG (A). The advisory effort was formally limited to 55, although that number varied a bit in actuality. In 1981, when the effort began, it was strictly enforced and any additional US military person in-country on temporary duty was offset by a US military person shuttled out of El Salvador. As time went on, a number of military people assigned to the MILGP did not count against the 55 man limit. First, the ten members of a normal large SAO went off the books – these included the Commander, his Chief of Staff, and other administrative personnel. Second, personnel who were in-country on temporary duty of 14 days, or less, were not counted. Finally, a fairly large medical Mobile Training Team was not counted. Thus, by 1987, the military personnel in El Salvador under MILGP auspices could, on any given day, number around 125.<sup>33</sup>

Advisors were assigned to the several sections of the Salvadoran Joint Staff. These were Lieutenant Colonels who reported to the MILGP Commander, a Colonel. Then, in each of the six Salvadoran brigades, an Operations and Training Team (OPATT) consisting of a Major and an NCO were assigned. In addition, a USMC OPATT was assigned to work with the Salvadoran

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<sup>29</sup> See Lansdale, especially Chapters 1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 17.

<sup>30</sup> Hickey, p. 43.

<sup>31</sup> Hickey, 43 -46.

<sup>32</sup> Hickey, Appendix A.

<sup>33</sup> Author's estimate based on his experience as XO of the Combined ESAF Assessment Team in 1987 – 88.

marines. One advisor was assigned to the Civil Defense program and school – the Salvadoran village level self defense militia similar to the PF of Vietnam. For much of the war, the advisor was a SF Master Sergeant but because of Salvadoran military bias against NCOs this individual carried identification as a Captain and wore the rank on his uniform.<sup>34</sup> When he finally was rotated back to the US, he was replaced by a “real” SF Captain. Another position was filled by an MP officer – a FAO – who advised the National Police and the two other police forces. One last position filled by the MILGP was a SF Captain who was assigned to work directly with the USAID mission. This lean organization served to structure advising for a Salvadoran military that by the end of the war numbered 56,000 (including the police).

As El Salvador was winding down the US intervened in Panama. As a result of prior planning – with the usual modifications brought about by reality – several organizations devoted to advising the new Panamanian government and its security forces came into being nearly simultaneously. The Civil Military Operations Task force (CMOTF) took most of SOUTHCOM’s J5 and turned it into teams to reestablish government services. Key to its success was that most of the command’s Latin American FAOs were in the J5’s political-military division and were able to work closely with the newly appointed members of the government. At the highest level, the Director, Brigadier General Benard Gann USAF, advised the new President, Guillermo Endara. Advising 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon, who wore a second hat as Minister of Government and Justice (responsible for public security) was one of the three J5 Deputy Directors, COL Jack Pryor. While neither Gann nor Pryor were FAOs or even Spanish speakers, they both developed strong rapport with their advisees.

Before the end of December, the CMOTF was augmented and then replaced (in large part) by a Civil Affairs Task Force (CATF) led by elements of the 361<sup>st</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade of the Army Reserve that had worked with SOUTHCOM for five years and was largely responsible for much of the post conflict reconstruction planning that had preceded the intervention over the previous two years. A late arriving element of the CATF was the innovative group of Ministerial Support Teams who advised senior members of the several government Ministries.

Two additional organizations were established by U.S. Army South commander, Major General Marc Cisneros, the U.S. Forces Liaison Group (USFLG) and the Judicial Liaison Group (JLG) to advise the Public Force and the judicial system, respectively. The FLG was staffed with active and reserve FAOs as well as two other reservists in key positions who were Spanish speakers – one had been involved in the post conflict planning and was requested by name from the CATF. The JLG was built around the office of the U.S. Army South’s international lawyer, a dual national of Panama and the US.

After about a month, the various organizations involved in post conflict reconstruction advising were put under a newly established headquarters called the Military Support Group (MSG). SF elements in the Joint Special Operations Task Force had a tenuous relationship with the MSG somewhere between TACON and OPCON. Not included under the MSG, but very much a part of the SFA effort, was the contractor heavy International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP). The bottom line in the post conflict Panama advisory effort was that the organizations were a mix of ad hoc (FLG), adaptations of planned for elements (CMOTF and CATF), and adaptations of existing offices (JLG and CMOTF).

*Counterpoint*

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<sup>34</sup> This is an example of using the archaic technique of Brevet rank, although it was not called by that term.

*COL Mark Brackney, Deputy Chief of the Mosul PRT, commented, “[W]e were probably the most successful PRT in country ... one of the absolute keys to success was the close coordination and integration with the BCT.”*

### **Application**

Over the better part of a century the roles and functions of military advisors have evolved significantly. In the days of the Banana Wars, American military advisors were the officers and trainers of indigenous constabulary forces. The constabularies had the dual function of military and police and the American Marines (and soldiers to a lesser extent) who provided their officers trained them and led them in garrison and in combat. Over the course of nearly two decades this advisor corps transitioned from being the only officers to only a few, and then to none. By 1934, the last Marines left Haiti and Nicaragua, leaving only the Army in the Philippines advising and commanding in both the Philippine Army and Constabulary.

OSS advisors in World War II worked closely with partisans whether they were three man Jedburgh teams, 15 man Operational Groups, or detachments of various sizes in the Far East. Regardless, the teams, groups, and detachments brought a number of capabilities with them. Foremost was communications – to and from the allied armies. Communications led to supplies, intelligence, targets, and training. The OGs, in particular, brought specialist skills such as engineering/demolitions and medical along with communications. The teams also brought planning skills linked to an understanding of overall allied strategy.

Lansdale’s approach to advising, both in the Philippines and Vietnam, was personal and idealistic. In both cases, he was operating at the highest levels of the military and the host government. Thus, what was critical was the rapport he was able to build with his counterparts – Magsaysay in the Philippines and Diem in Vietnam. In Vietnam, however, Lansdale also worked with other leaders, some initially opposed to Diem, like Trinh minh The.<sup>35</sup> He and his team operated both informally and made every effort to get out in the country and listen to what people were saying. It was a technique that has proved to be valuable in many other circumstances and is well recorded for a later stage of the Vietnam War by Stuart Herrington.<sup>36</sup>

SF operations during the Cold War – in places like Bolivia, Venezuela, Vietnam, and El Salvador followed a mixed pattern of formal training and informal advising of the type pioneered by Lansdale. In Venezuela, SF helped organize and train the *cazador* (hunter) battalions that helped defeat the Communist insurgency of the early 1960s. In 1967, a SF team led by Major “Pappy” Shelton trained the Bolivian Ranger company commanded by Captain (later General) Gary Prado that chased down and captured Ernesto “Che” Guevara. Also advising the Ranger unit was CIA officer, Felix Rodriguez – a Bay of Pigs veteran. In Vietnam, SF teams advised, trained, and led irregular units against the Vietcong and NVA. These units were known, variously and at different times, as Civilian Irregular Defense Groups, Mike Force, and, in Laos, General Vang Pao’s secret army of Hmoung tribesmen from the highlands.

El Salvador saw a breaking down of the advisory teams into the two man OPATTs. Some of the focus was on classical infantry training and involved constructing ranges and training troops to shoot.<sup>37</sup> Another focus was on advising brigade commanders and Immediate Reaction Battalion commanders on planning and carrying out operations. One team helped the Salvadoran Army set up the National Training Center. At the Joint Staff level, advisors worked with each

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<sup>35</sup> Lansdale, Chapter 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Stalking the Vietcong – Inside Operation Phoenix: A Personal Account* (originally published as *Silence Was a Weapon*), (New York, 1982), Ballantine.:

<sup>37</sup> Author’s conversation with Major Ed Phillips USA SF, 1985 in El Salvador.

staff section. One result, late in the war, was the establishment of a national service record registry by the C1 (personnel) section for the first time in the history of the nation.<sup>38</sup> From the beginning of major US involvement in the conflict, the MILGP commander was involved in developing strategy. SF COL John Waghelstein, who took command in 1981, along side American Ambassador Deane Hinton, worked with the Salvadoran military and government to develop a National Plan. Other commanders and American Ambassadors advised on modified strategic approaches, the most successful being “Municipalities in Action” devised by Ambassador Edwin Corr, COL John Ellerson, and, most important, President Jose Napoleon Duarte.

Panama, in 1990, brought together many of the same elements of advising but with a more mixed cast of players. At the national level, military advisors from the SOUTHCOM J5 worked closely with the President and First Vice President. Personal rapport, which was essential, was facilitated by the fact that the Panamanian President and both Vice Presidents spoke fluent English. In addition, the advisors early on were responsible for making sure that government services were provided while the government was standing up. As it did so, Ministerial Advisory Teams – mainly from the 361<sup>st</sup> CA Brigade with over five years experience in Panama – came in to work with the several ministries.

At the working level, other elements of the CATF, the FLG, the JLG, and, finally, ICITAP began to work to provide government services with the latter three organizations working in the area of security. The FLG, whose staff worked directly with the new Public Force, specifically advised its key leadership. The former commander of the USMILGP in Panama, spent much of his time, Lansdale fashion, in close proximity to the commander of the police. When he returned to his permanent assignment in Guatemala, that role fell by default to the FLG Deputy.<sup>39</sup> Working closely with the chief of Public Force intelligence was the FLG intelligence officer; when that officer succeeded to command his advisor went with him until his active duty tour ended. The FLG operations officer worked closely with his Public Force counterpart and devised the only training course the police would have in the first six months; it took ICITAP that long to begin fielding its training program. Finally, the US Charge d’Affaires asked the FLG/Military Support Group if they could provide police trainers from the RC community who were policemen in civilian life. These came out of the RC SF on 31 day tours and, at the insistence of the MSG commander, were teamed with two man SF teams that remained in place for an extended period. These teams resembled the OPATTs of El Salvador.

*Counterpoint*

*COL Mike Senters, Brigade MiTT Chief, Mosul, had a number of observations about advising that deal with the application and execution of the mission: “It was clear that we were going to train the staff, but I think the training of the staff needs to be expanded into training the staff and sustaining it, maintaining and sustaining soldier skills, actually even developing them.” “If I’m a division MiTT I have to be liaisoning with the division, with MND-N (Multi National Division – North), with the BCT, and also with the PRT at the division level. At the brigade level I need to be liaisoning with the infantry battalion partnership unit....” “There is another thing, you have to look and see; is the U.S. unit feeding them and are they reactive to everything the*

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<sup>38</sup> Author’s observations during the conduct of the Combined ESAF Assessment, 1987 – 88.

<sup>39</sup> It had been expected that the ICITAP Director would play that role, having known and worked with the police commander when they were both junior officers in their respective militaries. When the ICITAP Director failed to become the senior police advisor, the author, who had developed a relationship with the police commander, stepped into that role.

*U.S. partnership unit and BCT says, or are they really in charge? ... When they were given the lead, were they really in the lead?"*

**Conclusion: What have we (should we have) learned?**

Selection

The primary method of selecting advisors for nearly one hundred years has been the “hey you” system. With the exception of SF and FAO selection, there appears to be no clear method for selecting the best qualified advisors. Because advising under both the Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and Unconventional Warfare (UW) missions are core activities of SF, their selection process tends to draw volunteers with the required skill sets.<sup>40</sup> FAO, the successor to the FAS program, emphasizing as it does language and culture, draws volunteers who are predisposed toward being military advisors. There is clearly a recognition that SF and FAO qualifications are desirable for advisors but there is not method for ensuring that those qualifications will be present in an advisor team – certainly not with the “hey you” system of selection.

Several principles for advisor selection appear obvious. First, advisors should be selected based on several specific criteria and not simply because they are available bodies. Second, to the maximum extent possible, they should be volunteers and selected because they believe in the mission. Third, they should be professionally competent in their military specialties and assigned to advise in those, and related, specialties. Fourth, they should have reading and speaking competency in a foreign language at the Defense Language Institute 3/3 level.<sup>41</sup> Last, to the maximum extent possible, advisors should have advanced civil schooling in the social sciences, history, or the humanities as this also develops the ability to work in another culture.

Training

As with selection, with the exceptions of SF and the FAO program, there has never been an institutionalized training program for advisors.<sup>42</sup> During the Vietnam War the MATA course was designed to give advisors some useful background and skills. In the last couple of years, the Army has instituted a course for advisors at Fort Riley, KS but this has hardly been institutionalized.

For SF and FAO, the basic training programs that exist do provide the kinds of skills that are required for military advisors to be successful. Nevertheless, the FAO program could be greatly enhanced in this regard with a return to the old FAO course as the fourth component of FAO training. This could easily be accomplished with a modification of the current Regional Studies course. One element that should be added is an advising simulation exercise, preferably as a Capstone experience.

For military advisors who are not SF or FAO, an advisor training course is needed. Its focus should be on imparting skills that will be useful and that can be adapted for any number of advising situations. The course should include a focus on the local culture and language and be designed to impart a survival level competence in that language. It should address the history, politics, and social structure of the area/country in question. Finally, it should culminate with a

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<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that the five SF groups each have a separate tradition and ethos. 10<sup>th</sup> SFG(A) was created for UW, 7<sup>th</sup> SFG(A) has focused largely on FID, while 5<sup>th</sup> SFG(A) has been most comfortable with the Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance missions. 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> SFG(A) have ethos that are mixes of those of the other three groups.

<sup>41</sup> This competency need not be in the language of the particular country of assignment but rather is an indicator of the capacity to work cross culturally.

<sup>42</sup> Other Army SOF has had access to the Regional Studies course since 1987.

Capstone advising simulation exercise. To be effective the course should be not less than 12 weeks long.

Finally, not every advisor will need such a course. This is particularly true of those who bring civilian acquired education and skills to their position. Many of these will be Reservists but some will be active duty soldiers and officers. In these cases, survival level culture and language training is likely to be sufficient.

#### Organization

Over time, the organization of military advising efforts has evolved from that of a simple military command and staff structure to a more tailored set of organizations. The one common element to most major advisory efforts has been the stovepiping of military and civilian organizations. In Vietnam, this changed, at least in part and only temporarily, with the fielding of CORDS under a civilian Deputy Commander of MACV. In the CORDS organization were all the civilian and military units and personnel who were working in the Pacification Program. Unfortunately, CORDS and the combat units were separate entities under different chains of command that were only united at the level of COMUSMACV.

El Salvador, and other smaller scale advisory efforts, united military and civilian advisors in the Country Team under the direction of the American Ambassador. In that case, the MILGP commander worked for the Ambassador as did the AID mission, the CIA station, and the US Information Service (USIS). There was some integration within the MILGP as a military officer was stationed with AID and the Psychological Operations advisor worked closely with USIS. That said, it still took a strong Ambassador such as the three who served there during the height of the war – Deane Hinton, Thomas Pickering, and Edwin Corr – to control the often independent actors who headed the various agencies involved.

Panama, to some extent, reverted to the previous stovepiped organizations. This was complicated by the role played by ICITAP which, except for its top three positions, was staffed entirely by contractors. Although the several military organizations – the FLG, CMOTF/CATF, and the MSG – all were part of the Country Team, at one time or another, they all responded to the military chain of command first and to the Ambassador second.

Finally, in Iraq, we see the development of organizational structures that include PRTs – first introduced in Afghanistan – MiTTs, and combat elements such as BCTs. Over time, all of these have been placed under the operational control of the BCT which has made for unity of command at the tactical and operational levels. That said, at the theater strategic level (Iraq) only unity of effort exists through the personal and professional relationships of Generals Petraeus and Odierno with Ambassador Crocker.

The optimal organization for an advisory effort requires unity of command, if possible. In the days of the Banana Wars this was achieved by putting the senior Marine ashore in command of the troops. In El Salvador unity of command was achieved because there was no major US military operation on the ground. As a result, the Ambassador's letter of appointment and instruction took precedence. The Lansdale missions in the Philippines and Vietnam were similar but fell apart in Vietnam when Lansdale was no longer being listened to by his military and diplomatic superiors. (Unity of command will not solve all problems but it will focus the blame.) Unity of effort that rests on the determination of two or more strong willed principals to make it work is a poor substitute. Achieving unity of command requires the President to determine that is what he wants and a willingness on his part to enforce it. If that is the case, his determination that either the Ambassador or the military commander commands the effort will make the structure work. At levels below that of theater command, the advising effort also requires unity of

command. Integration of combat, non-combat, and civilian efforts in the manner of what appears to be the current structure in Iraq seems to be an effective solution to organizing the effort.

#### Application

Applying the advisory effort is far more art than science. It depends on proper selection, training, organization, and, most important, the skillful development of rapport with the counterpart. This is something that simply takes time. Even the best “natural” advisors need time to win the trust and build the confidence of their counterparts. As Vietnam showed, short tours of six months or less were simply insufficient to the task. The best advisors, in the Lansdale tradition, often extended their tours, sometimes several times.<sup>43</sup> Even a year may not be long enough. However, effective use of overlapping tours and email communication with an advisor’s predecessors may mitigate this problem somewhat. Perhaps, the single most important skill an advisor brings to the table is the ability to listen and hear what his counterpart really is saying. Only then can the mutual respect necessary to successful advising develop.

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<sup>43</sup> See Herrington, pp. 243 – 244.

## **Chapter 6: Advising the IA in Mosul – A Personal Account from Team 5825**

### **By MAJ Rob Thornton**

#### **Introduction:**

This chapter seeks to tell the story of SFA capabilities were used to further FID in Mosul and provide the reader with a perspective on advising the Iraqi Army in Mosul during the 2006 to 2007 period. Ideally it will build on the foundations established by the previous chapters. It is told from the author's point of view as a battalion level advisor with Team 5825, assigned to advise 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> IA Division located in Mosul, Iraq. Through the narrative I will weave in the types of interactions that take place so the reader gets a feel for the complexity of the environment, and can consider some of the causal relationships.

I had the opportunity to conduct the interviews with the participants, and reflected on their significance to SFA and FID in Mosul. In all but a few cases I personally knew and interacted with those interviewed, and in those cases I was aware of who they were or what they did. As much as I will try and cover the scope, or breadth and depth of what went on, however, the reader is encouraged to actually read the Case Study interviews and consider them in order to broaden their understanding of the conditions and interactions that went on. My decision to use a narrative form is based on my desire to involve the reader in the case study, and better place the follow on observations and recommendations in the context of how a MiTT was selected, formed, trained, deployed, and interacted with the environment. Where relevant, I will include select quotes from the interviews to add perspective.

This chapter will be divided up into five sections. The first part will be on the forming and training of the team. The second, third, and fourth will be broken up by the RIP TOA (Relief in Place/Transfer of Authority) of the three U.S. BCTs who deployed into Mosul while we were there. The fifth will be a conclusion. It is my hope that this chapter and rest of the case study to include the interviews will be complimentary and supplement the reader's understanding of the environment as a whole.

#### **Adhockery – Form the Team**

*"I'll tell you how it all started off. I did go over to Iraq as the DCO of the 169<sup>th</sup> Fires Brigade, and I was originally going to be in support, or actually kind of lead up the IC of the IAD there in Tikrit with the 25<sup>th</sup> ID. As soon as we got on the ground there, we had about a two week turnover, and the day after we signed our transfer of authority letter, I got a call from Major General Mixon who said, "Congratulations Lieutenant Colonel Brackney, you are now the DTL for the PRT in Mosul." My first three questions were "What's a DTL, what's a PRT, and where's Mosul?" because I had no idea. So he said, "You'll find out, be there in 24 hours." So basically, I packed my bags, got on a C130, and I was up in Mosul within about forty-eight hours, and arrived at the PRT, not knowing at that time what a PRT was, what they did, or how they operated. So it was an education from day one for me."*

**COL Mark Brackney, the Deputy Team Leader for the Ninewa PRT on how he was assigned. While not on a MiTT, COL Brackney's experience was pretty standard because it exemplified the way we did business as an institution based on operational need.**

To give the reader an idea of how the MiTTs which were to go to Mosul and advise the 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Division were formed, it is useful to start at the beginning. I was at Fort Knox working a follow on assignment to company command. I'd spent about three and half years at Fort Lewis where I'd been a staff officer, a rifle company commander and the HHC commander in 1<sup>st</sup> BN, 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry in 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT. At that time I was tasked to be an advisor and I was working in a TRADOC (the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command) position as part of the effort to experiment with the Army's Future Combat System (FCS). This was also a staff position in the unit which fought a FCS BCT in simulation to consider the implications in terms of land power. I was told around Christmas 2005 that my name was number three on the list for deployment and I could expect to deploy around June of 2006. This was not the case, the day after I brought my wife home with our fourth child from the hospital I got a call saying the two officers in front of me had fallen off the list and I was to fill an immediate individual advisor tasking. Under the circumstance the command got me a little extra time to put things right with my family prior to departing for Fort Hood.

When I arrived at Fort Hood there was a good deal of confusion as the 75<sup>th</sup> Division was trying to get its arms around meeting the individual training requirements associated with forming and deploying the range and numbers of transition teams the theater was requesting. Most of my fellow future advisors I met were also in the dark. Mostly these were folks that were tasked from the Active and Reserve components. One reserve unit (the 108<sup>th</sup>) had actually known of this deployment in advance and had done most of the administrative tasks associated with deploying.

This was the overall nature of the conditions; the Army was already trying to adjust to the requirements of sustained combat and what that meant for the total Army. Unit manning was the priority in order to prepare BCTs for deployment. Not much was known about what the advisor teams were actually going to have to do by those who were making force allocation decisions. COIN thought and doctrine, and the idea of developing host nation security forces as a critical part of achieving our policy goals was not receiving the weight it would later; the focus was on preparing BCTs for combat.

I met part of team 5825 at North Fort Hood as they were coming back from M4 qualification. Although the tasker I'd been sent to fulfill was for a MiTT leader, 5825 already had an assigned officer to that billet. This officer was a major and I was a captain, in a normal unit that would indicate greater professional development and relevant experience and education of the type required to advise an Infantry Battalion. This was not the case. The team leader was a good officer and proved himself an effective small unit leader in combat; however, his experience level did not coincide with his responsibilities outside of leading an 11 man team. He was a branch transfer to Infantry from ADA (Air Defense Artillery) where he'd led a platoon. He had transferred over based on a Reserve Component assignment, and in his reserve capacity taught some ROTC courses. In his civilian capacity he sold insurance. He had not been to a formal advance course, and he had not held a company command. He left the active Army in the early 90s following a deployment in Operation Desert Storm as an ADA platoon leader. This officer did the very best his Army education, training, and experience had prepared him for. I remark on this officer's qualifications not to detract from the good job he did, but to consider the criteria for which he was selected to advise an Iraqi Battalion Commander who had been in combat for some time and had a great deal of professional military experience, as well as direct a team of staff advisors under combat conditions in terms of considering what that Iraqi battalion needed to do in order to increase its capability, commitment, confidence, and competence.

The rest of the team also reflected the ad-hoc nature of the assignment. The Intelligence advisor was an ADA officer out of Fort Bliss where he was awaiting command. He'd been serving in an S-2 billet for his BDE, but had not had to deploy in that capacity. He had some combat experience in OIF 1 in 2003, but nothing in his education, training or development had really prepared him to be an Intelligence advisor to a host nation security force battling an insurgency. His Iraqi counterpart was perhaps the best Iraqi Battalion intelligence officer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA Division and the type of advisement he required was not technical in nature, but involved the integration of Intelligence into operations. This officer contributed greatly to the team outside of the capacity as the Intel advisor, his consistent efforts to help the 1/2/2 BN S1 section develop a personnel tracking and accountability system allowed the 1/2/2 BN CDR (as well as the BN MiTT, the BDE MiTT and our coalition force partner unit) the ability to better see his BN, and make decisions, or requests to higher.

The HHC Advisor was the oldest member of our team, he was a Reservist, also out of the 108<sup>th</sup>. This officer was a math teacher by trade in Puerto Rico, as a Major approaching 50. He may not have been the officer most suited to being a combat advisor, but he did have the temperament to work in a cross cultural environment and train, advise, and assist on maintenance issues to a military culture to whom even the idea of PMCS was foreign.

Our logistics advisor was a LTC serving in an AGR billet. It had been a long time since he'd done tactical logistics or fired a weapon. He had not fired a crew served weapon since his days as a cadet. He'd been assigned to 5825 while at Fort Hood as a fluke; he should have been assigned to a much higher echelon command. Both our BN MiTT and the rest of the BDE MiTT teams benefited greatly by having him exactly where he was at; his understanding of the U.S. logistics system, relationships in Baghdad and the IA RSU (Regional Support Unit) at AL Kisick made possible a great many things which would otherwise have not been possible. On patrol this LTC preferred to gun on the M240, but like the rest of the team also took his turn at driving and leading patrols as part of the MiTT operations.

The last permanent member of our team was our Team NCOIC who was slotted as our Intelligence NCO advisor. This 1SG out of the ADA officer's basic course at Fort Bliss was also given a last minute tasker as he became the alternate to a SNCO who could not deploy. While the 1SG did work some of the issues advising the 1/2/2 Intel NCO who worked in the detainee facility, the real work he did was in developing 1/2/2 NCOs on the role of the NCO, particularly with the BN's CSM and company 1SGs. He also helped the BN's officers understand the role of the NCO and how to get the most out of them, and he formed relationships with the SNCOs and NCOs in the various partner units. The last role was important as we often had augmentation from partner units who wanted to ensure their soldiers were taken care of, and COP EAGLE was used as a "Warm Base" for combined operations at the time so it was common to have a section or platoon staying out at EAGLE for a couple of days at a time.

This was the 1/2/2 advisor team that formed at Fort Hood and went through training there, then deployed to Kuwait with a follow on to Taji, Iraq and ultimately Mosul. We were told the coalition partner BCT would augment our 6 man team with a medic, a FSO, a FSNCO, a Maintenance NCO and a Communications NCO once we were on the ground in Mosul. That turned out to be a half truth.

Team 5825 formed as part of a larger MiTT contingent that was the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV MiTT contingent consisting of the DIV MiTT team, three BDE MiTT teams, and their subordinate BN MiTTs. The 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE MiTT was headed up by LTC (P) Mike Senters from Fort Rucker. His team like the BN MiTTs and the DIV MiTT was an ad-hoc conglomerate of Active and Reserve

Component, with a range of experiences and backgrounds. Just by looking at the records of the personnel, there would seem to be no discriminators that indicated a personality that was better suited or less suited than another. However, as the deployment played out, the abilities of individuals to cooperate with one another and in some cases tolerate each other in an environment where the team worked and lived with their Iraqi counterparts would make a big difference as to the success they enjoyed in building capability, confidence, competence and commitment of those they advised.

The training itself both at Fort Hood and Kuwait was largely survival and combat type skills. What I mean is that the training was oriented on getting individuals who may not have conducted even Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM) with a personal weapon to a point where they could operate as teams in combat. There was very little cultural and advisory training, what was there was of very limited utility. Looking back and considering the way in which the teams had been formed with such an indefinable range of experience, training and education, the training was probably all that it could be given the short suspense to fill theater requirements. At the time the 75<sup>th</sup> Division had been tasked to conduct the train up for the MiTTs and there was very little institutional knowledge about what that training should consist of. The focus was on preparing a very diverse and ad-hoc group of soldiers to survive on the battlefield, not necessarily to be successful advisors that would speed the development of Iraqi forces.

In Kuwait the MiTTs received much the same training that they had at Fort Hood with the addition of some theater specific lane training such as how to identify and negotiate a battlefield where IED ambushes constituted the biggest threat, and some additional convoy live fire training. For about half of the aggregate 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV MiTTs I'd say the time could have been better spent, however for the other half the training was probably a good idea as there were still some NDs (negligent discharges that were unintentional firing of the weapon) on the crew served weapons that more training or the selection of more qualified advisors would probably have alleviated. The NDs were not the only indicators of training deficiencies, just the ones that tend to attract attention.

In Taji the MiTTs attended a course at the Phoenix Academy (now also referred to as the COIN Academy). This course was more focused than the training in Kuwait and Fort Hood. However, there was still some redundancy, and again for some it was probably still needed. The best class I personally received there was from a contractor who'd had a great deal of experience advising Foreign Security Forces (FSF) around the world. It was not the kind of mile wide, one inch deep fluff that we'd gotten up to that point, it was common sense type advice based on years of being an advisor. It was not necessarily cultural in nature, although there was some advice with respect to advising an Arab army (although up in Mosul it was by no means 100 percent applicable). The great value in Mr. Robbie Robertson's two hour block of instruction was in its advice on "how to advise." Again, not the way it would come across in a field manual, but the mechanics of doing it in the field for a long time under all kinds of conditions. This class was the first and last one to really identify and develop the skills that would be needed to advise.

## **Mosul: Contact Point and working with the 172<sup>nd</sup> SBCT**

*“The other mission I see as important is providing liaison with a partnership unit. The training didn't cover the recommended linkages you needed to establish with the partnership unit to enable and increase the level of situational awareness of Iraqi Army operations, intelligence sharing, and facilitate unit of effort in the AOR, the training was a hand wave of oh yeah, you're going to have a partnership unit. Well, what did that mean?”*

**COL Mike Senters looking back on the train up for his deployment as a “Combat Advisor” (ed. note – COL Senter’s wished to clarify the last sentence after reading this chapter – so it reads slightly different than his interview.)**

When we arrived in Mosul at FOBs MAREZ we still had a few administrative tasks and briefings to attend prior to linking up with the advisor teams we would be relieving. There was an opportunity to get a feel for MAREZ which would be the primary source of sustainment for the smaller combat outposts like EAGLE where 1/2/2 would advise at. In the case of the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE MiTT and the BN MiTT advising 2/2/2 IA, MAREZ would be home as those IA units had compounds which adjoined MAREZ. In the case of 3/2/2 they were about an hour south of MAREZ at a larger compound in Hamam Al Alil. FOB MAREZ became the link up for not only logistics but also for coordination since our IA BN’s higher HQs, our higher MiTT HQs and the BCT were all there.

Prior to linking up with our respective teams with whom we were conducting RIP/TOA and departing for our respective locations there was a brief given jointly by the 172<sup>nd</sup> CDR and some of the BCT leadership. This was really the first opportunity where the issue of unity of effort was visible, and in my mind it brought up some disconnects. I now had enough information about the mission and the environment that I was able to identify some missing pieces. There did not seem to be a common understanding about where in terms of development the IA were, what needed to be done in terms of a development path to get them to a point where they were capable of sustainable security, what resources were going to be made available to support their development, and what type of impact the enemy was having on their development. There seemed to be no common vision articulated in the brief. Later after talking with the both the MiTTs and members of the BCT I began to understand why.

We rode out to EAGLE with the help of A/1-17 IN from the 172<sup>nd</sup>, the MiTT’s three HMMWVs and a trailer did not provide enough space to bring both them and our six additional personnel back from MAREZ. If you have not had the experience of being in the back of a M114 up armored HMMWV (which has a max load of five including the gunner) and trying to get your bearings in a new environment, it is not easy. Every street but RTE TAMPA which was the MSR (Main Supply Route) looked pretty much the same. The vehicle did not have enough CVCs (Combat Vehicle Crewman helmets with a built in headphone and microphones) to allow me to listen in the discussion between the driver, TC and gunner – who were also the S1 Advisor, the S3 Advisor and the S2 Advisor we’d replace. As such asking questions over the top of the whine of the engine of a vehicle straining to move as fast as the driver was trying to make amounted to shouting in the wind. I knew where I had come from, knew it had taken about 15 minutes to get there I knew we’d made no contact on the way, and knew I was at COP Eagle when I got there.

There was a set schedule of things that had to happen as part of the RIP/TOA between the outgoing MiTT and our team. This was about a 10 day event where we looked at how their MiTT did business; considered the SOPs they instituted; individual advisory requirements; how they lived with one another; conducted a circulation of the battlefield; and learned how to get around the places in Mosul we needed to be familiar with. Some of this was a “who is who within 1/2/2 IA.” Some of it was “who you need to know on MAREZ to get things done you can’t do for yourself” like vehicle and equipment maintenance. Some of it was “what routes were better than others” based on where you were going. The idea was at the end of the RIP/TOA you’d have just enough knowledge to get you in the vicinity of the place where you could ask the right questions. This is the challenge of trying to sustain current mission requirements, meet the requirements of leaving imposed by a higher HQs, and still try and do right by the guys who are replacing you.

One of the observations that we made early on in the RIP/TOA was that there were some internal frictions between the members of the MiTT we were replacing, and that there also seemed to be some tension between them and their higher echelon BDE MiTT. Later we found out this had left a bad impression with the coalition partner unit 1-17 IN. The group seemed to have broken into factions, and other than what was required with regard to group activities such movement, or showing us how they executed portion of their unit SOPs, they did not associate or share information. Whatever the causes for the disintegration, or the possibility that they’d never really “formed” as a team, the result left an impression on us, the 1-17 IN, the interpreters, the augmentation we inherited and most importantly the IA BN we were there to advise.

It would be unfair to characterize the year they spent there on 10 days of working with them, they actually accomplished a large task in just assisting the IA BN and BDE in moving from the east side of Mosul across the Tigris to the west side. Anybody who has done such a move can tell you what a challenge it is, but moving a large organization like a BN and a BDE with very few operational trucks at the time, under combat conditions, and from a population density of mostly Kurd to one of mostly Arab is a huge accomplishment. Coordinating support for this, even if the 1-17 was largely the provider of support was still a huge task for the MiTTs in terms of advising the IA, obtaining resources, and getting over the operational humps that come from such a move. To that set of MiTTs great credit, the BN and BDE seemed to have established a working base of operations in their new area of operations. Its also worth considering that level of proficiency in the IA we inherited was not due solely to a lack of competency on the previous MiTT, but was also a factor of time and development. The BN moving from the old AO on the east side to the new one on the west side had to have caused some developmental hiccups.

After we dropped off the old team on MAREZ to await transportation out of theater, we set off on the task of sorting ourselves out. It was one thing to be under the shadow of the outgoing team, another to take the reins. Our counterparts across Mosul at the various BN, BDE, and the DIV level MiTTs were doing likewise. The 172<sup>nd</sup> and its subordinate units were getting a feel for us. The IA were cautious as they wondered how we’d be different. One thing that struck us during the RIP/TOA was the authoritative and directive nature of the previous team with regard to the IA.

One of the advisors had placed himself in an unofficial leadership role of the Battalion’s Scout Platoon. I watched him doing a PCI (Pre-Combat Inspection) of a scout and then making him do push-ups and threatening to fire him as a team leader. Afterwards I talked to the Scout Platoon Leader (PL) and explained to him that as soon as we took over we would advise and develop them as leaders, but not replace them as leaders. Later we found out how much discord

this created as some of the previous team members had created confusion as to who was actually in charge. There seemed to be no consensus as to what the role of the MiTT was from the point of view of the Iraqis. Again, it is hard to account for exactly why things were the way they were, we were not there for the previous year. However, it does raise a question about the proper role of an advisor, and the ability of our advisors to know when they should do something versus when they should transition it to the indigenous force. That incident and others like it allowed us to consider what our role should be, and how it should be different then what we were observing.

As such the first two things we had to do as a team were: to finish forming with regard to the conditions on the ground; and to gain some understanding on where to place our efforts and resources to move the battalion's development forward. The two issues were related in a "chicken and egg" sort of way, and would require constant reconsideration as the conditions changed with the environment.

The first was impacted by the selection and composition of our team. The immediate needs of the IA BN did not necessarily line up with either the roles we'd been assigned, or the level of experience, training, and education that each team member brought with them. COP Eagle itself was not a bad set up as it allowed the MiTT to live and work in the same structure as the BN HQs. The MiTT had decent accommodations and defenses that could be improved with resources in a manner that supported continuous, sustained operations.

There was also the challenge of defining our roles in a way that reflected the best use of our skills, which was also affected by the standard set by the previous team. There were several dynamics in play that had to be accounted for. The 1-17 IN leadership had an established relationship with the 1/2/2 IA leadership, so establishing credibility in their eyes mattered as well. The 1/2/2 IA leadership had grown comfortable with the status quo with regard to their roles within the battalion. The new BDE MiTT was also a consideration as it was trying to figure out what its role was both with regard to the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA BDE and with regard to 1-17 IN.

Being the only active duty Infantry officer to have had a couple of commands, to have served in a SBCT, to have been on both BN and BDE staff provided me a level of credibility with all three parties from the onset. I even knew the 172<sup>nd</sup> XO from our time in 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT at Fort Lewis. With respect to the IA we had many mutual acquaintances as my old BN, 1-24<sup>th</sup> IN had a good reputation amongst the IA in Mosul. Many IA in fact had digital or hard copy photos with various friends of mine. The Iraqis call it "wasta," but it kind of boils down to respect and credibility. My actions and those of my fellow advisors would determine if our level of wasta went up or down.

The previous team chief appeared to have had something of an exclusive relationship with the IA BN CDR. This also seemed to be a source of friction within the team because so much of what did or did not happen seemed to revolve around that. I was not the assigned MiTT Chief, so I needed to be careful about how my actions were perceived from the IA perspective. I knew we needed to be seen as a team, but I also knew the limitations of training, education, and experience the Army had provided our team members to prepare them for advising an Iraqi Infantry BN in combat. Our strength as a team wound up being in our ability to recognize the strengths and weaknesses in each other and leverage them as the conditions changed. As such we sort of voluntarily discarded our individual role identities and assumed a group identity that allowed us to consult each other, or advise any of the Iraqi leadership as we needed to.

Gaining an understanding of what needed to be done first so we could prioritize and allocate resources was the second thing we had to accomplish. This is a never ending task in that the environment is complex and interactive and as such new METT-TC conditions are always being

created. However, there is a need to establish what you believe are the starting conditions, and then you create a method of feedback as to your actions and inactions so it becomes a learning model. The first thing we had to do was define them in terms of:

- **Mission** –What should we as a MiTT focus on – what the Coalition Force Partner considered most important based on its perspective? What our MiTT IAG Chain of Command believed was most important? The goals the IA leadership we were advising had set for themselves? How would the coalition forces and the higher IA HQs shape the BN’s development? How could we reconcile those differences to provide the kind of advice to all that furthered common goals and unity of effort?
- **Enemy** – how would the enemy situation affect our ability to develop the IA BN, and how could/would the BN’s operations affect the enemy?
- **Terrain** – How would the environment, both the physical and cultural shape the development of the IA and their operations? How did our location at COP EAGLE benefit the mission, or complicate it?
- **Troops** – What was the ethnic and religious composition of the BN and how much did it factor into the BN’s development? What was the level of competency, commitment, confidence in the BN, and what did this equate to in terms of capability? How did the training they received previously affect what was possible? What was our ability to conduct required training? How would our personnel deficiencies in training, education, experience and manning affect our mission? How could we compensate?
- **Time** - What could we as a MiTT reasonably accomplish in a year, and what could we shape for a follow on MiTT? How would changes in the conditions create new or order requirements? How did the need to show progression affect our various higher HQs?
- **Civilians** – Since we were conducting operations amongst the population, what was there relationship to the BN’s development? What was required in order for the BN to be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the people in western Mosul? What civilians exercised influence over the BN or the BN’s higher HQ’s? Who were the AOR power brokers (official and unofficial)? What was the impact of civilians on operations and vice versa?

These were the types of questions we as a team visited and revisited to better understand our environment and the 1/2/2 BN. What we found are that the conditions don’t exist in isolation, but are inter-related to one another. An example is the issue of the BN’s ethnic and religious composition. The first thing you saw as you drove up to COP EAGLE from the East was a large Iraqi Flag painted across a number of the large T-Walls (12 foot tall x 6 foot wide) concrete barriers emplaced as force protection measures). It seemed normal enough given that this was an Iraqi Army BN sized outpost; however this was not the rationale for painting the wall.

1/2/2 was about 75 percent Kurd and 25 percent Arab in the Spring of 2006. The previous BN that occupied COP EAGLE was almost Kurdish pure. COP EAGLE was bordered by the Hay Al Tenek neighborhood on the South side, the Islah Al Zerah neighborhood on the North East side, and Al Sina’a industrial/commercial work area on the North West side. These are all very poor and very Arab. COP EAGLE itself sat in a low spot, and although it had other benefits, it was easily attacked by mortars and RPGs which can both be fired as an area effect weapon from a reasonable distance or to target specific structures and vehicles.

When 1/2/2 first moved into COP EAGLE there was a great deal of animosity to the IA, and this BN was seen as the one before it, as a representation of Kurdish encroachment. As such they

were the subject of a greater increase in attacks, and their influence of the population was very low. Some of the BN's leadership, which was a mix of Kurd and Arab, decided to try and identify themselves as Iraqi and not as Kurdish, and the flag was painted.

The anecdote above shows one level of identification. Within the BN itself, there were other levels of identification. The BN CDR was a Zebari Kurd, meaning his tribal origin was Zebari. His personal security detachment, about 12 NCOs, and enlisted with whom he conducted battlefield circulation were also Zebari. Of the four rifle companies in the BN, three were Kurdish led and mostly manned. Of these three, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Companies were Zebari Kurd, while 3<sup>rd</sup> Company was Mizzuti Kurd. While 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Companies were led by company grade officers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Company had an older major of great tribal wasta. 1<sup>st</sup> Company was Sunni Arab, and was led by a LTC of equal rank to the BN CDR, and who was also of great wasta being a tribal leader in a powerful tribe. The 1<sup>st</sup> CO CDR also was a very competent leader, had the best company in the BN, and had a relationship with the Americans dating back to the 101<sup>st</sup> – in fact he claimed friendship with then MG Petraeus, CDR of the 101<sup>st</sup> ABN DIV (AASLT).

The HHC (Headquarters and Headquarters Company) was like our own HHCs a hodge podge of various elements, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and characters. The CSM was an Al-Jabouri Sunni Arab who soldiered most of his life, fought in the Iran-Iraq war as a special forces soldier and who was a great peacemaker. We were once on an operation northwest of Mosul and I saw a piece of land I remarked would make a fine farm. He told me I should grow olives, to which he followed that he would raise sheep on the adjacent land that would eat the olives and both our families would eat well.

The HHC CDR was also the BN's Maintenance Officer. He was a Sunni Arab and a fine officer. Both he and his father were Iraqi Army officers and would later be assassinated; first the father, then months later the son. The S3 who was also acting as the BN XO was a Turcoman, and a good enough officer, but not really effective at either role given he had to be both. The S2 and A/S3 were among the best officers in the BN. Both would have made fantastic CDRs, but were also invaluable as staff officers. While the first BN CDR 1/2/2 had during our tenure was off trying to make contact with his PSD, these two officers provided direction for the BN, coordinating patrols, and bringing calm amongst the various crises that arose.

That first BN CDR was a good enough officer, but not an effective BN CDR. He tended to be in chance contact with the enemy often, and out of contact with his BN often. He complained continuously about the state of his BN, but rarely did he try and employ it as a BN, nor do I think he really understood what was required of him as BN CDR. He later went on to become the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV S2, and being a former police officer he was pretty good at HUMINT, but not necessarily in the manner we might think is right for a DIV S2 – meaning he did not really leverage the information or analysis collected by the division as a whole in support of the DIV or its BDEs with a city wide intelligence picture.

The men of 1/2/2 ranged from Sunni Kurd to Sunni Arab, Turcoman, Shiite Arab, and Yzidi Kurd. There were even a few Christians. The literacy rate was fairly high, but some could not (or would not) speak both Arabic and Kurdish, so the radio often required a translator between patrols, this made manning the BN Operations Center with an RTO (Radio Telephone Operator) who could speak both a must, or at least to have a Kurdish speaker on duty with an Arab speaker. This also impacted our interpreter requirements. They were for the most part capable warriors, but had not really made the transition to seeing themselves as soldiers of a common battalion; this would change a great deal over the following year.

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The life support and material infrastructure of COP EAGLE was in pretty bad shape. There were plumbing and sewage issues which impacted the health and morale of the BN's soldiers. There were issues with the quality and quantity of food. There were and electrical issues which presented a safety issue, but also impacted operations. There were heating and cooling issues in the company barracks that needed attention. There was a lack of towers, gates, T-Walls and other force protection and survivability measures which would have improved the BN's operational ability both making the enemy's attacks less effective and by allowing the BN to mask some of its preparations for the surrounding and higher situated civilian structures on the perimeter. In summary there were lots of areas that needed improvement.

This became a sort of "to do" list for the BN, and it was not just a matter of picking one. Resources were not always available for one versus another, sometimes it was a matter of keeping up the pressure until something came through, and then getting that improvement done before someone changed their mind or some new priority came up. Often the best you could do was treat the symptom of the problem or minimize the impact of a problem e.g. the sewage issue could not be fixed given geography and physics; however, we did acquire additional fly bait to offset the effects. The heating and cooling issue was not going to get fixed anytime soon, however we did eventually: find a way to get some ACs into the BN and fix some of the BN's existing swamp coolers; open up some of the spaces needed to spread the men out; influence some of the higher IA leadership to put pressure on the food vendors to meet their contracts better; and get the coalition unit to commit the material handling equipment and concrete to improve the BN's defenses.

It quickly became apparent that there were pay and promotion issues in the BN. The CDR had taken the perspective that it was mostly just complaints from those who did not like him, meaning those who were not Zebari Kurd, or who had not found "work arounds" for just compensation. There were soldiers who because the system and the institution were immature had never been entered into the pay system and no matter who said they were real, the system would not account for them. This is one of the reasons that the "ghost system" had been perpetuated – it allowed soldiers who were not recognized by the system to be paid with the monies paid to soldiers who were recognized, but who for whatever reason were no longer serving. It also facilitated corruption and graft throughout the system, and created the resistance to reforming the system.

The same was true for promotions. The system's reactions to accusations of corruptions facilitated the conditions which made promoting deserving soldiers more difficult, while creating the conditions where corruption was reinforced as the way to do business. While there were outright abuses of the system which needed to be identified and punished, the system as a whole seemed to suffer from explosive growth without building in accountability and oversight – meaning the mechanisms such as the Inspector General in a capacity that would allow deficiencies to be corrected without overreaction or apathy. For many American advisors this was just too much to consider from a one year perspective, and labeling the Iraqis overall as being inclined to corruption and graft was much easier. I knew many Iraqis who did the right thing and broke their own rules for the right reasons, and who understood the maturity issues of the system had to account for in order to take care of soldiers. I also knew a few who were truly corrupt and who because they felt they were owed, or were just plain opportunistic in war time conditions were doing things that jeopardized the mission and the men. These men were hard to weed out; in fact it took the better part of our year to do so.

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The hardest part was determining what was the problem we could affect, if it was worth the effort (meaning would it improve the BN's development), and whose belly button had to be pushed, or who had to be stroked in order to get things done. These are not the skills identified as required to advise an IA BN CDR and his Staff, but they are critical to enabling development of capability. Many of these are also not problems with solutions that reside at the tactical level. Many are institutional level problems that the advisor must articulate to the various "highers" that exist and can inform their own "highers" so a more complete understanding can evolve and the analysis required to help achieve a sustainable solution can be conducted.

Often because individuals and units rotate in and out, these problems get overlooked or undervalued because they don't match up well with the priorities set for that year. However with regard to developing the conditions for sustainable security from the perspective of the host nation force tactical unit and leader who will not rotate in and out but will remain, these problems matter. They have a cumulative weight on effectiveness that is hard to account for as an outsider. This is where experience and understanding of what it takes to generate, organize, train, employ and recruit a security force matters at the advisor level. The ability to recognize what is relevant, conduct the analysis and articulate it in a context that can go up the chain of command so it gets the attention it needs requires a certain level of experience and education.

*"I was a little shaky on exactly what it was I was supposed to do when I first got there, so there was a little bit of discovery learning. I got there, got linked up with my counterpart, began to try to understand the overall strategy in Iraq with Multi-National Force- Iraq, which was, as I understood it, which was the U.S. and the Iraqis partnering at the army level at least, working towards Iraqi army assuming the lead with coalition in support, to having provincial elections and provincial Iraqi control, to ultimately Iraqi security self-reliance."*

### **LTC (R) Howie Brewington on assuming his role as a BDE MiTT Chief**

Understanding what 1/2/2 IA's true operational capability was not just a matter of measuring the number of patrols they reported, the number present for duty and manning the platoon sized COPs (Combat Outposts). It also required considering aspects such as their OR (Operational Readiness) rate of the few patrol vehicles they had, the enemy's actions and freedom of movement, and the populations allegiances. While some things could be measured quantitatively, absent the context they could lead to a number of different conclusions.

It took us about three months to get a feel for what was going on in the environment, and what that meant for 1/2/2. Part of the challenge was determining what "normal" looked like, or should look like with respect to a city like Mosul. What was the result of an expected change, such as the flow of people with seasons or holidays, and what was the result of unexpected change such as displaced peoples? What did a normal traffic pattern look like on a given day of the week? Why was enemy activity usually slack on Fridays? What were the possible explanations why enemy activities occurred in certain patterns? What was the relationship between 1/2/2 activities and the enemy? What about the population's activities? This took about three months for us to begin to understand. I'm not sure how much difference it would have made if we had a list of expected activities because lists tend to be content oriented and devoid of context. Understanding some things requires either time or some relevant experience from which to suppose a causal relationship.

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One of the things we found early on is that moving our team required the whole team. With so many different areas to advise 1/2/2 on, and with 1/2/2's leadership on different leave cycles and working different hours we realized that in order to understand what needed to be done and make a difference we'd have to limit team movement. For the first few months we had some additional soldiers to round out our numbers, a fantastic USARNG medic from Iowa, and two soldiers from 1-17 IN. This gave us the nine bodies required to have a driver, TC and gunner for each of three vehicles. Three vehicles was the minimum number of vehicles to move. Very few trips were less the three hours, every tactical movement is a combat patrol, and nothing is usually ever simple or easy.

We started hitching rides with A/1-17 IN's patrols in onesies and twosies in order to get some idea of what 1/2/2's AO was like. What were the different neighborhoods like? Who were the people that 1-17 knew? What did the heavy IED sites look like and why were they preferred by the enemy? How did 1-17 view the IA and the IP (Iraqi Police)? What were the issues of combined U.S. and Iraqi patrols? How did they talk, how did they coordinate movement? We were not allowed to go out with the Iraqis in this manner. For the most part their small Toyota, Mazda, and Nissan trucks were unarmored and unreliable. There is also the consideration of who in the MiTT was actually experienced and trained to patrol in singles or pairs. 1-17 was happy to have us along, and facilitated our understanding of the challenges 1/2/2 faced greatly.

Most of the 1/2/2's resources as an Infantry Battalion were tied to manning and sustaining its own BN COP (COP EAGLE), the three platoon sized COPs (YARMOOK, SANTA FE, and SANTA FE GATE), one of which was a TCP (Traffic Control Point) on Tal Afar Road which was one of the main vehicle transit points into Western Mosul. Four platoons out of a BN may not sound like much, but when you consider that the BN had only about 70 percent of its soldiers, and had a liberal leave policy of 7 & 7 (seven days on and seven days off) a 120 men, plus the men required to move between them, the men required to coordinate, command and control, and the need to keep a platoon sized element available if one of the COPs should come under attack and you quickly run out of resources.

Overall the BN Scout platoon was probably the best trained and most suited to working with U.S. forces. These were all Yzidi Kurds (Yzidi is a religion unto itself, not part of Islam) who had been working with U.S. forces since 2003. The majority of them spoke some English, and a few spoke good enough to qualify as an interpreter. They were very good soldiers, some having served as Kurdish Peshmurga. They looked after their equipment better, and made for a fine Quick Reaction Force (QRF), or could be broken down into proficient 3 man sniper teams that could be depended upon. I would rate them very high in comparison to many units I've seen, including some American ones. There were three problems with the Scouts though. They were not Arab so they could not "blend in" in NW Mosul. They were not Sunni Islamic, so there was some prejudice against them by other members of the BN (Yzidis were sometimes cast a devil worshipers since in their eschatology Lucifer never fell from Grace, and God's Angels act as divine interlocutors similar to Saints). There were only so many of scouts, so if the BN employed them as sniper teams then that was what they would be doing for the next 48 or 72 hours if you include preparation and recovery. Like the rest of the BN and the 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV IA at this time the scouts were also on a 7 & 7 leave policy.

It is worth devoting a paragraph or two to discussing the leave policy because there were certainly a share of Americans who thought this was indicative of the Iraqis lack of professionalism. It also introduces the issue of mirroring US perspectives and values on Foreign Security Forces (FSF) without understanding their environment. Consider that while U.S. units

rotate in and out, the Iraqis have been in that environment since 2003 and will remain in that environment for some time to come. The domestic security threat will likely not disappear when U.S. forces withdraw, since that is not the precondition – the goal is to bring up Iraqi Security Forces to a level of capability and capacity where they can sustain their security.

The Iraqis have no secure area for their families to reside in while they fight for their country, there is no walled base manned by DoD civilian or military uniformed police. Their families are often targeted by an enemy who knows who they are and what they do. In fact we lost as many IA to assassination at home or in route to their homes as in combat operations – they were more vulnerable and let their guard down. They are often the only ones in their families who can do many of the required things it takes to maintain a family. Depending on where they live it may require two to three days travel to get home and two to three days travel to get back; it was seldom a straight line, and often subject to security. Iraqi forces were paid in cash; there were no checks, direct deposit, e-banking, etc. Comparatively U.S. forces can do electronic banking and pay bills from almost anywhere in the globe. If we want something off the Internet it arrives at the U.S. FOB in about a week. Our families are able to talk with us through various modes of communication, and they are safe. There are dependable public services, we have reliable hospitals, and we have leisure and entertainment. It is all too easy to see the Iraqi soldier or policeman in isolation from his environment, as it is the enemy. Both however exist within the context of their environment and understanding this is key to gaining relevant perspective and translating that into influence so you can become a “trusted” advisor.

There is a need to be able to understand and empathize. It does not mean you have to agree, or “go native” in your advocacy, but you do have to be able to acknowledge outside perspectives and consider the implications on other areas. Advising has a component of providing relevant technical advice with regards to operations and training, but it also has a “people” component or no one will tell you what you need to know, or listen to what you have to say.

The observations we made during the first three months were that: 1/2/2 IA and its next two higher HQs were largely on the defensive; the IP were relatively useless; U.S. Forces were conducting or leading most of the offensive operations and they could control parts of the city for a short duration – mostly these were along the major MSR; the AIF (Anti-Iraq Forces) enjoyed too much freedom of movement (both physical and ideological) in the areas that led to the MSR; the AIF seemed to have the initiative in Mosul as long as they did not attack a fixed, heavily manned position – e.g. they ambushed convoys, carried out assassinations and terrorized members of the population; the population in NW Mosul was poor, had little allegiance to either U.S. or Iraqi forces, and as such were being avidly recruited by the enemy. Now we could begin looking at why, and taking action that would change the relationships between the IA, IP, U.S. Forces, the population and the enemy.

The 172<sup>nd</sup> was beginning to conduct its RIP/TOA with 3/2 SBCT from Fort Lewis. The 172<sup>nd</sup> would be moving to Baghdad. They had done an incredible job given the scope of the task, and by maintaining offensive operations while doing some training, advising and assisting of the IA and IP they had helped shape future conditions in Mosul. They had conducted the Transition of Authority (TOA) that ceremonially ceded authority of the area 1/2/2 was assigned responsibility, however physically 1/2/2 only controlled those areas immediately around the four COPs, and control of those were temporal in nature. The TOA would later provide rationale for changing 1/2/2s nature, but there were other changes that had to occur first. The 172<sup>nd</sup> would move south toward Baghdad, and do some great work in the Diyala Province.

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3/2 was another very good SBCT. It had some history in Mosul as it had been there two years prior, following the 101<sup>st</sup>, and preceding 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT. This fact had both good and bad points as some of those who'd been there in 2004 had an expectation with regard to conditions that had evolved over the two years. On the other hand, they also maintained some relationships and had an organizational memory of the geography and makeup of the city. Overall the initial impression we got of 3/2's actions was that they were there to conduct offensive operations, and they would use the IA and IP to support their operations.

Meanwhile we'd made some inroads with 1/2/2 in ways the Fort Hood training had not prepared us for. We started to get a feel for the BN's immediate needs; some of this was building materials, CL VIII (medical supplies), spare parts, etc. We went to FOB MAREZ and started scrounging with trailers behind us. We found out about the coalition force dumps and created our shopping lists. Three years of units rotating in and out of country had left the dumps full of usable materials that for whatever reasons had been discarded. Once or twice we even brought the 1/2/2 BN CSM and a working party with us to fill up some of their 2.5 ton trucks. We found out that there were several MILVANs full of CL VIII that were expiring, and of which the BN was in desperate needs since its own lines of communication were immature. We got pesticides and field sanitation kits, old mattresses and bed frames of which they were in need, and other items and services that are often overlooked, but are critical to the health of an organization such as an Infantry Battalion that must provide for itself.

The BDE MiTT was a critical player in supporting its three BN MiTTs with information and support. The BDE MiTT Chief COL Senters recognized that the mission required establishing some credibility and commitment to the IA, and also to help the IA leadership throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE meet some basic needs of their soldiers in order to establish credibility themselves. This support from the BDE MiTT continued throughout the deployment and included developing a protocol with the BCTs on extending greater access for the IA to U.S. medical facilities when injured in combat, meeting their CL IIIB and CL IX (Bulk fuel and spare parts resp.) operational requirements when they could not meet them.

These were all things that did not appear in the training. These were all things that had you told us they would in some way contribute to our mission we'd have dismissed. These were all things that showed we were committed to making the IA better in their eyes, and that we were looking beyond our own eventual redeployment. Transitioning the battlespace between MAREZ and EAGLE was a good deal slower and more cumbersome than otherwise were we not pulling a heavy trailer and looking like the Beverly Hillbillies. To the IA it meant a great deal, we were not at MAREZ because there was a meeting that had to take place, but because we were doing something that affected them directly, and the IA knew it. Even when we had to be at MAREZ for other reasons we combined the trip with an opportunity to resource the BN. It might be a pallet of water needed at one of the COPs, it might be electrical wire needed to get power out to the lights on the perimeter fence.

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*“You have to assist and provide liaison in helping them execute. The point being that one of the missions is that you have to help them keep combat power on the road, and you have to have system for doing that. This doesn't fit into a very good who, what, when, where “five W” mission statement, but you have to do that because if not you don't keep combat power on the road they are not effective.”*

#### **COL Mike Senters on assisting the IA in execution**

These sustainment activities were not exclusive. When we were not doing hands on type actions in support of the IA, we were advising the BN CDR and his staff on operations, and assisting both the BDE MiTT gain an understanding of the challenges in the BN so they could better advise the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA BDE CDR and staff. We were also advising our coalition partners on the strengths and weaknesses of the IA, on the enemy from our perspective outside of MAREZ. Helping the higher U.S. and Iraqi echelons gain a better understanding of what was significant and why was a key function we fulfilled. It was the key to getting the resources which would enable 1/2/2 to be more effective on the battlefield moving them from a more defensive role to a more offensive role, and moving them from a supporting role to the supported. Again this function was not included in the training, but was required. In this way the MiTTs acted as advisors to the BCTs.

Our partner in 3/2 SBCT on the West side of Mosul was 5-20 IN. When the 172<sup>nd</sup> went south, it withdrew its soldiers. 5-20 then provided two FSNCOs (Fire Support NCOs) to augment our team. These two NCOs remained at COP EAGLE until our own redeployment even when 5-20 was relieved by 4/1. They were both very sharp, and in addition to being fire supporters to get coalition effects when we did patrols with the IA, they also became our intelligence collection and IO (Information Operations) section. These NCOs had some natural talent in other areas. SGT Andy Higgins, who was later killed down South, had been in Mosul with 5-20 in 2003. As such he had a feel for the environment and the enemy. He made a great Intel NCO, and this freed our team 1SG up to do more developmental work with the NCOs of 1/2/2. SGT David Block was on his 3<sup>rd</sup> tour in Iraq, and was great at Adobe Photo shop. After we paired him up with our best interpreters, some of the IA Operations and Intelligence personnel, and a color printer, 1/2/2 had a way to produce its own handbills to counter the enemy's IO and to promote their own objectives. While these NCOs never did a artillery or mortar CFF (Call for Fire) while with our team, they ran many a crater analysis and shell report which provided us and the Iraqis a better understanding about the mortars being fired at us which allowed 1/2/2 to run some effective counter mortar ambushes which cut down on the rounds COP EAGLE took.

5-20 also positioned a couple of RTOs at COP EAGLE to man the radios. This worked out well for us since 5-20 was using COP EAGLE for RETRANS (retransmission) of its radio nets, those same RTOs could man our radios and provide us greater awareness of the area as a whole. It was also about this time that we received a communications NCO, an IRR (Individual Ready Reserve) Reservist who'd been off active duty for over a decade; and we also received our maintenance NCO, an active duty soldier pulled from 1<sup>st</sup> CAV DIV as an individual augmentee. This rounded out our MiTT and allowed us to do more for the IA.

5-20 and 3/2 SBCT really did not have a full opportunity to impact Mosul and the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV. Only 3 months after they'd completed their RIP/TOA with the 172<sup>nd</sup> they were given a FRAGO to move South and begin operations in MND-B (Multi-National Division Baghdad). They had really just begun to understand the environment and reconcile their expectations they'd built up prior to arriving with the realities they were encountering on the ground. Three months may seem like a long time, but for an element the size of a SBCT it shows an amazing ability to adapt from the newest soldier to the senior leader. Assumptions are confirmed or nullified and new information is weighed against what was before taken as a fact.

What their presence provided us as a MiTT was three more months to understand the environment. We were now able to establish some relationships between problems and identify some systemic disconnects that had to be addressed. In some cases we were able to clarify which things were problems that could be addressed, and which things were conditions that would only

change over time. As MiTTs we were starting to understand the relationships between security, politics and economics, and how the three were interdependent. This meant that some developments in security were contingent on development in areas that we could not affect. This is when we began to seek out the PRT, and also when we started to build our ad-hoc network of people overall.

During this time there was also a leadership shuffle at 1/2/2 IA, and in across the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA BDE. This was perhaps the most significant event for development of 1/2/2 that occurred while we were there. While the work prior we had done put us in good standing, there was still an issue with the current BN CDR and his willingness to change the way the BN operated. He did not wish to decentralize and empower his subordinates, he did not wish to employ his whole BN, and he did not wish to cede any chance at recognition. He was a good man in a fight, but he was not the CDR 1/2/2 required to move it forward and really assume the lead in its AOR.

The incoming CDR and the two officers he was bringing with him would allow 1/2/2 to take a big step forward. These three Iraqi officers had had their formative experiences with the IA in 2004. In November of 2004 while 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT was in Mosul and the rebuilding of the ISF was starting to take root, Al Qaeda in Iraq, and other indigenous groups which overall constituted the AIF, attacked across the city in a series of distributed ambushes and raids. In some cases police stations were taken over and small ING (The Iraqi National Guard was the forerunner of the IA) units had been routed. In some cases, ISF leaders abandoned their units and fled North to Kurdistan. 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT and other U.S. units reinforced the Iraqis while conducting independent offensive operations throughout Mosul.

In some cases, such as that of Army Special Forces Team Sergeant MSG Anthony R.C. Yost, or “Big Tony” as IA of 1/2/2 referred to him, their leadership and sacrifice became part of the Iraqi Army warrior mythology. MSG Yost was killed on 19 November in Mosul leading some of the Iraqis who would later take on leadership responsibilities in 1/2/2. Even those Iraqis not there would claim to have been there or been near when MSG Yost told a group of Iraqi soldiers to stay back due to the danger while he went ahead. A large IED was detonated in the house fatally wounding MSG Yost, and several of the IA as well. “Big Tony’s” leadership example and sacrifice inspired a generation of Iraqis and like many other acts by U.S. soldiers set a standard to which a generation of IA would aspire to meet. We had first heard about “Big Tony” when we first arrived, but now we were seeing how it impacted the development of the IA officers assuming command.

This new BN CDR, his XO and particularly his S3 were of a mind to build 1/2/2 into an Infantry BN capable of taking the initiative from the enemy, denying them freedom of movement, and establishing legitimacy in the eyes of the local populace. The BN CDR was keen on establishing a better working relationship with the U.S. BCT and in getting his BN into the fight. While he knew how the enemy was operating better than any U.S. explanations we’d heard and had a few ideas about changes he’d like to make, he was unsure about how to implement them. He was also cognizant of the politics of making leadership changes in his own organization with regard to how officers are assigned in the IA, and of some of the issues with becoming more effective. It is important to draw a distinction between what we as U.S. forces would consider as improving performance and how we measure effectiveness with that of the Iraqis, they are not always the same.

It is also important to understand that we as U.S. forces do not always understand the challenges of the SFA OTERA tasks (Organize, Train, Equip, Rebuild and Advise) with regard to FSF (Foreign Security Forces). We tend to be able identify our capabilities and limitations

without fully understanding what makes them possible or impossible, and as such we often “mirror” our self image onto our partner with regard to what they should be capable of if they are in name a like organization. This was true not only with the BCT, but with some of the advisors working at different echelons. There was an expectation that given this many men, this many rifles and this many trucks that it should equate to a level of performance without really considering the institutional dynamics that have made our own success possible. There was also ignorance by some on how the environment drives requirements and how OTERA tasks should account for the METT-TC conditions. I remember at one point trying to explain to a member of the DIV MiTT who was an Armor officer by trade why the Iraqi’s OR rate mattered. His impression was that they were an Infantry BN and therefore they should walk. He had no understanding of the requirements for mobility, firepower and protection in the environment, or how the enemy was operating. This lack of understanding impeded our ability to assist this new BN CDR with implementing his vision for the 1/2/2.

Fortunately, between the 1/2/2 MiTT, COL Senters’ BDE MiTT, the 1/2/2 and 2<sup>nd</sup> IA BDE leadership in combination with our coalition partner in 2-7 CAV and its parent unit 4/1 BCT, we were able to articulate the materiel and logistics requirements to both the higher U.S. echelons and the Iraqi Chain of Command to include representatives from the Iraqi MoD (Ministry of Defense). This combination of desire on the part of the CDR and his senior staff along with the materiel and logistics support of the BCT enabled 1/2/2 and 2<sup>nd</sup> IA BDE to take a giant step forward in effectiveness, the most significant I think may have been the introduction of the up-armored HMMWV in significant numbers to the IA inventory. While it created some problems in terms of logistics, its immediate effect was to provide the IA with a means to get more patrols out to more places in a more survivable platform to which radios and a crew served weapon could be mounted. In terms of inter-operability it made friendly identification between U.S. and Iraqi forces much easier, and allowed the IA to keep up with their BCT counterparts.

*“So it was just what area you were in and working with the different influences, but the education piece was important. It took a long time to get that education because it wasn’t obvious. You couldn’t take a look at it and wire a diagram of the government or the people involved there and really understand things unless you knew the influences behind those people.”*

### **COL Mark Brackney, Deputy PRT leader on the understanding the environment**

Right from the beginning of the new 1/2/2 BN CDR’s taking over there was a sense of wanting to include the MiTT. Part of this may have been our level of confidence having gone up as we were beginning to understand the environment, the BCT was still shaking it operations out, and the new BN CDR believed the outgoing CDR had tried to poison the well a bit. This provided us an opportunity to be more aggressive in offering advice. It helped greatly that this new BN CDR had a positive history with Americans, and desired to make his BN the best it could be. Like many things that involve relationships, it is hard to point to any one thing that served as a catalyst; there were many aspects of this new relationship which would allow us to be more successful in our advising.

One of the routine events that made the relationship strong was dinner and evening tea with the CDR and members of his primary staff. Usually this was with his S3 or XO, sometimes it was both, and on occasion he’d invite his S2, S4, BMO or other members of his staff. As his

tenure in command grew, his comfort with those of his staff he inherited grew. This was important since he was a Zebari Kurd, his S3 was a Kurd from another tribe, his XO a Sunni Arab, and his broader staff fairly diverse both in ethnicity and religion. Our own numbers at the table grew as well. Initially the first week or so from the MiTT Chief, to myself, to where there were usually 3 or 4 advisors present.

It'd be hard to overstate the value of having a daily opportunity to get to know the Iraqi leadership in a way that is not directly linked to someone's assessment tool, or directly translates to something quantifiable. Like any relationship, trust is earned through an understanding of each other which allows each individual or group to gauge sincerity, honesty and earnestness of intent. This provides each interested party a chance to evaluate the potential of the relationship, and make decisions about how much they are willing to invest or bring them into their trust. This is critical for the advisor. While many things the advisor will advise on will be of a technical nature, e.g. tactical operations, many will be of a more personal and non-technical nature. The two are complimentary, and must be viewed as such if the advisor is to be taken into his counterpart's trust, and by extension the trust of his counterpart's organization.

Offering good technical advice will earn you credibility as a professional. Gaining trust and demonstrating earnestness through building a relationship will increase your "wasta" as a confidant. While the former is necessary to make you legitimate on the subject, the latter is what makes you a "go to" advisor beyond that area by which you are identified on paper. It is advisor "wasta" which allows access to the type of HUMINT which in turn allows U.S. leaders to make better judgments of host nation leaders, and as such reduces risk, improves the chances of mission accomplishment, and life and death issues.

One such opportunity occurred in September of 2006. We had been having dinner with the new CDR for about six weeks and had gotten to know each other well. There was usually a few minutes before supper was served to discuss what was on his mind, to discuss some of the day's operational activities or to make small talk. It varied based on what was going on. Most Iraqi officers I know have a number of cell phones, the 1/2/2 BN CDR had about five. This allowed him some freedom to discern who was calling on what cell phone based on who had the respective number. After awhile, even I got to know the different ring tones, and understand by the BN CDR's tone of voice and demeanor who he was talking to and what the nature of the call was. While I never learned to speak more than a few words in Kurdish or Arabic, I am fairly adept at reading body language and the Iraqis by and large are emotive, meaning they don't try and hide their feelings around those they believe can be (or should be) trusted.

I could generally tell when the call was from the 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV, when it was from the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE, when it was from a friend, a girlfriend, or from a community leader in 1/2/2's area of operation. This was important because it allowed me to inquire about the nature of the phone call and relate it to other things I knew, or might better advise him or his staff on. Most things I found can be related in some way, the key is to understand the value of how one thing relates to another, e.g. a call from the DIV CDR (at the time MG Jamal) followed by a call by a local sheik might establish a relationship between the two that needed to be explored.

This night the call came in on what I had labeled as the "friend and relative" phone. The BN CDR was not distressed, but did convey a sense of urgency and upon hanging up made a couple of more calls in Kurdish. I asked him through our Yzidi Kurdish interpreter if everything was okay, and he seemed a bit reluctant to discuss it. I commented that I understood if it was personal, and that he need not feel obligated to explain further. He in turn felt obligated to demonstrate his trust and also I think to demonstrate to us there was no information he'd not

share (this is not to say there was not ever, only that in this case he'd made that decision). He knew we openly collected on him and the BN, and that we evaluated our relationship based on a number of things. He further knew that by gaining our trust we would feel more inclined, and better positioned to make character value judgments when he needed an advocate. This played out later when MG Jamal, the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV CDR, was trying to get the 1/2/2 BN CDR relieved as the BN's tactical successes were beginning to disrupt the DIV CDR's relationships with some of the local sheiks and the profits he was getting from illicit activities (see the PRT interviews and the 4/1 interviews for more references).

The BN CDR went on to explain that the phone call was from an Arab friend in Mosul who had to take his wife into Kurdistan for medical treatment, and that he was in the process of making follow up phone calls to the Peshmurga checkpoints along the primary road to expedite their passage. I remarked that I hoped that everything turned out OK for them. Again he seemed a bit reluctant to discuss it, and then he decided to. He told me that she had a genie (djinn in Arabic) inside of her and that she had to see a specialist for such things. He said it matter of factly, and what looking at me and my fellow advisors to gauge our reactions.

Rather than question the validity of genies I decided to ask how she "contracted" a genie. This created a discussion amongst all the Iraqi including our interpreters. There seemed to be a number of ways you could become possessed by a genie, and a number of ways to identify them and where they lived. All of these men were very literate, spoke multiple languages, and had access to satellite T.V. and Internet (at least at home). It did not matter that they were of differing ethnicity or faith, and it did not matter where they'd come from in Iraq. They all took the existence of genies as a Christian believes in God's angels, and Christ, or as Catholics believe in Saints. They were also all impressed that I was interested and was willing to acknowledge their beliefs as valid.

After we'd gone back downstairs to the MiTT floor a couple of my fellow advisors seemed unsure what to make of this discovery, and asked me if I was willing to believe in genies as well. I remarked that it did not cost me anything to recognize their belief in genies, and that if it helped me advise, then I was willing to believe there were genies in Iraq. If genies were real to them, then nothing I could say different would matter to them, and dismissing their beliefs would only impede my ability to be trusted and advise the leadership.

In fact it did pay off, I think. It was not just one singular event or dinner, but a combination of consistent dinners and social calls, time spent discussing the concerns of the BCT, the IA BDE CDR, the problems with the DIV CDR and the local power brokers. It included time spent by the MiTT getting things done, or bringing things back from MAREZ for the BN, and of relevant, timely and valued advice on the conduct of combat operations. However, some events seemed to matter more than others be it the phone call about a jinni; the loss or wounding of an Iraqi soldier; or the ability to support them and be their advocate to their higher, or ours. It did not always add up quantitatively, but they mattered.

*At the end, clearly I see the mission as being a combat advisor – I think of the word combat advisor, not advisor needs to be emphasized. That means advising the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi Army commanders and staff during the planning, execution, and after action process of combat operations. We tended to be too fixed due to the IAG train up in providing effects. I see that as a subtask of being a combat advisor.*

**COL Mike Senters. 2/2 IA BDE MITT Chief**

It took us awhile to understand how we could best support the mission during combat operations. The first part of the problem was the lack of understanding during the train up for deployment. The second part of the problem was lack of education and training on COIN. The last part of the problem was a lack of education and training on “how” to advise. We learned there was a twist to who was being advised before, during and after combat operations. There was also a difference in advising for a specific operation as part of a IA BDE or IA DIV, and advising for the type of sustained combat, or “day to day” combat operations that were required as part of security function the BN fulfilled. This differs some from the observation COL Senters’ makes in the quote above because the function of the IA battalions in 2/2 IA BDE were different in the day to day combat operations from those of the 2/2 BDE HQs; much like the role of the BCT HQ’s is different from the TF HQs as brought out in COL Twitty’s and LTC Welsh’s interviews.

Before 1/2/2 participated as part of a BDE or DIV operation, the BN was able to extensively prepare. It would go into a planning cycle that usually involved a set of higher echelon briefings; execute an analytical style of deliberate planning; conduct some rehearsals with all the participants; and perform a reconnaissance of the general area and routes. This is standard fare for U.S. forces and the way we conduct MDMP (the Military Decision Making Process) and TLPs (Troop Leading Procedures). The operation had an identified start and end, and was constructed around a specific purpose. These operations might take place in the BN’s area of operations, overlap it, or take place outside of it. At first they seemed more designed to exercise higher echelon C2 then to affect the enemy, often occurring outside of Mosul, and in our opinion giving the enemy increased freedom of movement.

While we did advise the BN on some of the technical issues, for the most part they were capable of receiving this type of order and executing it, we (U.S. Forces writ large) just did not always recognize the signs that showed proficiency. During these operations the MiTT generally stayed with some element of the BN command group and either responded to their needs, or communicated with the other MiTTs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> IA BDE, or elements of the BCT. This function of providing the other MiTTs and the BCT with situational awareness may have been the most important one during this type of combat operation as it deconflicted actions in the area at a time when there was often misidentification by U.S. and Iraqi forces of each other. We sometimes provided access to coalition air assets, but generally there was very little enemy activity in the area where the IA division or IA BDE would mass. This would change later as we began to understand how the enemy attempted to use these types of IA operations to facilitate their own current and future operations by activities such as reconnaissance, resupply, and communications as well as kidnapping, murder, and other criminal activities.

This was the piece of advising that went on “post operations” of this nature, we would go back and consider what new things in the area happened during our absence, and try and understand what patterns the enemy was establishing with the IA CDR and staff. We would then advise the BDE MiTT (and by extension the IA BDE), elements of the BCT, and potentially other relevant participants. Then we’d advise the 1/2/2 CDR and his staff on how that might affect their day to day combat operations. After advising the IA we’d advise the higher echelon MiTT and the BCT what we thought so that all would be able to look for those enemy activities in the 1/2/2 AO, and understand why 1/2/2 might have changed its operations. Eventually through consistent coordination of this type, we were able to anticipate some of the enemy activity large IA operations might allow for. Together with the BCT and the IP, the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE was

able to coordinate FRAGOs that put friendly forces in places the enemy did not anticipate. As such we got the value of the larger operation with the added benefit of disrupting enemy freedom of movement, and gaining surprise by having friendly forces where they were not expected.

Advising the IA on day to day combat operations was generally more even paced, and meant considering the environmental METT-TC as a whole. It often meant picking out that one event in a day or a week that signaled some change and then establishing the relevance of against all the other days or weeks of environmental white noise. You'd take this "off key" note, and string it together with others to form an operating picture you could share with the IA, the higher echelon MiTT and the BCT (and in our case the other participants we'd added to our ad-hoc network). We'd sit down with the CDR and his staff, usually over dinner that night, and look at what we could do different, and what the costs of doing that would be in terms of men, trucks, fuel and time, and weigh that against the risk of not doing other things.

One of the things that really helped us was the tool of pattern analysis. This is basically something that takes the time of an event, the location of an event and the nature of an event and compares it over time with other events. Some are like events and some are unique. As an advisor team embedded with our IA BN we had a more complete picture of the environment in some ways than other U.S. Forces. While we did not have a SIPR drop for most of the deployment, we did have U.S. radios, and we did talk to U.S. forces as they came through our combat outpost. What we did have was continuous access to our Iraqi unit, and once we established ourselves to be trusted, we had the bulk of their knowledge of the environment. It might be through an Iraqi's family network, through an established intelligence network, something picked up off of their radio net, etc.

I had assigned SGT Andy Higgins, one of our FSNCOs the additional duty of Intel Analyst. He was pretty sharp and once I explained what I needed him to do in terms of collection he was able to assemble a product that we could use for analysis. There were three products, the weekly enemy activity report, the incident map and the pattern analysis wheel. The enemy incident report had the look of a table that gave a date-time group, a type of incident, a location and a column for other relevant information. The incident map was an UNCLASS map of the 1/2/2 area of operations expanded to include the whole west side of Mosul with the weeks worth of activities from the enemy incident report. A colored dot would be placed over the location where an incident occurred, and each color dot represented a different type of incident. Where there were multiple typed of incidents multiple colors were used, e.g. if it were a combination IED and RPG ambush, then a yellow and red dot were used. The pattern analysis wheel consisted of three circles. The first two were sectioned into 12 hour pie wedges with 31 concentric circles radiating from the center; there was one for 0600 through 1800, and another for 1800-0600. The third was an overlay of the first two so we could look for trends in a 24 hour period.

These tools allowed us to plot enemy activity in a way that could be analyzed for relevance and easily articulated to the IA, the IP, the other MiTTs, and the BCT. We were to ask questions as to why the enemy seemed to concentrate his activities in a given location, a given day of the week, or a given time of day. We were able to distinguish activities that looked to be unique from one another and themes and assumptions began to emerge which allowed us to advise the IA on the best use of their forces. Combined with the IA's knowledge of the environment we gained insights we did not consider and were able to share them with other U.S. forces thereby increasing everyone's effectiveness.

The 1/2/2 S2 (Intel Officer), and S3 (Operations Officer) adopted this model of collection and analysis and were able to add details to it which U.S. forces as a foreign force were unable to

do. The result of providing the IA with a means of conceptualizing enemy activity in a way could be shared amongst themselves, other ISF, and the U.S. forces created new opportunities to take the initiative from the enemy. They were able to ask the same types of questions we would when considering: why there, why then, and why that?

When you only have so many resources you can't be every where at once, so the challenge for the IA (and any security force) is to anticipate where you need to be and when with enough force to overpower the enemy. Once the IA were able to establish times and locations with some consistency, it was only a short walk to reason out enemy movement times and routes, and the backwards plan from an enemy perspective what would be required to conduct those types of attacks the pattern analysis tools captured. While the enemy often seemed proficient in pulling off an ambush, his strength was in his ability to get into position by blending in with the environment, having the surprise of an ambush, and then withdrawing back through the population.

If this enemy advantage could be nullified by making contact when the enemy was most vulnerable, the result was usually one sided in favor of the IA. At this time, the enemy was either focused on preparation and movement or on establishing his ambush. These activities occurring in a certain time at a certain place made him stand out in the environmental white noise. In many ways the tools he used to blend in the past became the criteria for targeting him.

This had some exponential effects on the enemy. Once he was bumped once or twice, or made contact on uneven terms favorable to the IA, his freedom of movement and "cloak of invulnerability" began to wither. The latter had several aspects, the image imposed on him by the IA, the image he imposed on the population, and perhaps most importantly, the only he imposed on himself. As he began to take losses, suffer from counter ambushes and IA sniper teams, make contact while unprepared with an IA patrol who was in the right place at the right time, he began to lose his confidence. He also began to lose his appeal to potential recruits.

The 1/2/2 IA began to assert themselves in ways that reflected they had gained the confidence that comes with knowing what it feels like to win a fight. When they made contact with the enemy on their terms they responded in an aggressive and offensive manner that struck a chord with the population, they became the ones who "owned" the ground. This extended not just to the MSRs, but into the neighborhoods that had provided shelter and concealment for the enemy. When the IA made contact with the enemy in this manner they fought until either the enemy surrendered, or until the enemy was dead. Afterwards they would pull the enemy vehicles to a visible spot that did not impede traffic or put civilians at risk and torch the car as a visible reminder to the enemy who owned the ground.

There were a number of things that went into making the IA turning the corner possible. In large part it was combination of training, advising, and assistance provided by U.S. BCTs and advisory teams over several years and a strong desire by the IA to be on other end of the gun. Being the one ambushed, and disrespected by the population gets old after awhile. When given the tools, be it armored HMMWVs or other materiel, advisor support, or just the time required to develop sufficient capability to out man and out gun the enemy, the IA had proven they take and retain the initiative. The enemy responded by targeting the IP, who by the standards the IA had attained by early 2007 were far behind in terms of development and assistance.

*I mean, they have a true cavalry scout mentality. Where is the enemy? Where are they at? I know the city, let's go. And that's why we had most of our very good effects in relation to HVTs, caches, and everything else really opened the door right around January 2007. It opened up because of the switch up. We had to take the training wheels off of them and go, "This is your city; where are they?" Then you can maximize those effects because they don't have money to pay informants and stuff, so they would basically set up their own intelligence collection, they set up their own informants, and what we did was, okay, proof positive; we've got cache.*

### **LTC Eric Welsh, CDR 2-7 CAV**

Helping U.S. forces and the IA understand each other's strengths and weaknesses was something the MiTTs were able to facilitate. Our own goal was to get the IA and U.S. forces to a point where the MiTT was no longer needed, and as a resource could be placed against other requirements. This was sometimes a painful experience and often placed the MiTT into the uncomfortable position of either telling the BCT what they were asking was not going to happen, or telling the IA that as unpalatable or wrong something might appear, it was required to maintain a good relationship with the U.S. BCT, from which the resources and assistance often flowed. It helped that we were advising an IA BN that had established itself broadly with U.S. forces and even up to IGFC (Iraqi Ground Forces Command) as good Infantry BN by anyone's standards. It also helped having an O6 in COL Senters as our BDE MiTT Chief.

We went through a process of mutual understanding. The Iraqis began to appreciate the things only they could do, and the limitations of U.S. technology. U.S. forces began to appreciate the fact the Iraqis would not and should not mirror 1:1 the capabilities of U.S. forces, and that their strengths originated from being drawn from the environment itself. However, it took time with each BCT to get to that point, although the learning curve was also shortened with each BCT as institutionally the U.S. Army began to benefit as an aggregate from its time in Iraq.

There is an anecdote worth covering as both highlight some of the difficulties of not on working with ISF, but of working with any FSF (Foreign Security Force) which might not have U.S. technological capabilities. There is also one worth pointing out that shows the strengths of such an indigenous force and by which by their absence of certain technologies have honed those strengths in ways that compliment U.S. forces.

The first anecdote is based upon a report generated from a Shadow TUAV (Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) operator which observed what looked to be someone emplacing an IED near a known IED heavy site after 2200 hours, which was the Mosul curfew. This happened very early in our time as the 1/2/2 MiTT. There are some things that should be mentioned up front such as the limitations of technology, something may look like one thing from altitude, particularly if it occurs at a time where no one should be out and in an area known for enemy activity. However, the activity of running wire may occur for other reasons, such as repairing the line which steals power from a generator to power your house. This happens a lot in Mosul, and when driving down most streets, you encounter what looks like thousands of strands of wet spaghetti strung between anything higher than about 10 feet. These converge on an already overloaded local generator, and go out to provide power to every household not fortunate enough to have its own generator, or 99 percent of them. This does not mean the activity is legitimate, or even that what looks like an enemy activity is not, only that there are limitations to technology to discern.

The spot report generated a call from the U.S. TF TOC (Task Force Tactical Operations Center) to the TF RTOs who worked in COP EAGLE and lived with the MiTT. The TF wanted the IA to send a patrol to investigate and they would maintain “eyes on” the individual stringing wire. We began to do the coordination required to get the IA spun up, such as providing the leadership the details and coordinates which all needed to be translated. The IA in turn began to put a patrol together. This was not a fast process by U.S. standard who maintain a QRF for the purpose of responding to unforeseen events and requirements. The U.S. TF began to get anxious about the time it was taking to get the IA patrol out the gate, they were watching the “suspect” complete his work, and begin to leave the scene.

The patrol was just getting formed up and we were at about the 20 minute mark. The TF Battle CPT could not understand why a QRF was not out the gate already, and I had to explain to him that the Iraqis did not keep a QRF, unless it was a preplanned patrol there was nothing quick about it. This was really before the Iraqis had become proficient, they had a very few number of HMMWVs which the BCT had given them, and they had not really turned the corner. All the Iraqis knew was that there was a potential ambush and that the U.S. forces could see the enemy through their UAV. The Iraqis knew the U.S. forces had good vehicles with armor and electronic counter measures, helicopters, night vision, GPS with a digital map, mortars and artillery at their disposal while they had nothing remotely close. In fact the best question I heard by an Iraqi that night was, “well if they see him and know he is the enemy, why don’t they kill him?”

As the U.S. TF TOC Battle CPT got more anxious the IA BN S2 and S3 decided to go ahead and take a small patrol to see if they could move to the location the enemy had withdrawn to. Soon after, the 1<sup>st</sup> Company sent its patrol out the gate en route to check out the IED site. A painful lesson ensued. The MiTT became the go between for the TF Battle CPT who was getting his info from the UAV operator and the IA BN S3 who was talking to the MiTT interpreter by cell phone. The UAV operator was watching the BN S3 move via the Shadow and trying to give him directions on which way to turn. This was because the IA had no GPS, no BFT (Blue Force Tracker), or even good maps with imagery (those were classified NOFORN), and as such had no internal direction. Providing the IA an 8 digit grid coordinate was both irrelevant and useless, but the expectation by the TF Battle CPT was that if he could see the house on his digital map and UAV feed on the plasma screen then why couldn’t the IA BN S3? What ensued was a cluster as the latency between the UAV operator giving directions through the multiple filters sent the IA BN S3 in the wrong direction to the point of futility.

At one point the UAV was moved over to check on the suspect IED site (now about a kilometer from where the BN S3 was) and the TF Battle CPT inquired as to the location of the IA patrol. The traffic we got from the IA patrol indicated that they were looking at the site, we then began to try and confirm if the IA were indeed at the correct site. Since the IA had no GPS to confirm their grid, we went through the process of using local street names, landmarks, and cardinal directions. As an American, even as somebody like an advisor who had been living and working with the IA for about five months, you sometimes forget what life was like before GPS and digital maps, for some American soldiers, GPS and FBCB2 have been a fact of their life since they came in.

The patrol was in fact at the site and had been for about 15 minutes, and were now preparing to return as they had found nothing that struck them as unusual. The IA’s methods were different from the way a U.S. patrol would have done it. With multiple armored vehicles, with IED defeat ECM, digital battle command, secure communications between trucks, individuals and back to the TOC U.S. forces are able to approach differently than a force without those things. U.S.

forces are almost always guaranteed to have reach back for attack aviation assets, and know that there is a reliable like force ready to roll to assist them in the event they come into contact.

The IA compensated at that point in their development (again this was not the JAN 2007 1/2/2 IA, but the July 2006 1/2/2 IA – six months made a big difference) by knowing the neighborhoods, taking an indirect routes, dismounting some ways away and approaching to observe by stealth the IA did not have the signature the UAV operator was looking for. The IA were not willing to directly approach what they considered to be a “known” IED the American had “eyes on”. To them this equated to basically walking into an ambush kill zone, with very little knowledge and the advantage to a set in enemy. They had learned the hard way what being ambushed meant, and this was at a point where are protocols for getting wounded IA the best medical attention available, that being at the U.S. CSH (Combat Support Hospital) on DIAMONDBACK had not been established well, and the alternative of seeking medical care at the local hospital was seen by the IA as a death sentence.

Once the UAV operator widened his search he saw the IA, and almost labeled them as insurgents until we confirmed their location. By now there were some OH 58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters on station, and the result could have been fratricide. Again the limitations of technology had created incorrect expectations, and created friction and misunderstanding. The following day the U.S. Route Clearance team consisting of heavy MRAPs (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicles the engineers used to look, probe for, identify and neutralize IEDs went along the route and interrogated the site. They found no evidence of an IED.

Routinely there were instances where the two forces had to work to achieve an understanding of each other, and it was never completely resolved. This is not just because the two forces are different, but is also due to the interactive nature of the complex environment which constantly serves up new wrinkles in the METT-TC conditions.

By late 2006, 1/2/2 was showing its strengths and confidence in ways U.S. forces could appreciate as complimentary to them. Weekly the S2 and S3 would take a patrol and go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE SPEAR base which adjoined the U.S. FOB MAREZ for the Combined, Joint Targeting meeting in which the 2nd BDE IA, the IP chiefs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE AO, and the U.S. TF. The purpose of the meeting was to share information and coordinate current and future activities and operations. The MiTTs, PTTs and other U.S. advisors would attend as well with their peers, e.g. I usually attended for the S2 and S3. Meanwhile the rest of the MiTT would do those admin things of MAREZ that had to be done. At the meeting’s conclusion The IA patrol would go back, and the MiTT would usually finish up what ever it had to get done, be it the picking up of a weeks worth of CL I (water and food), scrounging for misc. supplies, or vehicle maintenance issues.

As the IA patrol with the S2 left MAREZ to go back to EAGLE after the meeting they hit a vehicle at an intersection. The occupants were an insurgent cell leader and his driver who thought that because the IA had hit them, that they’d been made. By this point in time, the IA had become very aggressive and very confident; a few months had made a big difference in their development. The cell leader and his driver got out of the car with pistols and began shooting. The IA returned fire with a crew served PKC (medium machine gun) mounted on the lead IA HMMWV (by this time they had much better HMMWVs with radios that had come through the IA logistics system).

After killing the driver, and lightly wounding the cell leader, the S2 quickly turned a great deal of information that was time sensitive. While U.S. operations are often methodical and well coordinated, they are also often slower and more visible. The IA understanding the environment

were able to begin acting on the information much more quickly and generate a number of raids within a 12 hour period against enemy safe houses, capturing not only the cell belonging to the cell leader and a great deal of its arms and ammunition, but also a couple of related cells. This was due to the network the insurgents had created in order to share some intelligence, or to acquire money and materiel. 1/2/2 IA had turned this one chance contact in a series of raids that disrupted enemy operation in western Mosul for several weeks. This also had a cumulative effect as it allowed the IA and IP to gain three weeks of strength which further positioned them to retain the initiative.

It was actions such as this that facilitated an understanding of the IA and U.S. forces and promoted cooperation between them. It also facilitated some development of the IP by extension as some resources could be reallocated. The IA began to really get into the neighborhoods at this point in ways U.S. forces could not, they began to establish legitimacy as a force unto themselves, which was not visibly reliant on U.S. forces by the populace of Mosul.

### **Conclusion**

*So, we as MiTTs are fighting the war one year at a time with a bunch of different guys with an organization that for the most part has maintained constant minus combat casualties. So how do we reduce the friction as we transition from fighting the war a year at a time with MiTTs, so that when I come in to replace you, I'm not coming in sixty degrees off of your azimuth. I'm coming in, at most, two to three degrees left or right of center because that's the direction the guy was already starting ahead; so we're complementing each other as opposed to giving him conflicting advice, and though he's seeing a different face, he's still seeing the ball moving in the same direction, and that's one of the keys....*

*..... Now, the guy who replaced me, I stayed in email contact with him all the way through his tour over there, and we were exchanging ideas in email. Because after a year, I felt I had a vested stake in the success of 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Division; in fact, I still call the brigade commander on his cell phone from the States a year plus after I left. So, going back to your question, yes, I think we moved the ball forward; I also think we developed a process that continues to allow us to move the ball forward in the same direction, on the same field towards the end zone.*

### **LTC (Ret) Howie Brewington, 4/2 MiTT Chief**

This chapter was meant to provide the reader with and understanding of one perspective on the development of the IA and by extension the ISF in Mosul. It does not read in a linear manner. It does not show clear causal relationships between events and it does not establish defined relative value between actions. This is because the nature of development under the type of complex conditions found in Mosul put most developmental actions into a trial and error path that required the participants to observe, consider and adjust programs based on new information or changes in the conditions.

Often a "solution" might create one or more new problems, such as the equipping of the IA with HMMWVs created a need for diesel fuel, spare parts, and more mechanics because as the IA became more aggressive given more mobility and survivability, their operational tempo went up and so did their logistical requirements. This was both necessary and good, but it shows that development has inherent risk, and that there is a learning curve as the events you anticipate

are not necessarily the ones that occur, and the problems you identify are not necessarily the ones that cause the most grief. There is a lot of patchwork development that starts and stops in fits, or slows down and may go into reverse without a clear understanding as to why. The competent embedded advisor is the best tool to understand the challenges of foreign security force development, but generally he is only as good we prepare them to be.

Since my own experience as an advisor, the process of selection and training for TTs in Iraq and Afghanistan has gotten better, as has our institutional understanding of COIN, and war in a complex, interactive environment as a whole. What is not clear though is how the ground we've made up over the course of the wars will be institutionalized. Five years is a long time to get it "right enough," and that length of time puts the policy objective to which military force was initially committed at great risk. This is particularly true in a democracy.

Moreover, our understanding of the United States' 21st Century requirements indicate the "by, with, and through" foreign security forces, building partner capacity so that they can govern their own, and a more balanced, indirect approach will be called for. Since every policy issue will be somewhat unique, there will remain a certain amount of "ad-hockery." However, there are steps we can take to keep it from being a piecemeal commitment of ways and means as we seek to fulfill an end.

*"And we had taken the training wheels off the Iraqi army and transitioned authority back in December of 2006, or 2007, and then we were heavy on the MiTTs, but the MiTTs had done their job, and then what you had when they left in the early spring of that year, of 2007, we had a point and an opportunity to really take the training wheels off the MiTT and we should have. We had wasted manpower in the MiTTs because what you had were two fully capable brigade commanders on the east and west side, they had great 2ICs and XOs and S-3s, and what you had then was they were almost an inhibitor; in some cases they were a distracter by having them there because there were like, "Hey, stop what you're doing," and what you had was literally an opportunity to pull those training wheels off those MiTT teams and pull them out of there because the Tahahs, the General Nordeens, the Colonel Mohammeds understood what needed to be done and they did not need someone sitting over their shoulder like an OC going, "What are you doing?" You know what they call the MiTT teams at that point?"*

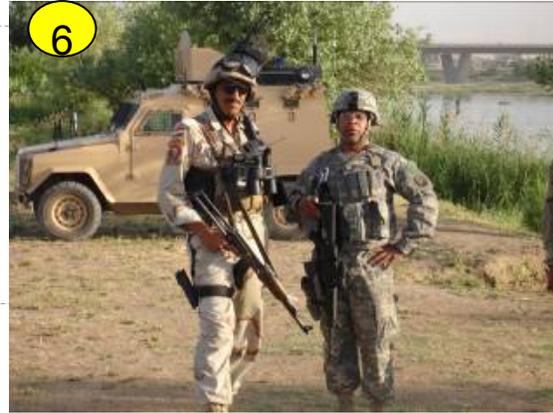
### **LTC Eric Welsh on understanding when to transition resources**

LTC Welsh's quote above articulates the goal of the advisor, which is a competent, capable, committed, and confident FSF cable of continuing to progress under its own accord, or with minimal external assistance. A major tool in accomplishing this goal is advisors who facilitate FSF "self-discovery" through a blending of ideas. When an advisor's relevant insights, observations, and recommendations become the ideas of those being advised; when ownership is established through the assimilation of ideas by the FSF peer, the advisor is successful and diminishes in personal importance. He becomes as LTC Welsh stated, "the guy who comes to drink chai." It is a long to that point, and not always explicit to all the participants, in fact there may be resistance by both those who are providing the assistance and/or those receiving it (possibly for different reasons), but ultimately it is to the long term health and viability of the FSF to "take the training wheels off." Generally this is a marathon event and not a sprint, and in the case of Mosul, the hard work begun in 2003 was built upon until the 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV IA units in Mosul were at a point where they not only could operate with little assistance, but desired to. That is the desired end state, self sustainment, and self confidence.

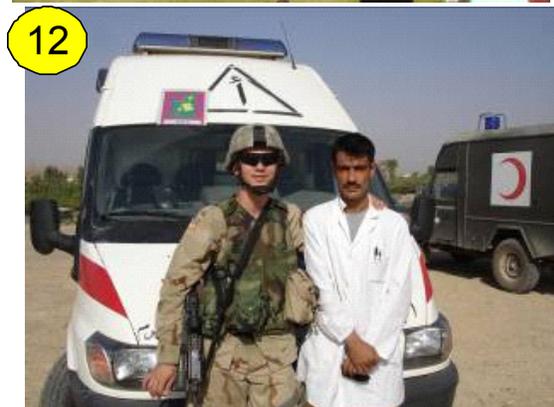
The next chapter will consider the DOTMLPF challenges brought up in the Case Study and in the interviews. Chapter 7 should be read in conjunction with the other case study interviews as they will provide context beyond the select quotes I've pulled out for the purpose of being illustrative. The question the next chapter seeks to raise the question as to if there are ways we can better prepare as an institution to meet the challenges ahead and fulfill those roles that policy creates for us in the complex, interactive environment?



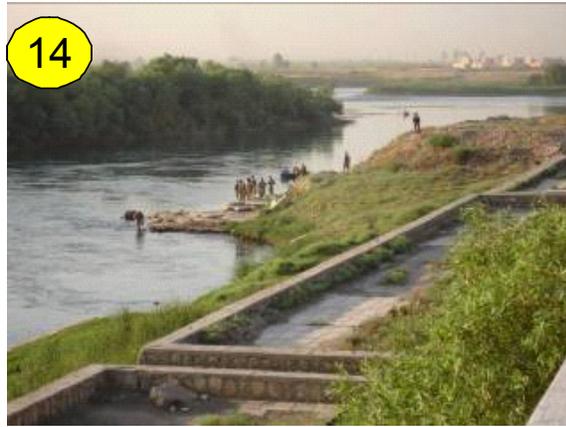
- 1 - The 6 man kernel that would deploy from Fort Hood and become 1/2/2 MiTT - Left to Right, Back Row - CPT Rob Thornton, MAJ Mark Hayden, LTC Charles Corbett; Front Row – CPT Nimrod Spellman, MAJ Victor Cartagena, 1SG John Thomas. The team was told they would be rounded out with their Medic, Fire Support Officer, Fire Support NCO, Communications NCO and Maintenance Advisor in country.
- 2 - Sand table exercise during the Fort Hood deployment train up. Little institutional knowledge existed with regard to training advisors at that time. The majority of the training time was spent ensuring these ad-hoc, composite active and reserve component teams could meet theater level entry requirements and survive on the battlefield. Little time was spent trying to ensure the teams understood their role, and the requirements they would encounter as advisors. Even this table top exercise was focused on ensuring the “advisors” had a basic level of understanding with regard to the types of tactics and operations they would advise their counterparts on.
- 3 - COP EAGLE, home for 1/2/2 IA and the 1/2/2 MiTT in 2006, 2007. Placed in the middle of some of the more dangerous neighborhoods in West Mosul, it was well positioned as a base of operations to disrupt insurgent activities. However, while the main building sits on relatively high terrain, the rest of the compound sat in a depression which required us to assist the IA with force protection improvements as well as sanitary improvements.
- 4 - A platoon graduation – the 172<sup>nd</sup>, 3/2 and later 4/1 all conducted training programs to improve the small unit performance of the IA. The IA SNCO out in front was the 1SG from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Company of 1/2/2. He was an outstanding soldier and a fine small unit leader. He was aggressive, street smart and hunted the enemy. On more than one patrol he showed me how to read the enemy perspective of the street – such as the where the enemy had fired his AK-47 from around the corner only exposing his weapon to return fire from the kill zone – you could tell because the weapon had climbed up and to the right leaving a crescent track of round strikes up the side of the building where the shooter had taken cover. Not very accurate, but the shooter likely survived to shoot again.



- 5 – One of the first social events we sponsored was a “U.S. Style” Dining In. We provided the history of the dining in and its relevance in fostering unit esprit de corps. The event was held in the officers mess with mostly Iraqi food (we did manage to get hold of some decent steaks and were able to grill them on a large grill we bartered for on MAREZ). It allowed us to see most of the BN’s officers at once, and for them to see us. It was the beginning of a relationship that allowed us look at personalities and influence within the BN.
- 6 – The 1/2/2 CSM, often referred to as the “Muktar” for his ability to mediate disputes and smooth over sources of friction in the BN. He was a solid, veteran Iraqi soldier and had a long memory about Iraqi military history. Standing next to him is 1SG John Thomas. 1SG Thomas moved the ball way forward with regard to developing the BN’s NCO leadership. His was a balanced approach between enforcing soldier standards as a role model, and by explaining the reasons why you have standards and why the NCOs are important. He did this by educating not only the NCO leadership, but also the BN’s officers.
- 7 – SSG Valenzuela from 1-17 IN sits in the cupola of one our 1114s the day after it’d been hit by an IED o Route TAMPA. SSG Valenzuela was a solid Infantryman, and a valuable augmentee to the team as he had been in Mosul for sometime already and new the routes and locations of things. The vehicle was down for awhile awaiting parts which made adhering to the 3 vehicle movement rule tough. There were no “float vehicles” or ORFs at the time. This also put a dent in MiTT OPTEMPO.
- 8 – Members of U.S. and Iraqi forces after an SVBIED (Suicide Vehicle Borne Improved Explosive Device) had made an attempt on a U.S. Stryker Combat vehicle at an intersection known for attacks. No U.S. personnel were seriously injured. The SVBIED driver’s lower arm was found still handcuffed to the steering wheel. An Iraqi family with 3 young children were blown apart when the SVBIED was detonated by the driver. Loss of innocent life did not seem to bother the enemy.



- 9 – One of many “Joint” (IA and IP) and combined (U.S. and Iraqi) operations that took place. Note the unarmored IP pick ups that while looking good, provided little protection to the Iraqi Policemen. The IP would mount medium PKCs machine guns and ride around in fearless fashion. In those conditions it was just the wrong vehicle. The IA’s principal armored vehicle at that time was the armored Land Rover. It was not a bad truck, used little gas and required minimal maintenance. However, once it took a significant IED it was usually a loss. When the IA started getting up armored HMMWVs this vehicle was less used. It would have made a fine police or gendarme type vehicle, but the HMMWV was better suited to the military.
- 10 – The BN TOA or Transfer of Authority ceremony. This event was the herald of events still a few months in the making when 1/2/2 really started to “own” its AOR. Throughout our time in Mosul their effectiveness was contingent at times on U.S. fuel and maintenance support. Patrols required fuel and trucks, foot patrols alone would not allow them to cover their area effectively.
- 11 – Missions with the IA as an indigenous force conducting counter insurgency was different in many ways. One thing was the foraging. The IA did not carry out rations on long operations. Generally they bought food from locals, or in some cases the local people extended their hospitality and brought food out. The operation did not stop, there was order and security as different elements conducted sustainment operations. Here the HQs element pauses for breakfast. The only element that I ever saw use rations was the Scout/Sniper teams during their 3 day ops.
- 12 – One of the BN ambulances and the BN “Doc”. This BN Medic was very well educated and trained and conducted some very complex operations with minimal supplies and facilities. He saved more than one soldier’s life. CL VIII (Medical Supplies), medical training and access to the U.S. medical facilities at the U.S. FOB was an ongoing effort. Eventually it got the attention it required as we understood the relation between it and development of the IA as a sustainable security force.



- 13 – The tail end of a week long division operation in 2006 in and near the town of Badush (where a major Iraqi prison was also located). This particular operation did not net much. However, in the background are three large chicken farms of the type the 2-7 CDR, LTC Welsh spoke of in his interview. In 2007. With a disaffected insurgent cell leader as a guide, TF 2-7 uncovered a large safe haven later in 2007. It was concealed under one of the structures and a large cache concealed in between a false roof and the real roof. The enemy was often ingenious in concealing its operations. Without the enemy “defecting” it might never have been found.
- 14 – A large division operation that took place at Hamam Al’Alil which is about a half hour South of Mosul. Looking out over what was once a casino during the Saddam era, the IA had to improvise to search the island out in the Tigris. While we’d previously discussed obtaining boats given the nature of their AOR, the division did not know how to go about requisitioning even a small river fleet. It took several hours to round up enough fishing boats to ferry a platoon over. The density required to thoroughly search the island was never reached.
- 15 – Iraqi Pay Day – which was actually a 3 day event. There were no checks, or direct deposit at that time – there were few banks in operation and no system whereas the central government could use banks across the country to pay its armed forces and police. The BN sent a courier to Baghdad, obtained the money in cash – which was an amazing volume to carry back. Then it would pay out over the pay period. Included in the event was a personnel tracking system that was not completely adhered to. Our systems were not fully embraced. Eventually a system they could understand and live with was adopted.
- 16 – SPC Doc Burgas was our team medic, seen here interacting with locals. He had been on the ground as a National Guard augmentee to the MiTTs after having served also in Baghdad. Brandon was an incredible talent. He was awarded the Bronze Star with “V” for his actions which included treating Iraqis under fire on several occasions. He was operating far above his pay grade advising the IA as a medical Platoon Leader and Platoon Sergeant might.



- 17 – Another of the large division operations, this one synchronized with a coalition operation. The major problem with these operations was that while it may have allowed the higher IA echelons to gain proficiency with their command and control, they were generally ponderous and predictable. They left a large gap inside of Mosul where we believed the enemy was taking advantage of the diminished presence of security forces. The enemy was left with freedom of movement where the population and tier one IED sites were at, and the security forces were out looking for caches in places the enemy was rarely operating.
- 18 – Then LTC Mike Senters holding up a typical pair of IA boots to illustrate even the basic challenges with the IA logistics system. Boots seldom make the news as a “show stopper” item however, the army that cannot even manage to put decent boots on its soldiers may have some deep seated logistics challenges. Iraqi soldiers, or Jundi, in tattered uniforms and broken body armor take little pride in their uniform and consider that as an indicator of how their civilian and military leadership invests in them. We eventually got the uniforms and other items from the RSU (regional Support Unit) we just had to make our case in an illustrative manner.
- 19 – The first 1/2/2 BN CDR (right) visiting one of his wounded soldiers in the U.S. CSH (Combat Support Hospital). Gaining access to the quality of medical care provided as the CSH was a huge boost to IA morale. The alternatives were either driving the patient to Kurdistan – which could take 2 hours, or taking them to a local hospital which the IA saw as being in enemy hands.
- 20 – Doc Burgus was also a great scrounger. He’d gotten in touch with the medical companies on FOB MAREZ and found a couple of containers worth of CL VIII that the unit said was expiring and wished to donate to the IA. We let the other MiTTs know about it, and loaded up two HMMWV trailers worth of CL VIII to bring back. The IA Logistics system was simply not there yet, but the need for CL VIII was great.



- 21 – The new BN CDR and his S3 were of critical importance to the development of 1/2/2 – leadership matters as much in the IA and in the U.S. Army. Seen here coordinating both the defense of COP EAGLE and coordinating the actions of a company maneuvering to clear the area in Al Sina's where the enemy had positioned about three of his five elements that were trying to fix 1/2/2. The enemy had coordinated by time a city wide attack designed to fix IA units and delay the U.S. QRF while they focused on trying to take over two IP stations. The enemy failed, and the IP stations were relieved by IA and coalition forces.
- 22 – One of the things the MiTTs and other U.S. advisors bring is U.S. fire and air support. Although our MiTT never called in an artillery or mortar mission in support of 1/2/2 we routinely used available air assets to scout ahead, look for snipers, provide relay amongst the MiTTs and on occasion look on roof tops for snipers, or down streets when we were static. Army aviation was a critical enabler for the MiTTs as it was usually over the city somewhere, and could get to your position fast.
- 23 – Stoic resolve on the face of MAJ Victor Cartagena our HHC Advisor. This wreckage had been one of the first IA HMMWVs 1/2/2 received. It was a level II armored up M998, vs. the armored gun truck M 1114 the IA received later. Amazingly, no IA were seriously injured which only increased the confidence the IA had in the HMMWV. While the HMMWV increased the IA's ability to conduct operations by providing a platform for increased mobility, survivability, C2 and firepower, it also created more logistics overhead in spare parts and fuel, as well as new maintenance requirements. Nothing is ever easy.
- 24 – The BN CDR with his staff on the left and his company CDRs on the right. Seen here, they are going over the details of an upcoming operation. The reader may take for granted the utility of having the staff in the same room as the CDRs during an operations brief, but some U.S. units have difficulties in getting their staffs and CDRs on the same page. This BN CDR admired certain aspects of U.S. operations and had benefited from multiple U.S. advisor teams and leaders from BCTs.



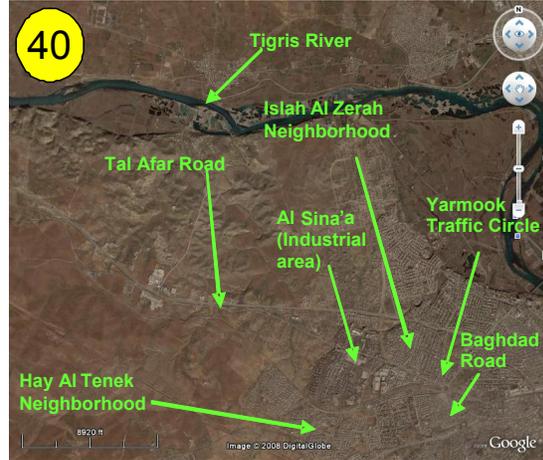
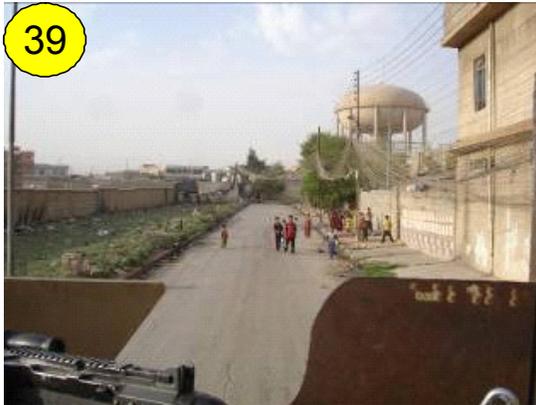
- 25 – Receiving some HMMWV rebuilds up at the RSU (Regional Support Unit) at Al Kisick. Where the previous HMMWVs had a kind of “loaner” or “hand me down” feel, these HMMWVs came complete with an IA paint scheme, and had an “out of the box” feel to them. While the reader may not mark the difference, for the IA (and the MiTTs) it was another milestone in the professionalization of the IA. It also made a difference in public as both the citizenry and the enemy knew who was who, and when the IA won a fight out in town, there was no doubt who it was.
- 26 – The BN CDR talking to a group of men who had been brought in by one of the most senior and competent IA CDR – who was also a prominent Sunni Arab. The group was reading insurgent propoganda at a mosque suspected of anti-coalition sympathies. The CDR did not detain them, just used the opportunity to get his message out, in a secure place, and allow the men to ask him some questions. He then used BN vehicles to return the men to the area of the mosque.
- 27 – Getting the Inman crane working on these Russian built Kraz 7.5 ton trucks was something the IA believed could not be done. Hard work by SSG Jones an augmentee from 1<sup>st</sup> CAV Division was instrumental. Jones (an 88M) and Victor Cartagena made a great team. Using the BN’s assets they were able to enable the BN to self evacuate damaged and destroyed equipment and either get in turned in to be fixed or have new equipment ordered. This team of maintenance pros in coordination with the 3<sup>rd</sup> DIV MTR MiTT also conducted the first evacuation with an MTR (Motor Transportation Regiment) in 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV, made all the more remarkable since it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> DIV’s MTR.
- 28 – RPG hole in the 1/2/2 maintenance bay. Because of its location and construction, the bay was often a target for RPG and mortar fire. The enemy understood the relationship between the IA’s ability to keep its small fleet of HMMWVs running and their ability to affect the enemy. MAJ Cartagena and SSG Jones were in the bay advising during numerous attacks.



- 29 – A ingenious IED this is an SK-5 rocket in a PVS firing tube concealed in a block which looks like “curb cement”. The enemy would emplace it and then use it either as a stand alone event, or in conjunction with other forms of attack. The IA patrol noticed something out of place in the way the vehicle and occupants looked, and detained them in flash traffic control point. The IA’s ability as an indigenous security force to understand what was out of place in the environment was a strong suit, and led to many successful operations.
- 30– One of the local Mukhtars in Mosul speaking out at the West Mosul Security Council meeting. Meetings such as this were initially started by the BCTs, then shared with the local leaders and security forces, then completely run by local officials. They provided an opportunity for the civilian and military leadership to get in touch with the various unofficial (not elected) leaders and discuss the problems. It might be thought of as a “town hall” type forum.
- 31 – Kick off of a Joint IA & IP operation. By this point the IA BDE’s had transitioned to assuming responsibility and were conducting their own planning and execution with the IP. Coalition BCT units were still integrating their own operations with those of the ISF, and were assisting those ISF operations through coordination and requests, as well as retaining visibility on what areas would be uncovered as a result of the IA and IP massing sufficient forces to saturate an area. The transition teams played a key role in the coordination at this point by keeping the BCT leadership advised of changes in the plan and updates during and after the operation.
- 32 – A successful IA team, and among some of the most proficient soldiers I’ve ever known. It was not uncommon for the BCT to come by and request teams like this to conduct combined operations. It was not to put an “Iraqi Face” on it, it was because these teams were just that good and respected amongst their U.S. peers. Note the carry posture of their weapons.



- 33 – An IA planned and executed combined community engagement (an element from the U.S. BCT participated). Through MAJ Mark Hayden’s civilian contacts the BN acquired several hundred “beanie babies” and other toys and school supplies to bring in the kids and also engage the parents. Community Engagement as a concept that took the IA some time to warm up to, their military had not generally been used in that role in the past. The U.S. advisors and BCTs who had been working with the IA helped them better understand their role as being the one visible government institution that demonstrated the existence of an Iraqi government. Once the IA understood their role better, and the need for a balanced approach, they integrated it into their overall operations.
- 34– Propane deliveries. On the news networks we often see propane salesmen on the streets in Iraq, what we don’t recognize is the significance of propane to Iraqi daily life. Whereas we use propane in select usage, the Iraqis use it for almost everything. All the bottles I ever saw were worn, dented and scarred. In this scene there had been a significant propane shortage, partially caused by the curtailment of the “propane” black market, partly through enemy intimidation of legitimate vendors. This created mob scenes for legitimate outlets such as this truck. Here a 1/2/2 patrol has stepped in to ensure the propane vendor does not sale to the highest bidder, but conforms to an orderly delivery. They also brought some order to the scene, keeping the children and elderly from being taken advantage of.
- 35 –Scene of a large SVBIED that had ambushed a patrol from 2/2/2 IA at the boundary between the two battalions. The enemy began using resources it had previously reserved for the BCT against an increasingly effective Iraqi Army.
- 36 – Just after 35 the only coalition element that could respond was a 1/2/2 IA patrol led by the BN S3. While they covered the withdrawal and evacuation of the 2/2/2 patrol, the S3 and his patrol became fixed. We (1/2/2 MiTT) were monitoring on the IA’s net and got the scene as quickly as we could. The BCT quickly provided OH 53 Kiowa Warrior helicopters, and other assets within the next 15 to twenty minutes. The enemy withdrew shortly after we got there, understanding that more forces were likely in route. In this photo a 1/2/2 MiTT member is with his IA counterpart, giving a situation report to higher and coordinating for additional support.



- 37 – Coordinating the evacuation of some of the BN's major rolling stock. While logistics is seldom seen as "sexy" or gets much play in the media, it is the life blood of a unit's ability to do more than exist. This scene is from the first use of 3<sup>rd</sup> Division's MTR to evacuate any of 2<sup>nd</sup> Division's rolling stock to the RSU at Al Kisick. Close cooperation between the 1/2/2 IA S4 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> DIV MTR's S3, and between the two advisor teams made this possible. Functioning towbars were a huge issue. The 1/2/2 MiTT had actually found these in the FOB MAREZ dump and refurbished them into working order. The vehicle being pulled is a 7.5 ton Kraz truck – which was down due to a faulty transmission that came with the truck. As a side note all the Kraz trucks were refitted with better transmissions at the RSU – this gets into the training and equipping of FSFs, and considering the range of DOTMLPF requirements on the FSF.
- 38– A meeting between the 1/2/2 BN CDR, the 2/2 BDE CDR, and the soon to be 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV CDR along with the members (not pictured) of the 1/2/2 MiTT, the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE MiTT, the 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV MiTT, 2-7 CAV, 4/1 BCT and MG Mixon, then 25<sup>th</sup> DIV CDR and CDR of MND-North. The meeting took place in the 1/2/2 BN CDR's office. While such physical meetings are rare due to constraints and conditions, the opportunity to share a common understanding was paramount to retaining the initiative across the coalition.
- 39 –In the upper right hand side of this photo the reader can gain some appreciation for the energy infrastructure throughout most of Mosul. While the top of the pole may look orderly, the bottom is the reality. Tens of thousands (if not hundreds of thousands) of individual lines to local generators snaking throughout the city, across alleys and streets and running to individual homes, businesses and huts. The enemy takes advantage of this clutter to mask his IED initiators. This sometimes confused friendly forces as a late night repair to a generator line might look like an IED emplacement.
- 40 – An overview of 1/2/2's area of responsibility. Some of the major features are marked in their Iraqi name. Yarmook and other names are quite common throughout Iraq. Islah Al Zerah eqates to place of culture, although the neighborhood was one of the poorest (along with Hay Al Tenek. Tal Afar Road, Baghdad Road and Yarmook traffic Circle were all contested.

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- **41 - This photo was taken by an IA member of the 1/2/2 patrol on his camera/cell phone.**
- The story behind it is also worth relating. During the RIP/TOA with the MiTT that would replace us, we were on a battlefield circulation of the 1/2/2 AOR. We heard contact just East of us about 1KM in Al Sina'a, and then the BN CDR received a radio call confirming that a 1/2/2 patrol had made contact with an AIF cell attempting to emplace an ambush ahead of the BCT route clearance patrol. The enemy had long understood the need to disrupt our counter IED efforts, the routes that these route clearance patrols traveled, and the speed and composition of the patrol themselves. The enemy had OPs along the routes to call in movement variables of the patrol and the enemy would adjust his ambush accordingly. We (1/2/2 and the 1/2/2 MiTT) began to develop ideas on how to disrupt the enemy. We were able to do this by understanding that the enemy was subject to the conditions that were created by his targeting. We also understood that while the enemy was strong when he was set in his ambush, he was most vulnerable during movement and set up of his ambush. At this point he could be surprised, and the mass and C2 of a good patrol could overwhelm him. This is what happened here. The enemy was attempting to set in, and the 1/2/2 patrol surprised them by coming from an unanticipated direction and in a manner that the enemy could not account for. While the enemy had good situational awareness on the location of the coalition patrol, they could not account for the location of the IA – it was beyond their resources. Our patrol had both prior knowledge of where the route clearance patrol was going, and the potential spots where the enemy would conduct its ambush. The result was that the 1/2/2 patrol had the initiative and used it to good effect.
- FSF (Foreign Security Forces) are not 1:1 copies of U.S. forces. If this photo was in sepia and the patrol dressed in the frontier garb of the mid 1800s, it might look like a scene from the old West. This is the current reality for many FSFs. They are not like us in many ways, and the U.S. advisor has to acknowledge that. The IA patrol member took this photo while the fire fight was still going. The burning car in the background was cooking off hidden ammunition. It was simply that important to the patrol to record this event as a “good day”. Following the 15 seconds that was required for the group to take this photo, they put their complete uniforms back on, consolidated and reorganized and continued to soldier. After the action I mentioned to the patrol leader that while I could understand their enthusiasm and the need to record the event, they might also consider that the fight was not completely over. He got the message and I did not take anything away from their moment. The advisor not only has to consider what he says, but how he says it, and when he says it.
- We should not forget that we are sending our advisors into combat. While a couple of us were advising the BN CDR and S3, our vehicle crews were providing security, talking to helicopters, sending up reports and exchanging a few rounds with the enemy. This is not a benign environment, and both good and bad people may die.
- One of the enemy killed in this engagement was an AIF Cell leader. He was responsible for the death of a U.S. HMMWV crew not a few months before. Visible successes like this by the Host Nation's security forces lend credibility to their claim of authority amongst the populace and over the enemy. As a result of successes like this more tips came in, and the BN's successes continued to rise.

## Chapter 7: Observations and Recommendations

Overall in Mosul there was a relatively high unity of effort. This was due in large part to the level of commitment of the participants and their understanding of the requirement to establish what is relevant and then enable and engage the appropriate unit, agency, or echelon. Within the PRT, the PRT Chief and the governance lead (from the Department of State) both had military experience. The RoL (Rule of Law) lead had two sons serving in the U.S. Army. The BCT CDR made a commitment to put his deputy commander in a position to assist and inform the PRT and himself as the principal liaison. By chance, the 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE MiTT Chief was an Army 06 (the position called for a 05) which provided him a broader experience set to draw upon, as well as a level of prestige and credibility when dealing with many agencies and his Iraqi counterpart. The Deputy PRT CDR was also an Army 06, drafted from his position in a U.S. Fires BDE. The Iraqi Army was at a point of organizational development where it was able to conduct effective counter insurgency operations.

From a broader coalition forces standpoint, Ninewa and Mosul were to be economy of force efforts at this time allowing MNF-I to concentrate forces and efforts in Baghdad. However, given the nature of the conditions in Mosul, the participants were actually able to gain ground both with regard to building security capacity, and with regard to reducing the amount of enemy influence and freedom of movement. While difficult to illustrate causal relationships, it is likely that the security force assistance and development conducted in 2006 and 2007 in Mosul played a role in the outcome of 2008 as enemy forces defeated in Baghdad and Diyala attempted to re-establish themselves in Mosul. They found more competent Iraqi security forces there, and an environment that was less tolerant and receptive to their message.

As well as events would seem to have played out in Mosul, there is still the question of how much better they could have been, or how much more effective and efficient they could have been if the participants had understood themselves, the enemy, the Iraqis and the nature of the environment faster and better. A relevant example is the nature of the security sector. Within the Mosul security sector there are the visible security forces such as the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police, but also private security companies employing Kurdish Peshmurga at Iraqi construction sites and the body guards for the Iraqi judges and government officials. The Mosul security sector was influenced by what went on at the border control points to the west and the east, and the occasional activities of the Iraqi National Police inside of Mosul. More broadly and less visible, the Mosul security sector also includes the prison guards at the correctional facilities such as Badush Prison located about 20 minutes north-west of Mosul, the Iraqi prosecutors who prepare the cases, and the judges who try them. The Mosul security sector is influenced by the political and economic sector, and the external influence applied from official and unofficial sources of power. From a U.S. standpoint the immediate goal was to improve the capability and capacity of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police units; however, this created problems in areas that remained underdeveloped such as the judicial system's ability to effectively process, screen, and convict or exonerate detainees, and the correctional system's ability to hold, secure, isolate and reform those awaiting trial or convicted.

There was an element of discovery learning that went on by a series of individuals and units who transitioned the battlespace through deployment and redeployment. They

had to orient themselves from what they anticipated in pre-deployment to what they found on the ground, and they had to learn to create ad-hoc relationships to achieve the mission. In the process, units and individuals had to relearn those things the last unit may have identified as important, but were unable to establish relevancy or context around. As such they potentially impeded reform and development of a key area, sustained a problem, or exacerbated or protracted violence which enabled the enemy to better resist our efforts and those of the Iraqis.

**Recommendations:** The below recommendations are articulated in terms of DOTMLPF, or Doctrine, Organizational, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, and Facilities. Using DOTMLPF allows the institution to consider observations and recommendations in a format that is both familiar and is a recognized standard in considering the rationale for change, and the implications of doing so.

1. **Doctrine:** The case study indicates a functional requirement for participants, agencies, commands and institutions to understand complex, interactive environments in a way that allows them to identify what is a problem, what is a symptom of a problem, and what is an environmental condition and distinguish between them. This understanding is what allows them to be more effective and thus more efficient to achieve unity of effort and accomplishing the mission at less risk to the policy objective.
  - a. This doctrine must be descriptive in nature and eschew formulaic approaches to complex problems. It should be understandable not only to the Department of Defense (DoD), but to the whole U.S. Government and applicable to its partners. It should articulate a framing approach that is founded upon a relevant theory and consider not only what U.S. objectives are, but how those objectives relate to the environment in terms of sustainability and tolerance.
  - b. This problem framing should lead to a campaign design that is founded on a learning model so that as the participants and their supporting institutions recognize and account for relevant change, they reframe their approach so it achieves the spirit and intent of the policy objective to which military action was committed. There are a number of emerging assessment, design, and planning models or tools that either exist or are being developed by our experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other relevant areas since 2001. Also, there are a number of emerging areas such as Security Sector Reform and Development, Rule of Law, and Building Partner Capacity which serve as intellectual conceptualizations through which we can apply framing and design.
  - c. The U.S. Army has produced new doctrine in its FM 3-24 on Counter-Insurgency, FM 3-07 on Stability Operations, and its Full Spectrum approach in FM 3-0 Operations. The U.S. Joint Forces Command is producing Joint Operational Concepts and handbooks to address the gaps we see in Joint Doctrine with regard to achieving our policy objectives. U.S. Special Operations Command has been named the Joint Proponent for SFA, which will further DoD's understanding of what security force assistance is, how to do it, and how it relates to our foreign policy objectives. There is DoD

- d. Given the nature of the environment, the range of U.S. policy objectives with respect to its many interests and the evolving nature of an interactive environment, a prescriptive approach to doctrine will fall short of preparing participants and institutions to do the range of missions and tasks they may be required to do. Many of the participants in the case study were not “trained” or “educated” to fulfill the roles and functions they took on. In many cases, they developed a capability and adapted over time by identifying what worked and what did not. What worked for one participant in a given role would not, or did not, work for another because most of the activities involved a degree of personal engagement or were subject to specific conditions.
- e. Doctrine must both identify what its limitations are with regard to “prescription,” and make explicit what is “descriptive.” It should emphasize the need to consider the nature of the complex, interactive environment through some approach be it a systems, or some other relevant conceptualization. It should allow for the use of that generated knowledge to consider the range of potential outcomes from actions or inactions so that as those outcomes occur the plan can be modified or adapted to reduce risk to the policy objective.
- f. With respect to identified non-Title 10 SFA doctrinal gaps that DoD may have to fulfill in the absence of Title 22 authority due to non-permissive conditions or inter-agency capability and capacity gaps, the reform and development of policing (border, national, and local), penal corrections officers and gendarmerie functions seem to be the ones most urgently required. This doctrine should cover the breadth and depth of the gaps to include: institutional development at the ministerial levels; the authorities required to enable assistance, and the development of sustainable security with oversight and accountability.
- g. The interviews also indicate that there are some doctrinal gaps with regard to the War Fighting Functions of:
  - i. **Movement and Maneuver** –
    - 1. Accounting for integration of HN security forces as they are generated, employed, transitioned and sustained into the plans of general purpose forces conducting full spectrum operations.
    - 2. Accounting for better integration of advisory teams, contractors, PRTs, and other non-organic organizations that are present during SFA and other capacity building lines of operation.

**Example** - As the Iraqi Army became more competent, committed, confident, and capable they were becoming more effective in many ways than the BCT. The relationship became

complimentary as each organization's strengths made up for the others deficiencies. Synchronization and integration of operations had the effect of combined arms – it presented the enemy with less freedom of movement, and provided more opportunities for increased capacity building in other lines of operation. How should we articulate this in doctrine?

ii. **Command and Control**

1. Accounting for the initial command and control of host nation security forces in a way that develops them to take responsibility within their unique environment. Accounting for a responsible transition to a coordination and synchronization role with the developed partner security forces.
2. Accounting for the command and control, or coordination and synchronization of advisory teams, contractors, PRTs and other non-organic organizations that are present during SFA and other capacity building lines of operation.

**Example** - Each BCT that came through Mosul had a different vision of how best to command and control or coordinate with the Iraqis. This was as much a function of personality as it was higher echelon guidance. The relationships with the other U.S. forces were largely the same. There is a doctrinal gap in where to start from with regard to command and control in this area. How should we articulate this in doctrine?

iii. **Fires**

1. Accounting for the impact of lethal fires and information operations on the host nation security forces, and the advisory teams, contractors, PRTs and other non-organic organizations that are present during security force assistance and other capacity building lines of operation. The impact may be positive or negative, but needs to be considered. How should we articulate this in doctrine?

iv. **Intelligence**

1. Accounting for the need to create situational awareness and understanding with all relevant participants, and how to better leverage the information collected by host nation forces, advisory teams, PRTs, and contractors, and validating their analysis on its significance to operations. While some organizations took physical steps to ensure exchange of information, many pieces of key information either did not make it where they needed to go, or were not placed in a context that showed operational relevance.

**Example** - The various advisory teams and other participants often created ad-hoc networks of varying

effectiveness to share information and intelligence. While all recognized the need to do better, the deployment cycles and lack of common architecture made overcoming natural frictions a challenge. How should we articulate this in doctrine?

v. **Sustainment**

1. Accounting for the requirements of developing FSF (foreign security forces) on U.S. OR (operational readiness) rates, the additional CSS required to do it effectively and efficiently.
2. Accounting for the priority of developing FSF with regard to their own OR rate and how that impacts the U.S. mission through the development of the FSF during combat operations.
3. Accounting for the increased burden of supporting advisory teams, contractors, PRTs and other non-organic organizations that are present during security force assistance and other capacity building lines of operation

**Example** - The OR rate of Iraqi Army HMMWVs (High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles )and the availability of CL IIIB determined the number of patrols the Iraqi unit would run that day, and how much freedom of movement the enemy would have in those areas controlled by the Iraqis. How should we best articulate this in doctrine?

vi. **Protection** – A secure base of operations, be it a combat outpost or a traffic control point, supports the sustained operations required for COIN.

1. Accounting for the protection and survivability requirements of a developing FSF with regard to its impact on generating, employment, training, and sustainment the FSF. How can we best articulate this in doctrine?

h. The institutions with a responsibility to produce doctrine should consider it from the perspective of the range of functions those who will employ it will face, and recognize that each set of conditions and each “user” will likely offer cause to employ doctrine differently. As such no single doctrinal approach will guarantee an outcome, and employing any doctrine in a formulaic manner without regard for the environment, or the need to be persistently engaged to some degree will unduly risk the desired outcome. Doctrine is not a substitute for an engaged discourse between commanders, staffs, and relevant participants in the interactive and complex environment.

2. **Organizations**: With regard to organizational observations and recommendations, it is useful to describe the range of conclusions that could be addressed based on this case study. At one end you could have an organizational form that is exclusive to its function, at the other you could have a form that is very limited in specialization and fulfills a range of possible functions. The interviews indicate that both specialized (PRTs and TTs) and general purpose organizations (the BCT) were required in Mosul at the time of the case study given the METT-TC (Mission, Enemy, Terrain, Troops,

In Mosul, as an aggregate there was an ad-hoc set of organizations in the BCT, PRT, the various transition teams and other organizations that deployed and redeployed on different schedules and with different levels of training and command and support relationships. This created a natural friction that organizational leaders had to work at to overcome.

Some of these organizations intended to perform a specialized function such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division MiTTs, but based on the nature of selection and the conditions (particularly the status of the unit they were assigned to advise), were themselves ad-hoc in that their composition was based on individual augmentees of officers and SNCOs who were tasked or volunteered from both the active and reserve components and had varying levels of experience and aptitudes. These augmentees came together for a short period of time prior to deployment and went through a cohort training experience. Many of these teams had members who were unprepared to advise at a particular echelon, or their qualifications in terms of training and experience were not aligned with the needs on the ground. Some of these teams “re-rolled” their assigned or augmented personnel to better organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding and advising the Iraqi Army units given the operating conditions found in Mosul at that time.

There were other elements such as reserve component units who were assigned to train police and contractors who augmented those police training teams and DoJ (Department of Justice) contractors who worked out at Badush Prison building corrections capacity. The members of the PRT often rotated on an individual basis based on how their parent agency could support the mission. All of these organizations occupied, transited, worked within, required support, interacted with, and impacted the operating environment which included the population, the enemy, Iraqi Security Forces and the U.S. Government forces and personnel.

**Recommendations** –The conditions which drive a set of recommendations may be exclusive to time and place, and be invalid under other conditions. There has to be a balance between providing organizations a better set of tools and over-engineering something to the point of a prescription which was only useful once. This is particularly true when considering what roles and responsibilities should be

undertaken while remaining cognizant of limited resources; i.e. trying to be perfect within a specified range that are inadequate for the range of functions conditions the environment may actually generate. Materiel and Organization changes are often the first ones reached for in the DOTMLPF equation, because on the surface they seem to offer the easiest way to solve a deficiency. However, both the “M” and the “O” create new requirements across the rest of the DOTMLPF which impact existing force structure, resources, and the ability to perform other roles and missions.

The organizational recommendations below are meant to be descriptive of the functions that may apply across operational environments when performing SFA activities. These recommendations will focus on the BCT or BCT modular like organizational level which depending on the service may look different, but is basically the echelon which has the requisite level of command and is capable of sustaining itself during a deployment. Increasingly the BCT seems to be a tactical echelon that is executing some operational level functions. There are two components to be considered: The requirements for individual augmentation to the command and staff, and the requirement for unit augmentation to enable the BCT to perform the range of missions given the operating conditions.

- a. **Individual Augmentations to the Command and Staff** – Identifying the requirements associated with conducting SFA activities in a given environment indicate that while the BCT command and staff is adequate for the war fighting functions associated with its METL tasks, it lacks some specialized staff functions required to do those tasks it may be called upon to perform SFA activities. The BCT may be the organization that is supporting or is supported, but it needs the tools to interact within the JIIM (Joint, Inter-Agency, Inter-Governmental, and Multi-National) environment given those METT-TC conditions in order to achieve unity of effort and achieve the policy objective in an acceptably effective and efficient manner. One way to do this is create a sliding scale Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTO&E) that had a series of required, but not authorized slots of specialty staff for the conduct of SFA. This creates a “pregnant pyramid” of more senior level officers (or possibly USG civilians and/or contractors) which could be required for deployment when the analysis indicates that there is a SFA component to the mission. It is not a perfect solution; Required not Authorized (RNA) ) has been tried before and was inadequate because it often coded positions RNA that were found critical in garrison and training. Given the nature of SFA, RNA may be an acceptable way of augmenting the BCT for conditions that vary in both time and place.

The two functional requirements and descriptions found in the Case Study interviews would be cells dedicated to coordinating and integrating operations and activities of foreign security forces (FSF) and supporting organizations, and with JIIM partners. As recommendations they are drawn from the functions assumed by leaders or staffs within the BCT, this is an attempt to capture the function as a recommendation in a form that is less ad-hoc and presents the BCT with the opportunity to preserve its original capabilities while meeting the new requirements.

The nature and scale of the functions may require the two recommendations remain separate dependant on the conditions which affect each – e.g. if the unit has only a minimal requirement to coordinate with the JIIM community, then the structure of the cell can reflect it. If a unit’s sole function or line of operation is oriented on coordination and integration with either the JIIM or a FSF partner, the answer may be to focus the BCT staff on those tasks, and request specific individual augmentation as required. If the METT-TC conditions require that the BCT pursue multiple lines of operation in addition to supporting a JIIM partner or building security capacity in FSF then their organic authorized staff will probably be taxed just coordinating those operations to support its organic units.

<b>Function</b>	<b>Description</b>
<p>FSF Coordination &amp; Integration Cell</p>	<p>The FSF Coordination and Integration Cell should reflect the scale and predominant orientation of the SFA effort. If the FSFs are predominantly police, or the decisive effort is oriented on the police, then the composition of the FSF C &amp; I Cell should reflect that. In a phased campaign, this might mean that in the first year the focus is on the military, and in a subsequent year that focus shifts to police or some other segment of the security sector. The composition of the cell should also reflect who the cell will coordinate with, and is in effect representative of a smaller staff sized to scale of the effort.</p> <p>The Cell OIC should have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be capable of professional and mature judgment in the area in which the cell is focused e.g. if the objective was to assist the FSF partner in the conduct of COIN (Counter Insurgency), then having a cell OIC who had never conducted COIN, or was from a sea or air service might not support the mission.</li> <li>- Be of sufficient rank and/or stature to get things done with regard to the BCT CDR, the range of other U.S. personnel they must interact with, and with special considerations of the FSF leadership – e.g. a major will have some challenges interacting with a COL or BG level equivalent in the JIIM or the FSF of the HN. He may get the mission done by force of personality, but he may risk some other aspect of the broader mission in doing so.</li> <li>- If possible, the cell OIC should have some experience working closely with FSF.</li> </ul> <p>The rest of the cell should reflect at a minimum the war fighting functions of movement and maneuver, command and control, fires, intelligence, sustainment and protection. The cell may also</p>

	<p>have a requirement for CA, IO, PsyOPs, a Security Assistance Officer (SAO), a JAG officer, contracting officers, etc. depending upon the nature of the SFA activities at that time, and the development path of the FSF.</p> <p>This cell should be capable of coordinating and integrating not only the BCT activities and operations with the range of relevant FSF, but also of coordinating and/or integrating the activities of those organizations such as the various transition teams advising and assisting the host nation police, military, gendarmerie, border police, intelligence agencies, correctional forces, etc. that are resident or conduct operations in that area with the BCT.</p> <p>This may include helping to obtain resources, acting as a conduit for coordination, or anything which is in support of the broader mission. They collect, analyze and synthesize information to provide the BCT CDR with an idea of what is important and why so he can make decisions and consider risk.</p>
<p>JIIM Coordination &amp; Integration Cell</p> <p>Ref. COL Twitty, LTC Boden, COL Brackney, Dr. Knight, Jim Holtsnider, Reid Pixler and Mike Howard Interviews</p>	<p>The JIIM Coordination and integration cell is there to assist the BCT CDR in achieving unity of effort with other USG, Multi-National Partners (MNP) outside the HN foreign security forces, the International Organizations and the Non-Governmental Organizations which may have a presence in the BCT's area and are working relevant projects or activities which can influence operations. It could also include U.S. or friendly Multi-National Corporations (MNC) (who are returning to the area and wish to partner with U.S. efforts. The JIIM Coordination and Integration Cell is not a Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) (and would not fully replicate the functions of a CMOC. The functions of this cell are also dependent on the METT-TC conditions, and the functions taken on by other USG agencies – e.g. a PRT (or the country team) may be the focus for coordinating the IO, NGO, and MNC plans and activities, but the provision of security may still fall on the BCT. However, if the conditions are such that there is no PRT or no country team presence in that geographic area, the expectation and responsibility may fall on the BCT.</p> <p>The Cell OIC should have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have commensurate rank, education, and professional maturity to be a trusted interlocutor between the BCT CDR and other senior officials who may report to different superiors or have different interests.</li> <li>- Have superior judgment.</li> <li>- Preferably have experience working in the JIIM community.</li> <li>- Have advanced education.</li> <li>- Be free from other duties and responsibilities within the BCT.</li> </ul>

	<p>The rest of the cell should reflect at a minimum the skills needed for further cooperation and unity of effort. As new lines of operation materialize or old ones evolve beyond the requirement for coordination, the composition of the cell may change. The upfront mission analysis of the conditions and problems which will occupy the majority of the USG's attention in achieving its policy objectives should drive the initial composition. This cell could be "contractor heavy" as many of the skill sets may be beyond being resourced in DoD.</p> <p>While it may seem that the recommendation of such a cell is beyond the initial scope of an SFA Case Study, the interdependence between the security sector, the economic sector, and governance create conditions where further progress in one area may be contingent upon progress in another.</p>
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- b. **Unit Augmentations** – Augmenting the BCT to perform SFA activities is contingent upon the conditions of METT-TC. There is no “one size fits all” approach, and drawing such a distinction works well enough in a peacetime training environment, but creates the conditions for piecemeal ad-hoc efforts in a complex, inter-active environment such as war. This makes achieving unity of effort more difficult than it should be, and jeopardizes the objective.

One of the assessments that must be done upfront concerns the nature of the partner's security sector and considers what is the best course of development with regards to their security goals and ours. While this decision may be made above the BCT, the BCT certainly informs on the decision in terms of what is feasible, and how that decision is playing out on the ground. The BCT may be responsible for, or play a significant role in generating, organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding, and advising FSF. As such it may find itself as the responsible command and/or as a supporting organization to SFA activities. The relationship may be attached, or there may be a requirement to produce some of these teams or augment existing teams out of the BCT's structure. The command relationship may be administrative control, operational control, or tactical control.

There are considerations with regard to a BCT's ability to produce specialty transition teams or skills to perform a specific function, or to conduct other operations while conducting SFA activities. For example, a BCT might be able to support the creation of one 12 man MiTT along the lines of those currently in Iraq out of each of its battalions and one out of its BCT staff if the METT-TC conditions supported it, which would allow it to advise a FSF equivalent echelon. However, if it were tasked at more than a like unit 1:1 ratio while conducting other operations, or if it were tasked to partner at that level with different components of the security sector that were not of a like nature, then it would require augmentation.

In the Case Study, 4/1 fell in on both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> IA DIV MiTTs, as well as an inadequate number of Police Transition Teams (PTT) that were a mix of units, specialties and contractors, some Border Transition Teams (BTT), a PRT, some DoJ contractors advising the Iraqis at Badush Prison, and a host of other related units and activities either located inside of their area, or that transited and influenced it. They maintained as many different relationships as there were teams which made unity of effort more a function of personality than design.

There is also an issue of the authority to conduct specific types of SFA, in the case of Iraq exceptions have been made to make up for capacity shortfalls in other USG agencies – e.g. police training is not normally a Title 10 DoD function; however, in the case of Iraq the need to build the Iraqi police to an acceptable level was of such importance in achieving the U.S. policy goal for Iraq that an exception to policy was made.

Augmentation	Considerations
Military Transition Team(s)	1. What is the role of the FSF component in the current METT-TC conditions?
Police Transition Team(s)	2. What is the desired endstate for the FSF component within the security sector?
National Police or Gendarmerie Transition Team(s)	3. What is the current state of the FSF component, and what are the primary impediments to reform or development?
Border Police Transition Team(s)	4. What areas can be influenced by resources (men, money, equipment, etc.), what areas require time to develop regardless of resource commitment?
Corrections Transition Team(s)	5. What areas of a FSF component’s development are contingent upon development in another area?
*PRTs Note – the absence of a PRT does not negate the need for the functions it performs.	6. What are the immediate requirements in terms of transition team composition, and how will they change over time? 7. What will be required to exercise command and control, coordinate activities, synchronize operations, sustain transition teams and the FSF, protect resources, etc. in order to achieve unity of effort? 8. In what areas will augmentation be required?

- c. **Organizing** - Although organizing is not normally a part of Organization in the DOTMLPF sense, in this case it warrants discussion, particularly as it links back to other elements of DOTMLPF. In Ninewa 4/1 BCT inherited a number of transition teams and other ad-hoc individually augmented teams. The relationship with these teams changed over time; however, the functions performed were critical to accomplishing the commander's intent and the broader mission. Additionally, 4/1 augmented existing teams, and in some cases reorganized elements of its own to accomplish specific tasks. This composite effort was made possible by existing conditions to some degree, conditions that had evolved over time. But what about when commanders don't inherit force structure, and must

organize (or reorganize) without an inheritance of existing conditions for the purpose of conducting SFA?

The answer may be by using something related to our existing method of mission analysis. If the commander and staff begin by looking at the policy or military objective in the context of the conditions, they can develop their requirements or tasks. This might look something like  $P \text{ (or O)} + C \text{ (METT-TC)} = R \text{ (or tasks)}$ . Once you get the requirements and tasks, you can start looking at organizational functions from the HQs down to the executors. The planners may come up with new requirements, some of which can be fulfilled by re-rolling existing units, cells or individuals, some of which may generate a request for very specialized individuals or teams of specific composition to meet those requirements and tasks. The former is an extension of task organization as we know it. The latter is about doing "ad hoc" better, and requires the generating force to have visibility not on just unit types, but individuals with certain experiences, traits, technical skills, and attributes in order to reduce operational and institutional risk.

The planner can look across the phases of SFA planning (Generate, Employ, Transition, and Sustain) and the SFA tasks (Organize, Train, Equip, Rebuild, and Advise) and map their campaign plan out and start allocating resources, and maintain the understanding so that as conditions change, commanders and staffs can reallocate resources, reorganize elements, etc. to meet changing priorities.

3. **Training** – The Case Study interviews reflect the challenges of creating a training environment from our simulations to our Combat Training Centers (CTC) that replicates the level of interaction, complexity and non-linear nature of operating in the METT-TC conditions of a living city. The living city environment which produces a range of potential outcomes with every new interaction cannot be replicated in a controlled environment where the focus is on pre-identified collective outcomes. A living city is not a controlled environment like our CTCs or simulations where due to resource constraints and objectives events must occur within an identified period of time.

This does not mean that our CTCs and simulations must be redefined and re-engineered in order to better reflect reality, they are in fact very good at preparing units to do collective tasks, and turning them into a city that reflects a 1:1 scale may be beyond our sustainable resources given the current disposition of training resources. What can change are our own expectations with regard to what our collective training can or should provide. We should also consider that while emphasis on collective training has its place in terms of collective tasks that produce unit proficiency for offense and defense missions, those same collective tasks are not necessarily the ones that will allow units to succeed in SFA activities or in an environment where the end state is dependant on qualifications beyond the ratio of the number of enemy destroyed and friendly forces preserved.

Individual training beyond education and leader development matters in a different way in this environment. Influence, communication, negotiations, understanding of motive and what is relevant require equal or greater attention in

those who will perform these functions then their participation in collective proficiency. The paradigm of individual training for the purpose of supporting collective proficiency is still valid, but must be measured against the need to train unique individual skills that may be exclusive to measurable collective proficiency.

In other words, while our unit Mission Essential Task Lists (METL) shows us a path toward assessing units' training readiness, it also drives our focus toward conducting collective training as the endstate with a "T", "P," or "U" (Trained, Needs Practice, or Untrained respectively). In the environment that the case study took place in, those collective skills are often just the vehicle for surviving on the battlefield, or moving someone or something from place to place so that the personal interaction between two or more people can occur. Often that engagement has very little to do with the action that brought them there, and the desired outcome of the engagement; or the going in position of the engagement varies markedly from what actually occurs. This is not to say that conducting an offensive or defensive task is not important, and does not occur exclusively as an objective in this environment; just that it usually exists as a part of something broader, or as a result of some other action. A company raid on an insurgent safe house is an event we don't want to get wrong; however the steps to making that event occur such as the interaction with local leaders, the assessment of the validity of the operation, and the pre-coordination with local leaders of the host nation are not in and of themselves collective tasks.

The actions that take place afterwards such as the engagement with the people who were affected by the action, or the manner in which those detained are handled, evaluated, and processed to achieve more information depend heavily on individual skills. Even the actions during the raid such as how a key leader acts toward the members of that target's family have an impact. The purpose of the below recommendations is to help bridge the training gaps we create by the way training is valued.

- a. **Accept risk with respect to collective training strategies based on mission analysis** – The first step in shifting the focus requires an assessment of the risk involved in doing one thing and not another. It may mean considering the risk of not enhancing the individual level of training for which there is not a reportable requirement; but however, is assessed as mission critical based on the METT-TC conditions of an interactive environment.
- b. **Interact with real environments as part of training** – Some units are in fact finding ways to do this by partnering with local police and emergency services at home station on an individual basis. It is generally done on an ad-hoc fashion, and often does not involve the leaders who will participate in key interactions – e.g. the medics might get some time at a local emergency room, but our key staff and commanders are generally consumed in other activities. Exposing some of the staff and commanders to the challenges of how a city actually works, how security actually occurs, and what it actually means to a city's citizens by training them in those functions via exposure and partnerships in a city, county, or state may better prepare them to succeed in roles where the endstate involves sustainable security by the host nation.
- c. **Bring resources together** – There are a number of disparate training centers across the Department of Defense which train "advisor skills" for those going

out in “advisor” billets. The study indicates that all of the interviewees performed some level of advisor function. This is another aspect that distinguishes our training from operating in the real city with real people. Contacts with host nation citizenry, leaders, and officials are not limited to those personnel by billet or grade, but often occur in a random and ad-hoc manner. A JIIM center for training and education advising where leaders could attend courses of varied length, which could send out mobile training teams, and could run an interactive web presence that could provide commonality and expertise in advising. It could better leverage resources across the JIIM community as well as better partner with academia. It could serve the JIIM community as the focal point for training advisors that ranged from ministerial/cabinet level down to the advising at the tactical level. It would not be there to develop the advisor’s subject matter expert skills that require technical training and experience. It would not replicate the individual and collective combat skills provided by units. It would focus on the development of the advisory skills and attributes listed in sub paragraph 6 of these conclusions, observations, and recommendations.

- d. **Creation of a near real time Community of Practice (CoP) that is interactive and facilitates the adaptation of training to changes in the operating environment** – The interviews indicate that as units deploy there is an adjustment period to reconcile the METT-TC conditions they trained for with the METT-TC conditions as they exist on the ground. Part of this issue is units have trained to a standard based on what was reality in the operational environment not what is the current reality. While secure real time conferences, emails, and pre-deployment site surveys have helped change expectations, they still have limited influence in terms of shortening the “adaptation curve” which confronts units, staffs, and leaders. An open, UNCLASS community of practice similar to that of the Small Wars Journal, which facilitates interaction with a broad community may in fact be the best way to flatten communications and shape expectations on a meaningful scale. Most of the information that would do so is in fact UNCLASS, and is available on the web in diffuse locations, the difference would be providing a CoP to focus that information and allow the user to build the type of context that drives affects his expectations and training for this type of environment.
4. **Materiel** – The observations and recommendations on materiel are focused on interoperability as both a means to understand the battlefield and with regard to expectations between units. The interviews indicate a variance in perspectives that were developed over the course of individual and unit deployments. There were a number of ways in which individuals and units communicated that ranged from unsecure cell phones used to coordinate something with an Iraqi Army leader through an interpreter, to secure FM radio communications between MiTTs and coalition units, to remote secure Internet drop for sending classified documents. The problem was that it was largely an ad-hoc communications backbone to an ad-hoc network of people who through trial and error discovered not only who to talk to, but how to talk to them.

The Iraqis, for example, did not have the ability to talk on coalition encrypted, frequency hopping FM communications, nor could they talk via a secure satellite cell phone, nor could they talk through FBCB2 digital battle command communications; they talked either through unsecure FM Motorolas, some encrypted HF radios or via cell phones. They would often use code words and names, but that was the extent of their capabilities. This was exacerbated between the different types of ISF that had to coordinate. The advisor teams had the requirement to be able to talk to both U.S. units, and to their Iraqi counterparts, often coordinating activities between the multiple elements.

This also manifested itself with regard to collection, analysis, and dissemination of information and intelligence. Often, because the advisor teams were embedded with their Iraqi counterparts their access to secure Internet was limited to either a pick up from a higher echelon of dated and irrelevant information, or if fortunate were the recipient of a remote secure terminal which provides the SIPR access. The flip side to this is their ability to send out relevant and timely information and analysis was equally restricted, so others who might benefit from it went without.

The issue of interoperable communications illustrates the impact of expectations on achieving unity of effort. If the expectation is that because U.S. forces have a piece of equipment that allows them to do a task in more effective and efficient manner, then everyone must therefore be expected to do that task in the same way, that disconnects or impedes interoperability and unity of effort. The issue is compounded when the various components of a FSF security sector are resourced by different ministries and in an age of coalition warfare may have different requirements to interoperate with partners from a multitude of countries. Even amongst the IA and IP there were challenges in communicating.

There are two perspectives on recommending materiel solutions for SFA activities with regard to reform or development of the foreign security forces. One is with regard to the FSF's ability to achieve inter-operability across its own security sector based on resourcing and the functions that the force is supposed to fulfill; the other is with regard to the various components of a FSF interoperating with U.S. and other coalition forces. Organizational culture, levels of organizational development as an FSF component and levels of trust all need to be considered when drawing up a materiel recommendation.

The materiel requirement should consider the issue of interoperability amongst the FSF, amongst the relevant USG SFA participants, and the challenge of communications between those two groups. This is not just a matter of ensuring each group in a BCT's area has the hardware, but transcends that echelon up to the commands responsible for articulating common requirements and advising ministerial level bureaucrats on why they should equip their security forces toward a goal of interoperability and sustainability. With regard to the U.S. forces be they BCTs or transition teams, the challenge is recognizing the requirements for interoperability given varying conditions, and the requirements of the advisory teams that often act as the "inter-operability facilitator."

5. **Leader and Education Development** – one of the key observations in the case study about leader and education development was made by COL Steven Twitty the 4/1

BCT CDR, *“So we don’t get a lot of this when we start talking about National Training Centers. We don’t get a lot of this when we start talking about Leavenworth coming down for the Urban Operations Course and stuff. So it requires you as a Brigade Commander to not only be a tactician, but to also be a diplomat.”*

The context of COL Twitty’s comment is that the duties and responsibilities he took on were not necessarily those that his professional development and education had explicitly prepared him for. He had to adapt. While his leadership and educational experiences did allow him to adapt and become effective, there was an element of learning which had to take place. COL Twitty’s experience would seem to be indicative of all the case study participants, but particularly so in the case of the military participants. From the advisors embedded with the Iraqi Army, to the 2-7 CAV CDR, LTC Welsh who was charged with day to day tactical responsibility of Mosul, the operational and educational experiences that they had up to that time required them to: make assumptions in some critical areas; acknowledge that there was going to be some discovery learning and accept risk; and often pursue a particular line of effort or make a judgment call on intuition rather than fact.

- a. **Leader Education** – *“Secondly, I think some Arabic knowledge can be useful, but I don’t think it’s a prerequisite. I think that more important than that is knowledge of developing countries and their culture. We had people who didn’t speak any Arabic at all who were incredibly effective because of their understanding of the needs of developing countries; their background, having traveled abroad largely. On the other hand, we also had fluent Arabic speakers who had served in the region in other parts of the Middle East who were also very effective because of their experience with the region. So, I think that can go either way. If someone doesn’t have the Arabic experience I think they should have a strong background in developing countries.”* **PRT Governance Lead Jim Holtsnider, DoS**, on education and experience.

*“The biggest thing was I did grad school and I taught history at West Point. I think the advanced civil schooling, the immersion in working with higher education, specifically with humanities, government, political science, for me it was history. I think that leadership helped me prepare for something like this. It gave me some of the intellectual tools in the kit bag in terms of dealing with people, and studying that I think really helped me.”*

**LTC Michael Boden, DCO 4/1 BCT on some of the importance of education**

Of the DOTMLPF categories, “Education” does not receive its own letter in the acronym, but is attached to the “L” as Leadership and Education. In this capacity “Education” is somewhat constrained to those educational opportunities provided in the course of a career. Distinguishing what is “training” and what is “education” is not as easy as to say that one occurs in a field environment, and one occurs in a school house environment. A better way to consider it may be the orientation or purpose for each.

Training has an air of certainty about it, focused mostly in the “known knowns” and “known unknowns.” It could be skills that have been codified by the institution over time, such as training company grade officers to perform staff

functions or to plan other training events as a company commander – this is a part of what goes on at a Captain’s Career Course in the U.S. Army; it could also be the battle and crew drills, or part of the Situational Training Exercises (STX) lane design at a unit’s home station. These are skills that have been identified, and validated as a requirement that must be trained, and often there is a set of identified standards that are trained to such as: write paragraph 3 of an operations order in “X” amount of time, put a crew served weapon into operation in “X” amount of time in the following conditions.

Education should be about preparing for uncertainty and the unknown and for the ambiguity of complex, interactive environments. We run into problems when we approach education as though it were training. Education should provide the student the basis for the fundamental understanding of things that can be new or different through an inculcation of knowledge that can be applied beyond its face value. Higher education could be described as building upon a fundamental education with the object of application beyond understanding, toward adapting and developing existing ideas and experiences so that they are useful in a given set of circumstances, or METT-TC conditions beyond where they were taught, e.g. learning about counter-insurgency and advising a host nation army counterpart on conducting counter-insurgency are related, but different.

Our institutions as a whole have qualified what traits and attributes they believe they need in our leaders to best overcome and succeed in a complex, interactive environment which may take them to separate continents in successive deployments. Given the range of potential geographic and cultural locations in the full spectrum of operations required by U.S. policy objectives we cannot rely on investing in a “condition specific” education, but must prepare them for the range of conditions they may encounter. Some of the most valued traits and attributes that show up in the Case Study interviews and are reinforced in much of the professional military writing done since 9/11 are: innovation, adaptability, creativity and inter-personal skills such as communications and gaining influence. While our institutions have qualified those skills, traits and attributes, and articulated the environmental context of Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and the Philippines that drives the requirements, we may not have changed our approach to education in a manner that allows us to realize our educational development objectives.

This is a problem with two parts. The second part is the one the institution can affect once the leader or service member joins the institution. This part is a reasonably small portion of the available time given the institution’s requirements and the amount of personnel end strength it is allowed to maintain for non-specific functions. In DoD’s case (and this is not standard across the USG) the TTHS (Training, Transit, Hospital and Student) account allows for some overhead as people move, receive non-unit training, are hospitalized or are enrolled as a student. During relative peacetime this is a fairly stable model in which the flow of personnel can be regulated with manageable risk and friction.

In a war time environment where the personnel end strengths of institutions have been adjusted based upon expectations that have been overcome by events, DoD’s TTHS account becomes stressed. Personnel shortages due to

attrition mean an increase in demand for key leaders, and unforeseen requirements (such as the Transition Teams and PRTs), in large numbers exacerbate the supply and demand equation. If the institution responds by increasing its unit end strength to reduce the stress on the existing force, then it further stresses the TTHS account as new billets are identified to be filled. The point here is that while the easy answer may be to add more time to this part of problem, the reality is that there is little to no additional time to add, and at times of peak operational tempo, the institution may be operating on a deficit.

This means that in order for the institution to introduce something new that requires some of the available time, it must also decide what it is not going to do, or not going to do as well. Substituting an “unknown” for a “known” is an institutional risk. Making that decision on where to accept risk while not knowing definitively how to best achieve the desired outcome can result in an ad-hoc, piecemeal change that neither proves or disproves the approach, and offers no recognizable return. For an institution that must fulfill a broad range of policy objectives, its willingness to compromise what has traditionally worked for it in the past on the basis on anecdotal information is tough sell.

The first part of this problem is the one the institution can only marginally affect, and even that is limited to how we assess future leaders into our institutions. This is the problem of how we educate U.S. citizens, and begins from the moment they begin school regardless of if they are home schooled or attend a public institution. This is the human capital the institution inherits, and any additional education is shaped by what went before – right down to the way people learn. With DoD and its officer corps, there is both the potential to improve upon its pre-commissioning material and the potential to adversely affect that segment of its leaders. Through the military academies and ROTC sources of commissioning, DoD can shape the qualifications for commissioning. It could require more of this, less of that or a combination of different disciplines in order to be commissioned.

However, there is also risk in changing the academic requirements with regard to health of the overall force, and there are still technical disciplines that are required to maintain the strength of our military. In terms of mitigating the risk of a directed academic plan while trying to better shape the educational path prospective officers are taking, the institution must better understand itself and its requirements so that it can advise cadets on why a course or particular degree may help them succeed in complex, interactive environments.

**i. Recommendations:**

1. DoD should sponsor a collection effort focused on determining as conclusively as possible through interviews and AARs what traits and attributes are most valuable to the successful operations of the type we are engaged in now. The effort should clearly define what those skills and attributes are and qualify their importance. The collections should reach across form and function so that the breadth and depth of contemporary “full spectrum” operations are accounted for.

2. A follow on DoD effort should consider how best to educate those skills and attributes, and make recommendations to OSD and the Title 10 Service Chiefs for consideration against the responsibilities of roles and missions those services have been charged with fulfilling on behalf of policy. Ideally such an approach must provide relevant education at the various developmental stages of a leader's development. Service schools and distance learning should be addressed.
  3. DoD should review implementation decisions made by the services to assess overall benefits and risk to:
    - a. DoD-defined Title 10 responsibilities
    - b. DoD's identified requirements under DOD Directive 3000.05 (or its follow on)
    - c. The policy requirements as articulated in NSPD-44
    - d. The objectives as stated in the NSS, NDS, NMS and the GCC integrated campaign plans
  4. DoD should articulate the importance of these skills and attributes to the capability of the U.S. military and look for ways to partner with other branches and agencies of the USG, institutions offering higher education, and our public education system in ensuring that where possible those skills and attributes are educated prior to our future leaders becoming service members.
  5. Create a JIIM SFA advisor education and training center to serve as a university where those going to serve in advisor functions and where unit leaders can obtain an education on "how to advise" and learn to apply advisor skills in an uncertain environment to achieve a broad range of purposes.
- c. **Leader Development** *".....as Americans, generally, we are culturally isolated. I had never thought about that notion, but it's true. We are very culturally isolated here, so as we travel around, our cultural isolation causes us to view conditions differently than other cultures view them, and so a condition to us becomes a problem. It's not a problem, it's just a condition of this environment, and you work inside the condition."*

**LTC (RET) Howie Brewington on how culture creates a natural bias in perception**

The principal challenge of leader development is time vs. personnel requirements – e.g. how much time is available to provide a leader with the education, training, and opportunities for experiential development to prepare them to take on the additional responsibilities and authorities that the organization requires. This is made more complex as an organization tries to balance its structure in such a way where portions of its population are provided time away from those responsibilities and authorities to attend the additional education opportunities which provide them the tools to perform the widening range of requirements they will assume at the next level. It also provides them an opportunity to reflect and inculcate what they have learned to make it tacit. This

opportunity services the institutional knowledge base by keeping it current with the operational experiences of those who attend. In time of personnel turbulence and increased demand such as war, the balance of the pyramid is disrupted and maintaining it is more difficult and costly.

The Case Study interviews indicate that there is a gap in the experiences we currently expose our leaders to in their professional development that will make them more adaptive to the requirements of SFA activities. Throughout the typical development of our leaders, the focus is on preparing them to assume greater organizational responsibilities through serving in command/leadership and staff positions. In our organizational culture, we have created explicit institutional reinforcement of this by our system of Branch qualification jobs and implicit reinforcement through an understanding of what jobs within an organization best position an individual for advancement.

A rifle platoon leader explicitly knows that he will probably go on to do an XO or Specialty platoon leader job in his battalion, but he implicitly knows that among those potential jobs, some are more well regarded than others by his rater, senior rater, and the institution. This trend continues with the “value” being attributed to positions based on how they will both better prepare a leader for further command, and assist that leader while in command. E.g. the battalion S3 job is a Branch Qualifying job; however, the brigade S3 job is sometimes referred to as the “King Maker” of staff jobs as the leader who assumes it is first among equals when being compared against his or her peers. For those wishing to continue on in the institution to increased positions of responsibility and authority, the effect by and large is channelization into professional experiences that reinforce what the institution values most.

This is not wrong. It is natural based on the way the institution as a whole interprets its role. It has developed over time with regard to organizational learning about how best to fulfill its function with regard to the types of personnel it seeks to attract, recruits, trains, educates, advances, and seeks to retain. It is a form of natural selection where the institution tries to reflect what it most values and believes it should be composed of. Through trial and effort these institutions have discovered that it takes a combination of certain experiences, opportunities, and education to produce the volume of leaders that can maintain the institutional values of the organization. While there remains the occasional “natural born” leader, the requirements of the organization are such that the standard amount of time required to develop the level of leaders in the amount we require is about what it is.

The question that the Case Study Interviews bring up is: “Are the developmental experiences required to advise FSF resident in sufficient capacity to meet the requirements of our policy objective(s)?” The question for the institution charged with developing leaders becomes: “where do we accept risk if there is no additional time built into the ‘professional life’ of a leader?” This may not be an either – or proposition. The interviews also indicate that as a developmental experience, advisory duty may offer unique value to an organization that must fulfill the policy objectives of a United States that has cited

working by, with, and through the security forces of other states as critical to attaining its own national security objectives.

**i. Recommendations:**

1. Make advisory duty a key developmental position for the rank at which the advisor is, not the rank against which the advisor is billeted. While the Army has taken steps in MILPER MESSAGE 08-175 to award key developmental credit and acknowledge the importance of serving as an advisor to full spectrum operations, it is primarily focused on a specific rank in a specific billet. While this is an important step, it does not reflect the nature of serving as an advisor on advisory teams. While the transition team chief has an important role, it is not the same role as a commander of a company or a battalion in relation to the other members of the transition team. Each advisor on a transition team is fulfilling a unique function, and the requirements of each position to fulfill the mission vary from team to team. The critical member of the team may be the logistics advisor, or the intelligence advisor, and that may change as the unit advised progresses. To create value as an advisor means valuing the “advisor,” not the Team chief, whose role as such may be secondary or even nominal based on the composition of the transition team. Otherwise, the steps taken in the Army’s MILPER should be emulated in spirit by the broader JIIM community.
2. Create opportunities to serve in Inter-Agency billets early in a career and with a sense of institutional value. Sabbaticals, fellowships, etc. where the organization sponsors a leader to work for the duration of a typical assignment in an agency such as U.S.A.I.D. or the Department of Justice offer a different kind of developmental experience due to the functions and culture of those organizations. The choice of agency could be closely related to the function or branch the leader is part of, or it could be an opportunity to develop a different skill set which enhances the leader’s ability to think and achieve unity of effort in the complex, interactive environment. In some ways like living abroad, working inside of those agencies also brings back key insights which benefit the parent organization as a whole.

6. **Personnel (Skills, experience and Attributes)** – There are key functions that every personnel proponent must deal with/account for regarding every occupation, field, or specialty
  - a. **Accessions** – getting the right personnel into the program. We have determined through historical experience as far back as Vietnam that not everyone is cut out to be an advisor. Services should be tasked to establish accession standards based on their requirements. This does not necessarily lend itself to a specific personality test, type or indicator, (e.g. Myers-Briggs or MMPI), but rather, requires the creation of a program that assesses personnel who possess the potential to become good advising or working around FSF. SFA and advisor duty requires officers and NCOs who are mature, patient, and culturally aware. Because of the environment where they will operate, they need to display self-motivation, innovativeness (finding new

solutions to situations or new ways of implementing existing solutions), and be skillful communicators. Aptitude testing or personality evaluation may be appropriate.

b. **Qualifications** – the bar consists of formal training, education, and experience in some requisite combination. Each Service should establish qualifications as they deem appropriate for those it considers to be advisors. Qualification may include completion of a formal training course such as at Fort Riley or Fort Dix, and/or relevant experience; it may even include a voluntary, self-selection mechanism. A Service’s fully matured qualification system or program might include attendance at a formal training course followed by a utilization assignment, but some Services may elect to waive courses or give constructive credit for relevant experience. The key here should be to allow the Services enough flexibility in their qualification programs to make the process relevant and ultimately useful to the Service.

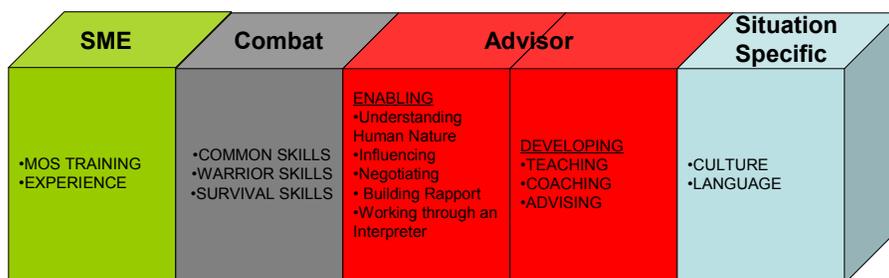
c. **Utilization** –establishing utilization goals over the career of an officer or NCO will be difficult at this point given the ambiguous demand signal. Once designated, advisors should be required to serve in recurring utilization tours to keep skills honed. Tours need not be downrange, but may include instructor time at an advisory training course or at some other training/educational institution. In the final analysis however, advisor duty should not be all-consuming. As one participant pointed out at the JCISFA symposium, “nobody wants an advisor whose only expertise is giving advice.” Advisors need to keep abreast of their primary specialties and possibly develop others.

d. **Tracking** – establish a system to identify and track advisors, monitor promotions/selections and call up advisors based on the requirements generated by the policy and conditions so that the institutional force providers can make better use of their entire population.

An interesting point based on the Active and Reserve component composition of the transition teams is the value of the civilian skills that the Reserve Component soldiers brought to the advisory mission. COL Senters in his interview remarked about the value of his BDE MiTT S3’s relevant media skills derived from his civilian position with Telemundo, a cable TV channel which broadcasts in Spanish to a large population. It was not only his skills in mass media, but his inter-cultural skills developed through programming content for a different cultural market than say a cable channel like CNN, or FOX. Congruent with our total force concept, services should establish ways to identify and track civilian skills of our reserve component forces, and where applicable use them where their civilian expertise can be best employed.

The answer to these questions exposes several critical factors. Based on extensive research and analysis, members of the SFA Community of Practice have ascertained that there are key identifiable skill sets required of a well-rounded advisor. They can be graphically portrayed in the figure below.

## Advisor Skill Sets



*“I ultimately identified the capabilities and limitations just based on observation, so what ended up happening is I had to go out on patrol with them, get out with them, watch their process so I could then understand how they did things so I could provide them with useful, potentially useful, advice that might be listened to and heeded; and then the results of that advice determined whether or not they listened to me again on that subject. And I had a great relationship with my brigade commander built on trust and mutual respect, which then allowed me to encourage him to engage in joint operations with the police, and it allowed me to encourage him on better ways to potentially do what he was doing. Because once again, I figured out early on because he told me, **“I was fighting when you got here, I’ll be fighting when you leave,”** and he was. The guy who replaced me has already left, and he (ed. – the IA BDE CDR) is still there, and he’s still fighting. So he understood the fighting piece, what he was looking for me for were ways to help him increase his own capability and increase the capability of his partners, the police.”*

### **LTC Howie Brewington on how he assessed his Iraqi partner, and contributed most as advisor.**

A. **Recommendations** – The following recommendations correspond to the “Advisor Skills Sets” figure above. It offers a way to conceptualize the skill sets required to make a capable and competent advisor who can perform a broad range of advisory missions under varying conditions. The recommendations describe what force managers can do to better develop and track personnel so that they may be better selected and employed for the advisory mission.

1. **Subject Matter Expertise.** At the far left is Subject Matter Expert (SME), or technical skills. They are gained outside the advisor training program, based on the individual’s specialties and experience level. Both the specialty and experience components are important. An infantry platoon leader may have great infantry skills, but might not have requisite experience to advise a foreign infantry brigade commander. Similarly, an officer with ministerial-level experience in one area might not be able to handle a position at that level in a totally different specialty. Services already track some of this type of information, so adding it to the advisor tracking

requirement is unnecessary, better to access existing databases so they update each other.

2. **Combat and survival skills.** Combat training and experience are also developed and tracked outside the core advisor training program. These skills are currently taught at advisor training venues, but there is no systemic requirement to do so. Services train combat skills at various locations and have the capability to track this information. Combat/survival refresher training, battle drills, etc. can still be honed on the road to deployment without overwhelming the curricula of the advisor training centers with redundant training retirements.
3. **Advisor skills.** This is the crux of advisor development and what sets the advisor apart from other SMEs. Services should be required to track officers, NCOs, and Service civilians who have completed advisor training and served in an advisory capacity.
4. **Situation-specific skills.** Situation-specific skills such as culture and language should also be left to the Services to identify and track as they see fit. Obviously, it is highly desirable to assign advisors back to regions where they have cultural/lingual expertise, but this may not always be possible or always necessary. Services require the flexibility to allow operational adjustments and exceptions. In addition, strictly requiring the tracking of country-specific expertise, as opposed to regional or cultural expertise, may not be useful. There are trade-offs in how specific the data requirements need be.

One of the questions the services will face with meeting the demands of the operating force is whether to build new or different force structure. Getting the “Personnel” piece right in DOTMLPF allows the service leadership to mitigate the risk of not having set aside force structure specifically to do SFA. While this means that in some cases part of the operational demand will be met in an ad hoc manner, it is an ad hoc manner that is based on better understanding of the human resources available. It is still akin to a “pick up” game, but the difference is that the force provider knows who within the list of available players is better suited to the particular sport at hand. So when the force planners for a particular course of action require a particular SFA skills set (as articulated above) and generate that request back to the force provider. The service or institution can then look across its available human resources for the best fit. It can pull together better suited individual augmentees who by virtue of the skills, experiences, and attributes can better meet the needs of the METT-TC conditions facing the command that generated the request. The force providers do need to establish what questions to ask with regard to how they identify, assess, and track their personnel, but once they have done so it makes putting together a team that is better suited less of a guess, and reduces the operational risk of not creating specialization.

7. **Facilities** – There are two issues with regard to facilities: The first is in regards to education and training facilities for the JIIM advisors and advisory teams. The second

is in regards to training facilities which bring the BCTs (and BCT like units) together with their SFA augmentation prior to deployment.

Unless the ratio between a BCT and the partner it is providing security force assistance to is 1:1 based on allowable METT-TC conditions, the BCT is going to require augmentation to conduct its mission. In the Case Study, the augmentation was substantial just inside Mosul, and this was only a part of the 4/1 BCT's area of responsibility. Complicating unity of effort was the unsynchronized nature of the unit and individual rotations that impeded a shared vision of the environment, and created alternative, ad-hoc networks and unofficial lines of communications to get things done.

Several leaders interviewed in the Case Study mentioned the need to adjust our training to account for the nature of the METT-TC conditions in a complex, inter-active environment from home station to our CTCs; however, this has an impact on the facilities which would host this training. There are currently a multitude of service training centers which train the range of advisory transition teams and PRTs. The number is growing as more services and commands understand their responsibilities with regard to SFA. While the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) has assisted in identifying the JIIM SFA community of practice (COP), and helping them leverage each others resources to establish some commonality with regard to "advisor" skills (see the block chart in preceding "Personnel" section of this sub-chapter), the disparate nature of advisor training centers still makes us both less effective and less efficient in terms of meeting the demand for advisors across the JIIM spectrum.

The issue of the SFA augmentation element being on an asynchronous training and deployment path then the BCTs (or element with a BCT like function) also impedes effectiveness and efficiency. Bringing these pieces together prior to deployment for the purposes of: producing more qualified advisors; building unity of effort through planning and/or training; and achieving a more acceptable outcome, faster in the complex, inter-active environment may require new facilities or the restructuring of existing facilities.

#### **A. Recommendations:**

1. Create a JIIM SFA advisor education and training center to serve as a university for those skills sets identified in the red blocks of the Advisor skill sets model in the preceding personnel observations and recommendations of this chapter. This will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our educating and training advisors in SFA to assist in achieving unity of effort in the complex, interactive environments where operations take place.
  2. Resource the CTC facilities as such they can accommodate the requirements of bringing a BCT together with a large SFA augmentation component for a MRX.
8. **Concluding thoughts on this chapter:**

In considering the observations and recommendations it is important not to consider the individual components of DOTMLPF in an isolated context. There is no hard line between the "D", the "O", the "T," etc. There are "threads" that run through the components as a whole, and changing one often requires changing another, or can

have consequences on other areas. Instead, they should be seen holistically and as a question occurs in one area, we should consider how it will affect the other, and we should understand what it means to the way the institution perceives itself.

Carl Von Clausewitz postured that the most important question that a statesman can ask is what is the nature of the war upon which they are about to embark. This is a policy question which weighs the importance of the end or policy objective by both the statesman and his opposition. It also incumbent upon the statesman to consider if he is prepared to use the ways which best achieve his ends, and has the means to accomplish them. The statesman should be able to turn to their military leadership and get an understanding of what is available in terms of ways and means to support the attainment of the end.

For the United States this has contextual meaning. Do the policy objectives that we currently envision justify the rationale for change and acceptance of risk? While the observations and recommendations articulated in this chapter are drawn from a case study of a specific set of conditions, how applicable are they to other conditions? While Mosul, Iraq 2006-2007 is a specific place at a specific time, are some or all of the observations relevant to other parts of Iraq, at different times? Are they fully or partially relevant to some or all of the operations in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and the Philippines? How relevant are they to future operations of the types articulated in the Army's FM 30, FM 3-07, FM 3-24? Are they relevant to others in DoD? Do contemporary policy indications from our civilian leadership lead us to believe we must be better prepared to do these types of operation in a complex, interactive environment?

What is the relevance to the government and military services as institutions? Is serving as an advisor beneficial to the development and judgment of our military and civilian leaders? If the United States' role is to remain the "indispensible nation" in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, how does understanding those with whom we may work "by, with, and through" or assist benefit the other roles we have traditionally fulfilled? The above observations and recommendations are not meant to be prescriptive or authoritative in that regard, they are meant to reflect the other chapters and interviews in the case study and to serve as a catalyst for discussion on how the services, DoD and the USG writ large may be most effective and efficient in achieving U.S. policy objectives.

Institutional change, if required, is subject to the natural resistance found in large, bureaucracies. The exterior sides of the walls which buttress and conserve the institution are the strongest, and most resistant. They are meant to resist the type of change which comes with political winds, or temporal policy, and are generally strong enough to resist all but the types of cataclysmic events which leave the institution in ruin. The interior faces of the institutional walls, are not as strong however as they are not meant to preserve against relevant change. The key to gaining leverage against these walls is to establish institutional value. Change that has persistence and meaning then must come from the inside through leadership. If SFA as a conceptual framework for building capacity in our partners is to really take hold, it must demonstrate sustained relevance to the roles and mission of the policies it is to serve.

8A. Interview Transcripts

(Editors Note: Interview enumeration will restart at -1-)

Areas that were not able to be transcribed are highlighted and/or are in parentheses.

Interview

with

Colonel Stephen Twitty  
Commander, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team  
1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division  
Mosul, Iraq

By

Major Robert Thornton  
and  
Mr. Mike Lee  
Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Date of Interview 02 APR 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, we are trying to put together this case study that shows the complexity of full spectrum operations in terms of really from a Security Force Assistance perspective, but how a BCT manages that while also conducting offensive operations, defensive operations. I think Mosul was a pretty good place to look at because we have a lot, I think between the various players there's a lot of synergy. I think it is well managed for a...my understanding they got it from the Corps Commander was maintained the things and I'll ask you specifically about that, but actually the ball was moved forward, I think, and the situation we see today would be much worse were it not for the efforts that went on at that time period. So while people can look and say, "I thought you said Mosul was great," you have to put it within the context of where we were and what resources were going on at the time. We are really interested in is capturing your role as the BCT Commander.

**COL Twitty:** Correct. In fact, I am going to go to this white board. As you know Ninewa Province is a very complex province, and I had to really sit down and figure out how I was going to attack this thing – not only from a tactical standpoint, but from a governmental and appeasement standpoint with the people. So a couple of things I'll let you know that I had to take a look at up front. Ninewa Province – seven ethnic groups. I don't know if you know that. Out of the seven you have the Kurds, Sunnis, Sunni Turkmen, Shia Turkmen, Christians, the Yazidis and the Shubak.

**MAJ Thornton:** I am aware of all of them but the last one.

**COL Twitty:** A total of seven. So when you looked at this, the predominant group or the majority is the Sunnis and they are 60% of the province. Then you come to the Kurds. The Kurds are about 20% of the province. Now, there has not been a census conducted on Ninewa Province in a while. I would argue that the Kurds are probably a little bit higher than that because of all the migration happening in Ninewa Province. But when you look at the seat of the governance remember this, when you look at the seat of governance for Ninewa Province, you have the governor (Governor Kashmoulah). Guess what he is? He is a Sunni. The vice-governor is Kurd. And you have to look at the provincial seats. There are 41 seats. 31 of the 41 seats are Kurds. Now this is the part that very few people understand that as a BCT Commander coming in here, I had to figure out how I was going to deal with this because these two here are constantly at each other's throats, as you know from being there. These two here hate each other's guts and then you have the Christians which half are aligned with Sunnis and the other half are aligned with the Kurds. The Kurds are encroaching. If you know Ninewa Province, you have Mosul here, Tall Afar here and Quayarah here. All this area is predominately Christian and Kurd. All this area down here is 99% Sunni. This area in here from Mosul west out to the border is Yizidi, both Turks, Sunni, Kurds (remember Sinjar?). Kurds have every last one of them except for Christians. So there are no Christians out here, but a hodge-podge of everything else. So dealing on a daily basis with who is doing what to whom, or who is encroaching on whom, pretty much consumed a lot of my time. I would go see the governor and the governor would lie to me about the Kurds encroaching on the Christians. I would go up to see the Christians and see all types of peshmerga checkpoints and all kinds of Kurds sitting right there on the checkpoint. The governor would say, "No, that's not happening." The reason why the governor would say that is because he is Sunni, but he ran on a KDP (ed. note - Kurdish Democratic Party) ticket and he won. This guy right here really ran the province, the vice-

governor. So for a BCT, as a Brigade Commander coming in here, this type stuff that a brigade commander had to deal with every day. It was just fascinating and consumed a lot of my time instead of the actual fight time. The other thing is you take Sinjar here – Sinjar is a place where Saddam pushed all the Kurds into so everything around Sinjar is mostly Sunni. So they are just sitting right here. So peshmerga would migrate out of Kurdistan, come across (XXXX 7:42) here, come into Sinjar and they would try and control Sinjar. Well, peshmerga is viewed as a militia. So all the time I was flying out to Sinjar kicking the peshmerga back up into the KRG, those type things. So we don't get a lot of this when we start talking about National Training Centers. We don't get a lot of this when we start talking about Leavenworth coming down for the Urban Operations Course and stuff. So it requires you as a Brigade Commander to not only be a tactician, but to also be a diplomat. The other piece is when you look at our strategy over in Iraq no where does it tell you how to deal with the Kurdish encroachment. So what is our real operational strategy with dealing with the Kurdish encroachment coming down out of KRG on the east side of Mosul? Do you know? Do you remember all the KDP checkpoints and all the PKK checkpoints sprinkled throughout and all the Kurdistan flags that anger the Sunnis? What is our strategy? I was driving around telling people to take the Kurdistan flags off their buildings and headquarters and close their KDP compounds simply because I knew it was fueling the insurgency. A large part of the insurgency in my view was the Kurdish-Sunni relations. Kurds were making a lot of Sunnis angry. That is one aspect of what I think of the brigade. When you talk to my XO and 3 they will tell you because my 3 went with me everywhere. We spent a lot of time getting sheiks together, Sunni sheiks, Kurdish sheiks that had been whacking each other. I would get a phone call saying that this sheik killed somebody's son and nine times out of ten, it would be a Sunni sheik that killed a Kurd sheik or vice-versa. So that is one aspect of it.

**MAJ Thornton:** You had a lot of tools, but maybe not enough because I always got the feeling that 4/1 wanted to do more, but the resources were down south. But they were tools that maybe four or five years ago a BCT commander really didn't have to concern himself with. So you had the TTs that were there of all different flavors that had to be managed, resourced – and even if they weren't (at the time I was there) in the attached status you were still responsible for them. They were still a tool that could be used. You had the PRTs and some of the other different Transition Teams that fell within the scope, the PTTs and I think you had some BTTs maybe out west. How did you go about managing all of that to bring something together?

**COL Twitty:** Well, first of all the management part when you take a look at the wide area; this is another anomaly for Ninewa Province. In our case, as you know, we had the border so you had the border guys, the border BTTs. Then we had the POE (Point of Entry). So you had the POE BTTs separate from the border BTTs. Then, as you know, we had the PTTs here. We had the MiTTs here. And then in KRG land, which you don't know, I was responsible for from the border over here with Iran, the BTTs here. So with the vast land that I had to do, once a week I went here and when I went there, I always went there, so that was a once a week type thing. The MiTTs and PTTs, they were pretty much integrated with the battalions because I had to do that for not only life support, but also to ensure that I got them out of trouble. So everything was synchronized – the 2-7 here and 3-4 here and then became 1-9 here. So what I did instead of these guys being attached to the brigade, I went ahead and attached them, if you remember; I attached them to the ground owning units in this area right here. The only guys that did not get ground owning units attached I kept them on under my control with the BTTs, POE BTTs, out

here and the BTTs out here. Then I would fly out and see these guys. So that is how I pretty much controlled things. The other thing is because when you look at Mosul, when you really do the combat power, there are only really 600 boots on the ground soldiers in Mosul, the 2-7. When you look over here there are only 300. So as you know, the MiTTs and PTTs, they did a lot of fighting. They did a lot of raids, too. They fought along side the Iraqis, but it was additional combat fire for us. I talked to a couple of my fellow brigade commanders. They are adamant that MiTTs and PTTs didn't do raids, they didn't fight, and stuff like that. For me it was a necessity. I would task the PTTs all the time to go on a raid. You guys would raid right along with the Iraqis.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, I remember the decision process you went through and the outcome of that was to, at least for the time that I was there, it kind of happened towards the end, but when you assigned 1-9 to be the super MiTT and how that kind of played out even between the different MiTT brigades and IA brigades. It was a little bit different on our side of the river versus the east side.

**COL Twitty:** You were on the west side, weren't you?

**MAJ Thornton:** That's right, Sir. I was up at Eagle. What sort of led you to that decision about how you were going allocate those assets?

**COL Twitty:** I think what really led me is when General Mixon and I sat down; this was after 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade came under IGFC. We knew that they were capable, but we knew that they needed a lot of training and we wanted to put them in the lead and because they were going under IGFC control we wanted to demonstrate that they could probably take more of a security responsibility. But we weren't sure that they were well trained. So we took 2-7 and said we would make them be like a Strike Force capability and do raids and also do the outer cordons for operations for the Iraqis, give most of the ownership to the Iraqis. But because they were not completely trained yet, we'll take 1-9 and we'll put a platoon with each brigade to assist with their training, to assist you all, and also provide them extra combat power. As you know, 1-9, even though they were super MiTTs, they were going on operations and getting in the fight as well. So that was the intent, to demonstrate that the Iraqis could handle the fight, but don't forget about them. Number one, continue to train them. These platoons would also go on combat operations with them to make sure that we stay with them and continue to let them see the Americans demonstrate that we will always be with them and also here is what right looks like. I think it worked pretty well for what we were doing. With 2-7 owning both sides of the river because, as you know, the insurgents would cross it, and in many cases when we had 1-9 on the west and 2-7 on the east we were missing insurgents, trying to do that handover. Once we got 2-7 owning everything, they could really get the intelligence down to the point to where they could conduct operations on both sides of the river and not miss insurgents. I also think the Iraqis liked that better; that 2-7 owned the entire city and they knew who they could call whether it was the west side or the east side.

**MAJ Thornton:** A lot of times they would do out of sector based on HUMINT, personalities, and relationships. Would you talk a little bit about logistics? I saw a big jump in logistical support, not just to the MiTTs, but to the Iraqis.

**COL Twitty:** Well, when I looked at this thing I said we are a small force coming in here. Our life depends on the Iraqis. If the Iraqis are not on the street, the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police, we are not going to be successful because we only have 600 soldiers in a city of 1.6 million people. We have to have their police and the Iraqi Army on the street. If you remember I was going around to Eagle and all these places kicking police and guys out into the streets all the time. So I didn't want to hear that you don't have fuel, that you don't have spare parts, that your soldiers don't have boots. I will give it to you just to get you on the street to bring security to the place. I told my commanders anything we have we will give them. They will not stop. They will not be hunkered down in the barracks. They will not be hunkered down at the police station. Now, the other piece to that – we are not going to give it to them if they have it. Find out if they have it. If they have it and need assistance with mechanics and so forth we will help them out. As you know, we fixed a lot of their vehicles and in doing so we made sure their mechanics were standing beside learning how to do it for themselves. Eventually, we got to a point where their mechanics were fixing and we were monitoring them. That was the rationale with the amount of combat power that we had we had to have the Iraqis out.

**MAJ Thornton:** We had a good relationship with 2-7. Colonel Senters had a good relationship with 2-7 in addition to the brigade, but primarily we worked with 2-7. We feel like we were pretty successful in providing them information about the status of the OR rates, for example, or some of the other areas. Do you feel like you got a lot of mileage out of having those folks down there?

**COL Twitty:** Absolutely. In fact, COL Senters and team, you all, were the best at it. I could not get the east side guys to do like Senters did. Senters is a really talented and capable BDE MiTT Chief there. It wasn't only the maintenance part of it, it was also the intelligence. If you remember when we got we got on the ground I started changing the way we were doing business. First of all we had a security conference meeting once a week. When I got on the ground there we were keeping all kinds of intelligence from the Iraqis. It baffled me. We were fighting the same enemy. These guys are supposed to be our brothers. The only way we are going to gain their trust and confidence, I said that a thousand times, is to start sharing intelligence. So once a week I did a security conference meeting at the BCT level. That meeting would have the following people: the Provincial Police Chief, the two Division commanders, 3 IA Division and 2 IA Division, their intelligence officers (S-2s), my S-2, all their 3s (Division 3s and the Provincial Police Chief 3s). Then twice a month I would bring in the brigade commanders; all the brigade commanders on both sides of the river and out of 3 IA. We would sit down and first start with a roll-up of charts, PowerPoint charts on the enemy's SITEMP, what we had seen for the past week. And invariably the west side would always be the worst location. Then I would give a SITREP because I would always battlefield circulate, look at where they say they have checkpoints and call them out on it. Then I would turn it over to my S2 and we would share all of our intelligence; all of our classified intelligence, I shared. I told General Petraeus when he came one time that I had shared it, and Odierno and they didn't seem to give me any problems about it. We shared every single thing; all the pictures that we would get, I shared. All the human intelligence that we got, I shared. What changed things was this right here because they started sharing. When we started pulling out pictures and started throwing out names, they went to school with about half of these insurgents. They knew where the guy lived, knew his brother,

went to the Iraqi War College with them. Then they started bringing the same information. So we started pretty much fusing the intel between what the U.S. had and what the Iraqis had, bringing it together, and we would take that intel and we would say here are the operations we are going to do for the week. That's where 2-7 got much of the guidance for the week from me because I would also have the 2-7 Commander there and his S-2 – based on the intelligence sharing, feed that information to 2-7, feed it to the divisions, to the Provincial Police Chief. That's where all our raids came from, cordon searches, you name it for the week based on the intelligence products that we all worked.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you do that at MAREZ, or did you do it up at Al Kindi (ed. note - 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV IA HQs)?

**COL Twitty:** What I did was I rotated. I did not want to get anyone killed so we rotated the date and we rotated the location. It was always done at four locations – my headquarters, Al Kindi, Division headquarters for 2 IA, out at 3 IA headquarters, and out at IP headquarters (One West). These were the four locations that we did it. This we didn't rotate; it was always 1,2,3,4. So it rotated by day to these locations so no one could figure it out.

**MAJ Thornton:** Over time, Sir did you get an appreciation for the host nation capabilities? Once we started understanding what the strengths were within the IA we encouraged them at the battalion level to pursue those strengths. How did shape your future operations once you kind of understood where guys were really, the hole that they feel, so to speak, in the security equation?

**COL Twitty:** When you say host nation support, what are you talking about?

**MAJ Thornton:** The Iraqi Army and Iraqi police specifically.

**COL Twitty:** Well, the first week that I got on the ground at the TOA, the only way I got a feel was I went to every single police station, every single one of them. We drove for two weeks going to all the police stations, and then I went to all the COPS (Eagle, Fortitude, Resolve) and just sat down with the commanders just talking to them and getting an idea of what kind of reputation they had, talking to the Division Commander and asked the reputations of his battalion commanders and brigade commanders. I talked to them. I quickly understood that General Nuordeen was probably the best brigade commander in both 2 IA and 3 IA. I quickly understood that Colonel Tahah was very capable; he was quiet, but he would get the job done. The 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade commander that was in Irbil was a dirt bag. He didn't want to come to Mosul and I had an understanding of that. Then part of that also is I kept a book with me that had their OR (ed. - Operational Readiness) rates so when I would visit I would always look at their OR rate and see how many vehicles they had down and I would question the brigade commander. To a "T", none of them understood maintenance. None of them understood how many vehicles they had, and the only reason I knew was because you guys were feeding it to me. I started asking them the hard questions. Tahah would have like 16 vehicles up in the whole brigade. He would tell you he only had four up, that type stuff. But from a fighting standpoint, I thought they were pretty capable fighters; from a planning standpoint, no. These guys...you can't throw our technique of MDMP on them, as you know. But if you give them a goose egg, you give them a picture and say go find this person, they will get in that goose egg and hunt that person down and

do a pretty good of it. So capabilities-wise they are good, but the other piece of it – all the enablers that came with it. I knew that they didn't have helicopter support obviously, they didn't have mortar support obviously, they didn't have engineer support, but I built them an engineer company out of 113s. We built it and by the time we left there they were actually doing their own route clearance. I knew also how I had to always commit my assets to make sure that they were successful based on just going around the battlefield trying to figure out what they had and what they didn't have. And there were a lot of things they had that they lied about. For instance, once the MTR (Ed. - Motor Transportation Regiment) got up there they had over 600 vehicles up there and I didn't know about it until I went up there and looked at them. Then I made them start using them; that type of stuff.

**MAJ Thornton:** That was in the process of being stood up about the time I left.

**COL Twitty:** Yes. We stood it completely up, but 3 IA was the one that said they didn't have them, but I went out there and saw those vehicles and got them to start using them.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, one of the things that was interesting was, and I talked to General Bednarek a little bit about it, talked to Dr. Knight and those other guys, is the personality piece. An incident that comes to mind that was pretty personal to me was 1-2-2 was doing pretty good things over in the northwest corner, but we had an issue with General Jamal and...

**COL Twitty:** I was the one that got General Jamal fired. I don't know if you knew that.

**MAJ Thornton:** I knew you were a key player in it because it had to be articulated up the chain of command and then pressure had to be...there were different pressure points that had to be punched all roughly at the same time. In terms of evaluating personalities and the role those play in moving things forward, I wonder if you could just talk about that and how you went about that.

**COL Twitty:** You know how we want things done now. You really have to take an appetite suppressant when you go over there. The other thing is when we do something we pretty much do a 90% job at it. We try to do it great. You hope to get a 70% solution out of the Iraqis when they are doing it. Now there are two reasons for that. Number one, many cases they just don't know what right is like. We go through school and doctrine. Most of these guys never served in the military. We recruited them and said okay. So with a guy like Jamal, I knew like a week after because I met with him routinely, a week after I met him that he had to go. He was very negative, never left his office, and didn't want to fight. You remember the fuel situation that was in 2 IA. He was taking coupon money and he was taking it up to Kurdistan to sell them fuel so he was totally corrupt. And as we tried to professionalize the Army he was definitely not the right role model for the division. So I wrote this long paper up and sent it to MG Mixon. MG Mixon said, "You just got on the ground here." I said, "I know but I got a hunch this guy needs to go." It wasn't until, (You don't know this; very few people do.), but I had General Muthah who was the Deputy do a little investigative work at the depot down on the west side right there by the train tracks; you know where they used to go get their fuel. So he went down there and talked to the owner, the runner of that thing. Come to find out General Jamal was having trucks come in from Kurdistan. He was escorting the trucks and they were using the fuel coupons of

the Army to get the fuel and they were taking it back to Kurdistan. So that's where the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, and all the brigades' coupons were.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's why we had to lean on you for Class III-B.

**COL Twitty:** Yes. So once I got that information and sent it up to General Mixon, he said, "You are right. He has to go." When you look at it from a brigade perspective, all I needed was people to be willing to fight. If they are willing to fight, I can accept any type man you have out here. I didn't need anyone where when I tell them to a mission they say, "I can't do it. I don't have enough." If you are willing to get out there I will give it to you. Ironically enough, all the commanders, including the battalion commanders, at 2 IA were willing to fight for their country. I think you could say that was true for yourself over in 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. So when it came to swaying them to do stuff I didn't have any problems trying to get them to fight. I had problems trying to get them to fix their vehicles. I had problems trying to get them to keep their uniforms on and stay in the right gear. I had problems trying to focus on training as a part of operations as well. As you know, they just want to fight. They never want to train.

**MAJ Thornton:** You can create a school or a roster but out of the 30 slots you might get three of them filled, and out of the three one of them might be the right guy that was your target audience for that. I think we got a little bit better, but it required Colonel Senters leaning on Colonel Tahah a lot.

**COL Twitty:** Yes. They didn't understand that kind of stuff. You have to come out of the fight, regroup, and focus on the fundamentals and train.

**MAJ Thornton:** Once you changed 1-9's focus to be the super MiTT there were some things that went on that, like Sergeant (XXXX 33:37), now First Sergeant (XXXX 33:30), would bring a patrol back on and they would do some training. There were the more formulated courses that went on that were also pretty good. There were some opportunities there that got better, I think, over time.

**COL Twitty:** I agree. But totally different mind set in 3 IA. I had hard problems with the battalion commanders, getting them to get out and fight whereas 2 IA they were motivated. They didn't mind getting out there and getting in the fire fight, as you know.

**MAJ Thornton:** I think they got better. One of the things that really impressed me was their ability to turn a target. There was one instance where the battalion Intel officer, Akeed Ahkmed, was coming back from a meeting on FOB MAREZ. They had a traffic accident. Their lead vehicle hit a, they were going north on Tampa, their lead hit a vehicle pulling out. It turned out that there were two high tier-level AIF inside that vehicle. They thought they had been made. They got out and started shooting. The IA patrol killed one of them and wounded the other one. Remember they turned all those targets in about a 24 hour period.

**COL Twitty:** That's right. They are very good at that, and they are very good also at having clandestine informants. Many of them had women out there that were sweeping their front porch

that worked as informants for them and so forth. General Nordeen, I think, had the best informants. He had kids working for him, girls working for him. He was just all over it.

**MAJ Thornton:** We were trying to build a capacity within our capability within 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade for close target reconnaissance where folks recruited out of the basic training. They would be identified when they went to their basic training as being from a specific area within Mosul. Then they would be groomed at that point to be kind of a plain-clothes...

**COL Twitty:** Colonel Mohammed had that.

**MAJ Thornton:** Well, he had it originally when we got there and then it kind of atrophied a little. We were trying to build it because, of course, our guy had kind of grown up there, both Major Ahlah and the XO and the battalion commander had all grown up in 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. So they said we should try this in 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's AO, but we couldn't get the resources.

**COL Twitty:** LTC Quater?

**MAJ Thornton:** Well, not Quater because he went on to become the G-2, he was kind of guy who really enjoyed just trolling the battlefield and shooting the enemy.

**COL Twitty:** And I tell you what, he was pretty effective.

**MAJ Thornton:** He was good at it, but of course, they taught us how to spot two Opels and a Bongo truck at a hundred yards. The turning point for us was LTC Qualeq who came in and started to reform that battalion into one that had more of sort of a battalion feel to it. But he wanted to build this CTR capability because he understood the value of not only the operational value of being able to collect information and quickly turn it, but also the psychological value of having the insurgents look over their shoulders. But the only place we could go to for type of training for these guys was the ODA. And the ODA, we talked to them about it one day, but they had a lot of tasks that were actually, from what they told us, they were very high-level tasks so they could only devote so much attention towards that mission.

**COL Twitty:** I'll tell you, we went through four ODA teams while we were there. The first one was pretty decent. The second one was excellent. The third one was decent, but the fourth one as we left there, I had problems getting them out of the gate.

**MAJ Thornton:** Overall, were they responsible to you or how did that relationship work?

**COL Twitty:** Yes. The Rangers were not responsible to me, but they operated in my battle space. What I can say about the Rangers that operated in my battle space – they serviced all my targets that I requested and I got a daily SITREP from them. I knew where they were on the battlefield. They would check in with my headquarters or the subordinate battalion headquarters, and we had a great working relationship. With the ODA guys, we had great working relationships with all the first three. The last one was just before leaving there; I think they were feeling that we were leaving, they were coming in, and they were not going to be working for us.

3rd ACR was coming in so they didn't want to have to play ball with us. But we had a great working relationship with the SOF guys.

**MAJ Thornton:** That was an interesting thing, Sir. The dynamics of that and the number of different types of units operating within your battle space, they were on different rotation cycles so you would have people come in with a different set of expectations and there had to be an effort made to bring everybody up to sort of a common appreciation.

**COL Twitty:** They all met in my targeting meetings, and I met twice a week with both the ODA and the Rangers, and they all attended my target meetings. That kept us all on the same sheet of music. It kept us all knowing who was servicing who, who is going after these top Al Qaeda guys, who is going after these guys, who is going after these guys. Once a week, every Friday, for four hours; this meeting would last for four hours, and we would get into the nuts and bolts of who was servicing what. Then we would take that and also I talked about my meeting that I would have with the Iraqis; I would take that book with me and see whether we were going to have fratricide when we start planning for Iraqi needs, what the Rangers are doing, what the ODA is doing, or what we are doing. So we would have to de-conflict that as well. We also because the Rangers many times would say, "Hold off on this particular target. Let him continue to advance so we can pick out more lines." And the Iraqis in this meeting would say, "We want to go after this guy." And I had to figure out how to tell them no without giving away that the Rangers were going to hit this target; those types of things. So the meetings, particularly this meeting that I talked about, was very helpful in making sure that we were all in synch and who was going after what target.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, we talked to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT last week down at Fort Hood, and there were some interesting things particularly with 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT. They didn't fall in on the MiTT structure that you did. They didn't have much of a structure at all so they had to form MiTTs out of hide. They took their DCO and they made him the brigade MiTT chief. You took your DCO and made him the facilitator or go-between between BCT operations and the PRT. Both Dr. Knight and Reid Pixler and now Colonel Boden said that was one of the key decisions that was made. I just wonder if you would talk a little bit about putting round pegs in round holes in terms of personalities, but also assessing...

**COL Twitty:** How did Knight and Pixler like that idea? I never got any real feedback on that.

**MAJ Thornton:** In fact, they were the ones who told me that I had to talk to Colonel Boden because he played such an instrumental role in synchronizing things and getting support for various things. So it brought you up, but they thought it was definitely the way to go.

**COL Twitty:** Me too. When I looked at everything I had to do, there was no way I could have a PRT meeting, a meeting with these guys. You heard me talking about the targeting. I would never be in the battlefield circulating. So what I did was let them handle the PRT and the second tier governmental guys. I took the first tier guys – the provincial governor, the vice-governor, the mover and shaker mayors like the Mayor down in Quyarrah, the mayor down in Sharqat and so forth. But all the tier two guys I gave to him. Part of our target meeting was also how is it that we synchronize the target points between what I'm saying to the governor and my tier one

guys, and what he is saying to these tier two guys and what the battalions were saying to the local mayors, sheiks and so forth. That was another part; that's why it lasted four hours. We had synchronized talking points that I would take, put in my pocket for the week, and when I'm going on an engagement here are the things I am going to talk to the guys about. They should be very similar at the tier two and what he is talking about and what the battalions are talking about.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, I know that this brigade, and from talking to many other brigades in 1<sup>st</sup> CAV guys, they already have a date to deploy again. I know this brigade has a date to deploy again. If you are looking forward, based on what you did last time, how would that shape your training path? What skill sets and that sort of thing; what would you be looking at based on conditions that you might expect to inherit a year from now?

**COL Twitty:** That's a great question because I will tell you that...I'll give you two pieces – from a personal standpoint going in as the Brigade Commander I never thought about any of this stuff that I put up here initially, about the ethnic groups and how essential they play with trying to shape the government and so forth. So I would get more involved from a training standpoint with my staff putting me through a “murder board” all the time on how to deal with all these sheiks, how to deal with the ethnic piece of it – the Kurds versus the Sunnis and so forth. The other piece we didn't even talk about is this border on the western side. Several times I had to go over to the border to kick the Syrians. The Syrians would be across the border, not because they were coming to fight, but they were bringing their goats and everything else across. I would get some Sunni sheik calling me up and saying, “I've got a Syrian in my yard and his goats are grazing.” Instead of him going out to kick him off and all the tension that goes along with it, I would go out there and say, “Look, Sir you have to get back,” those type things. All that that plays with a brigade commander having to deal with the politics and the diplomatic piece; I think I took a huge education when I was there for a year, and I would like for the next brigade commander to go in there with a better view. The second piece of it is we talk about the MiTTs, PTTs, BTTs and all this stuff; we come together when we deploy, but we never form a team and we never have a vision. You remember, we had BTTs and MiTTs all over the place. I'm not so sure that I could ever get all you guys on the same sheet of music that I was trying to walk in. Senters made it happen on the west side very well. I continue to say his name because he was probably my best; the whole time I was there he was definitely my best. I would go on the east side and they were doing things totally different than what I said. For instance, OR rates had to be a must for me. If a vehicle went down, if 2-7 didn't know about it, MiTTs, you must know about it. I would go over on Fortitude and see a Humvee sitting there that was down and I'm think the humvees are up. I didn't have the MiTTs pushing to get the humvee up so we can get the patrol out, those type things. One of the things I brought up to a couple of my senior guys is when we go to the National Training Center you have got to be able to replicate the BTTs, PTTs, MiTTs. Either get the guys that are going very soon to the same location or figure out how to do it because that plays a big part in the command and control piece, the vision that you want to take, and how they execute as well on the battlefield to ensure that you are accomplishing the things that you want to. It is just having all these little key players across the battlefield; you don't get that at the National Training Center. You are thinking about you Brigade Combat Team, you've got it, you're moving along. It is a different ballgame when you get there. Now you have all things other things sprinkled and you're trying to figure out who is doing what.

**MAJ Thornton:** I asked a question while I was down at Hood, with General Bolger coming in down there, if he pulls all the senior leader together and says, “How are we going to tackle this based on what we know,” what would you ask for? They said an acceptance of risk because, and you get one from the other which kind of their impression was that if we are going to break out internal transition teams or if we are going to break a battalion out to be a super MiTT or what have you, because we are looking forward – what is the infrastructure going to be to support “X” in a year. They said those are kind of the two key things to do that.

**COL Twitty:** See, Baghdad is different. With me up in Ninewa I had all kinds of leeway. I was pretty much my own king up there. Now General Mixon, thank God he was a great CG and he battlefield circled, as you know. He did just as much battlefield circulating as I did. He was out there every day. I would tell you that it is more than acceptance of risk. You get a lot of senior levels, excuse me when I say that, me included, that are still thinking the old way. As you know, we had sergeant team leaders, squad leaders, calling for helicopters, OH-58 support. I know of brigade commanders who wouldn’t dare allow a sergeant to call for that support if they are in contact. You had to call it through the lieutenant, the battalion commander had to approve it, the brigade commander. So I would think more than an acceptance of risk is a keen understanding that we are fighting a counter-insurgency and this war is fought at the lowest level, and we have to be very responsive to the lower-level individuals that are out on the ground every day fighting this war. So before we went over there we built some protocols on air support and so forth and who could call for it and so forth. The bottom line is that anyone can call for it. I had no problems with it, but you better know what you’re doing. We trained team leaders, squad leaders to call for OH-58s, call for artillery, call for you name it. And the other piece of it is what things do you decentralize based on helping these guys out? Once again, private, team leader, squad leader out there on the battlefield fighting every day...there are a lot of things that as a brigade commander...I’m finally there, I’ve arrived...I want to command and control and everything. So what things do I decentralize? I would be asking the Division Commander what he thinks he is going to decentralize. I’ll talk more about that. What things do you need to know? For instance, when General Hertling came on board, he started asking how many patrols we did every day. I fought that hard because first of all, we don’t do just patrols, presence patrols. You do mission-oriented operations. And why do you need to know that? What you really want to know probably is what combat operations did I do and then how many did I detain, how many did I kill and so forth? Did I meet your particular PIR? Therefore, if you want to know that there are certain things I have to ask these lower-level guys to give me – PIR. But if you just want to know how many patrols, I’m going to have team leaders and squad leaders count these things for no reason, just to send it up. So it goes two ways – what is it you need to know is key I think as a division commander and brigade commander and then what latitude are you going to allow your lower-level supporters to do that traditionally as a brigade commander or division commander you may have reserved at your level? I’ll give you another example. I know I am just rambling.

**MAJ Thornton:** That’s okay. We want to capture it all.

**COL Twitty:** Holding close air support – this happened at division. You had to get division commander approval. I fought that one hard and finally got it to brigade commander-level but couldn’t get it below that. In my view you’re a MiTT out there on the battlefield. You can

conduct a particular operation, your Iraqis are in combat and you're in a TIC. You should be given the latitude as a MiTT to call for close air support, don't you think? I'm either in Tall Afar doing an engagement with a sheik, and the division commander is probably in some meeting with some governor. How do I get General Mixon on the phone? How you get me on the phone to give you that latitude? It's a problem. So that is why guys like you need that. I was able to get it down to my level based on using that same scenario which I think needs to go to...when you guys are out there alone and unafraid, you need to have the ability to do that.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's one of the things we are dealing with right now. We have one of our guys over with a member of the J-3 and a member of the CENTCOM J-5 and they are looking forward into how are we going to support Security Force Assistance in Iraq, really a year out as the number of brigades draw down, both in terms of life support type of sustainment. For example, if MAREZ transitions back, where is the coalition presence going to be in terms of the sustainment piece? How are we going to do CASEVAC, how are we going to do QRF to these guys? Those are questions that are being asked right now.

**COL Twitty:** Well, I had a general ask me and I gave him an example. If this is SYKES here (ed. COL Twitty is at the map), this is all west, this is the border here. Al Kindi is up here. You have the Syrian POE here. Down here you have a brigade of 3 IA. At Tall Afar you had a brigade of 3 IA. And up here you had a brigade. My proposal when you have something like this (this is division headquarters) is you keep SYKES open. You do two things at SYKES – it has an airfield. You put a company-sized QRF on SYKES and of course you can also put a break those into three and put a platoon down here and so forth, but I would keep them together. You put MEDEVAC support on SYKES. You put an air support package, combinations of OH-58 Deltas or Apaches and UH-60 support. That looks like a company plus on SYKES. Now it has got to be a command and control of that particular area. When you talk about drawing down, you've lost your brigade commander; you've lost your battalion commanders. That is what Colonel Senters (ed. COL Twitty referencing COL Senters to use as an example for future BDE MiTT Chiefs) has under his control being the senior guy on the ground on at SYKES. He has the latitude to move this stuff around. And then up here you have the MiTTs here, MiTTs down here, and of course, they are broken down into battalions. You have your MiTTs up in Tall Afar and so forth. That is the way I'd design it.

**MAJ Thornton:** Do you feel like if a brigade...let's say that there were no individual augmentee MiTTs, but a brigade got tasked with performing those Security Force Assistance missions that it has a requisite leadership command and control and sustainment pieces to do all of that?

**COL Twitty:** The sustainment piece would be the hardest one, the sustainment piece and the CT piece. The COMMs – as you know, on all these mountains here I had RETRANs everywhere. MiTTs go over to just MiTTs. They don't have JNN and RETRANs and all that.

**MAJ Thornton:** They were assets that you brought to the fight. Anytime there was a resource issue we turned to the BCT because MiTTs don't come with any resources.

**COL Twitty:** The maintenance piece – when your vehicles went down I fixed them, so all of that. This right here, you would definitely have to do a mission analysis to figure out what else, maintenance piece particularly.

**MAJ Thornton:** What type of...if a brigade got tasked to do let's say for Ninewa, to be the command and control element but also to do all the MiTT missions. What type of augmentation would you need?

**COL Twitty:** First, of all, that would consume, as you know, just 2 IA alone, consume 1-9 and half of 5-8-2. So if I got tasked that would take up all of 2-7 going out west to do 3 IA so that leaves me with no combat power.

**MAJ Thornton:** Would you need an additional battalion just to be a QRF? And then probably some aviation pieces.

**COL Twitty:** Absolutely, OH-58, UH-60s. And the other piece of it because you have really stretched my lines thin, more RETRANs capability, more communications capability.

**COL Twitty:** We're not sure that is how they are leaning, but I think for the foreseeable future, individual augmentation will be around, but I know that they are considering what is going to be the BCT's role a year, two years from now?

**COL Twitty:** I'm not sure we want to put that on the BCTs. They need to be focused on their core competencies.

**MAJ Thornton:** If the BCTs married up with a big MiTT package a year out and trained together, how about that?

**COL Twitty:** That could work. We just have to make sure we define what the BCT's role is because you don't want to have a lot of soldiers sitting around.

**MAJ Thornton:** I know we are talking about it; I don't think they are approaching it as "one size fits all" because different areas of Iraq lend themselves to different solutions.

**COL Twitty:** Particularly in Baghdad. It would be much easier than in places like Ninewa where you have huge land mass. You are really stretching your capabilities in Ninewa Province. Just giving this bare-bones is a huge stretch. When I said SYKES, you would have to do the same thing to MAREZ, put another company there. You would have to do the same thing in Quyanrrah. So by the time you finished up you have three companies right there so that's a battalion. Then you have the OH-58, the UH-60, the medical support for each one of them. You are talking a brigade by the time you finish up.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, I know we've hit the wall on the time you had allocated to us, but I wanted to ask you if there was anything that you really think is critical going forward that we missed?

**COL Twitty:** No, I don't. The only thing I would say and this has nothing to do with anything critical going forward, one of the things I noticed when we got on the ground, and I don't know if it was like this when you took over your MiTT responsibilities, but there were no continuity files, nothing. Did you have continuity files?

**MAJ Thornton:** No, Sir.

**COL Twitty:** So what I stretched my staff to do is everything that we did over the 14 months there every person that we met, every single one that had something of value or interest, every person that we detained we had books on so we could give that stuff to 3<sup>rd</sup> ACR. And it strikes me after five years of being over there, particularly in Ninewa, I don't know about other places, that I was not handed not one single book of continuity.

**MAJ Thornton:** By doing things digitally we had some communication issues that eventually got solved. You got us a SIPR and some other things. But we were doing the daily OP SUMS and we had an ad hoc network that we sent up. We took all the photos of the detainees.

**COL Twitty:** I think I started that when I got on the ground.

**MAJ Thornton:** I think we did quite a few story boards that went up. So we were able to hand over a pretty significant E-File to our replacements. Mike, was there anything that I missed?

**Mr. Lee:** No. I'm kind of out of it in as far as you were there and knew the details so you can talk more to that. I know that...we see these different little things as we talk to the BCTs, actually we haven't talked to any of the other commanders. This is a new opportunity for us, but we think it is very important.

**COL Twitty:** You just struck something. Let me say something. One of the other things that was a huge learning curve, you remember the point of entry, the Syrian point of entry? No where did we get any type of homeland security training. No where did I get trained on being a border policeman. We live right here in El Paso, right here at Mexico. We have problems controlling this border here. We had huge problems controlling the border out in Ninewa Province simply because we were way out of our league. We had not been trained. We are using hide sites and stuff because we thought that was the way to go when in fact it wasn't the way to go. All the BAT systems, all the technology we have here that was shipped over there to Iraq, we weren't trained on – the PISCES technology and so forth that they had at the POE. It took us the better part of eight months to really get the point of entry and the border down – another thing that needs to be added into the training program for our soldiers so there is not this huge learning curve once you get there. He made a comment that prompted me to say that. I'm sorry for interrupting you.

**Mr. Lee:** No, that is fine. That is half of the idea of having this kind of sit-down as opposed as to having you write out something. I wonder if you had...we heard that boundaries are a problem, that sometimes we put these artificial boundaries in there that limit us. You might be put down over some Iraqi units and there are other BCTs that are there also and so they are trying to dance to the music of three different bands. Did you find those kinds of difficulties?

**COL Twitty:** Not U.S on U.S. I didn't have that problem at all because I owned the whole Ninewa Province, but for 2 IA and 3 IA it was a huge problem. You had this boundary, and you remember this, that went straight through Ninewa Province. You had Mosul, you had Tall Afar. Trying to get 3 IA to do some type of cross-boundary or trying to get 2 IA to do some type of cross-boundary, even if it was an inch on the other side of the boundary, "No. That's 3 IA." We were constantly fighting these boundary issues all the way down to the end of the border with 3 IA and 2 IA.

**MAJ Thornton:** And the enemy knew where those gaps were at.

**COL Twitty:** Yes. They knew. And we also tried to get the boundary changed because the enemy would use that boundary to come up and migrate, but it's like you had to talk to the god of Ninewa Province and go to AIG and all these other places just to get a boundary changed. That was a huge problem with Iraqi/Iraqi, but not American/American.

**MAJ Thornton:** There were some challenges I think too within ISF – IA/IP, who was going to do what at times.

**COL Twitty:** Yes, all the time. And I was pretty much the referee of who was doing what.

**MAJ Thornton:** I understand it has gotten better now because BG Mutah and Wathiq have a much better relationship than Jamal and (XXXX 65:37) which is good.

**COL Twitty:** Yes, it was better.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, we want to thank you for your time. We appreciate you making the leadership of the BCT available. I think here within a couple of months I will have something out on the streets. This is going to turn into an occasional paper.

**COL Twitty:** Did you talk to Welsh?

**MAJ Thornton:** I'm going to talk to him tomorrow. He is lined up for tomorrow. We will hit some more of your staff this afternoon. We hit 1-9 this afternoon. In the mean time before we put out the occasional paper the quick notes, the high points I guess, not necessarily interwoven with the other things will go back and go into the PCC. Colonel Clark will carry those forward. So there's different places we are going to inject these lessons. I wanted you to know that we are going to make good use of this. It isn't going on a shelf anywhere.

**COL Twitty:** I got you.

////////////////////END OF INTERVIEW////////////////////////////////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 23 June 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Interview

with

Dr. James Knight

**Provincial Reconstruction Team Chief**

Ninewa  
Mosul, Iraq

By

Major Robert Thornton  
Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance

Date of Interview 05 MAR 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** This is an interview with Dr. James Knight. He was the PRT Team Chief up in Ninewa. This is an interview to cover the Security Force Assistance case study on Mosul, Iraq from September of 2006 to March of 2007. A little bit different than the other interviews because we are doing the PRT interviews and there will be some flexibility in the questions, and I'll address that with Dr. Knight. Dr. Knight, have you had a chance to review the questions?

**Dr. Knight:** I have. It's been a day or two, but should I take them out?

**MAJ Thornton:** You can if you want to, but you don't have to. I was just wondering if you thought that the questions were adequate.

**Dr. Knight:** I think they were probably targeted for a broad audience. I'm sure they were. I mean, there were some things that weren't relevant to me and some that were.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay. What we're going to do is if a question...if you'd like to change it a little bit, or if there's something I mention that doesn't really get at something that you think is important, please feel free to go that direction.

**Dr. Knight:** Sure.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay, the first question was how did you see your mission at the beginning, and did it change throughout?

**Dr. Knight:** The mission of the PRT was to enhance the capacity of the provincial authority, pretty large, and that did not change. For us, it was focused on the provincial council and provincial governor taking office, and the governments of the district and the district level. Again, the mission required us to work very closely with our military counterparts on the coalition and on the Iraqi side, Iraqi military and the Iraqi police. It worked extremely well in large part because we did have a good working relationship with all those components of it. In fact, those relationships were consistently excellent, which is why I think it worked so well in Mosul.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you see any particular tasks as being key to your mission?

**Dr. Knight:** Particular tasks, meaning?

**MAJ Thornton:** Maybe focus areas, maybe things that, you know, you absolutely had to stand up or build capacity in a certain area to enable another area; your methodology for how you applied effort.

**Dr. Knight:** Well, the key to our success was being able to get out and deal with our Iraqi counterparts. We had an unusually good environment for that there. In terms of the focus for the PRT, they were governance, capacity enhancement focused on the governor's office and the provincial council. Rule of law focused on the judiciary, but also working closely with the Iraqi police. Economics - we sort of focused on building enterprises and that had agricultural dimension to it, although that was relatively underdeveloped, and became also involved in

provincial state-owned enterprises. We had the health and education component which became more central later. We had a reconstruction component which did not involve direct oversight of reconstruction projects but involved, again, advancing the capacity of the local Iraqi institutions and capacity to manage mechanical improvements. We also had a USAID component in our PRT. I think we were the only ones there that had an effective one, and for most of the time I was there, we had the only one with a USAID representative there. They were involved in a range of things, but I think probably the most critical was the Community Stabilization Program, which answered General Casey and later General Petraeus's call for youth employment programs, youth programming in general as a way to mobilize the youth for the purpose of reconstruction. That part worked best in Tal Afar actually, where there was an unusual ethnic and sectarian mix. All those components were key to the mission. If I was to pick out one that turned out to be probably the most important in terms of effect, it was probably our rule of law efforts, particularly to establish a Major Crimes Court in Mosul which became a way to deal with the intimidation of the judges as they attempted to deal with trials of insurgents captured by Iraqi forces.

**MAJ Thornton:** I'm aware of that, I had spoke with Colonel Brackney actually, while we were on the ground and where all that stuff was ongoing, but did you view the security sector reform component of the rule of law effort, how did that...were there any disconnects in terms of what you were able to touch or influence?

**Dr. Knight:** Tell me what that means. I'm not sure that we used that vocabulary to describe what we were doing.

**MAJ Thornton:** In this case security sector reform really speaks to those security apparatus or elements, be they military, police, intelligence, they could be executive protection; those type things that bring support to the rule of law or help enable rule of law.

**Dr. Knight:** I think probably the most important was, again, support training for police investigators, for the judiciary itself which in Iraq has kind of a European system where much of the investigative aspects of criminal law, and the criminal justice system in fact reside with the judiciary rather than the police. As I was leaving this was being expanded out to include the Army rather than just the police forces. And too, in Iraq, at least this part of Iraq, we had a very good police force, the best anywhere in Iraq, in any province that I'm aware of at that time, but in many ways it was actually an urban warfare force rather than criminal focused on crime in the usual sense. However, the insurgent issue lapped into both the consolidation of security but also the criminal aspects of that. I think that was probably the most effective thing we did was to expand the training and capability of the police, which again, had a military mindset rather than a detective mindset, if you will. The sections of the Army which dealt with the criminality was often manifest in insurgent activity and facilitated their ability to produce cases that could attack the sources of insurgency that we pursued by the court system.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay sir, thanks, I appreciate that. That was something that I had kind of been wondering about as a side note, but I think it's a great supporting question specifically for you. Have you seen...the USAID just recently put something out called TCAF which is a tactical conflict assessment tool?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, they love acronyms.

**MAJ Thornton:** It's actually a pretty good assessment tool if used correctly, like any other assessment tool. But the question I was going to ask is what assessment processes did you and the PRT use to ensure that you were on track, attaining goals, that you had unity of purpose, and that not only are the actions correct; are you doing the right things, but a measure of effectiveness in terms of doing the right things right?

**Dr. Knight:** There were a series of reports we did; there was a weekly situation report that we compiled with the PRT which went to initially the National Coordination Team and later to IPAO, the Provincial Affairs Office...sorry the OPA, Office of Provincial Affairs. There was also a...I've forgotten the name of this thing, it was a bubble chart with the commentary which had been provided by the people in the early phases of the program. It was redone about the end of the period you're looking at, somewhere around March 07. But it had specific indicators. In terms of the indicators we used to monitor effectiveness...it depended on the sector; for example, a governor's capacity would be how effective they were in providing for the constituents in that district, sub-district, and provincial level, how often they met, what sort of activities were pursued in the course of provincial council and lower council meetings. Rule of law was, particularly for this province, it was pretty easy because we tracked the numbers, and we had pretty good assessments of the cases waiting and how quickly they were cleared by the court system. For the micro-loan program, the measure was how much money was out, and how good the repayment rate was, and how quick the return in terms of receiving money back and repayment for loans that was then re-loaned to other borrowers. In terms of the support for state-owned enterprises, the level of employment, the kinds of things that kind of gauge that we could pursue, for example, the Brinkley Group [Task Force for Business and Stabilization Operations], which was interested in several state-owned enterprises, but there was a lot of interest there, and the kind of measures are how effectively they were able to maintain their operation and what we could do to support them. For health education it was getting the clinics built and equipped and what sort of training could be provided to medical personnel, the numbers that those things would generate. For reconstruction it was how much and how quickly the allocated funds were in fact dispersed to projects. So the metrics were fundamentally built around the...were tailored to the program, but tended to rise naturally from that.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you have subordinate efforts that you handed off to, I don't know, maybe portfolio might be a word that's used, or something like that to where you can say, "Okay, this leader or this person within the organization is working on this," and how did you manage that in terms of coordinating those efforts to where they produced the desired effects you were after if they were efforts that converged at points?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, you mean within my PRT?

**MAJ Thornton:** That's right.

**Dr. Knight:** Or sort of delegating out beyond it?

**MAJ Thornton:** Well, let's tackle within the PRT first, and if there was something that was delegated out that supported the PRT efforts, I'd like to hear about that as well.

**Dr. Knight:** Well again, we were organized into five sections plus the USAID, and one of the things I tried real hard to do was to empower the leadership of those sections and their members to be as energetic and entrepreneurial as possible to achieve our goals. Often we had to come up with other ways to pursue those goals. Just one example, all of the sections also had a human rights component and we were...as I was leaving, after the period of time we're focused on, we were a little bit, but none the less I think shows the way it's going to be done. There was a PKK refugee camp near Mahmur and one of the things we were trying to do was engage those with that camp and its internal camp organization and find ways to support their subsistence and ability to maintain a more normal life for the children and activities for women, women's empowerment, this kind of stuff within the camp, which was something we moved toward as the UN became less and less effective in dealing with it, so it became a venue for us as it became less of a UN refuge camp. Similarly, with USAID implementing partners, I worked very hard to bring all USG development and governance programs under the fold of the PRT, primarily to assure that they did enjoy the full range of support that the PRT had and were part of a coherent program, and that, again, worked very well with particularly the Community Stabilization Program which did this famous soccer tournament in Tal Afar which was identified by everyone who participated in it as the most successful reconciliation program that had ever been pursued in the city of Tal Afar because Sunni and Shia tournament teams against each other apparently worked very well. So, that kind of thing within the PRT; in terms of outside the PRT, we successfully engaged with particularly the local government at the district and sub-district level and facilitated their pursuit of it tended to be mobilized primarily around capital improvement funds, the reconstruction budget it was called, and I'm not sure it is technically speaking a hand-over, but what happened is we would discuss how to identify projects, how to document projects, how to prepare them for contracting, how to prioritize projects using the funds, and then how to oversee the completion of the contract so they were in fact effective to allow more funds to be made available for the same area and the same purpose. So, the hand-off within the PRT context tended to be driven by capacity enhancement and regular facilitation of efforts that we expected and promoted the local authorities to pursue.

**MAJ Thornton:** You also, out of the people being interviewed, have kind of a unique perspective in that the PRT was responsible for Ninewa, and I'm curious on your perspective of how building capacity in areas outside Mosul enhanced security force assistance, or we could talk rule of law within Mosul.

**Dr. Knight:** Well, you know the geography; we were on the tract that insurgents would come in, and particularly foreign fighters would come in through this area, would come through our part of the country on the way to Baghdad, so particularly Tal Afar was one of the reasons it remained a consistently difficult place was because of the fact that there was so much engagement and that sort of issue. Also, the Christian communities were frequently objects of extortion to fund activities in Mosul, as well as in Christian areas to the north and east. The Turkmen in Tal Afar were a little bit more complicated because they received money from other neighboring countries as well as their engagement in the insurgency. Our ability to engage the Bedouin Arabs...there were three kinds of Sunni Arabs in Mosul, it's a very complex; there were

the old families that had been in Mosul City forever, there were the Bedouins that had come up from the south from Saudi Arabia over the last 200 years, and then there were the settlers that Saddam Hussein had brought in over the last couple of decades. All of those were involved to some extent in the toleration, perpetration, or resistance to the insurgency, and with Mosul being, for most of the time I was there at least, the prize to be won or lost meant that the security of the whole province was engaged with the security of the city of Mosul.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay sir. I wanted to ask another question where we talk really about lines of effort. The level you were working at in the PRT with say some of the projects and funds that were available to the BCT; how were those coordinated and did you feel like they were supporting of each other?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, I think we had a very, very good relationship in terms of every aspect of our relationship with our BCTs. We did not use funds provided directly by the BCT through CERP, although the ePRT model was starting to affect the way business was being done with traditional PRTs like mine toward the end of my time. While I was there, the funds that were expended through CERP funds particularly and other kinds of funding were coordinated to the extent possible within the framework of the coordination that we had with civil affairs teams. The civil affairs teams coordinated with us; we had weekly meetings and we dealt with them on a regular systematic basis. In fact, toward the end of my tenure we actually posted two of our PRT members, one to Tal Afar and one to Qayyarah in order to make that kind of coordination easier among other things. So, it was a fair amount of coordination. Now, taken outside the BCT, the person who administered the US-funded major construction programs was a Provincial Project Manager and was a member of my PRT, he was a 3161 State Department employee, and those were managed within the PRT context, although that became a little complicated a little after the time that you're looking at because with the reorganization of IRMO into the Iraq Transition Assistance Office and the Provincial Affairs Office, the provincial project manager's reporting channels were through the ITA or the OPA, but from the time you're considering and de facto for the entire time I was in the PRT, those projects were also managed by the PRT in I think a very effective way.

**MAJ Thornton:** With regard to conducting reconstruction efforts and building capacity given the challenges, the security challenges in the environment, do you feel like you had a good understanding of what the enemy was doing and attempting to do, and what frictions between, or resulted because of enemy and friendly interaction on various levels; how did that affect you and do feel like you had a good picture of that, or what could have facilitated that if you didn't?

**Dr. Knight:** I thought I had an excellent picture; we shared intel daily. We also had our own internal PRT intel capability, primarily for movement security, but it also meant that we were plugged into everything else going on. The immediate problem, the biggest problem we faced as a PRT was intimidation of Iraqis by the insurgency. Now this gets complicated in Ninewa, well it gets complicated everywhere, but the complication in Ninewa was that the insurgency and resistance to the Kurdish expansion agenda merged during the time I was there. So, intimidation can mean lots of different things, but the issue was primarily to the degree which individuals felt personally endangered and subject to assassination, extortion, or other kinds of pressure from the insurgents because of the fact that they were engaged with us. That improved enormously during

the time I was there for interlocking reasons. The security situation did improve; the Brigade Combat Teams were effective in terms of reducing the opportunity for insurgents to be effective and intimidating the people that did work with us. Also, the criminal court had a lot to do with it too because there was a sense of loss of immunity on the part of the insurgents that contributed enormously to people being willing to work with us.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did sustainment from a PRT perspective of the actual team, because you've mentioned, security, that sort of thing; did sustainment or force protection create any unique problems in conducting your mission and how'd you work through them?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, that was a huge problem, but I think it was managed as well as it could have been in the situation. We moved with Military Movement Teams, which offered us unequal mobility among the PRTs. We had better access and better movement opportunities than any other PRT to my knowledge while I was there. That depended on two things, it depended on the fact that we had Military Movement Teams rather than contractors; I think that was critical. One of the best things that happened serendipitously, but depending on Military Movement Teams meant that we were much more mobile, and our close engagement with the Division and the Brigade also gave us access to more assets, particularly helicopter movements and occasional other fixed-wing as well. So we were able to move around very effectively. This was a key part of it, but the force protection of the actual PRT was never an issue. We were a little pad on the FOB, not a big one so it was hard to target. Force protection of the actual installation -- FOB Marez -- and the rest of it, I think, was in terms of its fixed force protection, excellent; in terms of the kind of protection we had moving around, it couldn't have been better.

**MAJ Thornton:** You know, we got around quite a bit to visit the different IP stations within the Battalion and Brigade AORs. It's kind of a partnership initiative that we worked through with the IA and the IP were doing much of the same thing which was really beneficial, but one the things we looked at was the different sustainment issues that they were having in Mosul and how the IA's ability to use regional support facilities such as that at Al Kisik benefitted them, whereas the IPs had all of their logistics coming through solely through One West; I can't remember.

**Dr. Knight:** That's correct.

**MAJ Thornton:** In terms of sustainment how were they were getting their equipment, their personnel, how when Five West got hit, or actually it was Four West I believe, that got hit with the SVBIED, how quickly were they able to identify the scope of the loss and replenish it?

**Dr. Knight:** Are you talking about the one that just about leveled it, and they actually had to reconstruct it?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, how did that...what sustainment and logistic issues did, with regard to MOI and the IPs, did you guys encounter and help them work through?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, the biggest issue was a hostile Minister of the Interior. He was hostile to particularly the to MG Wathiq, the police chief, the PDOP and the issues that were particularly

salient were hiring and firing of police, directed hiring, particularly in Tal Afar, that was a huge problem. The March VBIED that caused such problems there was a direct result of mainly the hiring of individuals that turned out to be the ones that did the reprisal killings after that bombing. Those issues we addressed most directly as a PRT through facilitating meetings between the governor and the police, the PDOP in Baghdad, an opportunity we enjoyed because of BG Wiercinski's program to enable governors to lobby ministers in Baghdad. Now the Minister of Interior kept standing us up, but on the other hand, the governor in particular had access to the Prime Minister on those visits on several occasions which I think was very useful, but the fact that Ninewa was a Sunni majority province and the MOI in Baghdad were Shia complicated things enormously, but on the other hand, there was another positive thing; the government in Mosul was Kurdish Alliance, and that meant that the Kurds, who were allied with the Shia, were more supportive than they might have been otherwise, at least for the government structures that were seen at least supportive of Kurdish interests. The police were not as developed like the army was to a great extent, but the attempts to "Shia-ize" any place and particularly in Tal Afar were a consistent problem that we tried to manage at the Baghdad level. This was due in large part to General Wiercinski's governor's visit program, I'm sure you heard about it; on a bi-weekly basis he would take a governor from one of the four MND-North provinces, not including Kurdistan, down to Baghdad, and he was often accompanied by another senior official, particularly and specifically for consultations between the governor, and the ministers, and other important officials in Baghdad. That, I think, was an extremely valuable asset that we obliged as a PRT as often as we could.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, with regard to intelligence issues, and this is an un-classed brief, but the description of some of the challenges; the way I pitched it to Colonel Senters was we could be talking about coalition to host nation hurdles to overcome, echelons within the coalition effort itself, be it the BCT to the TTs to the PRT, or it could be within echelons within the Iraqi security forces, such as sharing intelligence between army and police or down to the police level, between police stations. Did you see anything that really stuck out that you guys had to help them identify, understand, and then work through?

**Dr. Knight:** In terms of intelligence sharing with our partners?

**MAJ Thornton:** More in terms of how they became more effective. Was the east side talking to the west side, and what type of...how did they make that work for them? Because we had problems in the Iraqi army with the east side talking to the west side, so we didn't have a good operational picture that really extended beyond the west side.

**Dr. Knight:** I think that, at least my experience was that when reasonable commanders were in charge of the police and the Army it worked well. Mutah was the Iraqi commander in Mosul.

**MAJ Thornton:** He took over for Jamal?

**Dr. Knight:** What?

**MAJ Thornton:** When he took over for Jamal.

**Dr. Knight:** Jamal was awful.

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes.

**Dr. Knight:** When Mutah and Wathiq (IPs) were both part of his security structure in Mosul, that worked pretty well. Again, tended personality driven and rather readily subverted by the ministries in Baghdad, but again, with the support...everyone working to make this better, the BCT Commander, the Iraqi Commander, both Mixon and Wiercinski in that case, and the efforts that we made with ministries in Baghdad, I think managed it pretty well, I think. And again, for most of the time I was there, once they got rid of Jamal- it got a whole lot better.

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, that's one of the things we noticed was that the effort at the personality level; so if the 1-2-2 Commander had a good working relationship with Four West and Five West, it happened, but there was no system per se that pushed things back out in the same level of effectiveness as somebody picking up the phone and calling and figuring out how to connect things together.

**Dr. Knight:** Well, that's one of the weaknesses in Iraq, there was no structure in place, and certainly nothing supported the central and provincial level. There was no institutional structure for this to occur; it had to have been on the personal level. As you know, the governor's effectiveness entirely on his personal relationships and leadership; it had nothing to do with what was mandated in terms of the Provincial Powers Law, which still hasn't been passed I understand, or the other structure that it was clearly anticipated would be in place by the time they had done their three years.

**MAJ Thornton:** With regard to, along that same track, but getting outside of Mosul itself and into the greater province, we had issues with, for example, we knew that insurgents were coming in through Tal Afar. We'd sort of painted that picture, but we really didn't have visibility on intelligence collection or analysis efforts in Tal Afar or beyond it. Any way to shape that to help the security forces to the west of us, or for them to help us; was there any effort to build capacity in those areas, for example, to coordinate between the police in Tal Afar and the police in Mosul?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, that was another issue. The police in Tal Afar were pretty autonomous from the police in Mosul because of the high level Shia-driven interest in terms of the hiring and organization there. I think that may have been as much of anything a cause of the problem. I think if it had been, you know, you never know whether you just have an empire builder organizational strategy, but if they had better control of the police in Tal Afar, I think that these kinds of problems would not have been as great.

**MAJ Thornton:** What do you think about...later on I've a couple of the guys that worked out at Badush, what do you think about the relationship between the police in Mosul and the folks out at Badush; was that a good relationship? Did the Iraqis have control of that?

**Dr. Knight:** It was awful. They reported to a different ministry and I felt I had no control – the witchcraft accusations and the terrorists. There were enough assisted escapes from Badush that

that was the original contention. No, the inter-ministerial coordination was awful. This is one of the problems, and what speaks to the more general issue is the fact that services in the provinces are driven by ministries in Baghdad, and they are stove piped in a kind of irredeemable way owing to the fact that they have their own equities and their interests, and it's in their interests to maintain the power in the ministries rather than to allocate power to the provinces. The PRTs were in large part established to empower provincial authorities, but these efforts are frequently subverted by the central government in Baghdad, and most obviously MOI. Now we were able to overcome that stove piping a lot, but the fact that even to this day, no provincial power arrangement defines the relationship with the provincial government to those service providers for ministries based in Baghdad. There it was a consistent and personality driven effort, and the fact that it was effective speaks, I think, to the commitment and hard work that went into this from all sides. But again, it would have been a whole lot easier if there had been a legislative and legal framework for this to be institutionalized.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, the next question deals with the role of contractors, and not necessarily contractors we used to conduct a specific thing, but contractors that have entered in other capacities. For example, I believe there was a company called Falcon that was working certain contract issues; they were contracted to provide security at some of the IP stations as they were being built or in certain other areas.

**Dr. Knight:** Yes, I remember Falcon.

**MAJ Thornton:** What are your thoughts on the role of contractors from a PRT's perspective in terms of building partner capacity?

**Dr. Knight:** I think it's less than optimal, but given those circumstances in Iraq I think they may have been inevitable. Part of the problem was that we were always stretching beyond our organic capabilities and how there's no other way to solve. I think the issue's more managing and monitoring contractors providing the services more than anything else. As an example, the USAID is basically a contracting service, and the services are actually provided by what they call implementing partners but they're contractors and worked extremely well with the core programs that we were managing out of our PRT in Mosul, but there are other places where it didn't work at all. You've heard about the Local Governance Program problems, I'm sure, and the Community Stabilization Program and all the problems they had with that which dates to a time when it was much less organized and monitored. So, I don't have a generic answer, but again, I think it's specific and it has to be driven by the situation which you're addressing.

**MAJ Thornton:** That helped me get at it though, Sir. I appreciate that. You mentioned that because of the lack of legislation or effective legislation that is actually bought into, or maybe both, that you had to deal with different ministerial cultures in terms of getting things done and wondering where those different cultures collided in terms of achieving something on the ground. Were there different techniques that you used to deal with those as an advisor and in the advisor capacity where you worked with Iraqis on the ground? How did you help them deal with the organizational culture or the cultural bureaucracy back in Baghdad?

**Dr. Knight:** Again, it's potentially very situational, but I think the keys were personal engagement in an attempt to identify the specific issues for a set of problems and facilitate them through kind of the things that often we were the only ones equipped to do. For example, you're familiar with the famous ongoing saga of the Tal Afar reconstruction funds?

**MAJ Thornton:** Vaguely.

**Dr. Knight:** That only got sorted out because we had people in Mosul that we were finally able to get on board, we had people in Baghdad, and we were able to consistently push and pull and tug, and one of the things that turned out to be most critical to making that work was when we got Dr. Faruk down to talk to the Minister of Trade because, as you may recall, the Ministry of Trade had responsibility for oversight of the distribution of funds, and that kind of facilitation. He would have never gone there if he hadn't have been able to fly down there. I mean there's no way it would have happened and we were the only ones that could do that. Similarly, Major General Scott, as you recall, his support and his ability to pull and push at the right moments; having someone of that rank and influence was critical to making that work. That's probably a perfect example of the most dysfunctional programs we had ever set up. Across political, ministerial, and ideological boundaries that, I think, probably one of the two outstanding miracles of my tenure was that they actually got dispersed.

**MAJ Thornton:** The next question is about partnering. When I say that, what I mean is we noticed that there was an unequal effort in some areas, particularly in Security Force Assistance, and it's just the nature of resources, but where that the Military Transition Teams had been reasonably well resourced in terms of eleven man teams with equipment and etcetera, the partnership with the police was not as well resourced. Often you had a MP platoon that was responsible for, you know, quite a few number of IP stations and had to split their time between working with the leadership and they just couldn't...they didn't have the capability or capacity to do too much more than just local patrols. So, I wanted to get your thoughts on partnering, not just limited to the IP, but where are we lacking, where did you see very effective examples of partnering that helped them understand key issues, or rebuild bureaucracy, or things that would enable them to move forward on key issues?

**Dr. Knight:** I think the police were probably intrinsically a problem in terms of partnering because, again, it was basically a quasi-military force as opposed to a criminal containment and enforcement kind of organization which made it easy for MPs to do. But in terms of the civilian side of that was always limited by the fact that civilian police advisors were not really into...they weren't really trained or equipped to deal with the forces because their primary function was urban warfare. So, I think that some of the issues were kind of intrinsic and you'd globalize the coalition forces' responsibilities to include civilian police, which weren't really civilian, as you know. In terms of effective partnering, I think it depended on the degree to which of the coalition forces that supported the police were able to do so effectively and consistently. You're absolutely right that there was difficulty doing this given the limited assets, and that was, I think, part of the problem. It would have been useful too if there had been a more unified vision of what the police were supposed to be doing. General Wathiq a former army officer, and thought very much in terms of being a military unit, a military organization rather. I guess I would have

to say that the more effective address of that would have required more assets than we had; the answer would have been in the first instance more assets.

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the things that we were...one of the pieces that I didn't follow on was how we were helping that Iraqis in 1-2-2 to move away from some of their conventional capabilities and to function in a certain paramilitary capacity in terms of organizational structure and capabilities because the nature of the threat was not just wholly insurgent forces, like we think about Al Qaeda in Iraq, but was also the combination of that with organized crime and what it would take in order to build an intelligence picture. So, do you think that within Mosul and within Ninewa there was a capability gap between the military and the police, and was there discussion about "how are we going to address this capability gap in the long term?"

**Dr. Knight:** My sense was that the capabilities were parallel but they weren't well integrated, and if I was to consider the ways their missions overlapped, I would say addressing that would have been a very good idea. I think it was addressed pretty much on an ad hoc basis reasonably well on some occasions, but not in an institutionally driven fashion. The organized criminal element and the insurgency were indistinguishable for most of my time there, and I think that one fed the other. The organized crime did the same things the insurgency did for similar reasons, and often were part of the same effort to the extent that they reinforced each other. I think that they were both more powerful, extortion being the most obvious example. So, I think it may be somewhat misleading to try to disentangle the responsibilities. In terms of ordinary crime, that's another issue that I think was so overwhelmed by the security problems at large that it may have been appropriate, but the police were a paramilitary force more than they were a criminally focused force.

**MAJ Thornton:** We would say that the insurgent or the IED emplacer on Monday, might be the kidnapper on Tuesday, might be the drive by shooter on Wednesday.

**Dr. Knight:** Right.

**MAJ Thornton:** A lot of the things we uncovered pointed to that - an interesting point about how it resourced itself at times.

**Dr. Knight:** Absolutely. Remember when they took the bishop last week, the bishop of the Chaldean church...

**MAJ Thornton:** Did they get him back yet?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, it's one of those things where it may or may not be a good sign because the fact that they're extorting money from Christians again probably means that their finance flow has been disrupted from other sources again. We saw a lot of that. It's important to have a measured and informed look at these metrics because the extortion always peaked when the interdiction of funds flows from outside the country was in fact effective. Ethnic violence that had been escalating and I suspect that's still the case although I don't track it well enough to know for sure. Kind of the peaking of the Kurdish expansion agenda has led to a lot of violent

incidents which are not necessarily driven by the Al Qaeda agenda per se, but it's built around resistance to Kurdish expansion, particularly in some of the more distant areas like Sinjar.

**MAJ Thornton:** What we noticed was that it was tough sometimes to make causal relationships because there were so many different motivations and things that were going on, it was...unless something was clearly in one camp or the other, it left a lot of white noise to have to sort through.

**Dr. Knight:** That's absolutely true.

**MAJ Thornton:** How did the PRT move Iraqi capacity to the front in terms of building legitimacy in the eyes of the local population? And kind of what I mean by that is to be able to deliver all the things that a government should be doing that are visible. You know, the reason for the Iraqi citizen to say, "Okay, this is a legitimate government, it's doing something for me."

**Dr. Knight:** Again, capacity enhancement is precisely about that. It's about enabling local authorities to be able to deliver services at a level that is reasonable for the population. It's complicated because the level at which they can deliver services are often unable to match expectations of the clients, if you will. However, I think that to me it was absolutely critical that the local governing bodies had the capacity to respond to constituents' needs, and that's ultimately the core effort of the PRT. I think we made a great deal of progress in that regard. Now it wasn't as broad as we would have liked in some areas. For example, the whole...well, it tended to be restricted largely to Kurdish and Christian groups which are not the solution. There has to be a broader level of services you have to be able to provide - efficient bureaucratic administration, which was often very hard for reasons that couldn't be solved simply by building something. There was a tendency, particularly toward the second half of my tour, to look at building stuff as the answer to the insurgency, and I don't think that was true. I think what we needed and what we worked effectively toward was helping create the conditions for government at the sub-district, district, and provincial level to be responsive and to do so in a way which covered the whole province. Now we certainly didn't get there, but I think we made significant progress in that direction. Did that answer your question?

**MAJ Thornton:** It did, Sir. A related question is how do you think the Ninewa government and some of the local government structure up underneath that, did when it came to getting their message out, communicating for the purpose of gaining public support, but also for the purpose of denying the enemy local support?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, the local television in Mosul was used a lot by the governor and the PDOP and by the judges for the Major Crimes Court and other officials, I think, did a good job of putting the message out. I think the media and information efforts were quite effective in that regard. This wasn't true everywhere, and we did have this consistent problem where people refused to appear in the media for fear of being targeted, but I think it worked reasonably well. The governor had some blind spots; he had real problems going to Tal Afar, and he had real problems dealing with the sheiks of the western part, and to the extent that he failed to interact with those people I think it was a failure of governance. But generally speaking, I think the message was carried out, and I think both the Governor and to some extent the Provincial

Council Chair, who I've come to understand is still in jail, but before they put him in the clink were able to reach out. I think that had a lot to do with the effectiveness of the local government and in the province that, again, to my knowledge, it was unmatched anywhere else in Iraq.

**MAJ Thornton:** Do you think in that regard the Iraqis were able to match the narrative that they were putting out over different media outlets with the actions they were taking?

**Dr. Knight:** Yeah, I give them a lot of credit for that. It was often made problematic; as you know the fuel shortage was one thing we struggled with for most of the time I was there. That's a good example of talking about how we were going to be solving it and working to find a solution and then being sabotaged by an idiot Minister of Oil and Ministry of Oil, and by the failure of the Ministry to maintain contracts that could've kept the flow of fuel working well. So, to the extent that they promised a solution and it was sabotaged by failure to act or other actions elsewhere complicated it, but I think they did a pretty good job.

**MAJ Thornton:** This question is about the resources that you feel like could have been made available to you, but for different reasons, whether it be authority, resources or what have you, that were in your AO that on reflection you say "You know what, we could have used that resource to do this better or that better," and to sort of talk about what resources are required that could better enable one of these lines of effort, and then how do we go about ensuring that they're made available when needed.

**Dr. Knight:** My strong feeling was that the PRT shouldn't be dispersing resources. It should be dispersing capacity enhancement, usually through training, or monitoring, or facilitation, or something like that. The catch with that was that we depended upon resources that we were supporting the management of to be reliably provided from Baghdad, and that didn't happen with the regularity and reliability that would have made it much easier for us to work. That, I think, would have been, again, it's not a resource that was there, and I wish we had been able to use more, but I think our job would have been enhanced enormously if those resource loads had been more reliable.

**MAJ Thornton:** Do you feel like there was... a little bit different take on this question than when I asked Colonel Senters, but do you feel like there was unity of effort in Mosul from the host nation perspective? And if not, if they were going in different directions, for example, a Kurdish agenda versus an Arab take on things – how could we have helped that process, or is it just something that it's conditioned and it's just going to have to be worked through over time?

**Dr. Knight:** I think the biggest problem we had in the Ninewa Province while I was there was the Kurdish expansion agenda. The insurgency was manageable at one level or another, certainly after October, when the company sized attack on the FOB failed.

**MAJ Thornton:** I remember that.

**Dr. Knight:** They were pretty manageable for the rest of the time. But the failure of there to be a coherent and transparent Article 140 process, I think, was probably the biggest threat we had. It was badly managed from the Kurdish side, and it was also being... I think the Kurdish side

thought they were being guided by authorities Kurdistan and the Kurds that were actually working in the province, and by the Embassy initially, and certainly by the Iraqi government in Baghdad, the central government, in the sense that there was no coherent understanding of what's going on and in terms of the pursuit of that agenda and very little done to make it a more reasonable process. I think that continues to be probably the single thing that's going to blow up Mosul. I was feeling pretty good about the prospects of the province except for the fact that those gains were threatened by the Kurdish expansion agenda. In terms of the... the Sunnis were the reasonable ones in this regard which is kind of interesting given the view of the Sunnis in other parts of Iraq.

**MAJ Thornton:** Does the PRT rotate on an individual or a unit style basis?

**Dr. Knight:** Theoretically, it's a...from the State Department side, it's an individual basis. However, half our staff were Civil Affairs, which rotated on a unit basis, and the framework in which you're talking about, in March of 07, which is when the Civil Affairs contingent which was working in my PRT rotated out and was replaced by another one and we lost everybody without much continuity between the two except that provided by the overlap, which is relatively short, but that's okay. I didn't think that was necessarily a bad thing, but a traditional PRT staffed by civilians were staffed on the kind rotation we have in the State Department, which is they come in usually around the end of the calendar year or in the summer. I arrived in the summer which would have been a normal time for any other job in the State Department. So, now I don't know what goes on with the ePRTs and what's going to happen to them as the surge winds down, but they were very different, so if you're talking about traditional PRTs and ones which were, in my case, heavily dependent on military staff. The PRT as an institution is an ongoing organization which the civilian component is replaced on an individual basis.

**MAJ Thornton:** With regard to the civilian component, for example, with your replacement, is there an aspect of that process that doesn't matter whether they gave you a month overlap or a two-week overlap, there's just a level of complexity that you can't convey until it's experienced?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, the State Department doesn't believe in overlaps. My experience with them re-enforced that idea. It's a culture thing. I don't think overlap helps much. I think a good briefing does, and again, part of the reason for that is that in an organization that is working as it should be, your big sections of subordinates to a team leader should be able to provide the information the team leader needs to be effective quickly. It's not necessarily by how much he follows around and sees the style and the approach of his predecessor. Again, I was the third PRT leader, and remained in charge while Jason was still there. So, you had four very, very different approaches and very different styles and it worked well for at least two of us I think for reasons that don't necessarily entail large overlap. So, my personal view is that, in fact, in my experience in Mosul, and it tends to be reflected in my experience in the State Department, the best solution is a short gap in which the deputy prepares for the arrival of the successor. I was very fortunate in that regard, and I hope that true in terms of Jason. I certainly believe that my deputy when he was coming was capable of that; I'm assuming he took advantage of that opportunity.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, the last question is, is there a question you feel like, you know, I missed and that I should have asked in order to get across some of the objectives to show the complexity, to show the challenges with conducting this while conducting other pieces of the spectrum of operations, offensive operations and defensive operations, that sort of thing?

**Dr. Knight:** Probably the only thing that I think I would emphasize is that I believe that the Ninewa PRT was effective in large part because it was a state-led office as opposed to DOD-led. I had a stand alone history that went all the way back to the Coalition Provincial Authority Office in the city in 2003. I think it's because having the civilian phase and the military being a part of that does not diminish that civilian phase I don't think, and having guys who wore suits dealing with folks who wore suits and seeing it as a diplomatic and government engagement rather than something kinetic in one way or another, in the way a paramilitary organization would necessarily be presented and be understood. I think that was critical to the success there. I'm not sure how widely spread that view is now because the whole ePRT concept had been embedded within the Brigade Combat Teams in a way that was different. Their effectiveness I haven't been able to assess, but if they're effective it's for different reasons that may be equally valid. But I do believe that making it a State Department office and being like an office for the Embassy added enormously to our effectiveness, and the fact that the military were a part of that, but clearly under...in a state-led organization and under the authority of a civilian made a huge difference in our effectiveness and our ability to deal with what we had to deal with and the range of interlocutors that we had to deal with. That I think was key and it helped disentangle, I think, the kinetic from the developmental, if you will, which I think speaks to your question given the fact that there were ongoing kinetic operations, ongoing counter-insurgency efforts which went beyond some of the kinetic but also were clearly driven by security concerns, pretty much solely. The fact that we could carry on in the midst of that with a clearly separable agenda I think was probably very important.

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the things we're looking at, separate from this, is what is, post-surge, as the BCTs starts to come out, what's going to be the support plan for the continued advisory and PRT efforts in Iraq? So, while one model may exist right now, the TTs wind up falling up underneath...when I left the TTs came under direct control of the BCTs as well, but what's that going to look like when there really is no infrastructure or coalition infrastructure, for example, at Marez?

**Dr. Knight:** Well, really the PRTs are supposed to shut down after two years, and I also believe the Ninewa PRT could have followed that evolution plan. The idea was they were supposed to turn into USAID-led offices, and I was looking at how that might be done. It didn't happen, and it probably won't for a while yet, but I do believe it would have been possible assuming that we could build a consensus that this was a good idea, and that effort hasn't even started. For example, I believe we could have relied on the Iraqi army and Iraqi police to provide the security force protection that we needed. I think we could have relied on those same kinds of assets to provide the movement assets necessary, assuming that they had the kind of capabilities that were necessary. When Marez turns into an Iraqi army FOB, that could still work in terms of... now this takes a particular kind of personality, and it takes a certain kind of effort for it to work, and I don't think we had those kind of things in great abundance while we were there, but I think there's no reason a civilian-led organization can't continue to remain in place in the absence of

full reliance on coalition force protection, in my view. Now this kind of evolution doesn't appear to be under consideration, but I think there's no reason to believe it's impossible.

**MAJ Thornton:** Alright, thank you much, Sir. Have a great week, and thank you again.

**Dr. Knight:** My pleasure, and again, please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

**MAJ Thornton:** Will do, Sir. Thank you.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 5 June 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Colonel William Balogh

**Military Transition Team Chief**

2<sup>nd</sup> Division

Mosul, Iraq

By

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Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Date of Interview 14 March 2008

**COL Balogh:** As you well know, things move on, we get into these new jobs and you think back on your experiences in country and sometimes you can recall distinct events and experiences while others have become cloudy. So, I'll do my best in terms of giving you what I've got.

**Mike:** I appreciate that, and I think Rob explained a little bit to you; I think he forwarded the questions?

**COL Balogh:** He did. Some of them are better in terms of me being able to explain and some of them are not. But my mission, the first one is about the mission. I didn't really see my mission changing so much other than from when I first got there to when I left; it was essentially to train the Iraqi Security Forces to create a security environment that which would precipitate the growth of political and economic avenues. We were aware that we could not advance the political and economic, the PRT piece, without at least providing first the security within Mosul, and that was a given. So really that was our primary mission, though be it I personally and all my folks underneath me, I was the division MITT Team Chief. I had 3 brigades (BDE MITTs) underneath me. I think you're going to interview some of these guys if you haven't already. Mike Senters was on the west side; he had 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. Howie Brewington on the right side of Mosul; he was 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade. Then we had Dwight Raymond down in Q-West, which was a little bit... well, quite frankly, a big difference between what he was doing and what Mike Senters and Howie Brewington were doing right there in Mosul. And then obviously you had the battalion chiefs within each of those brigades and Rob was on one of the battalion teams within Mike Senters' brigade on the West side. But really, it was to train the ISF. Obviously when we got there they were still growing. My job as a division MITT Team Chief was to establish a relationship with then General Jamal who was a two-star general. He was the CG for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Division. That was a very challenging thing. He eventually was replaced about three or four months before my departure, so I think the new commander came in, I want to say November... no I want to say... Jamal was there for the transition, and assumption of battle space from the U.S. coalition forces to the Iraqi division in December 06, so Jamal relinquished command of the division to BG Mutah, I think sometime in January. So I was working with Mutah from January to March, and I'll go into the details of that a little bit later. But essentially it was training the ISF to prosecute the war against the insurgency there in Mosul, thus creating the conditions for political and economic growth. And the other thing we did outside that mission was provide access to coalition enablers to the Iraqi Security Force when we were out and about moving around with them. Enablers being U.S. air which they obviously didn't have; fires, which we had access to, but very seldom did we do it. I'm an artillery guy, so I know what it is to put a bullet downrange and prevent collateral damage, so that was one of those things that was available to us, but quite frankly, unless all hell broke loose, we very seldom even considered using any kind of fires. And again, like I said, it really... didn't change other than the fact that the division and each of the brigades matured from the time we got there in February 06 and departed in March 08. The only thing that changed was the fact that the area became less dependant upon the U.S. coalition brigade. When I first got there I was working alongside Mike Shields from the 172<sup>nd</sup> Brigade in Alaska but that transitioned over to Steve Townsend, 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, 3-2 Stryker Brigade, and then it was, the last guy working with me was COL Twitty out of 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade 1<sup>st</sup> CAV. I had a unique opportunity to work with each one of

those guys. Each brought a tremendous amount of abilities and capabilities to the fight. They all have unique skills and I was able to see each of those guys in a different light. I have nothing but great things to say about each of those three guys.

**Mike:** Colonel Balogh, what position did you come out of before you went to that MiTT Chief job?

**COL Balogh:** I was working at TRADOC headquarters, not within the TRADOC for Wallace himself. It was General Byrnes before Wallace.

**Mike:** Okay. I'm asking that because we've talked to some people, as I've said, in the 1<sup>st</sup> CAV...

**COL Balogh:** I was at ARCIC, which is now Army Capabilities Integration Center. I'm a 57 by trade; I was twenty-one years artillery, and then my twenty-one first year I switched over from a 13 artillery guy to a 57 simulations guy.

**Mike:** Oh, I see.

**COL Balogh:** So the army was kind enough to send me to two years to Orlando to get a degree, and then I went to Monroe and worked the 57 piece. I was the Chief of Simulations within the Future Center responsible for tying in all the TRADOC battle labs. Every TRADOC installation has a battle lab; I tied all those battle labs together in a common simulation environment in which we conducted experimentation for future force.

**Mike:** So that was almost a relief for you to go over there, wasn't it?

**COL Balogh:** Yeah, it was. I mean, I kind of volunteered for this thing because I really needed a break.

**Mike:** Yeah, I can understand. All those digits running around in front of your eyes.

**COL Balogh:** Yeah, and this is just something I wanted to do. I mean, you watch a TV screen every day, and you come home and you see these guys coming home with one less limb, and I was at my, I guess, my twenty-first... actually twenty-third year in the military, and I said this is just something I've got to do before I get out.

**Mike:** Right.

**COL Balogh:** Key tasks – when we got over there, it was really... we did the “Stormin Norman” stuff at Hood. We trained up at Hood, and the 75<sup>th</sup> Division. When we went to Hood, The 75<sup>th</sup> Division got the mission of training these teams going over, these transition teams. I talked to General Best who is the current CG in the 75<sup>th</sup> when I got back, and he knows they went into this thing half-cocked and they really didn't have a good plan and training. It was very evident to everybody concerned that they didn't really have a good plan in place. So as we went over there we were still forming our teams. So that was one of the key tasks for me was to continue to form our teams, train them because we've got guys...we took the backgrounds of all

our guys and put them in the right places as best we could. They met the requirements for going over, but we were still trying to learn what the ISF looked like, what they did, how they operated. We've been fighting the Russian Army forever, and now we've got to learn how the Iraqi system works, what the Iraqi organizations look like, smells like, feels like. So that was part one because I had been an OC at Hohenfels for four years and I know the first thing about being an OC is credibility. So if we were going to train Iraqi Security Forces I told my guys, "Look, we've got to come in with some level of credibility," otherwise with the Iraqi culture such a relationship based society, you've got to come in with some credibility because they will quickly learn whether or not you have the credibility or not. Then they'll just blow you off and consider you a friend, but not really take what you have to say as credible. So I really had to train my own folks and make sure that they had something to bring to the table. And then, I really saw my other key task was, and I learned this as I went, first to Mike Shields, then to Steve Townsend, then with COL Twitty, that as the DIV MiTT Chief I was really the key in terms of getting the linkage between the U.S. coalition brigade in Mosul and the Iraqi 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV HQs. And each of the brigade chiefs kind of did that too with their counterparts, their Iraqi counterparts, and their U.S. brigade or battalion counterparts – with the U.S. battalion that was on our left side, and the U.S. battalion that was on our right side. So, Howie Brewington had a relationship with the U.S. battalion commander, as well as Mike Senters on the west side. I had a relationship with each of the brigade commanders and we spoke regularly, on a daily basis, and even when those three guys wanted something in terms of getting the division to go in a certain direction, they would first call me and say, "Hey Bill, I think we should advance this cause," and I would give them my take on it in terms of whether the personality of the CG, Jamal was very different from Muthah, and then we'd meet with the division commander together and talk through it and figure out a way to go about it. But I was really the guy that those guys went to first just to feel out what the best course of action was and how to proceed to get the blessing and the buy in of the division commander. As far as mission essential tasks, I think you know the deal; this society is very, very relationship based. If you can't form a relationship with your Iraqi counterpart, bottom line is you're sunk. So that is... I saw that as one of my mission essential tasks. I had to form a relationship with General Jamal and then General Muthah so they could see me as a method by which to advance their causes and get them to be able to provide security in concert with the U.S. brigade in the city of Mosul. And then again, there were things that they didn't have.

**Mike:** How long do you think it took to build that to an effective level?

**COL Balogh:** A lot of time. The two things that I wanted to touch on, I already mentioned about the enablers to things they didn't have like air, but the other thing was that they didn't have that U.S. had was SIGINT. Every thing over there was Intel driven. When I first got there, a lot of times the division would just round up masses, and then interrogate and let the dust settle where it may, and then we got very focused. I first served with the 101<sup>st</sup>. The 101<sup>st</sup> was the higher headquarters when I first got there, then it changed over to the 25<sup>th</sup> Division when I left. So it was about half and half, and the 25<sup>th</sup> really wanted to drive into having all operations intel driven and focused on intel. The Iraqis didn't have any SIGINT kind of capability, the U.S. forces did. The Iraqis had the capability for the human intelligence, HUMINT, where the U.S. did not. I mean, you can't put a U.S. guy on the street asking questions. So I saw my goal was to try to get those two things to mesh together; take the SIGINT, mesh it with the human intelligence, possibly get something out of SIGINT to drive somebody, put an Iraqi on the street

asking HUMINT questions, and then solidifying those two causes and then coming up with a plan of attack in which you go and attack a stronghold. A lot of chai drinking with Jamal and Mutah. It really is just sitting around and talking through things; we talked about everything. I can't tell you how many times I went over there... I spent, just to give you a sense... at one point in time I was labeled by my team, my division team, as (XXXX 5:45), and I told my team, I said, "Listen, we all understand that this is a relationship-based society. I've got to start establishing a relationship with these guys, so I've got to spend less time with you to do that," and they kind of understood that. But I was spending probably, let's say about out of a sixteen hour day, probably about ten to twelve hours across the street, and I'll explain in a minute, across the street with the division commander. The division headquarters was up in Al Kindi which is on the east side up north in Mosul. My division team was up there with them, but we had a U.S. FOB which was just across the street from the Iraqi FOB. So what I'm telling you is they were essentially co-located, but there was a... we had separate fences. My fence was manned by Iraqi MPs given up by the division commander, so I had to kind of beg, bum, and steal a security force by which was my security within the wire. They manned the front gate and they manned my towers at night and during the day. I didn't have any U.S. coalition assets and the other transition teams didn't either. If I put guys in the tower at night pulling guard, then it took me away from my mission of transitioning the Iraqi Security Forces, training them, and getting them to a capability to prosecute the war. I couldn't do that; my team was only eleven strong at the division, and that's including a couple of medics. So, I had to use their forces to man the towers and the gates.

**Mike:** And I understand you were kind of out in the wild.

**COL Balogh:** Yeah, I was, but I would say in comparison to the three brigade MiTT Teams, COL Raymond down at 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade at Q-West obviously had it nice. Q-West is a pretty big facility. I don't know if you've been over there, but Q-West is a pretty nice facility, robust, a lot of coalition forces there. Mike Senters lived on essentially MAREZ proper. Howie Brewington lived on the east side. He was on a U.S. FOB, but was also with the brigade commander. The brigade commander lived on that same FOB, so he had Iraqi forces living with him. So yeah, the challenge of being up there in the north was I had to do, and I'll get to this later, I had to do sustainment and drive to MAREZ on a daily if not every other day basis, which became a challenge. Just driving the streets in Mosul was a challenge. I mean, probably not as bad as Baghdad, but Mosul had the same mentality in terms of weapons against U.S. coalition forces as Baghdad, it just didn't have the frequency. The only thing I think we didn't have, there may have been one EFP up there, but Mosul was starting to get EFPs when we started to leave, that became the hurdle. In fact, I had a good friend of mine killed by one, the gentleman that sat on the seat next to me going across when we flew over was killed by EFP in Baghdad. But getting back in, that was my key tasks and missions, my central tasks. I think the same... the next question was assessment, what kind of assessment did we use, or process. I don't know if you've heard of TRA, Transition Readiness Assessment?

**Mike:** Yes.

**COL Balogh:** Okay, so you're familiar with it?

**Mike:** Yes, I am.

**COL Balogh:** Okay, so that was the process which we used, and if you're familiar with it, it got down into the details of the personnel training and the logistical/equipment aspects. So it touched each of those things, and I think it was a decent tool. There were some things that needed tweaking, but overall it was a decent tool by which to gauge where the Iraqi Security Force was at any given time. It used, as you know, the color scale, I think red, green, amber. The nice thing was it was a standard tool that each of the transition teams within each of the nine divisions were using, so there was some standardization, of course, which is nice, but some of the questions that it asked really didn't get to the heart of whether or not the capability existed. They were tweaking when we were leaving, so I think they got on board on that one. Actions to empower my subordinate leaders... and let me know if I'm going off base in terms of the questions.

**Mike:** No, you're doing fine.

**COL Balogh:** I think the biggest thing I did to empower my subordinate leaders was just let them do what they knew they had to do. I mean, I had competent leaders... Howie Brewington. I think I had the right guys in the right places. Mike Senters, if you haven't already talked to these guys, Mike Senters is a real no-nonsense kind of guy, he's not into a lot of... he's an in-your-face kind of guy, and Howie Brewington is a real smart guy. I had those two guys in the city of Mosul; those two guys were the right guys for the job. Dwight's a little bit more laid back, and he fit perfectly in where he was in Q-West. And like I said, I think the biggest thing I could do to empower them is just let them do their thing. I didn't feel like I needed to interject myself in their process of establishing relationships with their guys because Mike and Howie and Dwight were very much committed to the effort when you talk unity of effort, but they were very much committed to this thing. It wasn't like I had to interject myself in their process and say, "Hey look, we've got to do a better job in terms of establishing relationships," getting them to move forward because they were always pushing hard, every day. So, they made my job easy. And plus, frankly, there was just too much going on in my foxhole to believe that I could do what I had to do at division level and interject myself at the brigade or battalion process; there's just too much going on. Unity of effort was also solidified every time... I spoke with these guys at least daily, if not multiple times through the course of the day, pick up the phone and call them and say, "What's going on?" But we really got to see each other each month when we got together to talk TRA; it's where we solidified this TRA process by meeting, they would come back, and each of the brigade and battalion chiefs down at the battalion level would brief me on why they rated their Iraqi counterparts the rating that they gave them. So that was our sort of monthly ritual by which we had the battalion and brigade chiefs come up and got a litmus test, a sanity check in terms of making sure everybody was aligned and understood the same things with respect to the standards of the TRA, and then I passed out and they got the chance to vent any things they wanted to vent in terms of this face to face kind of stuff. About the only other time we got a chance we got to do kind of unity of effort stuff was when I made my rounds with the unity commander. I typically would not go around and just drive around Mosul for the sake of driving around. I did not go around doing sightseeing. I went outside the wire... whenever the CG went out, I went outside the wire, and he very rarely went somewhere without me being with him. The only time that would happen is if I was out of town, in Baghdad with the 101<sup>st</sup> or the 25<sup>th</sup>. But anytime he went out, I went out with him, and as I went out with him, and while he visited his brigade commanders, I would get the opportunity to do my sit downs and meet with

my brigade MiTT team chiefs. So, a win-win situation there. Techniques employed, we talked about it. Really the techniques that we employed...the biggest technique we employed for the effectiveness, based on the fact that we've already talked about this is a relationship based society, I told my guys we would be embedded with the Iraqi soldiers. For instance, Rob Thornton was on a COP on the west side with his battalion, and we made the conscious decision for him to be out there in Indian Territory. Out of all the FOBs that we had, Rob was on the FOB where the most action was. So Rob can really tell you what that was like because on a daily basis he was in the bad part of the town. I could have very easily made the decision to say, "Rob, go to FOB Marez, and then go out and embed with the Iraqi, do your face to face with your counterpart as you please, or whenever you can." That wasn't the decision I made. We made a conscious decision to say, "Rob, you will live with the Iraqis on a day to day basis on that FOB with them and experience the same hardships and everything about daily life with your Iraqi counterpart." So, I think that was a technique we employed. I don't know how we compared to other MiTTs within the other ten divisions, but I can tell you I think we did great in terms of embedding because the relationships that you had to establish with your Iraqi counterparts dictated that you live and experience the same experience as the Iraqi counterpart. Otherwise, it would have been a we/them mentality, and I didn't want that to happen. And minimizing the meetings that they had; I didn't want to drag them in unless they absolutely needed to, and very, very rarely did I do that. If I had to speak with the brigade guys or someone in the battalion to do OER stuff, signing or counseling or whatever, I would go get their schedule and find out; I'd call them and say, "Hey, are you doing any kind of battlefield circulation up this way?" And we would integrate that into their thing, so I kind of minimized the amount of meetings that I had, which just let them do their thing in their own AO. Partnerships – absolutely. We saw it as a partnership with the Iraqis. It was such that if... and my team members knew this, if they failed, we failed as a team. It wasn't like, "The Iraqis failed; they're Iraqis, we're the U.S., so why should we care?" That wasn't the case; we took it to heart when the Iraqis were not doing something well. It was as if we were not doing it well, and we took it to heart, and we found a way to kind of fix most everything, not everything, but a lot of things. One of those things in terms of the frictions was the fuel piece, and I'm sure you've heard this before, but fuel was probably the most, without a doubt, the biggest friction point we had with the Iraqis. They had these fuel stamps, and so... one thing or another. The bottom line was at the end of the month, every month almost; it got better as we left, so I think we made some headway, but whether it was the excuse that the guy with the fuel stamps, that controlled the fuel stamps, I can't remember his name, but his face is very vivid in my mind, going up to Baghdad to the Iraqi Minister of Interior or something like that, I don't know... it was a long drawn out process, and every time we got together as a MiTT, the ten MiTT teams got together in Baghdad to talk to Chiarelli, who was the first IAG commander followed by Odierno, but we'd have these meetings regularly, every MiTT bar none voiced their concerns about the process being a bureaucratic process by which nothing got accomplished, and there was a lot of people on the take, there was nothing secret about it. There were people within the system that if you knew them and you gave some of the stamps away to them, you'd see that process go a lot faster than if you didn't do that. There was corruption from the highest levels down to the lowest levels. I've heard stories about battalion and brigade commanders having to get money up to whomever, the CG or... you know, the battalion commanders giving money to brigade commanders, brigade commanders having to give money to the division commander, and I just scratched my head like, "Wow. How do you make this work?" And brigade commanders and battalion commanders were selected by the division

commander based on whether or not he would provide money or whatever. So I kind of knew about this or heard about it, but was I able to substantiate it? No, I never saw any money passing from one hand to the other. I did have people tell me that this process did happen, but nothing to substantiate it. The bottom line is that at the end of the month they were hurting for fuel, whether it was benzene or diesel or whatever, and they came looking to the U.S. for fuel. How did we make it work? Well, first I talked to them through the CG and said, "Look, Sadi (COL Balogh referring to either MG Jamal, or BG Mutah), you've got to fix this fuel problem." So once they know that you know that they've got a problem... and I've got to tell you, fuel and a couple of other things...the contractor, with respect to the poor living conditions within the COPs and barracks where the soldiers lived. The contractors were responsible for fixing, for instance, sinks, bathrooms, clogged drains, showers, lights, everything that had to do with the quarters, contractors came in and were supposed to do that. We had a mechanism by which we graded them, and we would grade them poorly a lot of times. That stuff went up, and I don't know if it fell on deaf ears. It was getting better as we departed, but it seemed like it was a lot of times falling on deaf ears. But the contractors sub contracted, and these sub-contractors would be providing the quality and quantity of chow in the mess halls, and providing fuel. So, all that stuff, one, making known that you know that all that stuff is unacceptable in terms of the standards, so I told the CG this is unacceptable. There was a point for him to know that I knew it was unacceptable; and two... where was I? Oh, with the fuel, then what we did is we didn't really say, "Okay, here's some fuel." We made a conscious decision with the U.S. coalition brigade, whether it was Steve Townsend or COL Twitty, to bring these guys to a point of failure, but we wouldn't let them fail. So, the message we sent to the Iraqis was, "We really want you to work your system. We really want you to figure out how to get your system going because we're not going to readily give you fuel whenever you ask." But COL Twitty, God bless him, he made a conscious decision we wouldn't let them fail, and so in the 9th hour when they were absolutely dry in their tanks, we'd feed them fuel, and that was a conscious decision by the U.S. brigade commander in Mosul, and we would annotate the amount of gallons given them, and that was it. So we tried to work through it as best we could. Did we share a common operational picture? Yeah, we did; in the amount of times we spoke on a daily basis with my BDE MiTTs. Anytime anything would come down from division about an operational thing, I would go and pick up the phone and call my MiTTs, my brigade MiTT team chiefs, to let them know that something's brewing and give them the shared operational picture and to look for it within their operational chain of command, and if they didn't see something stirring, then obviously we had a disconnect, and something wasn't happening from the Iraqi chain of command down to the brigade. Much like an OC does out at the CTC. Help me through this most important line of operations and lines of effort; what exactly are looking for?

**Mike:** What effort was your concentration? Was it security? did you have to...obviously without the assistance of some of the other agencies and some of those missing lines, I don't know if you had to fall back and help create those kind of things; maybe there's a gap with the MOD or MOI depending on who you're working with, that you had to go in and do some of that as well, and that's kind of the side note of this. I think this is kind of a repeat of another question, but to get an idea if you had a priority and how you were moving along that line, why did you see that as your most important, and then those other questions fall in there.

**COL Balogh:** Yeah; as we got along and the Iraqi Assistance Group, IAG, got better, they had actually folks over imbedded with the Iraqi Ground Force Command? As that got more robust it certainly made our job at the MiTT level easier with at least gaining some clarity with respect to what was going on. So what I'm telling you, Mike, is when my guys went up to Baghdad for these fuel stamps, or with the fuel stamps to get fuel, the vouchers, and you would wait up there for five days wondering where he is, I could pick up the phone and call these guys and say, "Hey look, my guy needs some help pushing these vouchers through the Ministry of Interior to get the fuel stamps validated." That process was not up and running as well as it could have been when I first got there, it was becoming more robust and getting better as I departed, so that made life better for us. Okay, the sustainment and force protection unique problems – I talked through some of the sustainment piece being in Al Kindi up in the northeast, having a bit of LOGPAC run every day if not every other day; that created unique challenges in that trying to do two things at one time. One, we had to sustain ourselves because we didn't get a LOGPAC pushed to us, we had to go pull it from Marez (ed. note – this was the case for all 2<sup>nd</sup> DIV MiTTs outside of MAREZ during the first 10 months of the tour – this changed under 4/1 – see MAJ Maguire's interview). This at the same time doing the operational piece with the division commander. If he had something to do that put him on the road, obviously I want to be out on the road with him. So I had to gauge that, and I had to ask him sometimes, "Well, Sir, can you push this back or push this forward because my team has something that will preclude me from having available vehicles," and that was a unique challenge. The other thing was the governance piece. When we went to Hood, it really was Hood exasperated by Kuwait, exasperated by Iraq, Hood had limited facilities... they had facilities, but the fires down on the range created challenges for us in terms of qualifying the number of guns we wanted to qualify with a 240 machine gun and a .50 cal. Those unique challenges were again resurrected in Kuwait with the Bedouins out there walking the ranges and shutting the ranges down and it just seems like there was one hurdle after another. The bottom line to that and the result was that we didn't have enough qualified .50 cal and 240 machine gun gunners that we really would have liked to have going into country. And obviously the challenge in Iraq is there are just no ranges. We did have a range up at Al Kindi, but it was a short range, it wasn't anything long where you could fire .50 cal. So that was a challenge, and that was just exasperated by not having enough qualified gunmen. Before punching an R&R for leave, you've got to figure out and shift others. The fortunate thing for me was that I had one battalion team out of the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, Colonel Brewington's brigade, it was 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, actually living with me up on my FOB; so it wasn't just my division team, it was my division team and that one battalion, and we were able to mesh assets which facilitated and eased the burden of having to do log pack runs and the gunner's piece. So, we would pull a vehicle with a full crew from the other teams because at any given time you want to have at least three vehicles in a convoy, no less than three vehicles in a convoy, one of those vehicles being a .50 cal machine gun. So, those are some of the challenges there. Some of the sustainment issues – again, fuel, I don't want to... I think we talked enough about that. That was really the big thing other than the other challenges I've talked about, the poor quality of food, contractor support. There was this sheik in Irbil who was in charge of all the contractors. Sheik (XXXX 34:03) was the kingpin in all this, he was down in Irbil which was just east of Mosul, and what we found success in was we actually had some battalion MiTT team chiefs going to Irbil with the Iraqi counterparts to secure some of these services that were supposed to be rendered by the contractors, but what we found was once that happened, a lot of these services were not readily offered and provided by the... the bottom line was they would give you the bare minimums to

get by and then if nobody, obviously if nobody chimed in and screamed, they thought it was okay and continued to provide the bare minimums. Key intelligence issues – we talked about the Iraqis having the capability to do the human intelligence piece. The one thing they didn't have was they didn't have their ISR section split up. I actually had a guy, Lieutenant Gonzalez, who was supposed to be covering down on the ISR section and he was just getting up the DIV ISR company as we were departing. That was the natural progression, it wasn't like it was supposed to be there when we first got there, but they were starting to get manned and equipped, but throughout most of my tenure there in Iraq, the ISR section was not equipped or manned, and that was a capability that I wish they would have had because putting guys in unmarked cars on the street with the capability by which to conduct covert surveillance and intelligence gathering was an asset that they sorely needed. And then obviously, like I said, the U.S. coalition forces have a huge capability in SIGINT; I saw my job as sort of meshing the two together.

**Mike:** Was there a problem in that intel sharing?

**COL Balogh:** Say again?

**Mike:** Saying that in intel sharing did you run into some problems there?

**COL Balogh:** Initially yes, until the bonds were broken by which we all realized we were all on the same team. Very rarely did either Townsend or Twitty hold back something from the Iraqis unless they just thought it was necessary to do so. There were some times that... because initially, before December, like I told you, December 07... no, December 06 was when the Iraqis assumed their battle space in Mosul. And with it came a unique set of challenges because before that time Shields, Townsend, and Twitty were all conducting autonomous operations in Mosul because they were the battle space owners. They had the right to conduct autonomous operations unbeknownst to the Iraqi division for the apparent reason of there was a problem with spies within the organization, be it the police and/or the army; more so the police than the army, where they were tipped off on an operation, and those guys would go in and find nothing where the SIGINT revealed that there was something going on. With the battle space being turned over from the U.S. coalition brigade to the Iraqi division, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Division, in December 06, the challenge was now Twitty had no clear permission from the division commander to conduct any kind of operation unbeknownst to the division commander, Shields and Townsend didn't have to worry about asking, "Mother, may I?" So we kind of groped through that and figured out that was always the right thing to do if we were going to truly hand over the battle space to the division commander.

**Mike:** Did the Iraqis need air assets?

**COL Balogh:** Yeah, good. I'm laughing about it now, but every time the Iraqi ground forces commander, and for the life of me I can't remember his name, asked to see his nine, ten division commanders in Baghdad, I, as the division MiTT team chief told the other nine or ten division MiTT team chiefs how to secure U.S. coalition air assets to get these division commanders to Baghdad, which typically I did. I would call up Twitty and set up transportation for Mutah and Jamal letting them know that they need to be in Baghdad for a meeting. The battle space to the west, which was Tal Afar and what was the other city out to the west? I think it starts with a K. Whatever; that was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Iraqi Division's battle space. So really the coalition BCT CDR had two divisions by which he kind of had ground forces, and he was working with two division MiTT team chiefs; myself and the other one from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division. So, when he got a call from

me asking for air assets to get the division commander to Baghdad, he was also getting a phone call from the other division MiTT team chiefs as well. So we typically all jumped in a Blackhawk and went down. Some of the most critical tasks performed – again, relationship building, training ISF to prosecute the war against the insurgency, creating the conditions for political and economic growth. The BCT was providing the enablers, and we really... we, the transition teams, be it at the division, my level, or brigade and battalion level, we really viewed the U.S. coalition brigade as our backstop. What I'm telling you is I had the luxury of working with two Stryker Brigades, the 172<sup>nd</sup> first, followed by the 3-2, and I'm here to tell you, when 3-2 was announced to depart Mosul... it just seemed like the Stryker Brigades would enter the theater in Mosul and then go South, 172<sup>nd</sup> did that, 3-2 did that, and then those brigades would transition to Baghdad. 172<sup>nd</sup> did that, they had to extend them the extra ninety days. I don't know if you realize all the trouble associated with that because they were staying like the fifteen months. And then 3-2, Townsend was in Mosul when Shields was in Baghdad; when Shields left Baghdad, 3-2, Townsend, went from Mosul to Baghdad, and then Twitty came in, and I've got to tell you, there was some consternation and 25<sup>th</sup> Division was asking, "What does this mean in Mosul, going from a Stryker Brigade with equipped capability in Mosul to a HMMWV based organization in Mosul," because even though Twitty had tanks, the 25<sup>th</sup> Division commander said, "I do not want tanks in the city unless absolutely necessary," and Twitty did ask for some show of force initially to make sure that the populous knew that 1<sup>st</sup> CAV was not just a HMMWV based organization, and he did have the wherewithal, i.e. tanks, M1s, should the need arise. So he did have several show of forces within the city to just assure the population and show the insurgency that there was capability inherent within that organization to squelch any kind of insurgency. But there was some consternation on the part of the MiTTs going from seeing Strykers driving around the streets of Mosul, aware that if we got in a firefight or deep in a conflict, we felt assured that Strykers would be at a second's notice. Those guys leaving for Baghdad, HMMWVs coming in. We also drove around in armored HMMWVs; there was some consternation on the part of the MiTTs. Now, it all worked out, and thank God nothing ever happened whereby we were out outmanned or outgunned by the insurgency, but I'm going to tell you, to be honest, there was some consternation on the part of the MiTTs going from a Stryker based capability to a HMMWV based capability. It takes longer to get up and running. If they were parked outside the city limits or on the FOBs, then it would take some time to get them up and spinning and at the point of conflict if the need arises. Number nine, different techniques required to work with the police – yeah, the one advantage the 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Division had over I think many of the other Iraqi divisions was that they had the opportunity to (XXXX 45:39) based on our meetings (XXXX 45:43), and really that was with the four brigades, but we really had a sense of nine division MiTT team chiefs talking, ten division MiTT team chiefs talking together, and when we went to Baghdad for Corps conferences, and I sensed that 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Mosul was working better than most divisions across the board within Iraq when it came to Iraqi Army working hand-in-hand with the Iraqi police. And that was based in large part on the relationships that General Jamal, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division commander, followed by Mutah had with General Wathuk which was the Iraqi police chief. So that worked well, and how they would work that was... it worked well for a couple of reasons; one is the relationships between those individuals, but not only that it was guys like Townsend and Twitty who would regularly pull these guys in, he often invited my IA opposite number into FOB MAREZ, and we would talk and have conferences together whereby we would come up with plans for future operations whereby we would give police and army a chance to talk through their roles and responsibilities; it got to be a good

working relationship between those individual leaders in both the IA and the IP. You know, cordon and search; the army would be used to cordon sectors of the city, and the police would be doing the searching within the cordon because if you had one or the other do everything, they just really didn't have the forces to do that. So, working together provided some synergy, whereas working apart they wouldn't have been able to do it.

**Mike:** I see.

**COL Balogh:** Number ten – How valuable is partnering in developing Iraqi security forces & local government to build HN capacity? Yeah, it's very important. Again, before you can even get to the political and economic growth and host nation building, everybody understood that you had to get through the security issue first, so we all understood our role in the future of the country in terms of the political and economic growth of the nation.

**Mike:** You know, Bill, that question actually holds a little bit more than just a partnership between countries; they're talking about matching up a unit to an Iraqi unit to see or to affect a more rapid transition.

**COL Balogh:** Hold on a second. Yeah, I saw that second thing, that sub-bullet there, what level of interaction was probably most effective, brigade, battalion, or company? I initially thought about this, and I'm saying I don't know that at any given level one was more effective than the other; I will tell you where the rubber met the road in terms of this stuff happening obviously was at battalion and...really at battalion level; less degree at brigade and even less at division. Division would come up with a plan for these big operations, but on a day to day basis, the brigade and the battalions were really the guys driving the security piece within their sectors of Mosul. When Twitty and Townsend and I became involved was when we had these larger operations whereby we got operations where by we got Wathuk, the police chief, and General Jamal or Mutah, the Iraqi division commander, together and came up with these plans in terms of ridding the city of insurgents, but on a day to day basis much of that work, laymen's work, was done at the brigade and battalion level. Legitimacy in the eyes of the population was really established in a couple of ways. One, our visibility; going around and meeting the people. When we went out on convoys with the division commander when he went out, and same thing with my brigade commanders and battalion commanders, when they went... whenever U.S. coalition forces went out on the road along with their Iraqi counterparts, there were opportunities by which we presented ourselves to the Iraqi civilian populous, and it could have been either a good experience or bad. By and large, it was mostly, in my eyes, always positive experiences. Case in point, I got the opportunity to visit one of the schools in Mosul on the east side whereby we were able to distribute school supplies to the kids. We brought in the division commander, obviously we had the security contingency forces guarding the streets while we were in there, but General Jamal and I, and we made it a publicity thing with the cameras. But that was really I bet the first time those Iraqi school children had an opportunity to experience and see for themselves a U.S. coalition soldier, me and my team. So it was shaking hands, and through my interpreter talking to kids, and we're giving them Beanie Babies and school supplies. So I'm sure those kids went home to their parents showing them the toys and supplies, and it's almost like Christmas to these kids. That is just one of many, many opportunities that we had. There were kids and families right around the corner from the FOB that we were able to...every time we came in you've got kids off to the side of the road waving as your humvees come in, we would

go out and periodically give these kids supplies and take pictures, because they don't have cameras, take pictures of them and their parents and put them in frames and give them to the parents, which they cherished. But the other way to legitimacy was there were regular meetings by which the governor of Mosul...I can't remember his name, older gentleman, I want to say Kashmoula; he regularly called in Wathuk and Jamal, and Mutah to his office, and they would have local security councils and meetings with local dignitaries and sheiks and talk through many security problems. That was where the army, Wathuk, the police chief would gain legitimacy in the eyes of the sheiks who would then filtrate that information down to their pals, because the people in the towns and villages really rely on the sheiks as their figurehead and speaking voice for their villages. So if we could gain legitimacy in the eyes of the sheiks and the mokhtars then we were able to do that with the people. So, the meetings and then our local exposure with the populous.

**Mike:** So how did you push back...I guess it would probably take a little pushback on the U.S. side when they're partnering with the Iraqi units, on your operations to put an Iraqi face on things. Were there specific things that you directed your people to do in order to... and having the U.S. step back and putting more of an Iraqi face on operations?

**COL Balogh:** Yeah, it was. I always was cognizant of the fact that we should be taking a back seat, and the U.S. coalition brigade shared that same thinking. Twitty was very good at it, as was Townsend, whereby he ensured that almost everything, especially when the division took control of the battle space in December 06; cognizant of making sure that the operations had an Iraqi face attached to it as opposed to a U.S. face. I always was cognizant of it, and I always liked to take a backseat to everything. But you're right; it was very important to ensure that the Iraqi populous understood that the Iraqi division was in control of Mosul, and not U.S. Forces. The cameras and the papers and generated as much publicity as we could when we did the battle space ceremony. I mean, it wasn't just wake up one day and the U.S. is in charge of Mosul, and then the next day the Iraqis. We had an actual ceremony involved in this where we brought in all the local sheiks and mokhtars and all these people come in, and the ceremony showing it, and we had the 25<sup>th</sup> Division commander there handing over the battle space to General Jamal. So it was a big ceremony, but the point being was to show a demonstration of the handover from U.S. to Iraqi control. On to twelve, integrating IO into operation to gain and maintain local support. That's really what the U.S. coalition brigade got pegged to do. We didn't really have the assets at transition team level to do that kind of IO campaign stuff, but where the transition teams came into play is we would provide information to them. Twitty's guys and Townsend's guys had the capability inherent within the brigade to do the storyboards. For instance, if there was an insurgent that blew up something and killed some of the populous, we would do storyboards by which we would show the local populous that this is the reason why you don't want to support the insurgency because this many people got killed and the whole deal. But we really provided the details by which Twitty and his folks created the storyboards and got this information out, and the battalions, Iraqi battalions, would actually go out there publicize this stuff, hang these things in the store windows or what not. But we at a transition team level, mostly we were just the provider of information and some on the ground analysis. With some exceptions down at the battalion level we really didn't get into the processing of the storyboards, we didn't have the organic resources. What assets or resources were there that could have been of value? I had to think about this long and hard – personnel, one of the personnel things was medics. We seemed

to have... medics were provided to us by the coalition force, and it just seemed to... at one point in time we ran low on medics because guys were transitioning out, and as guys transitioned out, it was inherent on the coalition to backfill, and just a shortage of medics within theater created situations by which we were at certain times either short or absent medics within the transition team, which created obviously some consternation.

**Mike:** So how about...were there situations where you had U.S. medical facilities that maybe would have helped you in helping the Iraqis, but those were denied or did they try to...as far as treating partner nations, were those things available to you?

**COL Balogh:** They were, they were available, so there was never an instance where an Iraqi soldier was seriously injured and was denied treatment by a U.S. facility. The U.S. facility in MAREZ... in fact I, with the division commander, visited a wounded Iraqi soldier at the clinic there at MAREZ. I don't ever recall any instance whereby a wounded was denied based on his affiliation with the Iraqi Army vice the American Army. So that was never a case in my eyes.

**Mike:** How about the civil affairs guys or maybe PRTs that were available and you saw them, maybe they could have helped out or maybe there could have been some assets used to affect things in the community to, again, improve that Iraqi face overall, but maybe they were denied or maybe they were made available to you?

**COL Balogh:** Well, I'll be honest with you, In my opinion the linkage between the transition teams and the PRT teams was nonexistent, I guess. There was, at the end, interaction, but it was only because the U.S. coalition brigade commander, Twitty, brought these guys together by which we were talking, but there really was no... for instance, I can't even tell you... I'm trying to remember some faces of some of the PRT guys... Mike, I can't really give names and faces of PRT guys.

**Mike:** But were there situations where you thought maybe those guys could have been doing something for you, but they didn't?

**COL Balogh:** Yeah, well I mean, Mosul, the reconstruction of the city itself, or the lack thereof, caused us to scratch our head and say, "What's going on with a lot of the money that either U.S. is providing the government of Iraq or money within the country itself in terms of making the conditions within the city better?" Sewage. Garbage all over the place, which obviously caused challenges, daily challenges, for the transition teams moving in the city; US forces driving along within the confines of the city, obviously with all the trash it just makes it that much easier to plant an IED that a team couldn't be identified. Just driving around the city it was very difficult to be able to process, quickly process what's out there, visibly see it and determine whether or not you had to weave left or weave right or what not. There was just so much stuff along the roads that it came to the point where you just kissed it up to God and hoped nothing happened. So, getting back to our PRT thing, I didn't see a lot of it, to be honest with you, I just didn't. I don't know if it was because the Division MiTT was not on MAREZ with the BCT and PRT, because we were honing in on security first followed by economic development & PRT kind of stuff, but I just didn't see a whole lot of it.

**Mike:** Okay. You talked about working out transportation for the division commander; were there other things, other assets that you felt you needed, maybe CAS or something else?

**COL Balogh:** Well, the only asset that I can think of that would remedy that situation was actually getting the Iraqi ground forces to have their own rotary wing assets, which would have helped because rotary as opposed to CAS fixed wing for the airfields; the only airfield that somebody could fly in on was the one at Marez, which is where folks took R & R, flew out of on R & R. So, rotary wing was really missing from the Iraqi Security Forces' capability, thus preventing a lot of ground work going between the division commanders and the Iraqi ground forces. You're not going to get a division commander getting on the road and traveling from Mosul to Baghdad on the ground; it's just not going to happen. So having the rotary wing capability inherent within that organization or that force; he was really dependant upon U.S. capability. With respect to the unity of effort in Mosul, absolutely; that was really because of the efforts of the three U.S. brigade commanders, they pushed it hard, each one of them; Shields, followed by Townsend, followed by Twitty. Throughout the preponderance of my time there in Mosul, obviously, the U.S. ground force commander was the battle space owner of the city up until the last three months of my tenure there. January, February, and March 07 were the only three months that I was there that 2<sup>nd</sup> Division owned the battle space. So up until that time, it was inherent upon Shields, Townsend, and Twitty to make sure that we had synergy whereby the U.S., the IPs, and the IA were all working together in concert with each other. And then the other piece to that is Intelligence, we talked about me trying to lead the intelligence piece because, again, everything was dependant upon how well your intelligence piece worked, and after that ISR section at the division level the only real piece the Iraqis had an advantage over the U.S. coalition was in human intelligence because obviously you could put a plainclothes Iraqi out there in the city and sort scarf up information from folks within the city; the U.S. couldn't do that. So, I saw my role as trying to link those two capabilities together, what the U.S. brought to the table and what the Iraqis brought to the table, trying to mesh that, consolidate it, synthesize it, figure out where we needed to go.

**Mike:** Just jumping off the track here, did the police provide you any clear or additional intelligence?

**COL Balogh:** When we did these operations at the division level and the coalition level, when Twitty and I and General Jamal and/or General Mutah and General Wathik (ed. the IP General) got together at the division level, we brought in the IPs for those big operations. Let me say this before I forget; at the brigade and the battalion levels, and Rob will tell you, those guys, I think, had just as well a relationship with their police counterparts; so each of their...the city was broken up into distinct sections whereby... I don't know what they were called, district police chiefs or section police chiefs, but police chiefs had different parts of the city, and those guys were linked with battalion commanders that owned those same operational battle space, and those guys had very good and well established linkages; so what I'm telling you is not only did Wathuk, the police chief, and the division commander have a well-established relationship, that also filtered down to battalion and district level. But yes, we both had...on these grand operations we held, we would bring in the police, we would bring in the Army, and each of those organizations would share whatever intelligence they had based on their intelligence. The police had an intelligence section, the Army obviously, their G-2 had intelligence, and they would talk about what they each knew, they would determine a list of high value targets, i.e. people that

they were going after in the particular sections that they were going towards. And also, there was a joint, up there in the northeast where the 101<sup>st</sup> headquarters was located on the east side up north, just west of Al Kindi, was a joint... I forget what it was called; like a JMOC, Joint Military Operations Center, whereby we had monthly meetings, typically precipitated by U.S. coalition force because the Iraqis hadn't really bought into getting everybody together. They didn't necessarily see the worth that could be achieved and the synergy of getting all these people in one room and sharing, and their aversion to that was just that because in Iraq knowledge is power, and if I've got knowledge that you don't have, then I'm more powerful than you, and I don't necessarily want you to know what I know, but I certainly want to know what you know. And so yeah, breaking down those barriers of communication and information sharing was very, very difficult. It's like breaking down centuries of things that they've been doing in the past, and it didn't come easy. So yeah, it was a challenge, I'm going to be honest with you, it was a challenge to break down those barriers of communication between the police and the Iraqi Army and all the other players, quite frankly. But we got better as we went along; was it perfect when we left? No. Hopefully it's a lot better now than when I left. When we conducted RIP /TOA yeah, I do think we moved the ball along in a lot of respects. One, I told you I was going to talk about this, Jamal was replaced in late December or early January for a couple of reasons. One time Jamal spouted off in the presence of General Casey that he thought a lot of the Iraqi Army was still militia, and General Casey really just didn't want to hear that. What we needed to be spouting was that this was an organized army under the Iraqi ground forces commander and that we had well-established division commanders, and at one point in time Jamal said, "We've got to sometimes think of our army as a militia," and he didn't want to hear that. So that kind of precipitated his replacement coming in. The other things was Jamal was not moving things along with respect to fixing the fuel problem that we had and a lot of these other things that were readily obvious that he was on the take with a lot of things. And I told him, I said, "Sadi, look, you've got to move these things along because sooner or later people are going to be asking." So, he knew he was on the hotplate, and it just came to the point where we thought it best to replace him and bring in a new commander. General Mutah was a one-star, not a two-star. He was a U.S. educated division commander. He got his training in San Antonio, Texas, and he spoke almost perfect English. General Jamal did not speak any English which was a barrier to communications, but not much. I had my interpreter there, but there's something about hearing words flow off a division commander's lips and hearing it first hand as opposed to having an interpreter translate, and I'm sure you know the deal. With General Mutah you knew exactly what was said, how it was said, in the context of his intonation to be able to decipher exactly what he meant as opposed to the opposite; I couldn't do that with Jamal. And Mutah was a go-getter. I had to push General Jamal out from behind his desk to go out and check on his brigade commanders and to prosecute the fight against the insurgency; I did not have to push Mutah. In fact, Mutah pushed me in terms of the capabilities that I just talked about. At that point I was going out and kind of being, for lack of a better word, escort for him to ensure he had as much coalition enablers, i.e. air, if he got in a hotspot. So he, and of course me too, had to de-conflict things, challenges that I'd had, with Jamal I did not with Mutah because he was out there almost on a daily basis going around prosecuting the fight. Jamal was never like that, which also brought suspicion upon Jamal about whether or not he was in cahoots with the insurgency. Just take that with a grain of salt. So yeah, just the fact that we were able to replace division commanders; in the eyes of... and this was also, again, we put an Iraqi face on it. We were able to convince the Iraqi ground forces commander that this was a good thing for Iraq and 2<sup>nd</sup>

Division. So it wasn't U.S. coming down and putting a face on it and saying, "You will replace this division commander;" we put and Iraqi face on it and got buy-in from the Iraqi ground forces commander that this was a good thing for 2<sup>nd</sup> Division and his country and the city of Mosul. And so that was...and all the stuff associated with the TRA; they got better at personnel, they got better in terms of using those people to the benefit of the division, they got well in terms of the numbers of equipment and the upgrade and the accountability of that equipment. So yeah, I think we moved the ball along. Hopefully the team that took over for us took it even a step further. So, what haven't I told you? What else do you need from me, Mike?

**Mike:** Well, what haven't I asked? What haven't we asked you in this that's something that you think just needs to be out here as part of all of this? Is there anything you feel has been left out of a story that you would tell?

**COL Balogh:** Not really; let me think.

**Mike:** Any team internal conflicts that you had to iron out?

**COL Balogh:** Well, just the manning. I mean the only thing I can add to this whole thing, Mike, is not only did I have to provide a capability by which to transition the Iraqi Security Forces in a certain direction, but also I had to maintain current ops capability within my FOB. So what I'm telling you is I had to pull from my assets to create an element by which to man a TOC, for lack of a better word, because I had to maintain communications with obviously all my subordinate elements, the brigades; should they be asking for something, should they come in contact with somebody, should they have something to report, should they have a question to ask of us, should we require any kind of information from them that division needed from us, should we have to answer questions to our higher division, 101<sup>st</sup> followed by the 25<sup>th</sup>; all the stuff associated with current ops kind of TOC stuff I had to pull out of my hide. So it caused us to go through this process by which we looked at the transition team manning roster and across the board all nine divisions provided their input to Iraqi Assistance Group, IAG, and modified the manning of the transition teams to be more robust, which is a good thing. My reporting on a daily basis; I was under the operational control of the division, the 25<sup>th</sup> Division or the 101<sup>st</sup>, yet I was under the admin control of IAG. So I was rated by the IAG commander, Iraqi Assistance Group commander, General Pittard, senior rated by the corps commander, Chiarelli, followed by Odierno, but operationally I came under the operational control of the division, 101<sup>st</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> Division commander working in concert hand in hand with the U.S. coalition brigade commander in that city of Mosul, be it Twitty or Townsend. So, that kind of created some unique challenges because IAG wasn't always in bed with the division, so I kind of had two masters. But that was alright, it was good; I had some good bosses and I had some great people to work with and around as well as for, and I had some great battalion and brigade MiTT team chiefs, so, again, it made my life a whole lot easier than it could have been if I didn't have great guys in those positions. Overall, a very well worthwhile assignment, one which I will cherish and hold in high regard throughout my career.

**Mike:** Great.

**COL Balogh:** Alright, Mike, I hope I gave you what you needed, but if I didn't, by all means, give me a shout back, write me an email and I can exemplify on anything.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 13 August 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Boden

**Deputy Commanding Officer 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team Mosul, Iraq**

by

Major Robert Thornton  
Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Date of Interview 02 APR 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** I had a set of questions, and I don't know if you've had a chance to see them.

**LTC Boden:** No, I have not.

**MAJ Thornton:** I don't know, they were kind of generic, set up for the unit. What I would hope to do is capture a little bit about your role in working with the PRT and helping achieve unity of effort between the development side and the security side. What were your thoughts going into that, and how did you develop those relationships?

**LTC Boden:** Well, you hit on the key thing and it's relationships because a lot of it is, just like dealing with the Iraqis, dealing with all of a sudden, you've got a bunch of defense guys who are now working with some state guys with a few defense guys mixed in; was a lot of butt sniffing going on for a while where everybody's trying to figure out exactly what's going on. One thing, and I'm digressing a bit but I'll get back, before I came to this job I spent three years as an OC down at Hohenfels, and then came here and went to an NTC rotation, and in neither one of those places up until my last experience being the fall of 2006 was there a replicated PRT established to work with. If I were God for a day... you know, I've already contacted the folks back at Hohenfels and said there needs to be some way to replicate a PRT organization there to facilitate that training. I understand that NTC has already done that, but you've got to learn what their capabilities are first. As a DCO, I think every DCO you talk to will have different roles and responsibilities. I don't know how many other DCOs out there in the army dealt with the PRTs; I know there were some in MND-North that did, but I don't think any down in Baghdad did, and it's just the nature of the beast. But, you've just got to learn who the players are and what exactly they do, what exactly they can do, and then the big thing that we did was somehow there has to be a nested, parallel organization or function within the brigade that is, I won't say doing the same thing the PRT does, but is trying to accomplish the same goals. For example, Reid Pixler, working with the courts; well, he can only do so much working with the governance side of it, but when it comes to working with the police, when it comes to working with the security down by (XXXX 2:55) in Mosul, that's a security piece. So, you've got to have somebody in the brigade organization that can understand the issues that Reid's dealing with, that can address those issues that Reid doesn't have any control over. So we had a couple of people, we had our police liaison, Colonel Tony Hams, and we had our JAG, Captain Carol Brewer, and they worked very closely with Reid to conduct that liaison with the organizations on the Iraqi side that Reid didn't normally associate with. And I think one of the best places it came into play was at the Mosul crime lab, where working about getting the cop on the beat trying to do his function; that's a PTT team, that's the brigade's function, trying to teach a cop how to be a cop  
**[Break in audio]**

**LTC Boden:** ...to making sure the PRT understood the battle space owning commander's intent for the operations in there. And there were cases where his intent didn't line up with what the PRT wanted to do, and if that was the case, it was a matter of Dr. Knight talking to Colonel Twitty. They had a pretty good relationship where Mr. Highland talked to Colonel Twitty, and they had pretty good relationships, and those two would sit down and talk on the phone and figure out the ahead. One thing I will emphasize that a tremendous amount of this was personality driven. We were very blessed to have Knight and COL Brackney when we came in. They were great team players, they understood both sides. Dr. Knight, Vietnam veteran, and

Colonel Brackney, they were smart, intelligent, and they understood the way the military worked and Jim Holtsnider did as well, a former marine. When they left, there was less military experience that came in. Mr. Highland had not been military, J.T. Sebastian, Navy, Mike Hankey and Rodney Hunter had not been in the military that Jim had. Now, in the case of Rodney and Mike, they got it, they understood, they took the time to learn the things they needed to learn, and as far as understanding where the military side of things came in, they got it, they understood. But it wasn't second nature, at least for Mr. Highland and Commander Sebastian. There were different challenges working with them, and I'm not trying to say it was better or worse, it was just different because of their experiences that they brought to the table. And that's just part of the game, you've got to deal with it; and that was kind of my job to... there were some times where I just had to go into military 101 about what's going on in terms of battalions, companies, what type of operations we're doing, and etcetera.

**MAJ Thornton:** That was one of the things we wanted to do with this was to capture the friction points and come ask people with different expectations, different backgrounds, experiences, etcetera; they come in and there's a period where we have to synchronize within ourselves before we can shape or change the environment a little. One of the questions I asked Dr. Knight was about friction from their perspective. I asked him was there... at times you guys were pursuing a line of effort along the developmental piece, whether be it economical or political, and a security concern or issue that was kind of an anomaly, it was just unexpected, there was no time to coordinate and it caused a hiccup. For example, a high-tier personality shows up on the radar. We didn't really know who he was, or who he was connected to, but when we detained him, or what have you, come to find out he is related to so-and-so and so-and-so, and how did that get reconciled? And they said, "Well, we turned to Colonel Boden," and then they said, "because that was kind of their bag to work the security piece, and we just allowed them to do that, and what that did for us was it allowed us to continue along while the problem was still being addressed, so we had a feed into to explain to the uniformed side, 'Hey, this is how it affects these other lines of effort,' but we didn't have to stop dead in the water; we could continue to work while they worked addressing that."

**LTC Boden:** That's exactly the way it happened. It didn't happen often, probably about two to three times a month there was an incident of something like that, and normally the way it would work is when something was going down real quick, and I'll be the first to admit it didn't always work, sometimes I got overwhelmed by events and didn't call or they didn't; most often it was on my end, "Hey, there's a mission going down. "Hey, Colonel Brackney, Sir, we've got this going down, just wanted to let you know." We got better as the time went on, but the biggest one was route clearance. Depending on, you know, sometimes there would be a last minute change in the route, or maintenance issues, we lost a buffalo (ed. not – a Buffalo is one of the large MRAPs used by the Engineers to conduct route clearance), therefore we have to cancel one of our missions that day; you've got to let those guys know. One of the other friction points that I will mention, I don't think it's a bad... it's one of those problems that you like to see happen, and I think it's indicative of just how good our PRT was, you were out at Eagle; they were out all the time, they were out all the time. There were teams in Iraq that never left the FOB; the guys up in Mosul were out all the stinking time.

**MAJ Thornton:** They had high praise, by the way, for the military movement teams that were provided.

**LTC Boden:** Oh, the military movement teams were just outstanding; those MPs, they went on more missions than anybody else in the AO, every day. I sat in on some of the meetings with the PRT, and they were fighting over those assets to get them to move; so yes, if something came up and they couldn't do mission number one, chances are they're going to be able to do mission number two or three or four. But, there were stressors with that in terms of us supporting that. That took a platoon of combat power. Mosul's the second largest city in Iraq (ed. note – depending on who you talk to and how the census was interpreted, Mosul and Basra alternate between being 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> largest), and we've got nine platoons in the city, and we've got one platoon that's working with the PRT. We understand the importance of the mission, but at the same time, that is a substantial drain on the resources. And then just getting... and mostly it was ground; air never really seemed to be a problem. Either we were able to support or the 25<sup>th</sup> ID MND-North headquarters was able to support. I never noticed a problem with air. I think one of the areas we could have done better is the direct coordination between the Operations side, just to smooth out some of those movement issues. Again, it was never a big deal, but there were times we came into hiccups because of missions that had to be canceled. Well, maybe we could have supported that with... I was going out on a mission, maybe I could have diverted or tried to do a two-for-one or something, but there was always that talk back and forth. And again, it got better as time went on to make sure that that information was shared about scrubbing missions, changing missions, whatever.

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the questions I pitched to the different PRT folks because their scope was all of Ninewa was the way in which operations outside of Mosul impacted what went on inside of Mosul, and activities that went on outside, be they back to Baghdad, or be they back to the United States, but it could also be up to MND-North. We talked to General Bednarek briefly. I was wondering if you just had any thoughts on how trying to articulate those to the various parties in your role so that everybody had a common understanding of where we were going?

**LTC Boden:** I think it was a little bit better in Ninewa... well, I don't know, I don't have any basis of comparison. I don't think it was a significant issue in terms of synching the effort with all of the outside groups in terms of an overall strategic direction because the security tied in very, very closely with the infrastructure, the governance, initiatives that the PRT wanted to do. When you were talking about the Raybiya port of entry, the goals in terms of what you wanted to do to secure that place pretty much lined up with how you wanted to ensure a free passage of goods and the restoring of order along the Syrian border. When you wanted to talk about the Yzidis, they had valid security concerns that tied in very closely with their... I won't say their development, that isn't the right term, but they had the east and the west Yzidis that had the different economic balances, they meshed. There was a nesting there where in order to understand the security, you had to understand the complete picture; the economic background, the current status of the infrastructure, the governance piece, how they tied into the governance piece, and I think that fit. Same with the Kurds; Kurds could be your best friends, or they could make you want to pull your hair out. But again, security tied into all of those bigger questions, so in order to understand one, you had to understand the other; and I don't think... I don't see it as too big of an issue because you had to understand all the sides, and I think that even Dr.

Knight and Mr. Highland, they understood that. They understood the security piece about, at least in the general terms, about the Yazidis, the Kurds, the Christians. They understood those security concerns, maybe not all the specifics, but they understood the concerns just like we understood all of the concerns about governance; we didn't understand all of the specifics... I can't even remember what the article was for the Christian autonomous region, but we understood that there was this concept out there, and we understood that this is what they wanted, and if we needed the specifics, Colonel Twitty... after Jim Holtsnider left, one of the first things was he had a meeting with... I can't even remember who the meeting was with, but one of the questions was going to be about the Kurds, or about the Christians, and so he was like, "Alright, give me Rodney Hunter, get him over here, I want him in the meeting," and if the questions got too specific into the details, which would happen about once a meeting or twice a meeting, Colonel Twitty had no problem turning over and saying, "Well, I'm going to have Rodney Hunter address that issue, address the specifics," and Rodney understood, and Jim Holtsnider before him, they understood the commander's intent, and so were able to articulate the issue while supporting the commander as well.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's an interesting point because I think it goes all the way back to the training function, but the role of assets that normally don't fall within the BCT can enable the BCT to do its mission or to accomplish its mission, and I think there's a mindset, maybe, that goes with that that is able to wrap their arms around everything and make things inclusive in terms of going that direction. The more I find out about things that I wasn't aware of while I was there, the more I can attribute how things were going based on some of those relationships and personal choices that were made.

**LTC Boden:** Oh yeah, and there was a lot of personality driven... you know, I said Colonel Twitty had no qualms about turning over to Rodney or to Jim; it wasn't like that with everybody in the PRT. There were only a few select people that there was that complete trust in understanding the concept; the PRT team chief, for sure, Brackney, Jim Holtsnider, Rodney Hunter, I think Mike Hankey would have been there, but there never was the opportunity for him to step into that role. But there were other people that Colonel Twitty was like, "No, they are not... DCO you get up there, you be ready to talk the issue," just depending on availability; but it is so much the personality. It was a perfect storm of the right people working up there at the right time to be able to bring it together. We were very fortunate to have the team that we had up there.

**[Break in audio]**

**MAJ Thornton:** Talking to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade guys down at Hood last week (ed. note – this was a separate set of interviews conducted with the BCT leadership of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> BCTs of 1<sup>st</sup> CAV for a separate project), they had taken their DCO and they had made him the brigade MiTT Chief because they didn't have any MiTT structure to fall in on, but what's interesting is that the senior level decision was that these particular missions outside of what would normally be the scope of a BCT, or maybe what they had expected to encounter, rated a level of professional maturity and experience to put the number two guy within the brigade and even within... in their case, they formed MiTT teams out of their battalion, so the 4-9 CAV, he took his S-3 and placed him as a battalion MiTT team chief. I wanted to capture your thoughts on your experiences as the

capacity guy within the BCT, how that enabled the BCT to move forward, and what are your thoughts in terms of the DCO taking on these roles in terms of the future. How can a brigade make use of that and say, “You know, we’re going to go ahead and allocate the DCO to do this based on the conditions we anticipate,” and how can they better prepare the DCO to be more effective in that position, outside of just making sure the guy has got the right personality because obviously personality plays a huge role?

**LTC Boden:** I’ve got to be honest; I’m not really sure how to answer that. I agree completely with the concept that the DCO is absolutely the right guy to deal with all of these... with the dual issues of security and what the PRT is trying to accomplish because I was in all of the targeting meetings; I was in all of the intel updates, so I had... I wasn’t directly involved with all the planning for everything. The XO was the Chief of Staff, so I was not the Chief of Staff, but I do have the authority over those key staff players that need to interact with the PRT. And again, in Ninewa, that was the right answer because of the vast, vast array of issues that involved everything from... the best example I can think of is the one I gave you about the policeman between walking the beat and getting a guy put away in the court system. There are numerous examples of that across where you need to have the security involvement all the way up to the PRT involvement, and there’s got to be one person who’s the key linkage between the brigade and the PRT to synch the effort, and that lynchpin has to be, I think, the DCO and the Deputy Team Chief of the PRT. Those two guys have to work like that.

**MAJ Thornton:** How can that be carried forward from either a development, professional development standpoint, or right into the actual train-up, so as you get ready to go and deploy next year, what can be done now?

**LTC Boden:** The biggest thing is... like I said, if I were God for a day, I would... there’s got to be some replication of the CTCs, and it can’t just be one dude who’s the... and I say this, and they would kill me at Hohenfels because of the limits we have on resources out there. It can’t just be one dude. You’ve got to have a Team Chief, you’ve got to have a Deputy Team Chief, and you’ve got to have at least one person replicating each of these different functions of the PRT; the economics, the governance, the infrastructure, the rule of law, USAID, and I need to talk about USAID real quick too, all of those, and an operations guys. You’ve got to have somebody replicating all of those because they all perform different functions. I don’t really know about a... I’m looking over here because there was a call book that came out about PRTs.

**MAJ Thornton:** I know which one you’re talking about.

**LTC Boden:** Yeah, this one right here, I think this is the one because this has a picture of Reid Pixler in it somewhere. But this is actually a pretty good little document. I won’t say I read it cover to cover, but I did refer to it quite a bit. There are good things in here to introduce you to how a PRT works, to introduce you to the functions, but the fact of the matter is in actual performance... this can give you the introduction, the practice can happen at the CTCs during train-up, but in order to put into play, it’s going to be personality driven. I’m sure you have seen or heard of the stories where there were PRTs and brigades that did not talk. I can’t imagine how that would effect... I can’t imagine what would have happened in Ninewa had we been in a situation like that because it would have been... it wouldn’t have worked. And I won’t lie to

you, there were individuals on the PRT that I just wanted to strangle. The maddest I ever got over there was at one of the PRT guys. I didn't about shoot him, but I felt like I wanted to shoot him. He starts walking off with his interpreter and goes shopping in the middle of patrol and we couldn't find him. We found him. He didn't see what the problem was, but that's another story. But the good side was when the other members of the PRT heard this they were like, "Oh, we're going to kill him first, you don't have to worry about it. So, it's personality driven. That's pretty basic, but that's all I can really think of; I don't really know if I answered your question.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's alright; I'm just kind of fishing on that. I will tell you that it looks like the TT-PRT is going to move down to Fort Polk. They don't have a timeline. There's some infrastructure challenges associated with that; at least from the individual augmentee perspective. I suspect that's a good thing. Maybe that will become a hub for interagency type stuff. Any thoughts on professional development throughout a leader's career to help him prepare for that?

**LTC Boden:** I think a couple of the things that I did really helped me out dealing with that. The biggest thing was I did grad school and I taught history at West Point. I think the advanced civil schooling, the immersion in working with higher education, specifically with humanities, government, political science, for me it was history. I think that leadership, that helped me prepare for something like this. It gave me some of the intellectual tools in the kit bag in terms of dealing with people, and studying that I think really helped me. The other thing was having an overseas assignment where you deal with, in Germany... have you been stationed in Germany?

**MAJ Thornton:** No, Sir.

**LTC Boden:** Okay, living in Germany where you have to deal with another culture, another language, people who are... okay they're German. I'm German, but they still don't always think on the same synapses. That allows you to have to deal with people from... even if it's going down to the local schnell imbiss and ordering some food. There's going to be some difference in the way things are approached. I did some training in Eastern Europe. I was in the Balkans; all of that, dealing with... oh, and that's one thing that I do have to mention, but all that helped me. This past week we were on spring break, and I was talking with a former battalion commander of mine, and he's now a brigade commander at Knox, the Armor Training Brigade there, and he said probably the best MRE we had for Iraq was Kosovo. And I know it's not feasible, but boy, he isn't kidding because you have to do exactly the same thing down in Kosovo, in Bosnia, in the Balkans where, let's face it, there's not really a danger of you getting shot, it's very benign, but you've got the same missions. You've got crazy Serbs, you've got crazy Albanians, you've got crazy religious leaders. We dealt with them all, and you have to use the same tools, and you have other players down there from coalition forces, from the Department of State, that you have to work with as well; not as structured, not as critical as the PRTs, but the same type of structure; that really helped as well. But those experiences are the ones that I think best prepared me for it.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, I've got to move into Colonel Twitty's office because I know all you guys have other things, and we hate to impinge upon your time. I hope to be able to get something turned on this within a few months, kind of a rough... it's going to turn into a case study, so it should be able to go back out. We will use this information in addition to what comes out in the

case study, we will use the information to inform folks at all levels. We've already done that with interviews last week so this stuff goes back out into the army on a fairly quick turn. I really want to thank you for sitting down with me and going over this stuff, and it was great being over there with you guys, I had a great tour.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 28 July 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Colonel Mark Brackney

**Deputy Chief Provincial Reconstruction Team**

By

Major Robert Thornton  
Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance

Date of Interview 11 MAR 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** This is an interview with Colonel Mark Brackney. He was the Deputy PRT Chief for Ninewa. This is in support of the Security Force Assistance case study in Mosul, Iraq from September 2006 to March 2007. Colonel Brackney, can you tell me a little bit about how you saw the mission. I know that you came over as, I believe, either the DCO or the commander of a fires brigade if I recall; so your view on the mission of being the Deputy PRT Chief when you saw it, and then kind of how that changed throughout your time there.

**COL Brackney:** I'll tell you how it all started off. I did go over to Iraq as the DCO of the 169<sup>th</sup> Fires Brigade, and I was originally going to be in support, or actually kind of lead up the IC of the IAD there in Tikrit with the 25<sup>th</sup> ID. As soon as we got on the ground there, we had about a two week turnover, and the day after we signed our transfer of authority letter, I got a call from Major General Mixon who said, "Congratulations Lieutenant Colonel Brackney, you are now the DTL for the PRT in Mosul." My first three questions were "What's a DTL, what's a PRT, and where's Mosul?" because I had no idea. So he said, "You'll find out, be there in twenty-four hours." So basically, I packed my bags, got on a C130, and I was up in Mosul within about forty-eight hours, and arrived at the PRT, not knowing at that time what a PRT was, what they did, or how they operated. So it was an education from day one for me. My first impression was understanding what the PRT did and how it dealt with it, and it really kind of came down to the original mission statement for the PRT. Did anyone ever give you that mission statement at all?

**MAJ Thornton:** Absolutely, Sir.

**COL Brackney:** You have that mission statement?

**MAJ Thornton:** Do I have it?

**COL Brackney:** Have you ever heard it before?

**MAJ Thornton:** The mission statement for the PRT? No, Dr. Knight and others only said that it was about building capacity, but they didn't give me a mission statement in the way that uniformed folks are generally accustomed to receiving one.

**COL Brackney:** There was an actual... and I'm kind of reading off a brief right now that I prepared for anywhere from Secretary Rice to any of the four-stars that came knocking on our door, but the actual PRT mission statement says that we were to "assist Ninewa's provincial government to develop a transparent and sustained ability to govern, increase security in the rule of law, foster political and economic development, and provide leadership and central expertise necessary to meet the needs of the population." Underneath that was the unstated but understood direction that our mission was to eventually turn over the entire PRT mission to USAID. That was truly our underlying goal, to get the military out of this business and turn it over to the civilian organizations, government organizations like USAID. So underlying that big mission statement was, "Your goal is about a two year mission to transform this, or to transition this entire process into a USAID-led effort." What that really came down to was kind of the original timeline for what the PRT was supposed to do, and their actual mission capability or their mission design was to go in and bridge that gap between the initial coalition military force presence and the self-reliance of USAID and the Iraqi government. To do that, they took the

name of the PRT. Now, as you're aware, the PRTs kind of first started off in Afghanistan as a true reconstruction team. I mean, it was either a company or battalion sized element that was out there doing nothing more than building bridges, repairing roads, putting schools up, doing wells, all kinds of stuff that had to do with construction efforts. Well, it was so successful, they took that same name and took it down to Iraq and kind of changed the mission dramatically. It became a mission of truly supporting five basic lines of operations. One of those lines of operations was the local governance programs. How do we go in there as a PRT and support the provincial government as it stands, and then tie that to the local government and to the national government because at that time it was really kind of a broken process. It had gone from a centralized government to now a decentralized format, but there was no SOP. There was no corporate knowledge of how to do that. We came in as a PRT and under the governance program tried to work with the provincial government. It was basically in two phases, the actual governor's office and the provincial council's office. Those are the two major branches of that area, and we worked to have them work together to go out and actually work with the local area governments, the local area mayors and the local councils to begin providing that leadership from local to provincial to the actual head governments of purview. Does that make sense?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes Sir, and although Dr. Knight didn't come out and say it like that, he did hit on the areas.

**COL Brackney:** Now, if I'm repeating stuff and boring you, let me know.

**MAJ Thornton:** Not at all; I want to capture it all because in some cases, the way that you put it is going to help inform on the questions I've asked.

**COL Brackney:** Okay.

**MAJ Thornton:** And it also leads me to ask maybe potentially some better questions. Given the scope of the mission and the lines of effort, do you feel like the PRT was resourced organically to accomplish that, and if it wasn't then, like many of us there, did find workarounds by partnering, for example, with the BCT or with other elements that were there in order to pursue those lines of effort?

**COL Brackney:** Well, in the case of partnering, one of the reasons we were successful, and I'm sure that Dr. Knight and Jim probably hit on the fact that we were probably the most successful PRT in country, and I really feel like we worked for a lot of reasons. We really led the way in a lot of programs and a lot of good things, but one of the absolute keys to success was that close coordination and integration with the BCT. We were truly partners with them in all aspects. There was no engagement made by Colonel Twitty or Colonel Townsend that did not involve Dr. Knight when it came to governance. And then really all the way across, all five lines of operations that we held, we were in close cooperation with the BCT. I was in their office, if not every other day, almost that basis, and their DCO, which was Lieutenant Colonel Mike Boden, was in my office almost every day to make sure we were coordinating, working hand in hand with both their setup and with our intentions so that we really had no disconnect at all. That's what made it so successful, really, was that we just had this super coordination with both of the BCTs that were in our area; first it was 3-2, then it was 4-1.

**MAJ Thornton:** Do you feel like... we talked a second ago about the five lines of effort; do you feel like at times those five lines crossed over in ways where one became more essential than another in terms of the latter being contingent on some progress in the former?

**COL Brackney:** Yeah, I'd say in many cases they were codependent and the emphasis changed from one to another depending upon the situation at the time. It was really kind of what was important at that moment. As an example, there may have been two to three weeks at one time when the absolute priority for the mission was to work the rule of law and some key programs in the rule of law area. One of those programs was the visiting or traveling judges. Basically they would import judges from Baghdad up to Ninewa to go ahead and try terrorist cases because they were incapable of doing so in Ninewa. To get that program off the ground, for a while the efforts were almost... almost all the parties of the PRT worked towards that. And at the time, the actual governance program, which was going out and meeting with the local mayors, or studying up certain things, or working with the governor because he was an interesting individual at times, that took priority. At times, we were really heavily involved in the Econ section. I guess what I'm trying to say is that there was never really equal division where all five just went out and did things separately without the knowledge of what we were doing. Does that make sense?

**MAJ Thornton:** Absolutely.

**COL Brackney:** Does it answer the question is what I'm saying, I guess?

**MAJ Thornton:** You did. What about in terms of assessment processes, not only in terms of measuring effectiveness in goals, but in making sure that the efforts that you were pursuing were the right ones as they correspond to those goals?

**COL Brackney:** Okay. There were some formal assessment tools that had come down through both the embassy office and the division that they would... I'm trying to think what the name was of the actual assessment tool, and I've got that image but it escapes me right now, but anyway, it was a very long form with all kinds of bubble charts about is it red, green, or yellow in different areas from how many educators were online, how many kids were in school to the quality of the services, was there X amount of electricity, and sewage treatments; and was the governor in place for more than six months, and did he have an actual council? There were all kinds of metrics that way, but there was kind of the underlying metric we had, which was how we were doing in a few key areas. Number one is, "are we seeing an impact, and are we seeing some democratic processes actually taking place within the provincial council and government?" And the way we measured that was are they faithfully holding provincial council meetings? Are they actually using and budgeting and executing their budget in an effective manner because the PRT, or I should say the actual province, had a very healthy budget from the central government, several hundreds of millions of dollars. What they troubled with at times was how to actually allocate that and do so with some kind of a democratic process. So, I think our major impact there to help them formulate a process for not only budget management, but execution, and actually separating monies from the proposal, to the bidding, to the actual awarding of contracts in order to do things. And I'm kind of talking in circles right now, but I'm trying to make sure I make a few things clear and that was that the first and foremost project was the governance area,

and the measure of that was are they being effective, do they have an ability to actually rule or do things? So we keyed that upon how effective were their meetings, can they actually plan and execute a budget for the good of the population, and do they have a legislative power? And when I left, they still did not have at the provincial level, a true legislative power; meaning the council could not actually create laws and do taxes. It was heading that direction, but it had not been released yet from the central authority. I keep thinking I'm talking in circles right now...

**MAJ Thornton:** No, no, you're bringing up some good points. I'm not worried about a direct answer to the question. I think a lot of the cogent points are going to be drawn out in the way that you respond to get to a certain answer, there's that piece to it. So please don't worry about that. Let me ask you about frictions. One of the things that I've gotten out of talking to some of the rest of the PRT members is the scope. We were kind of focused in on our little areas, whether it be the northwest corner of Mosul, or whether it be Mosul itself, or east or west side; but through talking to the PRT, I've gotten a much greater appreciation for the effect of Washington on events, the effects of Baghdad and the Ministers and the Ministries within Baghdad, folks from C-PAT, MNC-I, etcetera, within the province itself, the effects of what went on in Tal Afar or some of the other surrounding cities, the way that they drained both capability and capacity in some ways, or created frictions. So without leading you into a particular area, I'm wondering if you can recount some of those frictions, and how you worked through them?

**COL Brackney:** Yeah, probably the biggest friction that you mentioned there was the whole Tal Afar situation, and that was... talking with Dr. Knight, and actually that was kind of situation that we created for ourselves by making Tal Afar such a focal point for US policy and visibility, as well as the Iraqi government, and it was a very uncomfortable focus point for the Iraqi government. Tal Afar, as you know, was a Turkmen stronghold, and I don't mean that in a bad way. It's just that was where it was a ninety percent Turkmen population of which about fifty-five percent were Shia, and forty-five percent were Sunni, and they had so many conflicting areas of influence and desires there from what Tal Afar wanted to what the local government in Mosul wanted to what the national government wanted. There were many competing interests, either for or against Tal Afar, and that created a whole lot of friction and problems in many areas. It first kind of became apparent when they were talking about the reconstruction money that had first been dedicated to Tal Afar. The entire year we were there, we spent trying to understand and to implement, or to secure those funds promised by the central government to Tal Afar for their own reconstruction. That battle went back and forth with sometimes the Mosul government, being the governor's office, the provincial governor's office not wanting to support Tal Afar because they were too local and too well known, and their interest in the Turkmen really wasn't that high right now; to an actual case with the central government where they were pointedly ignoring the promise they had given earlier and trying to almost create a problem there. So that became a real thorn in the side of the entire provincial government, the provincial activities because Tal Afar did take a great deal of time and energy and consternation among all of the parties involved because of those conflicting interests.

**MAJ Thornton:** With regards to... one of the things I've been able to do is sort of draw a line. Reid had talked about the need to bring in detainees from Tal Afar to Mosul in order to get tried based on the trial judges that were there, and the judges brought up from Baghdad, and some of

the other things, the judicial infrastructure and I guess authority that was there, we had noticed the influx or the use of the space between Mosul and Tal Afar by insurgents to stage operations, and we could almost tie it to the time it took to drive, conduct a reconnaissance, go back, finish out the planning, so we knew that relationship was there, but the idea of extending rule of law and extending governance outward from a particular place, and how that effects a situation within a city like Mosul was something that we really didn't consider at the level we were operating at, but would have helped us better understand what was going on.

**COL Brackney:** Okay. Having said that, I'm not sure what the correct response should be for that. I'm going to kind of couch my term, or couch my comments. I was surely not the rule of law expert. Reid kind of led that section with the help of a couple of the Navy people there. The overall picture that I saw was that the actual legal context or the legal framework within the Ninewa Province, they actually have a very well operating and understood court system for civil matters and other things; they really did understand that very well. Where that process broke down was any type of legal process against any insurgents or any kind of terrorist activity, in which case it was completely broken, and they had like a two percent conviction rate on any kind of terrorist activity. And that was a combination of the judges either being sympathetic to the cause, or threats, or family ties, or any number of reasons why they wouldn't let this happen, but it was just ineffective completely. And that filtered down into the trial judges and into the investigators, the trial investigators, which (XXXX 18:10) the judges, and they were all incapable of... either incapable or simply did not want to pursue those cases because of fear, or because of ties, or because of personal issues. So when they brought in those judges, those nameless, faceless judges from Baghdad... not judges for rent, but sort of the traveling judges, I guess; what they ended up doing is they put confidence back in the local authorities, and especially the local police force and military because it was getting to the point probably, and just before December and even into November of 2006 where there were many hinted allegations that the police just going to stop arresting people, and we will be the judge, jury, and executioners ourselves because our process was broken. When they finally did bring in the traveling judges and started getting convictions and making a difference, we saw a fairly significant change in both the police and the army's ability and desire to go out and do more work that way, actually pick these guys up and collect the right evidence to go forward because they stood a chance of actually getting convictions and doing some right things. In addition to that, it also helped clear up a whole lot of dockets where you had guys who had been there for two years, and they hadn't had a trial. These guys were sometimes just out and out innocent, but they'd been held for two years without any kind of trial. These judges came forward and actually started hearing these cases, and they went from a two percent conviction rate to about sixty-five percent or something. The ones that were released, should have been released, probably. The overall impact that had was to kind of reinvigorate, I think, the police force and the military support of that to actually go out instead of being a one person or a one team jury system, they actually picked these guys up, collected the evidence, and began building cases again. I'm not sure if that was your question or not.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's okay, Sir. I think you answered it well. Like I said, I'm looking for some of the differences that I can pull different bits from to better inform on this, but still keep it within the greater context of what the situation was.

**COL Brackney:** What that probably really relates back to the MiTT teams and the PTT teams was the ability of the PRT to help organize, especially Reid go out there and start getting support for the local Iraqi police and the trial judges and the investigative judges to get training on how to do evidence, and how to make cases, and how to present it correctly so that they could go ahead and try these cases. And then spreading that out to Tal Afar because in the case of Tal Afar I think they had a couple of investigative judges there that were actually pretty competent, but they were kind of scared to travel back and forth, and so one of the reasons for some of that action on the road is to keep these guys from traveling back and forth, and if you don't travel for the case, there is no case. So if there was a communication lapse between Tal Afar and Mosul, then you (XXXX 21:16). Does that make sense?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, and that synchs with what Reid had said about some of the issues with providing either the judges the bodyguards with weapons permits or providing the judges with weapons permits, and he talked about some of the bureaucratic interference from MOI and how in some cases the army had worked through that, particularly 3<sup>rd</sup> IA out at Al Kisik. You brought up the parallels with specifically the security force assistance piece, the PTTs and the MiTTs; now, when I had met you in Mosul, we were in the process of putting faces with places together and figuring out kind of who was who and how to work through that, but what I'm finding out now is, getting a better appreciation for what the PRT was engaged in, how that facilitated counter-insurgency efforts by the host nation. What things need to be drawn out of that in terms of coordination and coordination points from the efforts of the PRT at the build capacity and the local, provincial, and national government areas with MiTTs, BTTs, PTTs in terms of building capacity in the security force assistance areas?

**COL Brackney:** Let me think about that question here for a second and think about that.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay.

**COL Brackney:** Probably the last four to five months I was there, we began to really try to work a lot more diligently and effectively with the MiTT teams and the PTT teams in the area, in a couple of different areas. One was that in the governance area, the MiTT teams did have a chance to work with... I mean, they were really stationed right with the IA elements and they did tend of go out, and I think you started this, going out and working with the local military forces, battalions or brigades, and doing civil action type activities, military assistance CMO type operations; is that correct?

**MAJ Thornton:** Well, I think we got it started, but we weren't there long enough to really bear the fruits of it, I guess. We had bumped into you, and we brought you over to the IA Brigade headquarters, and I think from there the idea was developed.

**COL Brackney:** And I would like to think that idea kept going forward; because you left about when, Rob?

**MAJ Thornton:** March of 2007.

**COL Brackney:** Okay. I guess from March until June what had happened was as the MiTT teams began to work with us as far as identifying some key areas for the CMO operations the Iraqi army guys to lead and be involved with and saw a lot more success in that area, especially in the outlying areas; you didn't see so much in downtown Mosul, but on the far east side and the far west side, you could get out and do things for the communities that weren't tied up to Mosul, you found a lot more success and a lot more acceptance with the local IA area when they went out and did some good CMO type activities. We tried to incorporate that with the local IA working with the local leadership, the actual local town mayors; the way the actual set up works in Mosul, or in Ninewa is that you've got the provincial government and then there were fourteen districts, and each district has X amount of sub-districts. Each one of those districts and sub-districts had a mayor and had a council attached to it somehow. It was the ability of some of the MiTT and PTT teams to go out there and start working with those district leaders and sub-district leaders that began to encourage them to communicate back up into the provincial government and from there take issues up into the central government. So that's where we started to see more success with MiTT and PTT teams as far as what our areas of operation were, and that was governance and the rule of law type of stuff.

**MAJ Thornton:** I would send you, I would roll you up on my OPSUM which was sent over NIPR and we didn't have a very... we didn't have a structured line of communication, I guess, between the various efforts. It was kind of ad hoc. Did that change later on, and you guys had developed a more flatter hierarchy of communications in order to get information and situational awareness?

**COL Brackney:** I don't believe we ever got it formalized that way. I don't recall it that way. The best reports I got were the ones you sent up, and then that was not followed up on later on. So the answer to your question is no, that was never formalized and we never got as good of reporting that you provided. Does that make sense?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, that's one of the things we're trying to show is the linkages and how we can better support that by making the various efforts aware of not only the existence and the sort of personalities and names, but also what areas that they can influence so that when we move into these relationship-based societies or cultures, we can take advantage of our own relationships and get better situational understanding across the board. So, that is one of the areas we're working.

**COL Brackney:** Okay. I know that one thing, it seemed that the better educated or more aware that some of the support elements like the MiTTs and PTTs were of the actual governance structure of what the province was, because I talked to several people who had no idea what the provincial council was, that there was a district council or that it had any kind of influence or working partnership with a mayor, how to make that work better, because the PRT didn't have the resources to go out and talk to all these guys. We were kind of charged with trying to connect with those lower levels and the higher levels, but we didn't really have the wherewithal to go there and see everybody. I know that's something that Jim Holtsnider worked very hard to do, was to go out there and visit as many places as possible, but still it was the guys on the ground who were right there, whether it was the battalion commander or company commander working with the local MiTT or PTT team to go out there and visit with those key government

leaders and in some cases the council members and to get them educated about what benefits they would have by communicating with the province because for a long time, the first six months there, the local districts just didn't communicate with the actual provincial government, and then they'd come to meetings and complain about nothing being done, and yet they never talked to them. So, by the time we had left, there was a lot of active conversation between almost all the district heads and their district councils with the provincial council and the governor's office, so you saw movement forward that way, and that was really kind of promoted by the people on the ground, whether it was in Tal Afar or up in (XXXX 28:50) or wherever else it was, starting to get that working.

**MAJ Thornton:** Would you recommend that as part of the course of instruction or leader education that sort of the local cultural civics 101, whether it be at the district or provincial level?

**COL Brackney:** Absolutely, the real key here that would be absolutely essential is, number one, what is the government like in that province? How does the provincial council work? How do the district councils work? What are the mayors' jobs? What's their separation of powers? How does that work and who are the people in their area? Who are the sub-district mayors? Who are the district mayors? Who are the council members? Why are they there? How do they get elected? That's number one. Number two would be as far as the legal standpoint. How does the court system work? What's an investigative judge versus a trial judge? How does that process work? To help them work within the system a little better. These are key education pieces for anybody walking into that country working on the ground face to face with people.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's helpful because that's one of the jobs here is to help with leader development. Let me ask you, I'm going to switch gears for just a minute and ask you about sustainment and force protection issues within the PRT; so whether we're talking about the ability to move, I do understand that you were able to take advantage of military movement teams, which put the Ninewa PRT at an advantage to some off the other PRTs, but just the challenges associated with doing that in terms of being able to be where you needed to be with little to no coordination.

**COL Brackney:** Probably the number one issue that we studied every single month in every task that we had, the first and foremost issue was limited movement assets. We were pretty well supported. I usually had three to five teams for the PRT; three teams of three vehicles each that could take us out to places. But even with that, you figure that a three vehicle movement on humvees is a total of six people that could go out someplace, six actual members going someplace because every vehicle has a gunner, a TC, and a driver, and that leaves two open seats for the people. So three vehicles heading out someplace and I had five teams, I had a Governance Team, a Rule of Law Team, an Engineering Team or a Construction Team, a Health and Education Team, and an Economics Team, and all of those had a mission on a day by day basis. And so a limit in that activity simply limited how often you could get out and do things, and the more you get out and are face to face, the more effective you are. The second thing was the ability for air movement. Because of that wide operation it was often impractical to take vehicles on a two day trip someplace, to go to the outlying areas of the province. Some areas didn't get covered as well and that was important to us. And in addition, that air movement also gave a great deal of prestige or hitting power to the governor and his staff. If I could actually

take provincial council members out to see some of the outlying districts for the first time, that had a huge impact, but the ability of that air travel was very, very limited, so it really kind of cut down on what we could do. Again, our biggest limiting factor within the PRT was absolutely movement assets. Now, we were thrilled and did not want to do anything but military movement, and on behalf of Dr. Knight also, he was very adamant about, "I do not want Blackwater here, I do not want any of the other for-hire services to take us around. I want military movement teams to move these guys around for both for the safety and coordination, and honestly, a better image by the Iraqi people. There was a lot less respect, I think, for armored SUVs going out than it was to see three humvees pull up, see a guy with us in uniform and want to talk to somebody. For some reason, that just gave an air of authority and an air of confidence that they trusted the military more than the private contractors. He simply did not want to go with Blackwater. He wanted military movement teams, and the ones we had, whether were provided by 3-2 or 4-1, were consistently outstanding.

**MAJ Thornton:** With reference to... there was a sustainment question on here about Iraqi forces, but I'd like to put a little bit different twist on it and get the perspective, as you understood it, from the local government with regard to equipping and sustaining IPs and a little bit less on the IA side because they belong to MOD, but I know that the locals... the rift between the local authorities and MOI did cause some consternation.

**COL Brackney:** Again, I had kind of a limited vision of that and I saw what little I saw. The Iraqi Security Forces, the Iraqi police, from what I saw, they were fairly well equipped and armed and had decent transportation. One of the reasons they did not go, or one of the reasons they claim they couldn't go was because they wanted more armored cars, not just pickup trucks with 7.62s mounted in them, but they wanted actual armored cars to go around in. So at one time they had refused to go out because they were not well enough armed to counter the insurgency there. And yet, if you go back and look at the history of Mosul, the police combating the insurgency in any kind of fire fight, like back in October, generally speaking, the IP kicked the insurgents pretty hard when they had to.

**MAJ Thornton:** What we noticed is that when it came to defending IP stations, they were pretty well adept... you know they could beat back and attack. Occasionally, for us it was 4 West and 5 West and those stations out there, but we would go to their aid if it was required... they were routinely the subject of the attack, and then other AIF (ed. – Anti-Iraq Forces) efforts were designed to limit IA (ed. – Iraqi Army) reinforcements. They would set up on the primary routes and they would try to interdict with IEDs and that sort of thing so they could concentrate on the IP stations.

**COL Brackney:** The one out at Badush?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, that was one, and then some of the other complex attacks preceding that, where they would maybe put mortars or something like that on COP Eagle while they did their best to pummel 5 West, but the Badush prison attack is probably the best example of trying to interdict security forces inside of Mosul from responding to Badush. Luckily, I've got Bill Davis and those guys lined up for interview too, so I am going to spend some time concentrating on Badush.. Where we saw they had problems was in terms of their confidence in patrolling,

making contact in those venues on the insurgents' terms, which usually that meant an IED followed up by RPGs and PKC or something like that. So I talked to some of the IP chiefs about it, and they seemed to be frustrated that supplies would get hung up. Their impression was that everything got hung up at 1 West, but when you talked to some of the more senior guys, they said no, it's Baghdad. So I don't know. I am going to talk to the BSB SPO for 4-1, who back-hauled a lot of the destroyed IP GMCs and those type vehicles, so I'll get a little bit of a sustainment impression from them, I think.

**COL Brackney:** Well, I remember your reports talking about the problems the IA had just keeping vehicles operational. At times they didn't have tires to keep to keep vehicles rolling or gas to keep vehicles rolling.

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, that was... the Op tempo went up when we provided them, and MOD later, provided them HMMWVs, but as their Op tempo went up and they became more aggressive, their NMC(ed. - Non-Mission Capable) rate went up because they were making contact more. And we got accustomed to a number of patrols on the road, and everyone liked that because it meant less U.S. patrols, and in some ways I think it meant more effective patrols just because the host nation was very effective at identifying and making contact on their terms, but the cost of that was a larger Class 3 requirement (bulk fuel) and more Class 9 (spare parts) to keep those trucks on the road. That was tough to sustain. That was absolutely tough to sustain, and I think after I left, when the effects of the surge in Baghdad were felt in Mosul, I did talk a couple of times back to Major Allah out of 1-2-2, and he told me that their OR (ed. - Operational Readiness) rate was really low because there was no Class 9 flowing in. So, I wonder about the correlation in terms of creating breathing space for new insurgent activity because the IA and potentially the IP, but I'm not sure about that, just couldn't maintain the presence in the neighborhoods that they were able to in that period prior to the surge.

**COL Brackney:** Well, Mosul's kind of separate in the eyes of the central government just because their provincial council and governor were perceived as being strong Kurdishly influenced, and that didn't play real well with the Shiite government down south. What was not a Shia influence was still a strong Sunni influence because the Shias didn't participate in the elections. So you had the government in Mosul, that was really centered around Kurdish elects - Kurdish provided governor and Kurdish provided provincial council (XXXX 39:29) and that at times, I believe, kind of fouled the air for the centrally (XXXX 39:36) Shiite government supporting Ninewa.

**MAJ Thornton:** You know, did you get a brief, Sir, on... when you first came into the job and you sort of started to look at the district and provincial political structures, did you find that it was difficult to reconcile what was on paper with the amount of influence within those positions based on unofficial type power, familiar relationships, and could you spend a little bit of time talking about that?

**COL Brackney:** Well, Iraq rests upon relationships. (XXXX 40:22) that concentric circle, but very few Iraqis think of themselves as Iraqis first; you start out with your family, then you go to your tribe, then you go to your larger tribe, then finally maybe your city's religious influence, and then finally the general religious influence, then the Iraqi and the government of Iraq. So

most of the people we dealt with, unless they were just giving you lip service, Iraq as an entity was not generally as important as the tribe they were serving, the family they were serving, or the influence they were serving at that time, which I was amazed to find all the different impacts that surrounded Ninewa. I mean, it wasn't just Kurds versus Shia versus Sunni, but it was the Talibani versus the Barzani (ed. – two prominent Kurdish tribes) versus the others versus all the tribes that are there, whether it was Yazidi, or Assyrian Christian, or Chaldean Christian, or Shia, or Sunni, it goes on and on. There were so many competing influences and groups that it was hard to nail down what was the key driver. Does that make sense? The education piece for me was understanding we're not talking much about Iraqi, we're talking about a wide variety of powerful influences, whether it was the police chief, who at one time was a sofa maker and was now police chief of all of Ninewa, and Mosul, or a governor who was put in the governorship by a strong influence of the Kurds to his vice-governor, who was not only the vice-governor of Ninewa, but was also a key member of the KRG, and the vice-president of the KRG. You go into Tal Afar where either the it was all about the Turkmens, and the strong Turkish influence there, and we dealt with the Turkish government several times in relationship to Tal Afar and their fears and their strong desires about if Tal Afar needs help, we'll come in and take care of it for you. So, even going out to the very west where you had a strong Yazidi influence, at the very western border, and some strong input that you get from them. So it was just what area you were in and working with the different influences, but the education piece was important. It took a long time to get that education because it wasn't obvious. You couldn't take a look at it and wire a diagram of the government or the people involved there and really understand things unless you knew the influences behind those people.

**MAJ Thornton:** Do you feel like the area of social intelligence, and I'm trying to put some words together to sort of qualify that, but the idea that the intelligence piece of understanding the relationships was maybe one of the, if not the key intelligence requirement in order for the PRT to do its part of the greater mission?

**COL Brackney:** If I understand correctly when you say it's the social intelligence, yeah, understanding the personalities involved with all the different areas of influences and what made them tick and who they were beholden to. Yeah, it was definitely critical. Whether it was the governor of Tal Afar, or the mayor of Tal Afar, or the Yazidi (XXXX 43:54), or whoever you were working with; did you understand where they came from, where they were born, who they were beholden to, whether by government or by tribal or by family influences, because strange things would happen at the time and you would think, "Well, why did that happen, why did that person say that?" or "Why did they do that?" As you delved down deeper understood talking with the interpreters or the other people you began to understand. "Oh, now I understand, it's because that person is related to so-and-so and it's his brother or it's his sister who was doing this for them." That for a kind of place where the governor...we had captured somebody, somebody pretty important in the insurgency, and for the most part the governor and the police chief were pretty straight shooters, but this was a guy they tried to let go, and we didn't understand what was going on until you find out behind the scenes that, "Oh, well this was because of so-and-so who was this person's relative." And you had to know the people involved, the cultural intelligence, understanding the people involved were critical to doing your business.

**MAJ Thornton:** We struggled with some similar issues, even within a particular chain of command, host nation chain of command. There were issues surrounding the capture and detention of somebody and then what to do with them, who to turn them over to or where that person would wind up, and that was challenging.

**COL Brackney:** Can I add one more thing to that before you go on?

**MAJ Thornton:** Please.

**COL Brackney:** One thing that really kind of came up was the governor of Ninewa, he was a diabetic.

**MAJ Thornton:** I didn't realize that.

**COL Brackney:** Well, when we first started dealing with him we didn't either, and we couldn't figure out the really unusual and dramatic personality change at the time, and why he would sometimes come to a meeting and almost fall asleep at the meeting. Other times he would just be wired, and just some of the very strange and dramatic scenes he would throw and things like that. Then we found he was a diabetic, a pretty severe diabetic, and that you could almost relate some of his moods or emphasis with the time of day when he had last eaten or taken care of himself. The less he had taken care of his diabetes, the more irrational and strange things he did. It took a while to figure that out until somebody said, "Yeah, he's been a diabetic for quite a while," and just a little thing like that can help you kind of gauge a personality or see what's going on with somebody. Does that make sense?

**MAJ Thornton:** Absolutely, I think that's a key anecdote, and I will capture that in the body of one of the areas that I wind up building on. This is going to turn into a case study, so it will be pretty broad in scope. So we'll build a body, and then we'll support that body with the interviews and hopefully present kind of a holistic look at the complexity of trying to do these building capacity operations while at the same time conducting offensive operations and defensive operations. That sort of gets to the next question about...you gained some key insights over time, and like us, you saw different partners come in and go, whether they be different MiTTs or whether they be different BCTs; and was there some friction, I mean natural, not hostile or animosity type friction, but just natural friction incurred with changing partners and getting them along a similar dance step routine?

**COL Brackney:** I'll tell you, I think we were very fortunate when we did change from 3-2 to 4-1. We went from Steve Townsend who I just thought the world of. He was the commander for the 3-2 and just an outstanding individual. I was very impressed... did I say 3-2?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes, and 3-2 is who it was.

**COL Brackney:** Okay, just making sure I got the right guys there. He was fully supportive and actively engaging and went out of his way to do everything with the PRT possible. He had a very close relationship with Dr. Knight, and that kind of filtered all the way down. I know his DCO, if there was friction it was that the DCO was really the hard-charging guy, and he wanted

to get things done all the time, and it frustrated him that things didn't happen as fast as he wanted them to or he couldn't solve this problem, he couldn't solve anything. He thought that was his job was to solve everything, and when he couldn't, he wasn't very happy about that and sometimes made that frustration known. But still, as an organization throughout the activity, 3-2 was outstanding. 4-1 came in and we were fortunate in that their turnover maintained that same type of relationship. Their DCO, Mike Boden, was on my doorstep on a daily basis making sure that we were working stuff together; what were we doing, here's what he was doing, how could we work together, what can we share, what do you guys need? We're getting ready for this operation, you guys make sure that if you can support this, great, if not, how can we help out? So again, as I pointed out, the critical piece that made the PRT work up there was the very close coordination with the BCT. We really had, I think, very little friction in that transfer. There were some minor issues, and that was having 4-1 understand the importance of providing us with a military movement team, and that if they had work they wanted us to do, we had to get out and do it, and they had to provide help for us to go do that. So on a very minor basis, was there areas of friction sometimes? Sure, because that cut into their combat power to support us. That's one of the trade-offs. They had a hard time supporting us at times, but they supported us as best they could. Is that what you're looking for?

**MAJ Thornton:** That's part of it, I'm going to ask a follow-up question that I'm going to build off something that Dr. Knight said. I had asked Dr. Knight about friction that developed as a result of operations along one line of effort that impacted another. The example I gave him was if there was a security incident along the line of operation to go out and tackle, go out and defeat the insurgency, the lethal aspects of those missions. So, for example, in Mosul – Jadidah (a neighborhood in W. Mosul) , or a neighborhood like that, a high-level insurgent, a target, is killed or captured, but that insurgent had ties to different areas or family that made it more difficult to proceed along a line of effort, say governance or something like that. How did you guys work together to reconcile those things?

**COL Brackney:** I'm trying to put that into context right now, and I'm thinking of things that would happen where...the head of the Shiite party, the Shiite legal party that was there, would on occasion come to us and say, "Hey, you've just captured my good friend Achmed and I'm here to vouch for Achmed. He's a dentistry student up at the University of Mosul, great guy, outstanding, and I'll personally vouch for him. He collected in some sort of dragnet, but believe me, he's a good guy." And so he would come to the PRT with that kind of information, and we'd go back to 4-1 and say, "Hey, what do you know about Achmed, Dr. so-and-so asked," or the actual head of the Shiite party there, "and he vouched for him," and 4-1 would come back and say, "Well, that's nice, but this guy got caught red-handed with an RPG in his trunk. He's a bad guy and he can't go." So there would be some friction that way between us playing the go-between between a political party as the government liaison there in Mosul and the 4-1 or even the IA saying, "No, we're not going to let this guy go. He's a bad guy. You can't have him," and us having to go back and say, "Well sorry, so-and-so, but we can't do that." That didn't create so much tension, but it just put us in a brokering position sometimes.

**MAJ Thornton:** I think that's what I'm after, just some anecdotal evidence or relations that allow us to show that sometimes what goes on in one area impacts what goes on in another area, sometimes it's not so much, and then sometimes it might be in a big way.

**COL Brackney:** With regard to actual security operations. Often times we would get a call from 4-1 saying, “Hey, you guys really shouldn’t travel today. We just got some intel that we got something big coming down, so it’s not a good day to leave,” and we’d say, “Thank you very much, we’re not going any place,” even though we had some big conference set up. Now, that wasn’t so much friction; that was just them taking care of our backs so that we didn’t go wandering around the streets when they had something big planned. But in the case of actually... I can’t think recall that we ever worked cross purposes. I know that we were at times put in that brokering position, whether it was with the Turkish army and their diplomats there on the ground or with the different political parties, whether it was the KRG or the KDT or the Shiite party there or the Sunni party. Any of those would have come to the PRT because they looked as us as kind of an honest broker. Dr. Knight being a civilian and kind of an embassy representative helped it play that way. On occasion, we could gain some points by working some things out where the BCT said, “You know what, we haven’t got a whole lot against this guy right now. If you guys want to go ahead and let this guy loose,” it gained us points in the eyes of the Shiite political party, or by, you know, “We scratch your back, and you’ll scratch ours,” that worked out also sometimes. It kind of gained us more influence and the ability to bring them together. Because in one incident where we did just that, where they had picked somebody up and they didn’t have a whole lot on them, but they just didn’t feel right, and we came in and said, “Well, what if we let this guy loose? How bad is that going to be for you?” If we do that, what we get back from that is we get to start meeting with some local mullahs, some of the local religious leaders. The Shiite will set it up for us. That was a big deal because we hadn’t had a chance to do that for almost eighteen months beforehand. We we’re never able to meet with the local emirs or mullahs, whatever you want to call them, but by doing this one thing where we actually let somebody go who really did not have any evidence on, just a feeling, that actually gave us some points for it and they agreed to have us start meeting with some of the local religious leaders that we couldn’t get to beforehand.

**MAJ Thornton:** As a uniformed guy working really at the tactical & operational interagency level, what are your perceptions about how operations were they enabled by the civilian component? I’m trying to get a feel for the interagency operations as seen through the eyes of a uniformed guy that was part of that.

**COL Brackney:** Rob, say that again for me. I’m trying to work my way through that a little bit.

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the things that is new here is the idea that the interagency is able to field a capability in terms of capacity at the operational level, and in some cases I think it bleeds over to the tactical level. How did having civilians working the lines of effort that the PRT pursues, what is your perception of that?

**COL Brackney:** Well, it sounds really like you’re talking about the relationship we had with, specifically, USAID as an interagency and with DOJ, and how the PRT kind of put all those under one umbrella and resourced those to have them work with the operational leaders on the ground, the BCT itself. As an example, the USAID guys were the ones that would actually go out there and start programs in and around the city that were not embedded with the courts and with the BCT. Here’s an example. They want to go out and start a bunch of civic action

programs – they’re starting soccer teams, they’re putting up soccer fields, they’re starting education programs, school for kids, other things. The USAID had the resources to start that, but they weren’t sure where, so by working with the BCT and identifying which area is worse, some really bad areas that need the employment. They could begin focusing their efforts in those areas where the BCT says, “We need some help here. We need somebody to come in and provide jobs for about 200 kids,” just to keep them off the streets or give them employment somehow to keep them from taking IEDs and for 100 bucks, bury it someplace. And so they would find key areas to start washing out graffiti, or putting up new walls, or doing clean up activities, or garbage collection, or putting together a soccer field and starting soccer teams. Whatever case that might be, they focused those on areas that were kind of keyed on by the BCT and also where the Iraqi government said, “Yeah, you could do the most good here.” So that’s where that coordination and cooperation not only benefited by the BCT, but gave the right intel work for USAID to start those programs in the right places. So that would be one area of interservice cooperation, or interagency tie-in to the BCT commander there and the overall operational picture. I guess the second one would be the DOJ, and that was those guys working with and trying to train the local cops and the local judges and investigative judges and working with the BCT again, and the Iraqi officials. Where is it best to do that and how to make it most effective, and that probably helped out at the prisons also. Does that kind of give an answer to you, or did I head the right direction at all?

**MAJ Thornton:** It does; it leads to another question though because it changes a little bit the way that I characterized the PRT’s role in that. If it wasn’t an organic capability, as it sounds like in this case, did the PRT become a coordination point for those activities; is that fair?

**COL Brackney:** Yeah, that’s very fair.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay. That provides me with a different understanding, something I hadn’t thought of before. That’s a good piece of information. Let me ask you about information operations in terms of building host nation capacity to do that to where they were actually able to match a narrative with their actions, and to show that to the Iraqi people, be it via the IMN, the news network, or any other type of media relations. Did you guys work that in terms of building that capacity, or advising them to do that?

**COL Brackney:** Yeah, Jim Holtsnider worked on that, and Dr. Knight would, on several occasions, arranged to have those kinds of actual interviews with... he might be meeting with a local official there, somebody with the governor, somebody coming in where they had a combination of Iraqi officials and US officials, and they would call IMN and say, “Would you like to cover this broadcast?” He did several interviews like that where they wanted to come in and interview Dr. Knight along with whoever he was with and actually have a chance to air that kind of stuff. So, the two areas that seem to come to my mind is that, number one, they actually helped provide some of the news networks around there with the radio broadcasting capability and then give them a format to do interviews that would include some very high ranking government officials from Baghdad along with Dr. Knight and other people. We did not institute an information operation per se. Information operations was not one of our lines of operation. What we did do was try to help, as far as local governance was concerned, use the media to

broadcast things, use the media to say, “You had a success here, let’s broadcast it. How can we do that, how can we help you do that?”

**MAJ Thornton:** With regards to... and that did answer the question, Sir, I appreciate it. With regards to building legitimacy, I remember when we were going through this discussion on the ground there about propane, benzene, those type things; how did the process of building legitimacy to where there was a change in the local population’s perception about what the government was able to do for them, be it provide security, or be it provide services, or those things which we expect government to do that builds credibility; how do you feel like that developed over the time that you were there?

**COL Brackney:** Well, the only way that legitimacy got built was by actually delivering on the essentials, and probably in about the April time frame, for the first time, we really started to see significant deliveries of oil from... not Al Kisik, but what’s the big refinery down south?

**MAJ Thornton:** Oh, it starts with a B I think, but I know where you’re talking about.

**COL Brackney:** If you leave for a year you, you forget things.

**MAJ Thornton:** You lose touch, but I know where you’re talking about.

**COL Brackney:** There’s a major oil field down south, just east of Tikrit, right?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes.

**COL Brackney:** And for a long time they were simply not getting any field deliveries at all even though they had been promised. What basically happened is that with General Weircinski really getting involved in this stuff and working the people along with the governor and the guy down south at that refinery, they finally started giving significant deliveries of fuel products up into Mosul, which really made the Mosulians very happy about that. Once Mosul started getting stuff, then Tal Afar and other people started saying, “Where’s ours?” (XXXX 63:17) So as they began to really deliver the goods, whether it was food from the storage houses or fuel from the refinery down south, that more than anything else began to deliver the credibility that, “Oh, this stuff is happening.” And one thing that the PRT tried very hard to do was when that stuff happened, the credit did not go back to the U.S., it went back to the Iraqi commanders and the governors got the stuff arranged and organized. When it came down finally, it was the Iraqi army working with those people who actually secured those deliveries, actually provided the protection for them and made sure the drivers got there and back, so that Province A who had the oil got it delivered to the border and Province B, being Ninewa, actually took it from there, like 2 IA who got it halfway across, and 3 IA picked it up and got it delivered. Any other (XXXX 64:07), but they had probably a good ninety to eighty-five percent delivery rate which was pretty good compared to what the rest of the country was going through.

**MAJ Thornton:** I do remember when we were working that.

**COL Brackney:** Pardon me?

**MAJ Thornton:** I do remember when we were working the operational concept to ensure fuel delivery.

**COL Brackney:** Were you there when it actually started hitting the ground?

**MAJ Thornton:** That's right.

**COL Brackney:** It was a good thing.

**MAJ Thornton:** Let me ask you, with regard to the government being able to deliver on civil services, how did that change or open up other opportunities along other lines of effort?

**COL Brackney:** You know what, I can't point to a concrete thing other than to say that as services got better and better, as more electricity, as more fuel was delivered, the obvious thing was to look at downtown Mosul at night and see all the lights lit, to drive down there on a Tuesday, or Thursday, or Wednesday and see the massive amounts of material goods, and people shopping, people doing things down there; once you started seeing this place come back to life again. That's probably the best way to describe it. I couldn't point to person who is doing better. What I can point to is that the actual city itself continued to come alive while I was there. There were a lot more lights on in June of 2007 than there were in August and September of 2006, and I saw a lot more people and a lot more things going on. I guess one thing, also to get back to a governance standpoint, where I saw the improvement in the governance was when I first got there, I would go to a provincial council meeting, and what I would see was the council chairman stand up there for an hour and a half, either lecture or tell the council, "Here's what we're going to do," and they would go do it. There was no debate, there was no discourse, there was no discussion back and forth, and by the time I left, he was no longer being quite the totalitarian dogmatic leader. An issue would be thrown out and there would be spirited and almost antagonistic debate back and forth about it, and then an actual vote taken. Sometimes he got his way, and sometimes he didn't. That in and of itself showed me that there was a little bit more feeling of freedom, a little bit more ability to get people there to do things because when I first started, people were afraid to show up to council meetings. They wouldn't come; they wouldn't do stuff. So from both a security standpoint and a commodity standpoint, they now had the petrol to get there, the ability to have lights and air conditioning, and keep things on during these meetings, so it was okay for that. You just saw an improvement, and my way to look at that was what would happen at these council meetings. By the time I had left, they were actively arguing stuff, actively doing things, actively making some resolutions to go out and get things done, and arguing, an actual democratic process.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, I've pretty much hit all the questions that I had kind of come up with for you. I was wondering if there was anything that I missed that you think is pertinent to the study that you'd like to address?

**COL Brackney:** I guess the only thing that I want to make sure I emphasize is that, again, the mission of the PRT. Our sole purpose was to be around for about two years with the intention of turning this thing over to civilian aid agencies. It was bridging a gap. It was the bridge between

military control and civilian control. Now, I thought that in that process the PRT held a very, very valuable space in this entire area. When I started off with that thing, we had military personnel in charge of all five of the departments, battalion commanders and lieutenant commanders basically. By the time I left we had two of the five under complete civilian control, and then within about eight months, I think they had about four of the five departments led by civilians. Partly because of (XXXX 68:08), but you could see that it was actually taking place. We were setting that thing up to be a civilian controlled operation. The military support they were getting was actually backing out of it, eventually. So, from that standpoint, the mission of the PRT was never to be around for a long time. It was really that transition point, and from that standpoint, if you kept that focus in mind, you had a lot better idea of what their job was and how to do it.

**MAJ Thornton:** Is it reasonable to consider, as the PRT transitions from military to civilian, that the nature of the PRT changes as well to where you get almost a diplomatic mission?

**COL Brackney:** That's right, and that's what it should be. The PRT should eventually go away completely, and it becomes a USAID run mission.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay. That's helpful. That's something I had not considered before.

**COL Brackney:** That was the intention of the PRT, to provide that bridging gap between military occupation, military forces, and the US government agencies that are charged with going out and assisting countries and developing all those infrastructures. And because we had to manpower, the security, and everything else, we start that process off, and then you begin to filter in more and more civilian control of stuff, whether it was DOJ taking over the rule of law areas, you've now got the State Department totally running the governance area, you've got the Corps of Engineers running the construction piece. It was just all those agencies finally stepping up and getting involved with USAID being the umbrella over the PRT. The PRT originally was the overall umbrella of which USAID was a part of. The idea was to take that and make USAID the government agency in charge of all those different areas of operation.

**MAJ Thornton:** A couple of follow-up questions; the first one is do you feel like there was unity of effort and that we moved the ball forward?

**COL Brackney:** I do. I really do. Like with most things in Iraq, you take two steps forward and one step back at times, so we had our successes and sometimes not so much successes, but where I found true success was in a few key areas. One was the governance piece. Governance is always an ugly area. It's always a very difficult area to claim success or failure at. I mean look at our own government and think, we definitely have times of interesting operation, but to have seen the progress made with the provincial council and the district councils actually beginning to say, "Okay, instead of taking my piece right back to the central government, or just complaining to the IA commander, I can now go to the provincial government, the provincial council and have a champion there to actually speak my piece and get some things done." Was it always successful? No, but it went a lot further along in my year where I started off at, being successful. The second piece of that is rule of law which was a huge, huge success, and that actual program started off by Reid Pixler, was the traveling judges. It was the model for the

same program being used around all of Iraq in a lot of different areas. People were clamoring for it. We sent people out several times to help start that program at someplace else because of the success it had. So, just in those two areas alone I think it was a great success, the fact that after having been gone there almost eight months now, or seven months, the thing that I'm hearing back from the team is that we really do have civilians in charge of most of these areas now, which was our desire, and we're making progress.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay Sir, I really appreciate your time informing this study.

**COL Brackney:** I had a chance to see something that worked well, or didn't work well as far as PRTs, and no two PRTs are made alike. Some of the areas where they really struggled in other PRTs was where they did not have a good relationship between the BCT commander and the PRT chief. And sometimes it was the commander's fault, who just doesn't want to deal with it, and shoved it off to somebody else and says, "Take care of it. It's not my deal. I'm out to get bad guys," and sometimes it was the State Department guy who says, "I don't like the military. I want to use something else." There were some PRTs that pride themselves on never talking with or working with the military whatsoever. They go out and do their thing and the military did their thing, and they would just go separate ways, and it was obvious because of who was successful and who wasn't.

**MAJ Thornton:** Well, I'll tell you, I did add Lieutenant Colonel Boden to the interview list at the advice of Dr. Knight, and it seems like you had pointed me in that direction too, if he hadn't. I've also got a name of a Navy JAG officer down in Baghdad that was giving some friction to Reid Pixler.

**COL Brackney:** Friction?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yeah, I guess he was in Baghdad; he was a Navy captain, and he had talked a little bit about that. So, I think by the time this is done, we'll have a pretty well rounded... it won't be complete because there's just pieces that are going to be missing, but I think what we'll show is why... because so far across the board, the consensus is that there was unity of effort and we did move the ball forward. So I think understanding that, and getting at some of the potential causal relationships is important. So, thank you again, Sir. I will probably contact you before then, maybe just as a follow-up or something like that, but look forward to hearing from me sometime in the future with some more information about how this thing's going.

**COL Brackney:** Hey, Rob, (XXXX 75:15), thanks again for calling me; I appreciate the time and the opportunity to contribute, I hope.

**MAJ Thornton:** You did Sir, and thank you for participating.

**COL Brackney:** Alright, you take care now.

**MAJ Thornton:** Alright, Sir, bye-bye.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 25 July 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Colonel Mike Senters  
Brigade MiTT Team Chief, 2-2 IA  
Mosul, Iraq  
September 2006 – March 2007

By Major Robert Thornton  
Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance

Date of Interview 05 MAR 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** We'll go with question number one. Sir, how did you see your mission?

**COL Senters:** At the beginning based on the train up at Fort Hood and AIG mission briefing and statements, I was clear enough that the mission was to advise, conduct staff training of the Iraqis and provide effects. I will say this, as much as the train up period did not prepare me adequately, it did not prepare the teams adequately to face the actual mission they were going to take on. The missions were...I have a whole different view which I'll discuss here...the next question is at the end. At the end, clearly I see the mission as being a combat advisor – I think of the word combat advisor, not advisor needs to be emphasized. That means advising the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi Army commanders and staff during the planning, execution, and after action process of combat operations. We tended to be too fixed due to the AIG train up in providing effects. I see that as a subtask of being a combat advisor. The other mission I see as important is providing liaison with a partnership unit. The partnership unit was not...it was kind of a hand wave of oh yeah, you're going to have a partnership unit. Well, what did that mean? Being a conduit between the Iraqi Army and a partnership unit needs to be in the mission statement whether you call it liaison or whatever, making sure the infantry battalion has the situational awareness of the Iraqis and the Iraqis have the situational awareness of the infantry battalion and we all have a common goals and objectives of what we are trying to achieve in the area of operations. Logistical assistance...I would say advise on logistical operations, the planning and execution of logistical operations. It is finding enough that you can help them plan and advise them. You have to assist and provide liaison in helping them execute. The point being that one of the missions is that you have to help them keep combat power on the road, and you have to have system for doing that. This doesn't fit into a very good who, what, when, where "five W" mission statement, but you have to do that because if not you don't keep combat power on the road they are not effective. A logistics advisor says, "I'm just an advisor, Sir. I can't get their vehicles fixed." Well, you need to because if not they lose combat power and if you lose combat power then you lose training. It was clear that we were going to train the staff, but I think the training of the staff needs to be expanded into training the staff and sustaining it, maintaining and sustaining soldier skills, actually even developing them. You would think now they were coming with minimal soldier skills; that's an assumption. So it would be training the staff and coordinating and conducting soldier-level training with the assistance of the partnership unit. You have to have a method; being that method is that a MiTT team cannot conduct soldier skill training on its own. It has to have augmentation from the partnership unit because you can't run a range with a MiTT team. It takes up the whole MiTT team; you can't do it. You have to have the partnership unit out there conducting those soldier skills – weapons training, driver's training, driver's maintenance, medical, crew-served weapons, maintenance, firing, and other soldier skill tasks. One thing that we were...I know effects, when they say effects it's coalition effects and we are taught to do MEDEVAC, all that stuff, but really once you get over there you find that your rule in the medical evacuation and then the liaison you conduct between the BSB or the combat support hospital is much more than what you were prepared to do, and we had to develop a system to actually evacuate their casualties based on life, limb, or eyesight. Now, I would say that would have to be evaluated in every area of responsibility or every area of operation if the Iraqi medical facility, being in our case Al Jamouri, which I've been told now is up to a point where they can handle casualties of the Iraqi Army and you know they are not going bleed out or die due to the limited facilities there. Okay, they can evacuate their own

casualties, but until that point and time, in order to maintain the morale in the combat forces and give these guys a little hope, you have to have a system in place to get their casualties evacuated to the CSH (ed. Combat Support Hospital) and then take them off that system after their systems are set up.

**MAJ Thornton:** If you had to boil it down to a mission essential task, what would that look like?

**COL Senters:** I would have to say “advise the IA in combat operations”. Advise the IA in combat support operations, conduct liaison, and then you know, Rob, we can go into our own ARTEP manuals and kind of break down the supporting tasks of that. I don’t think rambling on in an interview on what the supporting tasks are would be much benefit to you. I could pick up an ARTEP manual and probably have you something written within a week or two and then you just kind of document it. The liaison, and again, there are different levels of liaison. If I’m a division MiTT I have to be liaising with the division, with the MND-N (Multi-National Division-North), with the BCT, and also with the PRT at the division level. At the brigade level I need to be liaising with the infantry battalion partnership unit, the BSB, and the CSH. One method is to burden the partnership infantry battalion left doing all that for you, but at that point in time I think you’re taking advantage of the partnership relationship. You need to get up off your rear end and get the okay from the partnership unit and have an understanding within the BCT that you are going to be liaising with battalion-levels and also the CSH as a MiTT team. I think you need to consider expanding this list into fifteen different key tasks; you focus on those three and have the subordinate tasks.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay, Sir that is about what I was after. Let’s move on to question two which really gets to how you assess things and how you change the focus of resources from the time that we got there till the time that we left. The actual question is: What assessment processes did you use to ensure you were attaining the goals and objectives?

**COL Senters:** It is all a matter of timing. The assessment of the Iraqi’s staff capabilities; we would go over and watch them conduct meetings, plans, and operations. They in turn briefed those in front of the partnership unit, and then they went out and conducted the missions. I think you have to...first of all you have to go in and assess their abilities without jumping and giving the PowerPoint training presentations on the MND, the orders process. I think you will find in Mosul now Iraqi staff can execute an order, can execute an AAR (After Action Review). Then it all becomes a matter of at what level and standard they are executing it. Then what you apply, what standard you are applying to it. That is where it is a matter of...if you apply our standard to it then you are always going to come up short. If you are going to evaluate their combat operations, I think many times we tend to depend too much on the company commander of the partnership unit or those guys to come down and do joint patrols and get an assessment from them on how the battalion conducts combat operations. Well, that’s a good assessment of how the company does combat operations, or how the platoon does combat operations, but a poor assessment of how the battalion is operating. Just because this kid is an infantry captain on his first tour as a commander in Iraq, majors and lieutenant colonels shouldn’t be too dependent on getting his assessment. That should be part of your assessment but not your whole assessment. Well, I’m just going to ask the company commander of Bravo 1-23 Infantry how is the battalion conducting combat operations. The only way you are going to find that out is that you have to

go out with them. I would encourage that MiTT teams go out as part of joint patrols with the partnership unit and the Iraqi infantry unit in combat patrols. You don't have to take the whole MiTT team. You can go out with the company much like Mark Hayden did at times, and then when the battalion goes out to conduct operations the MiTT team has to go out there. You can't evaluate that. Evaluating how they do logistical operations is a daily garrison activity. You can't do it from inside the wire. And you also can't depend on the partnership unit to conduct the evaluation. You need to talk and have discussions between the partnership unit and the MiTT on how you see the battalions and the brigades because if the infantry battalion sees it one way and the MiTT team sees it the other you are going to have a big problem. That is all part of conducting that liaison. If I as the brigade MiTT chief say this brigade can conduct independent combat operations with no coalition support and the infantry battalion commander says different, then you have a fundamental flaw in the system and issues within your own coalition support system of the Iraqi Army. It is the same thing at the division level. If the BCT commander has an assessment and the division MiTT chief has an assessment they better pair up. It has to be part of the whole liaison with the BCT commander. If you say, "I see it this way," you have to come on strong as to this is why I see it this way. If he says, "According to my infantry battalion commanders I don't see it that way and here is why." There has to be a conscientious effort to make that all match. And depending on the relationship that is established with the partnership unit you have to be pretty hard sometimes. But if you don't do it, it is just not going to do anybody any good. Assessments – you're obtaining goals. Well, independent operations should be the goals of what we are working for, and again, how much prodding, how much BCT-fed directed, how much MiTT team directed missions are we having to do? It is really a matter of is the Iraqi commander at the battalion-level and the brigade-level willing to sit in his office every day and not command or not do missions in the area of operations? Is he waiting on the Americans to give him permission? He may be because that's what we have done. We have hand-fed him the missions. Or is he aggressive enough to say, "We aren't hand-feeding you the missions anymore. You need to come up with your own." That is what the MiTT team has got to do. They have to force them into independent operations. If they are used to being spoon-fed they will be content with that. That is another thing, you have to look and see; is the U.S. unit feeding them and are they reactive to everything the U.S. partnership unit and BCT says, or are they really in charge? What did we call it over there, Rob? When they were given the lead, were they really in the lead? That is pretty easy to assess. What do you have next?

**MAJ Thornton:** The next question is about empowering subordinate leaders and it is interesting because you had one MiTT team that was pretty far to the south of you, a battalion MiTT team that was there. You had a battalion MiTT team that was on an adjoining compound that was partnered with a battalion that also adjoined that compound. Then you had another MiTT team that was up maybe fifteen-twenty minutes away up in the northwest corner of Mosul. So you had different C2 challenges with each of them, but you also had different challenges in the way that those subordinate leaders related to the coalition partners and the way that those Iraqi Army battalions related to the Iraqi Brigade Commander. So this really talks about how did you empower those subordinate leaders to achieve the goals of the Iraqi battalions in terms of where we want them to be, independent ops, and how did you, if you needed to, get those leaders to take ownership of their piece of the advisory effort?

**COL Senters:** Well, first of all, I can tell you that they have to be independent because one, the mission drives that. You cannot be trying to micromanage three different teams at three different locations that are spread out across a combat area of operation. I'll say this; the most successful team is the team that I was able to communicate with the most, in my mind. Now that is my perception. It didn't have to do with proximity; it had to do with communications. I didn't see that team the most. The team that I had the most proximity to was the second most successful team, but the team that I was able to communicate with, and I will say this; it was FM Communications was the most successful. FM Communications was the most successful team. If I had it to do over, I would have established an SOP of daily morning SITREPs where the team leader or the team maneuver trainer came up on the net, being the FM net or telephonic, and gave a SITREP on the radio. That accomplishes a couple of things. One, it gives everybody situational awareness of what is going on. Two, it allows the other teams to hear what is going on. So through the eavesdropping of the SITREP by the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion the MiTT chiefs know what is going on in that area. Three, I think it would lead to the unity of effort on all the teams even though certain Iraqi battalions needed different training in certain areas. But I default the most communications went with one team because there was always something going on over there and there was always a requirement. I found that the daily SITREPs over email were just what they are – people would sit down, type them out, send them to the maneuver trainer and myself, but I can't remember if everybody was cc:'d on that. I can't remember if the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion team was able to see the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion SITREP and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion MiTT team was able to see the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion SITREP. If you are going to do it over email, then everybody should be able to see the SITREP. I just think it is important that you actually get it out over the radio. The team that I had the hardest, the longest lines of communications with, was the least successful team I had, and having given it over, I would have forced that communications because the means was there. We had enough communication means to do it. I just didn't force it. It was a failure on my part that I did not force him to either crawl up on top of the building everyday and shoot and azimuth with his SATCOM radio and make satellite communications and give a SITREP or put up a higher FM antennae. Now that I look back at it, that could have been done. He could have communicated over the FM radio if I had forced him to do it. That is my cut on as I sit here, but then again, a SITREP is what it is. You cannot be micromanaging and I think you have to get that assessment. The TRA charts are one thing. We turned the charts in, yet you have to force the subordinate MiTT team to say, "Okay, you have turned in your evaluation. What scheduled events, what actions are you taking based on this assessment of making the Iraqi Army better?" Again, we are not running the Iraqi Army's training schedule, but you should have input and you should have a plan as Transition Team advisor to address their shortfalls. What are you doing about it? Your assessment says this, but the next thing I need to hear out of your mouth is what is your plan to go back and get with the Iraqi commander to address that and what resources do need me or the partnership battalion to provide to accomplish your goals? Instead of having three MiTT chiefs go through three company commanders and going to a battalion commander who may have to turn that request for resources up to the BCT commander, they can all be consolidated at the brigade-level, in my opinion. They can be submitted to the infantry battalion commander in a consolidated list and say I need resourcing here for these guys here and then the MiTT chief has to be, if there is a partnership company, talking to him and on the same sheet of music so there is no surprise. You would expect that company commander goes back in and talks to his battalion commander on what is needed down there. And along with that same message the MiTT team should be, like

the brigade, should be telling the battalion I need this resourcing here, here and here. Here is the plan to train the Iraqis up. His company commander should be echoing the same message. At the division-level when the battalion is not within the battalion's resources, which a lot of times they are not because the BSB does not belong to the infantry battalion commander, when you need resources coordinated by the BCT you need to submit them up to the division MiTT and he needs to be having correspondence with the BCT commander and the BCT staff to acquire those resources either through the infantry battalion or directly through the MiTT team, however you can work it out. Again, you don't need three different brigade MiTT chiefs trying to work with the BCT commander. That has got to be the job of the division MiTT chief. When I can't produce it at a brigade then the division MiTT chief needs to be facilitating the resourcing through the BCT, but it has to be independent operations. But again, continuous evaluation and I guess the only thing I can say is that it does no good to evaluate and assess unless you have a plan to address what you are assessing and evaluating to improve it. I found that a lot of guys...they wanted to do this evaluation...they're the OCs at NTC kind of mode. Well, sorry dude. You're stuck with this rotation the entire year you are over here. Not only do you evaluate, but you have to have a plan to make it better.

**MAJ Thornton:** The next question: We were there for three different BCTs that come through. When we first got there it was the 172<sup>nd</sup> and then the 3-2 came in behind them, and then eventually 4-1. This really talks about how the different echelons interact. We came in and in regard to relation with the 172<sup>nd</sup>, they had an opinion of the Transition Teams based on the folks that we came in behind. So there is the element of overcoming different goals and objectives or different perspectives on goals and objectives. So how do we get past that and how do we reconcile their perspective on what the objectives should be with our perspective on what the objectives should be and did that progress as we got a better feel for things so that by the time that 4-1 came in we were able to help them adjust and adapt a little faster?

**COL Senters:** Well, I think that has to do with being the liaison and it can be done as simply as this: The maneuver trainer has to, at the MiTT brigade-level, has to be over in that infantry battalion and probably getting it from the infantry battalion S-3 on...we need a unity of effort here so what is the plan here within the infantry battalion and which way do we need to take the Iraqi Army? That is where you get it from. There has to be some kind of system set up. When we got there no one was attending any kind of briefings, updates, weekly updates, battle updates in the infantry partnership unit. Not the right answer. That is a disconnect. With that I would say this; the best optimal solution of this would be that the MiTT teams train up with, deploy with, and operate with the BCT here. They go through NTC rotations, they form up at the divisions, and they are part of the BCT train up effort prior to deployment. Injecting into a BCT that has been there nine months is very problematic. You are totaling depending on the reputation, established procedures, and what has been done by the MiTT team that preceded you. If they did well, then okay, good. You are probably going to be okay for the remaining three months that BCT is going to be in place. Then have a clear understanding of where the BCT commander sees the security forces within that area of operation going. I did not have any idea where Colonel Mike Shields thought the Iraqi Army ought to be going when I got there. By the time he left I had a better understanding, but going in I had none which was not good. It doesn't matter what the division MiTT Chief thinks as to what direction the Iraqi Army should be going or the major down at battalion or the brigade MiTT Chief. It really boils down to where that

BCT commander is taking the area of operation, and how the IA or the BCT are working on that unity of effort to accomplish the mission. That has to be covered up front. It should be covered prior to deployment. The next BCT out of 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, was it 3-2 or 4-2?

**MAJ Thornton:** It was 3-2, Sir.

**COL Senters:** 3-2 clearly had a plan to empower the Iraqi Army, but again, how did he see the MiTTs fitting into that plan? If he discussed how he saw that plan with the division MiTT chief that should have been trickled down through the BCT or through the brigade MiTT chiefs and the battalion MiTT Chiefs. I don't remember that. I remember Colonel Townsend saying things such as, "This is the way I see it." But as far as, "This is really where I need to you to take this brigade. This is where I need you to take this brigade." When it comes to the Iraqi Army you could have different directions you needed to go. The east side maybe needs to go in one direction and the west side needs to go another based on their proficiency in command, equipment fielded, proficiency, and so forth. He has to have time to make that assessment though, and the division MiTT chief should be part of the assessment to the BCT commander. I don't know how much the BCT commander depended on the division MiTT chief to do an assessment or if it was just, "Hey, I'll have my battalion commanders do the assessment." If he is not part of the assessment then I think you are missing it. He is missing an opportunity and again, it is not a unified effort between all the coalition guys that are on the ground. By the time we left, due to the fact that there was a reduction in coalition forces there on the ground and rapid turn-over, I think we had a good system established with the BCT at the division-level and clearly a very good relationship with the battalion partnership unit whether it was 1-9 CAV and later 2-7 CAV. I felt that clearly the battalion commander looked at us an asset and that message was translated all the way up to the BCT, even to the division commander. He brought the division commander out there to see down to your battalion level. I still think MiTTs need to be part of the train up and deployment with the BCT; not when you get on the ground. Here's a MiTT team and then you are all depending on relationships established or not established – a big disconnect there. It is a "Big Army" disconnect in my opinion. If we are going to be in this advisory business for a few years, that needs to change. If we are going to be in the business of training up foreign security forces and continue to do that I don't see any time that...it is very rarely that we are probably going to be disconnected from a combat team. In doing that we have to be part of that process, not separated under some different organization called the Iraqi Assistance Group. I can see where that group can be responsible for training and deployment under the current system, but there has to be method for getting it into the BCT and made part of the division, the MND before that. It doesn't have to be part of the division before it deploys. It can be part of the BCT. You have to do that. If you can't do it that way, at least set it up to where a MiTT team interacts with the BCT headquarters during a train up at one of the Combat Readiness Centers so they can know what to expect and so can the BCT commander. Then that has to be...each one should know what I can depend on these guys to do, how they're formed, this is what I am expecting – at least they can get kind of a feel for it. The only problem is...the optimal solution would be that MiTT team is that MiTT team when that BCT hits the ground.

**MAJ Thornton:** What about relationships with folks outside of the BCT be they PRTs or other?

**COL Senters:** I see this on the PRT. I can tell you I did not have a clear understanding of what a PRT does before I went. That should be part of the train up process for MiTT. I am going to be very clear, the only part that I see a battalion MiTT...I see him having no interaction with a PRT. What I do see is that that battalion MiTT should have situational awareness on what PRT-level projects are taking part in the battalion area. So if need be, the Iraqi commander can focus on security efforts in that area and he can focus on the population in that area. The Iraqi military, as you saw, is not very good at the whole civil affairs operations. That is due to the fact that they grew up in an environment where civil affairs just didn't matter. It was a point that the population will support me because I am the Army and I have the force. He should have visibility on what is going on in his area of operations with the PRT. Now, I think he should also have a method, through the division MiTT chief, of saying, "Here are some good areas or projects that I am getting from the Iraqis that should get some PRT attention." Whether it is going to or not, you don't know. But there has to be some way to push what the Iraqi commanders feel for what should be going on in the field of operation and getting that to the PRT. The way I see it, the brigade MiTT chief is the same deal. He has to have situational awareness on the projects that are going on in the brigade AO so he can make Iraqi brigade commanders situationally aware both from a security support aspect and from a civil affairs psychological operations aspect. But the real key player I see in that is the division MiTT chief. He has to be...he has got to be some way tied to that PRT. He has to have some interchange and exchange, situational awareness, and be able to interject and also get information from them. To me that is division-level, BCT-level stuff because in Iraqi that PRT is run by a State Department guy, chief. He needs to have a colonel-level of interface with him at that level. The division MiTT chief may not need to interact with him; maybe he just does all his interaction through the BCT commander, but I would encourage, maybe not equal to, but at least some independent engagement by the division MiTT chief. The BCT commander may see it different. He may say the division MiTT chief has no business interacting with the PRT. Even though I am kind of fuzzy on who this...even the PRT does not really answer to the BCT commander either. They are an independent force out there. Their function is PRT, not to do what the BCT commander says. So how do you get that level...what projects are going on and how do you make those level...this is what the Iraqi Army brigade commander and division commander is saying about the provincial reconstruction going on within this area of operation. A fine example of that is the PRT comes to a security meeting. The PRT came to the security meeting with Dr. Knight, right?

**MAJ Thornton:** Dr. Knight is the guy.

**COL Senters:** He is attending this and then the members of the Provincial Council are at this security meeting and they talk. At that point in time there in this meeting it turns into an Arab tent meeting and the division commander stands up and accuses the Provincial Council of stealing money and corruption and it turns into a...and clearly there was no unity of effort between the Provincial Council and the military. I would say at that point in time one of the low lows of the way I saw the whole effort, our strategic effort...you just looked at it and went there is no way we are going to have a good outcome when you have this level of conflict, accusations – the military on one side and the Provincial Council on the other side yelling at each other, accusing each other of being corrupt and stealing. I scratched my head and thought this could have all been prevented if the division MiTT Chief had prepared the division commander to be there and say, "What do you think you are going to say to these guys?" "Well, I'm going to

stand up in the meeting and accuse them all of being a bunch of crooks and liars and thieves.” “Well, my advice to you is that you don’t do that.” Then he could have worked it and said, “Well, I just think this whole meeting needs to be cancelled.” When the new, I can’t remember which infantry battalion commander was there, I think it was the new infantry battalion commander from 2<sup>nd</sup> Division or maybe it was the 172<sup>nd</sup>. I can’t remember, but the bottom line is that a lot of his soldiers saw that and he saw that and he just...how do you have any hope? There has to be some kind of connection there to prevent such scenes and to at least show some kind of unified effort when you go into things like that. And again, I think for your battalion MiTT chief, as long as he knows what is going on in the area...that’s my cut on it.

**MAJ Thornton:** Question five deals with really the MiTT’s side in your case, but not only for your team but also to the battalion teams that you were responsible for so the question is: Did sustainment and/or force protection create any unique problems in the conduct of the MiTT mission and how did you get past them? How did you resolve them or did you just learn to live with them?

**COL Senters:** Well, you learn to live with them, but there is also the...I took force protection like this; you kind of get three different levels of it. One is you assist the force protection, the battalion MiTT chief assists the force protection. There are force protection guidelines and you look at them. You say, “Well, I feel pretty safe living over here on the second floor of this battalion or within a FOB.” Then here is the point; there are all these force protection COP down-fed requirements of which oh by the way, you boys over at COP EAGLE clearly could not meet over there in your battalion given the conditions and available resources. Every MiTT on an Iraqi compound must have a FOB within a FOB. It must have this and it must have that...blah, blah this and blah, blah that. Those are well-intended guidelines meant to safeguard and secure people. However, in my opinion, it is situation dependent. Then you get the new BCT commander in who, God bless him, he is responsible in his mind for every living creature out there that wears a U.S. uniform outside of the big FOBs. He looks at it and he goes, “Well, boys. It’s pretty good. I think you need this, this, this, and this.” “Roger.” You reach a point of just, “Yep. I agree with you Colonel. When are you going to deliver it?” It really comes down to that. The big Sugar Daddy in force protection is you can want it all you want, but the real deliverer is the BCT commander who controls the assets to get the force protection – allocate the equipment, allocate the materials, and the man power to get the force protection requirements taken care of. I won’t say that’s a distracter because it is necessary, but then you have the IAG visits and then the IAG commander comes up and goes, “Oh, no.” The IAG started measuring and then they got a force protection cut. They’ve seen MiTT teams all over the place so whose opinions count the most? I guess my cut on it is that it really boils down to this, unless that person who has an opinion has the ability to put man power and resources against his opinion, his opinion doesn’t matter. That’s kind of my whole thing on force protection.

**MAJ Thornton:** Any sustainment type challenges whether we’re talking about mission essential equipment like trucks, upgrades on trucks, weapons, anything like that you want to talk about?

**COL Senters:** I just wish it would all be done through one system. There is the whole IAG is pushing this and IAG is pushing that. Let’s take for example, if we were to get fielded MRAPs.

Where would those come from? Well, you kind of figure that IAG would push them up. I just kind of wish there was a system that was just all done through one channel, where you got it all from one entity instead of I deal with IAG on this, I deal with the BCT on that, and I deal with the infantry battalion task force on that. You know how it was getting trucks repaired. I don't think the BCT or the infantry battalion partnership unit is in a position for the most part to support your repairs and your upgrades to your vehicles and your maintenance, your scheduled maintenance. A fine example, the Strykers are there. Do they have a lot of light-wheel vehicle mechanics? No. It all comes down to that. They tear us out of there and here comes the next battalion and it's an armor unit. How many light-wheel vehicle guys...since they were using a lot of humvees it kept the burden on them to keep those humvees on the road. That was their priority, keeping their battalion humvees on the road. MiTT teams went down here. There needs to be a system set up to just take care of equipment where you're not depending on the BCT. I would say it needs to be contracted and that contractor takes care of your MiTT vehicles. Either that or you come as part of the BCT. See that is the big rub. When you are not part of the BCT, you're not part of it. You are either part of it and you train and deploy with it, or you're not. If you're not you need to have a separate entity taking care of that stuff because there is too much running around. And it is problematic on how well that infantry battalion is going to repair those vehicles or get them back to you in a timely manner. Sometimes it is a matter of well, if they can't do it then I'm going to go over here to DynCore. My best solution to that is that DynCorps should just be doing it all the time – dedicated, high on the priority list; same thing with weapons; same thing with radios. Even though I will say we got great support out of the communication guys there at the BCT.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's a pretty good lead into the question about sustainment and ISF. From an advisory perspective and having to lean on coalition assets, particularly when the sustainment issue was such that it was an operation, or maybe even a strategic issue, that was becoming an impediment to advancing the Iraqis in terms of tactical operations. You can't get Class 9 and you can't get parts ordered and brought in. As such their op tempo drops off and now you've got a break in contact in terms of their progress in replacing coalition patrols on the roads. You could also talk to the same thing with fuel, ammunition for certain types of weapons, etcetera.

**COL Senters:** The number one, failure...I'll say it – failure – of everything is that the system that is in place, from my perception, which to be honest with you, I have to go outside the wire with these guys, you have to go outside the wire with these guys. The number one failure of the whole ISF, Iraqi Army taking the lead, becoming independent, and the reduction of American involvement in operations, I can't say that for all Iraqi Freedom, but at least when it applies to Mosul, Iraq, it is logistics. Fielding of Iraqi humvees, we'll take that one. One, there was no train up. There was nothing. There was no NET (New Equipment Training) team. There was no Iraqi NET team. There is nothing that comes down. It is go pick up the vehicles and the MiTT team does the training either there or at home station to identify drivers to drive the vehicles. There was no thought put into even the simple stuff like the weapons mounts on the vehicles being the right mounts to mount PKC machine guns. So the fielding of any item as far as I am concerned is lacking. There is no fielding in my opinion, not to western standards. It is a drive by, dump it off, they pick it up, take it back and everybody hopes for the best. The end result is this, the vehicles get destroyed. The vehicles break down. The vehicles...and there is a loss in operational readiness rates which equals a loss in combat power. It manifests itself in a

reduction of combat power in the area of operations and the ability of the Iraqi Army to put combat power out there. What that results in is an increase in insurgent activities to be able to maneuver and engage. The system that I saw – there is no system. There is no system to repair parts. There was a system of “Oh, yeah, bring your vehicles all the way back to the facility, the regional facility that is supposed to support or there is a concept of the transportation unit back hall these vehicles to the regional facility and they will magically be repaired and brought back. If that is working, prove it. Prove that that is in place and that it is working. I’ll be surprised. There was too much check the block. We gave them 250 humvees and we coded the PowerPoint slide green. That’s great. The PowerPoint slide was green for two months, three months then it went to amber. If I was a betting man, it probably went to red because there is nothing in place and unless...having the MiTT do it is not...that is the last desperation effort, my friend. And the partnership unit to keep the combat power on the road for the Iraqi Army. To me it is the number one failure of our effort. It was the number one failure of our effort. When I say collectively our effort being the United State’s effort within the Ninewa Province up there where I was at in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division – number one failure. But if it was...I am very curious on the procedures that I hear that now we are fielding them M-4 rifles or M-16 rifles of how that process goes because I heard that the training is Taji. I can just imagine the requirement of we have to take all the soldiers to Taji to get them trained – no go – non-starter. Unless it is an exportable training package to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Infantry Division and the team comes up there, and the Iraqis train them on the M-16 rifle, it is going to fail. And unless there is a system to train the armorers and give the armorers spare parts and cleaning materials to maintain the rifles, to repair the rifles. I would look at that M-16 in an Iraqi’s hands and I would think he is going to have to have some cleaning fluid for that rifle because you can’t clean it with gasoline and diesel fuel like you do an AK-47. Is there a plan to field those cleaning fluids? Is there a plan to field the cleaning kits, the rods, the steel brushes? I would say there is probably a one time shot and that’s it. Then where do you go from there? Everything from equipment to ammunition to vehicles to anything that is purchased through foreign military sales, I saw no sustainment. My point is that you can train the staff up, and you can train the soldiers up. You can train them hypothetically. You can have them trained as well as a Ranger Battalion in soldier skills. You can have them everyone branch qualified and guess what? It’s not going to make a bit a difference if all their vehicles are broken and their rifles don’t have ammunition or are broken and they can’t repair them. They are all sleeping in buildings that have no air conditioning and no heat and they don’t have a life support system that will feed them and be able to give them water. That is how we...how the Iraqi Army is being defeated, to me. It has nothing to do with insurgency. That was how the Iraqi Army was being defeated in Mosul. It was highly successful in Mosul, but it was being defeated little by little. It was losing due to logistics. And I saw nothing...no logistics guru. I saw a piece-meal effort to fix that from the U.S. part and the Iraqi part and the perception that we have to let the Iraqi logistics work; this is the perception of the Iraqis in Ninewa Province due to the fact that they perceived that the central government and the Ministry of Defense to be a Shia dominated government and highly influenced at the Ministry of Defense-level is that it is all a Shia plot to ensure the Sunnis up in Ninewa Province were not given the equipment they needed to fight because it was to keep the Sunnis down in that area. They didn’t want the military to be strong. Now whether that is true or not, it is the perception. Why are we not getting the equipment up here that we need? Why are we not getting spare parts? The Iraqi’s mindset was not because the system was screwed up, but it is all a Shia plot. That is what you have to work against. Unless their systems get in place, unless that

improves greatly in that area, I don't see the Iraqi Army ever being able to go beyond needing coalition assistance to provide security in that area. They will always be dependent on us, and it is no surprise. They could have a guy commanding the division that has the intellect of George Patton, and it doesn't matter if all his vehicles are non-mission capable.

**MAJ Thornton:** The next question is related. In this case we are talking about intelligence issues. You can approach it from key intelligence issues in terms of combined operations – how the coalition shared, or the MiTTs shared with their Iraqi counterparts. You can approach it from a joint perspective in terms of how the IP and IA and other security force type elements shared intelligence, or we can talk about the level of intelligence cooperation and coordination between the different Iraqi Army echelons – division, brigade and battalion.

**COL Senters:** I think each MiTT has to have a system for...they need to make sure the Iraqis have a system for collecting intelligence. Then there needs to be a system where he is the conduit of sharing that intelligence from the Iraqis. I saw a lot of times when we lost due to the fact...I think I could have done a better job with the MiTT intelligence S-2 advisor forcing him to have a system where intelligence was gathered, not so much analyzed – documents, names, faces, pictures, and then he provided the conduit for that information to migrate over to the coalition forces. Then the coalition forces having a data base to enter that stuff in and the assets to do a thorough analysis and provide that information to the command. The sharing of intelligence with the Iraqis...again the...I think that has to do with timing. I think there is still a bit of a security risk on that, but if it is timed properly, short timing, as directed, missions are directed soon after, hours not days, it can be successful. The main thing is I think a lot of pictures to the puzzle could be put together at the coalition side if they were to get more information from the Iraqi part of it. Again, I think it is heated. There is a lot of exchange at the division/BCT-level and that the Iraqi Division with the BCT, and again, there is a link up between the division intel guys and the Iraqis and the coalition guys and the division MiTT has to make that happen. Then a sharing of a common intel picture with some level of detail among all of them in that...it looks to me like we have ten cells of Al Qaeda in Iraq operating on the west side. We've captured three guys over here in this cell and we've rolled this cell up completely. We've captured two guys here that are operating over here in this area. They can't seem to be concentrated there; so intel-driven operations. And again, a lot of the operations that I saw that the coalition wanted the Iraqis to do weren't intel-driven. If they were, they had to tell the Iraqis what intel was driving them. It was kind of like they just put them out there and see if they could make things happen. There needs to be a better system in place for doing that. I also think that there was a lot of good information through cell phones that were captured that could have been analyzed technically by the coalition forces. Some of that information was lost because of the chain of custody of the captured equipment or whatever. I don't think the coalition paid a lot of attention to it sometimes when Iraqis would roll up with a car full of dudes, whether they killed them or captured them and say they captured three guys. Then he didn't give them anything and they never asked. You have to kind of push it on them, in my opinion.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, the next one gets back to unity of effort and not so much your own, but in regards to security force assistance (when I say your own, I mean your own element, the TTs), the tasks that facilitate security force assistance or help drive it forward, are there any of those on there – PRT, BCT, the sub-elements, contractors, the actual host nation forces, or others that you

feel had a critical task or function that wasn't fulfilled, that could have enabled us to move more sure-footedly and maybe a little faster?

**COL Senters:** I can't speak about the PRT. Those guys may have been accomplishing great things, but to be honest with you, I had no situational awareness, had no idea. Contractors, other than from a maintenance standpoint, I think contractors are not utilized to the fullest extent of what we could...I think we could have benefited more from contractors, and I'll tell you why. The whole thing of the contractors can't go over on the Iraqi side. It's like come on. The Iraqi side shares a T-Wall with FOB Marez. You're telling me you can't drive a crane through here and do this or do that. (XXXX 68:05) where the contractors went over and assisted and trained in logistical sustainment of those vehicles and weapons and direct support maintenance...well, yeah, we are kind of doing the Iraqi's job, but we could have done a better job of utilization of contractors because, as you know through your observation, there are plenty of contractors over there. And they are not all working twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. They are plenty of guys that could have been utilized to do things. I think we need to have a way of doing it. If it is a system of taking weapons and vehicles and...see what I am saying? There is no system. There is no...you kind of hodge-podge it together in an ad hoc manner, do the best you can for a year, and then when you leave all the knowledge and all the connections and everything that you've done with the contractors is gone other than the short introductions you made in the week of TOA. There is no standing system. There is no agreements, no contract that says you will support this or that or whatever.

**MAJ Thornton:** The next one gets to observations that you made. As the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade MiTT Chief you also not only interacted with the Iraqi Army, but also with the IPs. You've got your eyes on places like Badush Prison. You have your eyes on folks that came to the Security Council meeting. You saw joint patrols between the police and the army. So these questions kind of get to your observations about that. How did the role of the police differ from the army and maybe was that a bad going in position that they should differ under the existing conditions. What were your observations about that? The second part of that question kind of gets to how all that stuff gets integrated. So if the police had been doing "X" would that have allowed the army to be doing something else? The other one is just kind of an assessment. So all three of those sub-questions are tied in together.

**COL Senters:** The Iraqi police in Mosul...well, clearly what we want the Iraqi police to do and what they are forced to do is two different things. I'm not clear on what the expectation of what they are expecting the police forces to do in that setting. They can police in certain neighborhoods; they can perform policing actions. For example, maybe focusing on organized crime, theft, kidnapping, murder for hire, but then just due to the circumstances in that town they are also forced into direct fire engagements which at that point in time they are forced into survival mode because they are not equipped or trained. They are looked on by the Iraqi Army as a second-rate organization which I would say that if you are comparing them to the Iraqi Army, they are a second-rate organization. However, they really shouldn't be combating terrorists at the level that they have to do it. They are not equipped to do it and they are not trained to do it. You would like for them to be concentrating on kidnappings, murders for hire, corruptions and policing efforts, but the situation doesn't allow that. I will say this; we got to the point where we thought well, this area of town is secure enough where we can turn it over to the

Iraqi police. I think okay, that's good. Let the Iraqi police have it. I think that's the mode that you almost have to go into, and then the Iraqi Army concentrates on combat operations against known insurgents and insurgencies whether it is Al Qaeda or the Army of Islam and that's what they do. I think it is also very...there's a mixing...if you do too much joint operations between the Army and the police, it gets muddied on if it's a policing action. I don't consider the Iraqi Army going after a bunch of guys in cars who for the last 15 minutes shot up an intersection and fired RPGs to be a policing action. I consider it to be a combat operation. Then the Iraqi Army gets too focused in to we must arrest and capture. No, what you really need to do is kill and capture; they're combatants. It is not LAPD – everybody in the car get out with your hands up. That's where we need to clear the lines of what we expect from the police. I wouldn't expect the police nor the Iraqi Army that's chasing a carload of insurgents, if the car runs off the road, to not fire a shot and say, "Okay, get out of the car with your hands up." They're combatants. Clearly if they are willing to surrender, capture them, but I think in a western mindset everybody thinks it's a police chase down I-10 in East Los Angeles when it comes to the Iraqi police. Well, they can't do that either because they are being engaged with RPGs and PKCs. They are driving around in pickup trucks. When possible, you should reduce the military force and let the police force take over if they are able to police the civilian populace. Obviously, if the civilian populace is harboring, whether willfully or unwillfully, a terrorist organization cells from whatever, the Iraqi police force can't handle it. That is my cut on that. It's good that they work together and that they are seen as a unifying force out on the street even though at times I think the Iraqi Army felt the police were not to be trusted; that they had made deals with terrorists and some of them were part of terrorist cells and they were a second-rate organization. Even though it does help with the CA and psychological affairs to see them out on the street doing stuff together, it is good to do that in secure areas. I think in areas where you are prone to combat, it is better if the Iraqi police exit the stage and stay out of the way because they are just going to get shot up and they are too hard to integrate into the plan during combat operations. If you can have them securing intersections, throwing up road blocks, and patrolling traffic in the area where you're expecting big combat operations, you can utilize them, but you probably don't want to tell them which house that you're going into.

**MAJ Thornton:** That kind of gets at that one. Actually, you said it real well. There were some things I had forgotten about and I think some things you've done some more thinking on. The next one is about partnering. Now this is less about us as the advisors and more about the actual partnering of the coalition unit with the Iraqi unit at that stage of their development. You can take it all the way from the specific task force companies that would go around and do patrols with Iraqi units, but you could probably also take it down to when we were provided additional resources like Class IIIB (bulk fuel) to go out and do those combined patrols. How valuable were they and where do you think the focus should be of those efforts?

**COL Senters:** I will be general in this so we don't call anybody out specific by unit. I will say this; partnering can be very, extremely valuable if done correctly. It has to be or it can be very detrimental if not done...if done without situational awareness and consideration of what level of training the Iraqi Army is at, what level of proficiency the leadership is at, and an understanding of that Iraqi battalion does have a battalion commander. I'll just use hypotheticals so we're not pointing out anything here, and we both know what the real situation is. If a company commander comes down, or even if he sends a platoon down, to an Iraqi battalion to do an

embedded patrol that can be good if done properly. If that patrol comes down to go through the planning process, or listen to the Iraqis do the planning process and they accompany them on the patrol, and there has to be a little bit of detail planning in there between those two in case the lead does start flying at least we know where everybody is at, what's going on. It can't be, "Okay, you guys ready to go? We'll just follow you." There has to be something there, a little detail and coordination, so there is a shared level of knowledge because when you go outside the wire there's a shared level of risk. That is good. That can be beneficial because it does a couple of things. One, the Iraqis can...if they could learn something during the planning process from that unit that is down there, and I'm talking platoon, company command-level, and still at the Iraqi platoon, company command-level; the same thing during the execution. It also provides the coalition unit that is out there with the Iraqi unit that can provide situational awareness back to the partnership unit and back to the MiTT who can relay that situational awareness to the Iraqi battalion commander in case the Iraqis aren't reporting in a timely manner in case of troops to contact. If they send out a patrol, and the patrol gets in an engagement, the U.S. can provide situational awareness to the coalition battalion, Iraqi battalion, through the eavesdropping of everything that is going on the MiTT can tell, because the MiTT is not going to go out with every platoon and company level patrol, "Hey, Battalion Commander, that combined patrol is in a fire fight right now. I recommend you send up another company or you QRF to out to assist." And then the MiTT can provide that situational awareness over to the battalion. It all works when you do it that way. It's good. It develops leadership, trust, and cooperation on all parts. And those little bits of training things...the Iraqis learn from watching and mimicking a U.S. unit – how a U.S. unit handles its weapons and vehicles, and how they get ready to go outside the wire. Where it doesn't work is this; when they drive by and say, "Give me thirty; we're going downtown." There is no consideration for the battalion commander. There is no consideration for the Iraqi company commander. And the U.S. company commander treats the Iraqis like a squad in his platoon or his company, like a subordinate unit. If it is a subordinate unit, it is no longer a partnership, my friend. That can be detrimental to the command. It does not develop leadership. It does not develop trust, and it does not train anyone to do anything other than here comes the U.S. guys, let's just do what they say and we'll come back in. That's detrimental. You've seen it. You've seen both ends of it. You've got to understand that when the Iraqis can command and control, you let them command and control. Here is another situation; just hypothetical. You have an Iraqi company commander or a battalion S-3 that's been in the same battalion or in the Iraqi Army in the same area for possibly all of his life, who grew up in Mosul, Iraq, has fought in Mosul, Iraq the last three years in the Iraqi Army. He's a good leader, knows more about the streets, more about his soldiers, and more about the insurgency, but here comes the company commander who has been in country all of three to four weeks and guess what? He is going to go show the Iraqis how to do it. Well, and I want to caution everybody when they say, "The Iraqis can learn from our soldiers because we have combat veterans." Careful...you may want to stand back and see what they already know because they will surprise you. They have some combat veterans after three or four years. They have some guys that fought in the Iran-Iraq War. They wouldn't be alive for long...wouldn't be alive today if they didn't have some level of situational awareness and proficiency at being soldiers and leaders. When we don't take that into consideration it is detrimental. U.S. company commanders are good, but they need to understand going in that when they are talking to an Iraqi major, certain Iraqi majors may have a lot more combat experience than they do. Major Allah (formerly the 1/2/2 BN Os Officer) is a great example. Does he know how to fight in Mosul, Iraq? Does he know how to

lead in Mosul, Iraq? Is he someone we would like to see make battalion commander in the Iraqi Army? The answer is yes, yes, and yes. If a company commander comes down there and exerts his authority or tries to be the big dog on the walk to show the Iraqi Army how it is done, and we're here to do this, it is going to be detrimental. Now, I think, in my opinion, based on the observations of a coalition force commander...for example, LTC Welch had a lot of respect and admiration and knew that there were certain Iraqi units that could fight. He knew they could fight, and he knew who they were, and that didn't happen. We hoped that they got passed on to the other units. And you know, I've seen pictures of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ACR there, there's a captain, he's laying out a map, he's talking...just within the last two weeks an Iraqi lieutenant; which is good. They are spreading the map out on the hood; they're doing it together. Where it doesn't work is when there is no consideration for their combat experience and the soldier-level of proficiency of the Iraqi Army who is gaining combat experience every day in fighting the insurgency. They have different methods in how they go about it, but still...there are guys in 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the Iraqi Army that have shot up more Opels with terrorists in it than your run-of-the-meal captain or platoon sergeant in the United States Army with one or two tours in Iraq. That's where it doesn't work, and you saw how it doesn't work. You have to take that into consideration as you go in. That is all part of the assessment.

**MAJ Thornton:** The next one talks about how you advised, for example Colonel Taha (the 2/2 IA CDR), whether he actually took advantage of it or not, or in some cases, LTC Haji (the 2/2 XO) when he was the acting brigade commander, but how did you help maneuver them, help themselves maneuver into a position where they were seen as a more legitimate force, a more integrated force representative of the broader Iraq government in terms of building rapport with local officials, be they acknowledged, elected types or whether they be the unofficial types – the power brokers, the mukhtar of (XXXX 88:17), that sort of thing?

**COL Senters:** Well, there's two points. One, you have to advise him and help him develop his image, not just with...first we'll say with the coalition. First you have to get him in there to engage with and he has to be seen and understood and talked to that infantry battalion that's in that area and he's occasionally going to have to be seen to know...you have to pair him. Here's the point; as the advisor, if you take your brigade commander or your battalion commander and he's in a meeting with the coalition battalion. If your brigade and battalion commanders are in a meeting with the coalition infantry battalion commander and he can't brief, their operation orders are screwed up, and they look incompetent, what impression is that going to...is that going to help them? No, so it is preparing. You have to prepare. Each advisor has to prepare his commander when they go down that road; same thing with the BCT with an Iraqi brigade commander. When he goes up to division and he has to brief his own division commander or brief an Iraqi operation that he is going to do to his division commander and the division MiTT chief is there and sometimes even the division commander, the MND commander is there or the MND-ADC. You have to help him prepare, and that is where you advise and help him prepare through your advice and through getting products ready from his S-3 and getting him prepared and getting him rehearsed where he comes off as a competent leader. That helps him in the image of the coalition forces and of his own army. If you think he is one of those guys that needs to go up the ladder, he shows that potential. The same things happen with regard to engaging with civilians and government leadership...the Iraqi Army isn't very good at winning or thinking they need to win and engage civilian level leadership. They don't understand the

importance of that when it comes to counter-insurgency because this is a concept they have never had to deal with. They've never fought insurgencies. Again, it is all about preparation. If he has an engagement on the TV station, like he had a couple of times, the brigade commanders went down there and talked, you need to prepare him, give him some talking points...you don't feed him talking points, but get his staff to feed him talking points. Hey, here are some of the questions they may ask you. Here is the message you need to put out when you are given your three minutes to talk on the television. Instead of making it up; same thing when we go to a security meeting. He goes and he engages. He has to have a message when he goes down there. It's not the message you give him; it's the message his own staff gives him. And that's the hard part. What we think they should be saying to the civilian population and what they think they should be saying to the civilian population...it would surprise you how different that is at times. It's not necessarily that their message is different, it's maybe better that their message is a better message than we have. That's the thing; you have to help him prepare. That doesn't mean that you're taking and getting it translated into Arabic and giving it to him to say. That means that you have to convince...you have to have an effort and tell him you need to get your staff to do this and get you prepared for this meeting. And oh by the way, I'll have my major and one of my captains helping your staff put that together in case your guys struggle with it along the way. You not only advise him on combat operations; you have to advise him...and a lot of times...the most successful I was with Taha was not advising him on how to deploy battalions. Colonel Ahkmed figured that out as the Brigade 3. He was better at that than Colonel Taha was, figuring out how to deploy battalions in a brigade operation. Colonel Taha was good at reviewing and listening and that it all made sense, but the most success I had with him was advising him on how to engage the coalition commander and ask for stuff, engage LTC Welch and also to go up to the division and when it came his turn to talk, he was able to brief. He sounded prepared. They know politically within their division and their army how things work. They also know that the coalition can influence their destiny to a certain extent, at this point in time the way things work over there. And telling him that is like...Colonel Jones up in the BCT is going to be there, and you are going to be talking and you want to come across well. He understands that if Colonel Jones says, "Colonel Taha is a good brigade commander down at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade," he is going to tell that to the Iraqi division commander, and he is also going to pass that on to his division commander in the MND, and he is going to probably throw that out on the table somewhere down at the MOD (Ministry of Defense) so you kind of have to build them up. They have to understand that they have to be tactically proficient, and they have to politically savvy at what they are doing and it has to do with engaging the coalition forces, their own army, and the civilian population. So it is kind of PYSOPS SA in one area. They don't understand that they have to play that. They have to do that to win a counter- insurgency and to do that they have to win the population. You have to advise them both ways; how to do that, how to do it on the political area of it; just looking good in front of their own commands. The hardest part is just getting them to understand that you really should engage the population and Rob, I don't know, if given...again, that's a western mindset and I'm very hesitant to say that they need to be doing that because in an Arab society, maybe that don't need to do it as much as we think they do. That's something I think we need to take a look into. Does Colonel Taha need to be shaking hands down in Mosul Jahdeedah with the mukhtar and the civil authorities as much as we think he needs to be doing it? Or as a matter of fact, if he proves himself stronger than the insurgents and he defeats them and runs them out of the west side of Mosul, it doesn't matter what the mukhtar thinks of him. The mukhtar will be waving the flag and saying Colonel Taha is the best

thing since sliced bread because guess what? He is the last man standing with an AK-47. That is something people need to put some thinking into. Maybe they don't need to spend as much effort courting the civilians as we think they do even though in order to get that intelligence, you have to have a level of trust and connections with the civilian populace to get that intelligence of when the insurgents are hanging around. That's a hard question. That's PhD-level stuff that MiTT teams don't get, and you only get that through an understanding of how things work over there. I'm not so sure it's as big a need as we think it is. He can have all the medical setups downtown for the people and have a relationship with the mukhtar, but that's not going to matter if he can't secure them, guarantee their safety. I'll tell you this; if he guarantees their safety and he comes through with it and they are safe and he is part of the legitimate government and he's the only man left standing or the only organization left standing that is an armed force in the city, everybody's going to love him to death because they know they have to. That's the kind of stuff as the advisor I pondered many, many times – does he really need to be popular? If he wins he is going to be popular anyway.

**MAJ Thornton:** Based on what you said on that question, let me change question 12 a little bit and talk about how information operations were integrated throughout the brigade, not just in terms of how the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade MiTT helped the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade headquarters in leadership think about it, but in terms of how you saw gaps or successes; things you didn't anticipate that made you take a different take on it, how it affected operations. An example would be when the battalions started...after they had a successful engagement, the materiel that was captured was destroyed. The car burnings – that in a way is an information operation. The other things that went down that were not necessarily what we'd call standard IO, but the Iraqi's take on it was that this clearly sends a message. So was there a difference between the battalions and the personalities, were there gaps, and were there things like that that got you to thinking?

**COL Senters:** I'll try to keep the answer short because you could really talk for hours on this. There is ground roots information operations which are as simple as...1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's method was they shot up the car, the dudes ran off, they burned the car in the middle of the street. That's the level of information operations of the "burning wagon train." It's the burning wagon train on the plains of the west. The Indians burned the wagon train; the white man doesn't come any farther. We burn us a wagon train. That's simple information operations. Now, it's interesting how that's perceived. I don't know how that was perceived. I don't know if it was effective. It would be interesting to figure out if it was. The other level was there was a big push by the BCT to get IMN (the local news agency) out to locations of car bombs to capture equipment and so forth. I think that level should have been expanded. I don't see that...I think the division commander's orders to his brigade commanders were "you don't get anybody down there unless I approve it". And I think with the new division commander that they got in, he was more media savvy. He was more polished, more refined in that they need to be plastering that stuff on the television and the radio every day. But here's what you get...they (the enemy) bring nothing to the table but destruction, carnage. We bring security, opportunity, viability, etc. The problem with what I saw over there...if we bring security, if you tell us you bring security it's one thing, but there just wasn't enough good news as in here's a new water plant, here's a new school, here's a new bridge. There just wasn't enough of that from what I saw. The Iraqis did not understand information operations on a mass media level. The Iraqi Army did quite well at information operations of going out and knocking on doors...Hi, how are you doing?; I'm from

here...I'm a good guy...I was born and raised in this city. Here's my card, if you have a problem in your area, call me. That was the average "Joe Citizen," the mukhta, and the sheiks. I will say this; with the mukhta and sheiks those guys are going to blow with the strongest wind; not that they're not loyal to the Iraqis or the Arabs, it's a matter of survivability and you would too. You are going to side with whoever is the strongest because whoever is strongest ends up being the last man standing. If you side with the guy who is not the last man standing, guess what? You end up going down with him. That is the deal with the mukhtar and the sheiks. If you can guarantee them security like we've done in certain areas – e.g. "we'll help you get rid of Al Qaeda; we'll all be the last man standing, we'll kick them out of town.", you'll pull them to your side. I think that's where it has worked there. It's a bit more complex up in Mosul due to the size of the urban area and the cultural mix of that city. I would say this too, coalition guys need to be situationally aware that information operations have to be handled in that city with regards of ethnic make-up taken into consideration. For example, a Kurdish battalion handing out flyers in an Arab dominated area of the city where the soldiers may or may not speak Arabic probably is not a good information operation. I could have said it is not. You have played into the hands in that unique area of the insurgents by doing that because the enemy could spin it as a Kurdish takeover. You could say, "See, the Kurdish are coming to your houses, knocking on your doors; the next time they come they will force you out of your homes." It plays too well, "it's the Kurdish Peshmerga. They're wearing Iraqi uniforms, but do not be fooled by them." You have to put thought into information operations in an area like Mosul because if you don't do it right with the right people, the wrong message gets sent or you set yourself up to an extent by the insurgents that is easily spun to their advantage. Its master's-level degree kind of thinking that has to go into that stuff. You can't just say, "We'll get Battalion X to go in here and hand out flyers." No, they're all Kurdish. These guys are all Sunni Arabs. Oh by the way, this tribe was kicked out of Kurdistan. It is made up of this tribe that just happened to be implanted by Saddam Hussein and then was kicked out of Kurdistan. Anybody with a Kurdish accent, even speaking Arabic, is not going to go over well. They're just going to take that piece of paper, throw it in the garbage, and say, "The Kurds are here to take my land or my house, steal my women, children, whatever."

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, the next question...

**COL Senters:** One more thing on that. When it comes to Reserve guys, you really need to find out what other skills they have. Otto was a good example of a guy that was completely and totally a fluke, complete luck, it just happened to be. A guy that was real familiar with mass media, television production; he was a producer familiar with cells working for Univision in Miami. He was very experienced at getting out messages, in other words, information operations, to reach Latin American audiences. What message is going to get to them? He was very adept at being able to turn that into information operations there in Iraq. Now, he could have, and he was involved in that, but again, there was no identification of that skill set for Reservists or National Guardsmen when they come to the table and they're activated. There has to be some kind of feeling out of that just so the team members know that I can use this major to help out with information operations, not only within the BCT and the Iraqis. He is trained at doing this stuff. He just has to apply it to the area he is in. I think that level of detail needs to be thought about when it comes to National Guardsmen and Reservists when they are activated or mobilized. We don't do that. We look at a guy on active duty status, he is either trained to do it

or he's not. If in their civilian jobs they are doing it, then they need to be identified and if possible, allowed to work in that field.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, the next question gets to some of the resources that you saw, but because they were allocated beyond your level of influence or because they were tied to other things. We could be talking about materiel type things such as MHE (Material Handling Equipment), material handling equipment, or we could be talking units like the ARSOF-ODA up there. Those things that were either wholly or partially unavailable to you and how do you think they might have been used to facilitate the transition?

**COL Senters:** I don't know. I would have to say that we didn't have a whole lot of access to those guys. You don't know what they're doing. You don't know what the procedures are for getting them. You don't know if that fits into the unity of effort of what you're doing. Again, it comes down to who is responsible for the unity of effort within the area of operations of that AOR and comes down to the BCT commander. Maybe he has a grand plan. Again, I think that is where it comes down to. You have to have that division MiTT chief get with that BCT commander every now and then. He takes forward a request for resources. He says, "I have a requirement for resources here, here, and here." The BCT commander can look at him and go, "ODA can help you out there. I'm glad you brought that to the table." That would kind of be a process for that exchange. Again, I think the BCT commander is in a better position to determine what resources and how they are applied in the area. The thing is, you have to identify the requirement. You have that division MiTT chief identify his requirements and needs and then he goes to the BCT CDR and says, "I've got this requirement here. What do you think? Is there anything you can help me out with?" If I as a brigade or battalion MiTT say, "We need to get the ODA guys to do that." Well, you don't control the ODA. They're getting a mission from somewhere. That's where it has to come down to the resource controller. You have to make him aware of what your resourcing requirements are for training, operations, logistics, maintenance, force protection, so forth, so on. I don't know what the process of that is. I don't know if there are exchanges over email, telephone calls. I don't know, but there needs to be something as long as the BCT is the controlling entity of resources. If we reach a point in time where they exit stage left (ed. note - meaning one BCT leaves and a new comes in), it is a totally new ballgame.

**MAJ Thornton:** These are just kind of questions that allow you to sum up to some degree how you felt you left things so with regard to the period in question, September of 2006 until March of 2007, do you feel like there was unity of effort or do you feel like there were...what level of unity of effort really do you feel like was there?

**COL Senters:** I felt like there was a partial unity of effort, but not completely. I don't feel that there was a unity effort and it depended on which battalion you're talking about when I came to the Iraqi Army and that MiTT team and that infantry battalion commander. I felt that we had pretty good unity of effort with the Iraqi brigade, one battalion, marginally on another battalion, and another battalion not at all. I can't say that I felt real good when I left because looking back on it, if I were asked if I would have done it all the same way, I would say no, I wouldn't have done it all the same. There is no way. We got out of the block way too slow. It was way too slow out of the starting gate. The last four months, five months were the most productive in my opinion. Once things settled down with 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> CAV I looked at this as the most

productive time that we had. I will say this; I think the MiTT team the preceded us was very productive in getting that division and that brigade and those battalions to where they were as “stood up organizations”. What I’m saying is there was a lot of accomplishment before we got there, just getting them functional, fielded, manned, some level of organization, and abilities to communicate. But I just think there could have been a lot more accomplished if I’d had a better feel of where we needed to go unity of effort-wise when we came in. And again, there was three distinct breaks in unity of effort – one BCT left, another came, they left, and then another came. It kind of all settled down after that. So not as good as I would have liked. I also did not have a good feeling in terms of the relationship of where we needed to be as a MiTT whole when it came to division/brigade-level. I think we did the TRA (Training Readiness Assessment) excellent. I think that was done...that method was in place and executed to perfection. But I think there was a lacking of unity of effort on the MiTTs as a whole, when you take it as a whole as from division of getting to where we’re supposed to be taking the Iraqi Army and the forwarding of those resources up to the BCT or to the division. Not that I don’t think the division MiTT was doing what they needed to do. I think that due to the communications channels and the autonomous operations that we were doing, we didn’t talk about that enough. We didn’t sit down and talk about...that’s the problem is our focus that we were given when we got there as a whole. The focus was TRA; we have to get the TRA slides because that’s what IAG wants and IAG has to get that. And MND or Multi-National Forces-Iraq and multi-national forces; that’s what they’re going to see so it’s important. It’s important, but the fact of the matter is, in my opinion, it’s not as important as doing combat operations and defeating insurgents, and capturing equipment, and rolling up cells, the killing and capturing that need to be killed or captured. That’s the whole thing of it. We find ourselves consumed in that, but very little discussion of getting in a room together and going, “Alright fellows, let me hear the total, raw truth of where you think the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion is at, or the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade is at, and where that brigade commander is taking that Iraqi brigade and do you feel that we have a unity of effort going on down there between the Iraqi brigade commander and the 2-7 CAV commander? It’s like, “Sir, I’ve got a great relationship.” If you were to ask Brewington and myself how we...our relationship with Welch, Brewington would probably have said great, but there were some of his MiTT chiefs down there in that battalions that didn’t have a good relationship with the partnership unit. I would have said it’s good. Same thing when 3-2 was there; Brewington’s relationship with Huggins versus my relationship with Antonio. I think we were taking 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade one direction, and Howie was taking 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade in another direction which is okay. I was looking at getting these guys more training and Howie and those guys were out running around chasing dudes down left and right. I think you kind of need to come together as a MiTT every now and then and discuss those type things, not just the TRA. I can remember discussing the TRA to a point and then no real hard questions of “Hey, Brigade MiTT Chief, how many terrorists did 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade roll up this month, how many killed, how many captured, how many weapons captured?” We never talked about that stuff. We never did, not in any detail and why? How are they progressing? How is the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion commander doing? Is he on top of things? Yes, no, maybe. It was always a color on a chart and a comment. That’s good for stuff going up the hedge at the echelons above division, but you have to have serious discussion of making sure we are all heading on a unity of effort on where we’re taking the Iraqi Army. There has to be feedback at that O-6-level. The O-6s need to have an exchange and make sure, “This is what I’m seeing.” “Well, this is what I’m seeing.” If they’re not seeing the same thing, you have to ask yourself, “Okay, who is fooling whom? Who’s smoking crack? Who’s drinking water?” They

are both there in the AO. They've got majors and lieutenant colonels spread across the battlefield. Are you seeing the same thing? That has to be O-6-level discussions. And when I say O-6 that is division and BCT. You have to have that pow-wow every now and then. I'm not sure that was going on.

**MAJ Thornton:** I'm going to change...

**COL Senters:** Whatever came out of it, I don't know. I never saw anything as a result of it. I never saw anything as a result of TRA except ceremony, Rob. That is the truth. We did the TRA. We painted the charts green and we said they are TRA level 2. It's time to have the transitional authority assume the lead in their AO. What came out of it all? The bottom line is we had ceremonies. That's the only thing I saw as the result. I didn't see any thing other than just that...purposely...once we do this ceremony and they reach this point, the following things will happen. All radio operators for the coalition will come out of the battalions. The Iraqi battalion commanders will meet with the coalition partnership battalion once a month. There will be a "this or that". There was nothing. We just had the ceremony, but things went along about the same. See what I'm getting at?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes Sir, I remember us talking about it. I'm going to change 15 then and just ask one question about RIP/TOA (Relief in Place/Transfer of Authority). In retrospect, looking back on RIP/TOA, what was your biggest concern in terms of there being disconnects? What was likely to get dropped, not necessarily based on the personality of who came in behind us, but just because the nature of the functions that your MiTT did or that the brigade MiTTs as a whole, the three battalions and the MiTT did, that were not standard or captured, but were as a result of painful learning? What things did you worry were going to get dropped?

**COL Senters:** The number one thing we have already discussed. What's the number one thing? Logistics. I did not feel when they came in that they understood the implications, the severity of the situation because they had just gotten there. If we had stayed there a month with them, I don't think they could have understood the implications or the severities of the logistics. Failures – methods that were set up. I didn't feel that they understood or they should have had an obligation to ensure that they had a system set up to help the Iraqis repair those vehicles and get them back out on the street, get them Class 9 repair parts even if they come to the point of scrounging for them, do everything within their efforts to keep those combat vehicles on the road. I didn't feel that when they came there, and I didn't feel like they understood it when we left. The only hope that I had was that when we left that one Reserve sergeant over there. What was his name? I can't remember his name.

**MAJ Thornton:** McCloy.

**COL Senters:** I felt that McCloy could keep it going for just a little while longer. And I had a little bit of hope that while he did that, they would come to understand the severity of the situation and focus on it. I got the feeling they were going to focus on just the same things that we focused on when we got there – the TRA, their own vehicles, their own living space, their just learning the area of operations, how to communicate, and I just didn't feel that they could grasp that, not due personalities but because you just don't have time to translate it. You have to

see the failure and live through the failure and the pain of trying to correct that failure or help them correct their own failures, and to see it go from twenty vehicles to fifteen vehicles, to ten, down to five to understand it all, and the implications and impact of it. That's number one. What was the other thing?

**MAJ Thornton:** That was pretty much it. The last thing I was going to ask you was if there is one question that sticks out that I didn't ask that I should have asked that will help build this case study?

**COL Senters:** Well, my understanding now is that MiTT teams go over and they actually go over on a mid-year visit. The MiTT team that I talked to at Fort Riley had already been over and on the ground in Mosul for a week and then had returned back to Fort Riley for training.

**MAJ Thornton:** They do a site reconnaissance, that's correct.

**COL Senters:** I'm very curious what their site reconnaissance is about. Those guys go over there and they are so self-centered on "I've come over here to do a site reconnaissance, where my room?" You know what I'm saying? Which way to the DFAC? You'll figure that out. That won't kill you if you don't know where your room is or where the DFAC is at. I think that they may have been doing it right. They have to kind of get to know the area of operations and be able to understand the severity of the lack of logistics, repair parts and the failures. What are the main failures over here in the Iraqi Army? Well, there's 25 broken humvees. That's failure. You face this when you hit the ground. I would hope that there is...that that's what they're going over there to look at, but I'm not so sure that that's what it is. I also didn't feel that the team that took our place, and again not due to personalities, but due to their train up, my friend because it was not clear to me when I went over there the importance, the driving importance of having a solid relationship with the coalition partnership unit and being on a common understanding of unity of effort of where I think the Iraqi Army, being the battalion commander and the BCT commander, needs to be going and what areas of operation they need to be concentrating on, like this neighborhood or that neighborhood. I think they should be really focusing efforts there and here is why based on my intelligence. This is what it shows based on the number of attacks that are launched. That they understood how important that was, I didn't feel that they made that connection, that it was driven home in their training. You cannot be a successful advisor unless that part is happening because if not you're operating in a vacuum and you're operating independently from the bigger picture. You're really dwelling on the small stuff, making sure that the brigade S-3 knows how to draw phase lines on a map. I think we failed in the training and having the MiTT understand the bigger reason you're there. It's not a matter if the S-2 knows how to read the weather report right and that the S-3 knows how to draw operational graphics in accordance with our operational graphics manual. They can draw graphics, they can do operations, just let them do that part, but they don't understand it. They can have a great functional staff and be able to regurgitate the MDMP process in accordance with western standards of training in an Iraqi battalion and brigade. Yet if you don't have the connection with the coalition forces and a unity of effort following through, it doesn't matter. It all just goes down to refrigerator art when they pull the graphics up. It's not going to matter. I don't feel that they were impacted with the importance of that because it wasn't driven home to us. Outside you are all an organization MiTT-wise; the next organization that you're going to be

highly dependent on and working with includes a U.S. Infantry Battalion, not just Iraqis. I think we understand that we are going to be working with these Iraqis all the time. Then there's the matter of oh by the way, here come these Strykers down the road. Did you know they were coming? No. Which company is that? Don't know. You just didn't understand that. I think that is another...you didn't have the subject matter of expertise training that when we went through training. I will say this and even tell the guy out at Fort Riley, Kansas, you don't have the subject matter expertise right now in your cadre training that level of detail that needs to be part of the core tasks of these advisory teams. They don't have it because if you look at the number of guys that have pulled advisory duties that are cadre out at Fort Riley. The numbers are not what they need to be nor are they ever going to get there. That's a failure, failure to the "Big A Army" because we aren't prepared to do this. The training out at Fort Riley is good core, soldier-lever task training, but when it gets down to the PhD-level kind of stuff that you need to be doing as an advisor, I call it PhD-level stuff, but something above common soldier tasks as advisor. We still fall short because the experience is not there. John Nagle is a perfect example. Everybody jumps up and down about him and his understanding of counter-insurgency, which he has a good understanding of counter-insurgency, but what understanding does he have as an advisor in Iraq? He was never an advisor. You take that and you go how many times did he go out with the Iraqis and have to get the Iraqis to put together a battalion and/or brigade operations order and assist them in doing that and going out and seeing them execute that and then working through all these things that the Iraqi Army doesn't do well like logistics? He has no experience at it, none. Yet he is one of the premier trainers that they have out at our organization that is responsible for training MiTT teams. I'm not knocking him personally; that's just an observation that I have. He's a good counter-insurgency guy, but who is bringing back that experience? It's just like any other, and even though they are not TRADOC, FORSCOM is responsible for the training out there, it's just like any other institution, Rob, we bring institutional expertise back to the Infantry Center and the Armor Center and the Aviation Center. We make them instructors – gunnery instructors, instructor pilots, instructors of our small groups and our Captains Career Courses. They are combat veterans. It's a concerted effort that we do that. We bring back the combat experience and put it through our institutional training and they train the guys we're sending back out there. MiTT teams are not doing that. We're taking the combat experienced dudes and saying, "Thanks very much for your service as a MiTT guy. You're next assignment is going to be the SGS at FORSCOM headquarters. Now, with you it's different. You kind of still have a foot in the door of doing stuff that's related to this in the organization that you're in, but what I see down at the MiTT team-level, very little has been brought back to the institution that we're using to training these people other than you've got some dude that spent a tour in an infantry battalion or a special forces group in Afghanistan or something like that. You're getting some institutional experience there, but it is a different kind. Those guys were trained to go out and do that and advise in those situations, but you have to have a conventional guy that was trained to go out and do it, and then went out and did it, and this is what he brings back to the table. You can't do this haphazardly, this selection. Over here you're going to have a cadre and I tell anybody, you have to have a deliberate process for selecting your cadre. It should start over in-country with IAG feeding that stuff back to HRC.

////////////////////END OF INTERVIEW////////////////////////////////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 21 July 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Lieutenant Colonel Eric Welsh

**2-7 Cavalry Commander**

By

Major Robert Thornton & Mr. Mike Lee  
Joint Center for International Security Forces Assistance  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Date of Interview 01 MAR 2008

**LTC Welsh:** I'll start it with a graphical depiction, and I'll apologize up front, Sir, because I'm not an artist, but I'm a visual person like most men are. If you know anything about horticulture, know anything about planting stuff, it's really this simple, and this is my visual of how I saw it, and I'll answer your question of how you assess, how you take that assessment and the feedback mechanisms, and then push back to achieve our operational and strategic objectives inside of Iraq. Really at the tactical level when you're fighting it, you have to consider and be mindful of all the sensitivities associated with each of those levels. So, PRT, PTT, IPs, MiTTs, IA, what else do you have on there?

**Mike Lee:** Did you have any border people?

**LTC Welsh:** We didn't have the BTT teams, that was with brigade.

**MAJ Thornton:** But you had some DOJ folks in Padush.

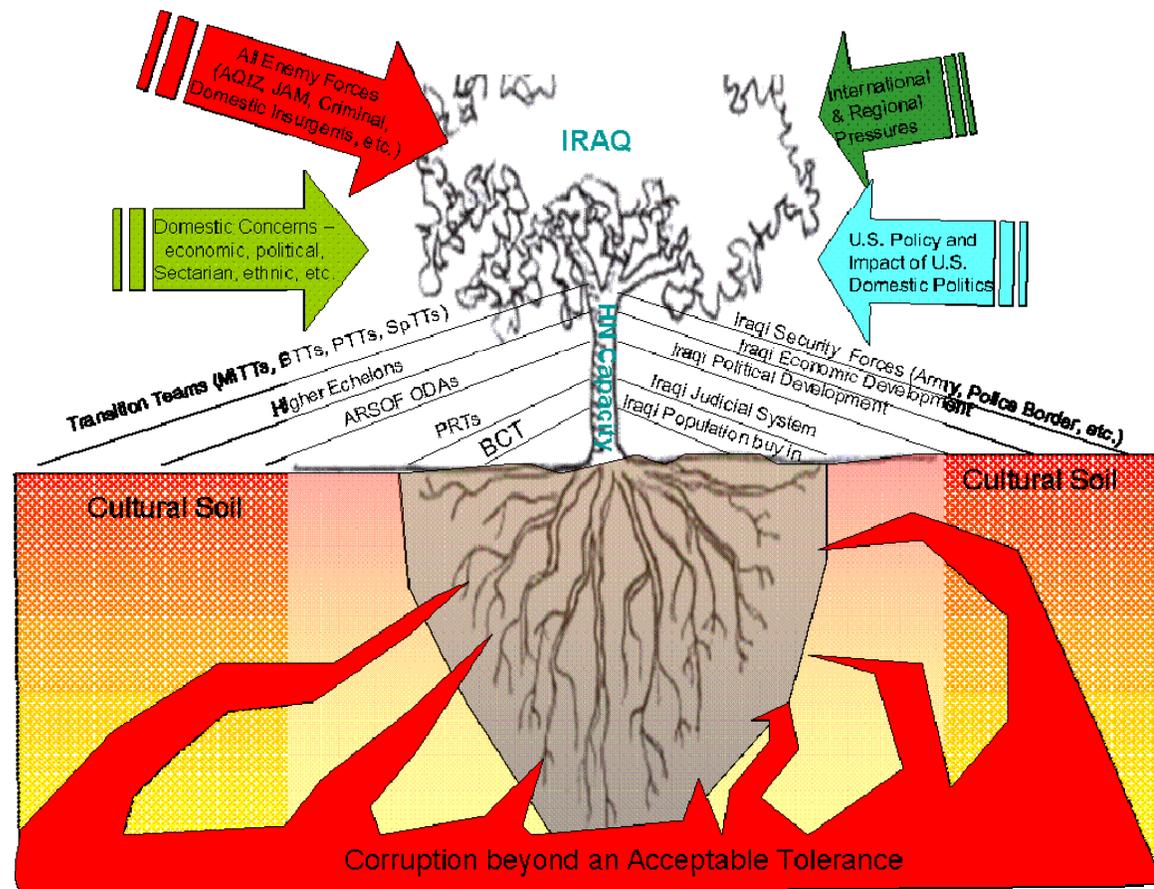
**LTC Welsh:** We had ODA; what level of classification are we at here?

**MAJ Thornton:** All UNCLASS.

**LTC Welsh:** So I've got to talk UNCLASS.

**MAJ Thornton:** You've got to talk UNCLASS.

**LTC Welsh:** Okay, well that's going to be hard, but I'll do my best. I just wanted to make sure we're clear on the classification level. What else? (Ed. Note- LTC Welsh is now going to the white board – I've included a copy of the graphic below



**LTC Welsh:** If this would be a tree, not a lollipop, this is earth, good planting soil. It's something that's fertile that you want to plant in, and you dig it up and you go ahead and put this tree in, this sapling if you will, and the branches and everything that would come off it. I had actually a good picture of it hanging inside the conference room, and what you had branching off there, these would be support mechanisms because there's wind, there's all kinds of things that try to interdict/infect your tree. There's insects, there's wind and elements, let's see what else; and those would be simply put as insurgents, political influences. Rob can talk about it and we'll talk about that in a little bit, but just the levels of bureaucracy and things that are trying to be imposed upon those lower echelons, whether it be PTT teams, or IPs, or MiTT teams, and IA, PRT, DOJ, it goes on and on because we had the prison and stuff. So, if you look at it in simple terms of here's a tree, it's a sapling, so this right here, the trunk that's going to hold this thing is not where it should be right now, and there's all kinds of things that interdict and blow it over, eat it up, infect it; but also this tree represents what we're looking for, which is a free, stable, secure Iraq which allows us to transition out with our coalition partners to let them do what we designed for them to do, which is govern themselves, feed themselves, do what they need to do, and into whatever century or timeline this could impose to them. But in order to be successful here, you have to plan something that works. Now, what was our role? Our role was simple; well it's not simple, it's rather complex, but it's simple if you look at this. You've got your PTT, you've got your Provincial Reconstruction Teams, you've got your MiTT teams, you've got you IPs, you've got your IA, and all these are support mechanisms, and it will differ whatever province or whatever location you're in throughout Iraq. So, quite honestly, where we were, we basically inherited a lot of good work that was done by a lot of great brigades and a lot of great

MiTT teams starting when General Petraeus was division commander in Mosul, and it went through ebb and flow. If you look at the history of Mosul, it sort of went like that, and now it's down like this again, and that's UNCLASS, you can read that off the ticker tape at Fox News or CNN. If you look at where they initially started in Mosul, everything was just blankets and handshakes and good negotiations and relationships with the tribal leaders, the sheiks, and everybody else. It's a complex environment in Mosul. You've got Yazidi, you've got Christian, you've got Muslims, you've got Shia, you've got Sunni, you've got Kurds, you've got some Jewish population out there. I mean, you name it, it's there. But that's okay because that's the history of Ninewa; it's the history of Mosul. Mosul, they consider themselves Mosulis, and if you've got a collective group of people from Mosul, their original origin, and they can trace it back, is to Abraham, or to Christianity, or to Judaism, to Yazidism, to whatever it happens to be, or Shia or Sunni; and they work much like if you look at it in the context of New York City. You go to New York City and say, "Where are you from?" "I'm a New Yorker." You don't ask them if they're Italian, you don't ask them if they're Jewish, or Greek, or whatever. I mean, they're New Yorkers, and they have their own way of doing business, and so does Mosul. At one point, eight million, two million, second or third largest city, depending on who you talk to; this city is very diverse, and it's split by the Tigris river down the east and west sides. Going back from the early nineteenth century, you've got Kurdish influences, and if you trace it even further back, you've got Greek influences and great battles that happened there and on and on. But the people of Mosul still tie themselves to Mosul. "I am a Mosuli. I don't see myself as Sunni, I don't see myself as Shia, I see myself as an Arabic person," and they work and get along. Also, by the way, over 28,000 of the senior leadership inside the Iraqi army, before we ever had the invasion back in 2001, was from Mosul. 28,000 of the senior leaders, generals, senior colonels, leadership, political appointees with Saddam, came from Mosul. And they were Shia, they were Sunni, they were Kurdish, they were Yazidi, they were from all walks of life, and they understood that. Now, my point here is this, and I'll talk specifically about each one of these, but let's talk the MiTT for instance, there was a point over there, and again this is LTC Welsh speaking on behalf of what I saw on the ground, and this is going to be probably converse from what other people believe...

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, that's OK – it important to us to capture how you saw it.

**LTC Welsh:** There was a point on the ground that...are MiTTs important? Absolutely; this goes back to decision points as commanders, and since you're a senior O6 (ed. wrt Mike LEE) retired, and Rob's been there and done that, there are points when you go through the scope of... you know, you lay out a plan, you execute the plan which you cross the LD, and then at that point no plan survives first contact; things adjust and change. We were at a point during our occupation, we inherited a really good situation, we inherited where the MiTT teams had really transitioned the authority over to the Iraqi army, and what we had with those 28,000 former Iraqi army officers, senior leaders and stuff, are people that really want to take the onus and ownership and get back their Mosul. They understood that their government was screwed up. You don't have to tell them, they're not stupid, they understand that there are all kinds of sensitivities and bureaucracy that are screwed up. They also understand that we're trying to, in some cases, impose layers of bureaucracy upon them that work for us in our army, but don't work for them in theirs because it never has and never will, and I'm sure you've heard that before. So, what I'm trying to tell you is we went in there on a pretty good up-slide and General Mixon decides to

capitalize on it and goes, “Hey, we have an opportunity here, we have an opportunity to transition authority, we have an opportunity to take this and put it into one combined arms battalion’s hands. “We had very good MiTT team chiefs at the time. We had on the west side Colonel Mike Senters, and on the east side we had... who was over there?”

**MAJ Thornton:** Howie Brewington.

**LTC Welsh:** Howie Brewington. I’m sorry, I changed MiTT teams, and I had three different teams in the course of that. Mike Senters, being an aviator, but more importantly a maneuver fires and effects guy, understood how to motivate. He understood how to excite his counterpart there to do what he needed to do, which was Colonel Tahah. He could get him to do what he needed to do. Oh, by the way, Colonel Tahah had twenty-one years of military experience in the Iraqi army, and all he needed was, at times, a little prodding and motivating to go out there and do what he needed to do. He had very good battalion commanders at the time. Those that were bad we pretty much had the ability to influence through them for them to get rid of them. So what you had were some pretty good warrior battalion commanders. You had very good majors that they had as XOs and S-3s who had military experience. Where they lacked experience was really at the skill level 10, these privates and sergeants and stuff, so we fixed that by having a basic training academy that they ran, which was down south and then went up around the eastern portion of Al Kindi which you’re familiar with. Now, because those things were put in place by brigades that came before us, the Stryker Brigades and stuff, we inherited a very good situation. Now, the decision point by the CG was, “Hey, instead of keeping a full-up army presence of coalition forces inside the city with one on the east and one on the west, let’s transition to them, and, oh by the way, let’s be in a position where we can react to contact, and do what we need to do.” And we did that. So what did that put us in? That put us almost in like a four to one ratio of Iraqi army to US forces, and we literally had broken down throughout the city, you had influence of two brigades, essentially, throughout our battle space. Now, Rob can tell you about his brigade, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade specifically, but in the southern portion of our AO you had 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade influence of IA. And then over here out to the west you had the 3 ID, 3<sup>rd</sup> Iraqi Army Infantry Division that they had, which had... I think it was their 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade that had influences out to our west, which was back towards where, just on the west side of Badush Prison. Mike, are you familiar with Mosul? West all the way out to Tal Afar and those cities and then up to the north of the Tigris. Now, when you look at that, that’s really a mixed match of combinations; a lot of descending geographical lines from the Iraqi Army and you have to deconflict that, and that’s hard because they want to know what’s theirs, what’s my responsibility, and then, “I have it.” When you start talking about higher echelons of coordination and stuff, that’s really... you’re talking like 30, 40-level kind of stuff, and that’s pretty complex for them; so that’s really where we transitioned our role, doing it with the MiTT teams and stuff, and making sure they understand boundaries, deconflicting battle space to make sure we don’t have any areas to recover. But they were quite capable because a lot of these former Sunni or Shia and all that had military experience, they were in Saddam’s army, and they were easy to co-opt, bring into the fold, and understand that. And that took years, literally years, of good work by the 172<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Brigade and all the other ones that were over in Mosul before us to get them to that level. So we transitioned; we’ve got one battalion inside of Mosul and then all the outside areas, out towards Badush and all the way down to Salamiyah and all that and then all the way out to the west to the other Christian Kurdish cities that were out to the north and out to the east, Bartalah and those.

So, what did that mean for us? That meant the decision point of how do we get into making this work. That was very easy when you have a Mike Senters on the west and Howie Brewington on the east, guys that understood maneuver fires and effects, we literally had it set up for ourselves, and this is not a secret either, we set ourselves up almost like a special forces unit, meaning this, that the majority of the command and control was under the Iraqi army, under those brigades. So you had Iraqi army commanders, and what I did was interface with each of those three brigades; with 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, and then 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade when they moved them into the southeastern portion of the city. So, the three Iraqi brigade commanders, I basically, as a battalion commander, would be working directly with them. So, you go through mission orders, and you go through rehearsals or whatever you want to say. We did more CONOPS where we were going and getting intel predominantly from other avenues, other classified means by which we were getting intel, we ended up driving from a 20-80 of how we got intel to the converse of 80-20, meaning most of the intel that we got, there were direct intel-driven raids for HUMINT, and we did not have that when we first arrived. And we got to that 80-20 because of relationships because it is truly about who you are and your relationship with them (ed. note – the Iraqis). And I'm telling you, in this case, more is not better. More U.S. forces on the ground would not be better. More MiTTs would not be better. There was a point where the MiTTs were doing a great and wonderful job. They left because of personalities and things going on, and where the level of expertise was in the Iraqi army, we should have transitioned away from MiTTs totally.

**MAJ Thornton:** We could have given those resources over to the IP or something.

**LTC Welsh:** That's where you needed them. So, you look at it in simple terms of... and I know you've heard this before, I'm sure. This should not come as a surprise, but if you look at it in terms of some type of bar, in terms of where you want to go; you have your starting point down here, and then you have your end point. This gets back to a commander visualizing an end state, and this is something that we really need to get a hand on, and I think we did a pretty good job of that, but we have a long way to go. And this is something I think that would apply throughout all Iraq. You have a starting point where you stand up and train the IA, and you're heavy on the MiTTs here, but then you almost... remember the tree again, pulling off those support mechanisms because there's a point where keeping those support mechanisms supporting that tree too long damages the ability for the roots to grow because you've got to rely on them, and take almost like the training wheels off something. And we had taken the training wheels off the Iraqi army and transitioned authority back in December of 2006, or 2007, and then we were heavy on the MiTTs, but the MiTTs had done their job, and then what you had when they left in the early spring of that year, of 2007, we had a point and an opportunity to really take the training wheels off the MiTT and we should have. We had wasted manpower in the MiTTs because what you had were two fully capable brigade commanders on the east and west side, they had great 2ICs and XOs and S-3s, and what you had then was they were almost an inhibitor; in some cases they were a distracter by having them there because there were like, "Hey, stop what you're doing," and what you had was literally an opportunity to pull those training wheels off those MiTT teams and pull them out of there because the Tahahs, the General Nordeens, the Colonel Mohammeds understood what needed to be done and they did not need someone sitting over their shoulder like an OC going, "What are you doing?" You know what they call the MiTT teams at that point? The guys who come and drink chai. I don't need them here. Why am I reporting to them? I have transitioned authority to the Iraqi army, I understand my job, and

more importantly, the MiTT teams give them what in relation to combat power? Zero. They give them nothing. They are more like... I mean, they have a true cavalry scout mentality. Where is the enemy? Where are they at? I know the city, let's go. And that's why we had most of our very good effects in relation to HVTs, caches, and everything else really opened the door right around January 2007. It opened up because of the switch up. We had to take the training wheels off of them and go, "This is your city; where are they?" Then you can maximize those effects because they don't have money to pay informants and stuff, so they would basically set up their own intelligence collection, they set up their own informants, and what we did was, okay, proof positive; we've got cache. We went through and went with them to provide them that additional outer cordon and combat security that they needed and we could show you classified storyboards of the maximized effects from ATTs. This battalion, and these are sheer numbers, thirty-five percent of the HVTs, high value targets with target numbers associated with them in Iraq, were detained in the course of that twelve months by this battalion. Thirty-five percent of the total. So, if you think about one battalion; there were twenty-seven battalions in Baghdad. The question is did we do that alone? Absolutely not. We did that with our brothers (ed. note – LTC Welsh is referring to the Iraqi Army). We literally fought as a special operations force type of unit because we had no choice. The surge and the main effort was in Baghdad, and no doubt it should have been, but when you start pulling all the combat power away, Iraqi army forces and MiTTs and stuff, and send them down to Baghdad, what we were faced with was sink or die. What are we going to do here? Well, I'm going to swim. It might not be pretty, but we're going to swim. And we swam together, and we sat down and we literally with the Tahahs and the Nordeens and the Mohammeds and all of them, and we literally understood, "You have combat power, I have combat power. You have information I don't have, and I'm never going to get it because you are Iraqi and you understand this city better than anybody." Those brigade commanders grew up there. There were lieutenants through colonels there. They knew that city inside and out. They knew what was good, what was bad, where we needed to go get effects, and we literally... if you look at it in terms of a snake of some sort, sitting there with what we had to achieve, we literally were able to whack off the pieces that mattered. So we literally could go, "Got to take the head off that snake," and you set up a line of targeting across the city from the west side to the east side, which, by the way, were interconnected. There wasn't just a west side insurgency threat, an east side insurgency threat, a northeast side insurgency threat, which was always the template, like they were separate and not tied together. They were absolutely tied together, and then you say, "Okay, well you're fighting Al Qaeda in Iraq," which wasn't a really big threat when we first got there; mostly it was former Saddamists and Baathists who were disenfranchised. So how do you keep yourself from fighting in two different directions? You co-opt those guys that say, "They hate Al Qaeda way more than they hate you." I mean, Al Qaeda is going into their houses and extorting them, kidnapping their families, raping their kids, doing just unthinkable acts, and those guys were a professional force, and they appeal to you as a military person. "I just want to be able to take care of my family; I have no job, I have no way to eat, I'm being extorted; if I want to drive down the street, I've got to pay a hundred dollars to get a thing of fuel from some guy who basically extorted and held up a fuel truck somewhere. So how do I get to where I want to go in life, because I can't get a job? I want to help you; can you help me?" "Yeah, you want to help your country? You become Iraqi Security Forces. Go through a vetting process to make sure that you aren't part of something else and you're not in the biometric system for being an HVT or something, and then we'll talk," and we literally able to do that. We took a lot of those guys and put them right back in Iraqi army uniforms, not

because we decided, but who decided? The Tahahs, Mohammeds, and the Nordeens decided, who were already in that position as brigade commanders, “I need these guys.” And they were the ones who told us where to start. So you pull these guys back into the fold, and what happens? Where you were fighting an insurgency of maybe two percent of a population of 1.9 million is how much? A lot of people; you now aren’t fighting that two percent because they’re like, “Wait a second here; they’re absolutely sincere here, I’m getting a job, and I’m going back, and I get to fix my country.” Not a neighborhood watch per se, not a tribal leader council, not a sheik awakening thing; it’s like, “This is your country, this is your city; what’s it going to be?” “Well, I want to have a job, I want to take care of my family,” because ultimately, essentially, these people, that percentage, really want to get their country back, and they really want to be a part of the solution, not a problem. The problem we have is this one percent, and it’s just like bad soldiers; it’s that one percent, it’s not the other ninety-nine percent, it’s that one percent, and that one percent are they Afghanistani Al Qaeda? No. They are truly a hybrid, if you will; they call themselves Al Qaeda, but their theologies and ideologies totally differ in some cases, but they would be the...I would call them the flavor of the week. And these flavors of the week would show up, and you know what they really were, ultimately? Just basic, plain criminals. People who wanted to make money; they were racketeering. They were the people who were making money off flour plants, every shipment of flour that went to or from. They were making money off the government-purchased foods that were sitting in warehouses, making people never take it out of there, saying, “If you take it out, I’m going to kill you,” so, they could extort the people and hold them at bay. They were the people who were taking every fuel packet of every fuel tanker that was moving back and forth from Syria or Iran or up in the south Tigris river valley; saying, “Kidnap it, take it, siphon money off it – the fuel cans, propane, cars, weapons – bringing them in from different places, like the Indian wars, like us. We had guys from back east getting the automatic load rifles and stuff, and they weren’t necessarily for the Indians, but they weren’t for the cavalry either. They were just about making a buck. So what you really had was this was your true threat which you had to eliminate was that, not just criminal though. Basically, when you’re cutting into their money operations, they want to interdict you, and they want to create the presence of fear, they want to create the presence of instability, and then you had what I call the diehards. The diehards were that even less than one percent that no matter what you do, they’re going to die. They strap the S-vests on them; they try to VBIED it into the FOBs. They would sit and fight in the house, and that’s who you had to eliminate first. When you go to the head of the snake there, literally what you had to take off, the rattle or whatever it happened to be, you literally had to eliminate that less than one percent of those diehards that had the venom. The rest of it, it followed because once you got those guys, and you set them down, and you put them through the Iraqi detainee system, and they start doing their... because they have trained intelligence interrogators, not torturers but interrogators, that literally could get that information from them and co-opt them. And then the other parts of the snake were that other fraction of that one percent, let’s say for the sake of argument that it’s about a thousand guys. What you had were some of these former 28,000 Iraqi army people, leaders, that absolutely hated Americans because prior to us ever arriving there, they had family members killed or detained or whatever. The tribal sheik of the (XXXX 25:14) tribe who literally had ties to Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and everything else. General Petraeus personally knew him, personally knew that he was a good man, but because he was directly associated with Saddam, he knew Saddam and worked for him on his cabinet, he was detained and thrown into Abu Ghraib. Well, he was released when we were there, and the first thing we did was what?

Why is he on the target list? And then, instead of detaining him, we went and treated him with dignity and respect like a sheik should be, a true sheik not a fake sheik, a real sheik. We asked him, "what's going on here?" General Petraeus thought you were a pretty good man." He goes, "I have a lot of anger. I've had brothers, I've had family members detained and killed from coalition, some of it founded, some of it unfounded." Everyone wants to paint me as this evil monster of what I'm doing." He was the biggest catalyst for getting that snake of that two percent and getting them on our side.

**MAJ Thornton:** When did that happen?

**LTC Welsh:** March. He was dead by May. He was dead by May. We had secret meetings going on with him, he totally changed things. That venomous less than one percent of those diehard Al Qaeda, more like criminal insurgent racketeering guys, walked up as he was coming out of a mosque on a Friday, put a gun to his head, and shot him straight in the face.

**MAJ Thornton:** With regard to some of the politics that were out there and identifying where a guy had a dual role; he had legitimate, or seemingly legitimate, business interests on one side, but he was also an AIF facilitator, or in some cases a key player. I know it never really got resolved while I was there, but you were working on it with LTC Abdul Qualec the 1/2/2 IA CDR, it was a pretty serious problem in our IA BN AOR, just to the northwest, I can't remember his name, but there was a 1990 sheik, or fake sheik that was up there.

**LTC Welsh:** He died.

**MAJ Thornton:** I knew it was just a matter of time.

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, because you literally... what you had was really a very delicate balance of the training wheel of pulling things together. We literally won them over. We went through a true awakening of when things changed and really got far better for us was May. We had squeezed them to a point of sink or die or swim, and the insurgents, that less than one percent that I was talking about, because of all the pressure they had been getting because we rolled up countless caches and all of that, and then literally they had nine VBIEDs in the course of three hours. Nine... and I'm not talking the eighty pounds of explosive in a little Hyundai or something like that...

**MAJ Thornton:** Big ones like at 4 West?

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, I'm talking about two to four thousand pounds of homemade explosives thrown in dual axle semi trailers that they placed at strategic locations and detonated. They totally failed. Absolutely; and that was going to be the big, you know, they thought "We're going to show the world we're kicking their butt in Mosul." They absolutely failed, and they failed because the Iraqi army found and detonated the one at the northwest side of the bridge, 1/2/2 battalion up at Eagle. Now, they lost an Iraqi army soldiers that day and one IP. Those are the ones that found that the vehicle driving towards that location and they engaged and destroyed them before they got to where they were going, but obviously it was at the cost of personal life. Now, did they level a bridge up in the north? Yeah, it was a little daily bridge that they leveled

up there, and they ended up destroying the outside remnants of an IP station which was all covered by CNMs and stuff. But the story was that... you've got to think at that point we transitioned to one battalion, we had relationships with them. They had cross-talk going throughout the city from the Iraqi police to the Iraqi army to the quick reaction forces and the scout weapons teams and everything to the point where they literally engaged and destroyed, probably... their counts were they destroyed 300 plus insurgents. I think the count is probably closer to seventy to eighty insurgents were engaged and destroyed by small arms fire and a combination of scout weapons teams and stuff. They never broke out the 600 out of the transfer jail, the detainees that they wanted to. Now, you've got to remember, going back to the early part of the year, February, they broke twenty-eight highly trained HVIs, tier one guys, tier two guys, that were foreign fighters out of Badush Prison which was run by DOJ, which we didn't control by the way. So they were trying to do the same type of spectacular effect at the transitional jail, and show that the Iraqi police was incompetent, the Iraqi army was incompetent, the coalition was incompetent, everything else, and it failed. More importantly, those bombs, those VBIEDs, detonated outside their intended targets. One blew up a bank, one blew up a very nice market area that they had, one blew up in a neighborhood, another neighborhood, another killed kids, killed a lot of very prominent Iraqi army members who were sort of on the fence there, the indifferent people. Now, imagine you as a family member sitting in your neighborhood, and you're not necessarily for what's going on, but you're not necessarily against what's going on, and you're sort of passive to these insurgents that are driving around because they're not really bothering your way of life, you know what I mean? They're not really affecting you, so you just sort of like a New Yorker would be. Think about it, big city, big city mentality doesn't necessarily affect me, so why should I care? So, what happened? By that happening, it totally opened up their eyes, and they said, "Screw this," sort of like 9-11 did to the New Yorkers. When you start leveling the twin towers and doing things then all of a sudden people are like, "Wait a second here, this ain't right. I don't like it; you're affecting my way of life here." It affected their way of life and people literally... we had so much targeted intel, the phones rang off the hook for the Iraqi army counterparts. We barely had enough time in the day to roll up all these people. We rolled them up though, and with evidence. I mean the huge caches we got, they're insurmountable; they would boggle your mind. We had to bring a PLS truck after truck to load this stuff up and destroy it. A lot of it was so big, the caches, we literally had to drop bombs on it. One of the guys... talking about the snake again, one of those former disenfranchised Iraqi colonels who was an intel officer who joined this Al Qaeda threat, this one percent, literally said when we detained him, I remember sitting him down in Colonel Mohammed's battalion, and he goes, "I've just been brought here out of Anbar to be the emir." I'm like, "Yeah, right. What proof do I have?" He goes, "I'll show you," and I go, "Well, why would you show me? You were in Abu Ghraib; you hate Americans." I told the whole story, and he sat there for two hours, and he talked. He finally said, "Because honestly, they are blowing up, killing children, and cutting off arms; I can't do it. It's not me. I'm an Iraqi. I can't... I'm not going to do it anymore. I don't necessarily like you. As a matter of fact, I hate you, but I hate them more." Those were his exact words. I said, "Well, why don't you show me?" So he literally, and I'll go over this again in storyboard, drive out west to the tier one hotspot of the Tal Afar Road and just before you get to the Badush Prison, there's this huge chicken farm, and this huge chicken farm literally had six huge warehouses. These six warehouses, you can pull it up in the graphics on the map, it's all documented, again; but these warehouses, there were six of them, literally linear, about a hundred meters long and about

eighty foot wide. And we got the guy in the vehicle, and he goes, "I'll show you." He loads up in the vehicle. We secure the guy, blindfold him and everything else, and we drive out there, and he goes, "It's right there." "Alright, let's see what you've got. We've got the Iraqi army with us, and we pull up there, and he goes, "It's here, there's two caches here," and I said, "Okay, I'm going to have my guys out and start searching," and go back and nothing. It's 116 degrees that day, it's a July day, just before the Fourth of July, and we come back and go, "Dude, you're pulling our leg; ain't nothing here." He goes, "Any chickens there?" "No, there are no chickens." If you go to a chicken farm, there's chicken crap and stuff where the chickens used to be. He goes, "Any feed or anything there?" And I go, "No, it's totally clean," and he goes, "Are there any men there?" I go, "Yeah." He goes, "Ask them what their job is." So, we're playing this game; I go over and go, "What's your job?" and the guy goes, "I'm the security guard here." I'm like, "Okay, the security guard for what?" Because all of a sudden it clicked, "What are you the security guard for?" "I'm the security guard for this chicken farm." So I go back to the detainee and I go, "Okay, you can show us where it's at?" He goes, "Okay, pull those other guys away, and I'll show you exactly where it's at," and he goes, "go to the first warehouse." We walk in, open the doors, we could have set a FOB up in here and you would have never detected what was in this warehouse. I mean, no kidding, documented with the evidence and the proof. We walk in there and he goes, "It's right here." My sergeant goes in there, and there's nothing there, and he goes, "There's nothing here." He's pulling everything, there's cement floor and everything. The guy goes, "You're doing it wrong." He comes over, and there's a pulley system that moves these little feed trays up and down, these little long, linear shafts to feed chickens when they were in the coops there. He comes over and there's a pulley system, and he grabs the one cord over here, he literally goes pull, pull, pull, he walks over, there's a cement thing there, he slides it right out of the way. Underneath this warehouse... full of cache. It's got a medical facility where they've got antibiotics, IVs, everything you could ever imagine, and, oh by the way, out on this road, because Rob here has driven it a couple of times, is nothing but a tier one hotspot. This thing was full of improvised explosives.

**MAJ Thornton:** We did a number of searches up there; I've been inside that.

**LTC Welsh:** You'd never find it in a million years without this guy. He goes, "But that's not all," and, oh by the way, they have wounded guys in there that we had got in a firefight previously that they were treating that we pulled out of there. So, we go down to the last warehouse, he goes, "It's in here." I go, "Hey, I'm not going to play the game with you; where's it at?" So we go out there, walk over here and he goes, "It's right here; it's right up there," and I'm like, "There's no roof on these things, they've got tin roofs," and he goes, "There's a ladder on the backside of the building." So, our guys walk out, and sure enough, there's a ladder. We pull the ladder over, put the ladder up, the guy goes up and he looked, and I go, "Open it up." He goes up, there's a drop ceiling here, he pushes it up and out of the way, and up there is S-Vests, mortar tubes, mortar rounds, you name it. All the stuff that was there interdicting COP Eagle was found there. That includes live S-Vests and everything else with the ball bearings and all. He goes, "This is not the best part," and we go, "Well, this is pretty good, brother," and he goes, "No, the best part is those 28 HVIs that broke out of Badush Prison, they're still here in Mosul." "No they're not; we've been all over Mosul, they're not here," and he goes, "They're up north of here." So I go, "Okay, show me the way, brother." So we load him in the vehicle, and off we go. We start driving down this dirt road, and we're north of the city now, on these

dirt trails and hilltops out there on the west side of the Tigris River, and remember the bridge that got leveled, that they blew up? It was a hilltop, so we drive past the bridge and sure enough he goes, "They're swimming right now down in the water hole, that's them swimming." And they were because it was hot out, so that's what they did, they went swimming. So, we got security on those guys, and he goes, "Come with me," and we drive up this dirt road, all through these mountains and stuff, and we get to the top of this mountain in this little saddle, and we pull around, and it's a bunker. It's got... you'll be familiar with this; these things were like 200, 300 feet in the ground, they had air ventilation shafts and everything. You could never ever in a million years detect them from the air because that's what they were designed for. They were fallout hide shelters that they used when we bombed them with all our strategic air raids and everything else that we did, with the palace and everything else. So this was where Saddam and his cronies would hide. We didn't even know it was there. We pull up on this thing, and there's two entrances to it, and I get out of the vehicle and I walk up to this thing, and there's fifty-five gallon drums laden with HME, Det cord, and everything else, demo-rigged to blow. And inside there were brand new RPG launchers, everything you could imagine, enough to fit a brigade's worth of combat power inside here. We had to drop J-DAMs on it. They literally had to retrofit bombs that they were using in Afghanistan for these deeply buried targets for this thing. So, it took three days with B-1s to blow it up there was so much stuff in there.

**MAJ Thornton:** You said this guy, he was down... it sounds like he was down on Tiger Base with Mohammed; did Mohammed and them... did Triple Deuce interdict this guy, did they pick him up?

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, we interdicted him on a... we did total raid; everything was combined. So with our combat power, we literally had a relationship with them and fused the intel that we had and intel that they had. We literally, night after night, day after day, nonstop, seven days a week, had platoons and companies rolling with these guys with combat power to give them the combat power that they needed. They didn't need the MiTT team at that point because they understood what they needed to do. The part they needed was our additional combat power for the security to go do what they needed to do. So much so that they had gotten to the competence level by late fall that year before we were ready to leave that we would go with them, and they were literally doing the missions; they would push my guys out of the way, in a good way, and say, "This is my house, I've got it." So, that piece that we would have had more success of transitioning the MiTTs out would have given them more confidence and capability to do what they needed to do, and not create sort of a rift between them and the MiTT teams. It was tough; I mean, you had some MiTT teams that had the trust and confidence of them, which they had no problem with, but they really didn't need them, and that was their words, "We don't need them. We can reach you. We know where you're at. We'll get you when we need you. We got it."

**MAJ Thornton:** I want to come back to that, but I want to... there was an assessment, a personality assessment piece that I think you probably had to do as commander. You interacted with a lot of different folks, and you had to get a feel for who they were, where their loyalties were at, what their competency level was, and certainly some of it were Iraqi battalion commanders or their key staff members, IP police chiefs, but also because of the situation that you inherited, you also had to evaluate the different MiTTs and figure out what their strengths and shortfalls were and how they could be... you know, as they sent you information or

whatever, can you talk a little bit about how as a commander just how you went through there and you said, “Well, I think this battalion is okay at doing this, etcetera.”?

**LTC Welsh:** Again, that was... I think it was easy. We had a... here was the other good thing about opening up both sides of the city to one battalion. People would go, when you first think about it, you go, “What are they thinking? One battalion in the second largest city. What are you thinking?” And really, it made absolute sense when you look back on it and you did it because what you had, remember the dichotomy of the city, the diversity, you had basically a Kurdish side (ed. note – the East Side), Kurdish Iraqi army over here, it’s the Iraqi army but it’s predominately Kurdish, and you had that predominately Sunni Arab, Shia, Yazidi combinations over here (ed. note – the West Side). Really what Colonel Senter had started over there on the West side, whether it was a happening or planned really makes no difference, but it really absolutely worked was with that Iraqi brigade you had over here, you had thirty-three percent Iraqi, thirty-three percent Kurds, thirty-three percent of others: Christian, Yazidi, Shia, etc.; and it really symbolized where we wanted to go. Because for it to truly work you had to integrate and force the cooperation amongst themselves. What you had over here initially when we first started was ninety-nine percent Kurdish. So, to answer your question, where we had one American battalion on each side of the river, you had intel that directly affected both sides of the river because they had mutual support, they understood it was an insurgency, how to play Ma against Pa. I mean, they’ve been doing it for thousands of years, they’re great at it; he said, she said, blah blah blah, and then you’ve got he said, he said, he did this, he did that, and what you had to do was sort through that. So, this right here... when our battalion took this over here, I saw through a fresh set of eyes what was going on on the east side and what was going on on the west side. I went, “Well, wait a second here now, the west side isn’t all that bad, because first intel reports was that that Iraqi brigade is broken, they don’t know what they’re doing,” but they would say the same thing about over here, and what you had really was the best of both worlds because you could see really what was going on here and what was going here. And then you said, “Well, wait a second here, they’re both very competent, capable commanders, and they’re both getting great results,” but what their results were not is mutually supporting. They were not working together in conjunction, you had no synergy. So by putting one American battalion, separating it with two maneuver companies over here, two maneuver companies over here, working together and the cross-fertilization of intel and information, synergy was really the desired effect, we got that, and we got that in large part because of the personalities. What we ended up having before we left, where we had the ninety percent Kurd over here, we literally had them split in two where they would never accept any Arabs, Sunni Arabs, into their formation, and Shias, they did. They took them in because they saw all the effects this brigade is getting and it really is, you know, “Wow, that 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade’s doing pretty good, General Nordeen. In the past it was all about you doing your thing, but you know what, they’re getting a lot of great effects over here, and I think they’re getting the great effects because they have a lot of trust and confidence in the people based on different personalities and the true assimilation of all the different cultures inside that brigade.” “Oh yeah, I think you’re on to something here,” and he did the same thing. Then what you had was, not only that, you had Iraqi Army sharing information and doing cross-boundary operations back and forth based on intel and informants, and trust and confidence to get great effects. And then the IPs were sitting on the fence going, “Wait a second here,” you had General Wathiq, the provincial police chief, going, “Well, wait a second here, I want to be a part of this.” And what you had over here on the east side were great

IP police chiefs. You had the Colonel (XXXX 45:56) of the world, you had the Colonel Mohammeds, and what was his name...I'm getting old. Anyways, these Iraqi police over here through the north, through the central portion and the southern portion were doing outstanding things, but these IPs over here weren't doing such good things, and then you go, "Well, what's the problem here?" So what you did was you built that synergy between the IPs because I could do that too because I had control of the city, and I was able to get them all to the table, not to sit there on a Saturday, drink chai, share information, because they don't do it that way; it just does not work. You can't have what we call a targeting board, they won't do that. What you had to do was sit down like we are here and get their intel, and this had to happen daily, and I had basically twenty-eight primary engagements between battalion level all the way up to brigade level, between battalion police chiefs to IA commanders and everything else, but you had to get the intel and then sort through that information and get the right guys talking, and sometimes that required securing a police chief from the east side and bringing him to the west side, and sitting down with that Iraqi army battalion commander or police chief and figuring out what the truth was. They cross-leveled the information, and then us doing the deliberate CONOP within hours, targeting it. So, personality-driven, what you had then was the Iraqi army getting great effects, the Iraqi police chiefs on the east side getting great effects but the west side not, but then you go to the west side, and it's not shaming them but it's sort of a matter of pride. "Hey, you know, I saw that he's going to get promoted. He's done really great things for his country; what about you? Are you on the team, are you wearing the jersey; where do you stand?" And he goes, "I want to be part of the team," and the next thing you know, great effects. You get good caches, you get the HVIs, they get these people detained that had the evidence with them, and it worked magnificently. It worked magnificently because, in this case, more is not better. Could we have put more battalions in that city, of Americans? Absolutely, but you wouldn't have the same effect because it was sort of the tree, pull off some of the MiTT tethers off the IA, and let it just grow - it was contagious. From May 16<sup>th</sup> through the fall, it was absolutely contagious. It was to a point where it was as safe as Ramadan in October that they've had in seven years, and you go, "How is that possible?" It's possible because you had great Iraqi Security Forces working together, which by personalities and getting the right people to the table and a mutual respect of warrior ethos between us that we were able to get what we needed. Now, was the time to start working security into other lines of effort. Once you had those detainees, you had the evidence, putting them back through the Iraqi justice system; the piece we broke there was with the intel, the counter-intel department. They had a really good guy in there and we had that piece humming too. I mean, they were building the forensics and the biometrics, the fingerprints and everything else, and forensics and ballistics on weapons to get the evidence and get these guys... and they literally, in Mosul, would have enough information to get these guys tried and convicted. The thing that Brigade affected and helped us with was getting the right judges because some of the judges were on the take (ed. note- see COL Twitty's and Reid Pixler's interviews for more insights). It just goes on and on, and once you eliminate one threat, it's like a weed. It will re-spring up somewhere else, and you've almost got to stay on top of it and pull these things out and stay to a point like the car dealerships, or the flour factories on the west side or the fertilizer plants up here and the propane plants down here, and we got great effects. Targeting financiers - we eliminated the cement extortion guy that was basically getting millions of dollars skimmed off the top out of these huge cement factories that were in our AO through false contracts and everything. We were able to get him rolled up and get the evidence to send him up to Baghdad, and able to get all of his connections through the Real Estate Department.

They had all kinds of illegal real estate properties going on that were brought over from the former Baathists, de-Baathification process; millions and hundreds of billions of Iraqi dinar. When you take away the finance, they squirmed because they were getting so much money internally to this very lucrative city that they weren't able to find the insurgents or the payoffs to those less than one percent. When there's no money, and those guys are motivated truly by money, not by ideology of Al Qaeda and that kind of extremist threat, it dried up. So, the local hires got less and less and less.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, how were you able to use, really during the early part but throughout I guess, the other things that were out there; be they MiTTs, PTTs, other folks, whether they be folks from the PRT; how did those assets help your understanding or help the understanding of the folks that worked directly for you in terms of building an operational picture that didn't... you know, you could sort of transition on? Because by the end, by the time we left, and I think we made that assessment, we were no longer needed, certainly not at 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion. Those guys had it, but the relationship between you and that battalion was solid. So, did you use those guys, is there any TTP for using those guys, any thoughts on using those guys that are out there, if they don't come with you but are already in place, and you have to sort of get to know them or whatever?

**LTC Welsh:** Which guys are you talking about?

**MAJ Thornton:** It could be the MiTTs, it could be the PTTs, because you fell in on kind of a bag of cats; I mean, a variation in qualities with different ideas about what they were supposed to be doing or what their relationship was, some of them were active duty, some of them were mixed bag active duty/reserve component, some of the PTTs were straight reserve component. So, how did you sort of grab hold of all that and use it to move it in a common direction?

**LTC Welsh:** I don't know, again, I just don't think it's hard. It's not hard in the sense that it's the part of leadership that we always gloss over. It's an intuitive part of motivating men and women and soldiers to get what they want to do. No one went over there with the intent, whether it was Reserves, National Guard, or active duty, to be a failure. We had great effects not only with PTTs and MiTTs, but redefining roles and readjusting their roles based on what the threat was at the time. Simply put, if you're not really in need of a high sit down, let's train the OC kind of thing, then they were able to transition into a lesser state of "Here's what we need to do." Each battalion and each brigade is different, each personality is different, so it's sort of like turning up the heat to keep your food warm on things that you need to because if you don't constantly reseed the ideas of what they need to do and how they're doing it, they can become complacent; not the MiTT and the PTT, the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police, so you have to constantly go back to that. You can remove three or four financiers with evidence, whether it's in the gold market down in the western portion of Mosul where they were extorting money, kidnapping ring, the fuel ring, the propane ring, all those were different because they had Ministry of Oil through the Al Qaeda ranks and all that. You remove them, but then you've got to go back, and they're going to reseed because they want to win. Sort of like we can kill a battalion commander, we can kill a brigade commander, we can kill a company commander, but you've got to remove those skilled-level people that with a lot of experience can do a lot of damage. For instance, when we first got there, daytime, we were getting mortar attacks on our

FOB, broad daylight. This isn't going to work. So within the first sixty to ninety days, we removed the mortar camps. So you put a targeting emphasis on removing mortar camps. You find out where the best line of sights are, the best crew sights, and you use a combination of scout weapons team, Iraqi army with SKT ambushes, the PTT teams and MiTT teams were able to sit in over-watch and support them, provide us additional comms we needed, and in one night we removed six to nine mortar crews inside the west side, removed them. Now, that is a skilled set, I mean, a guy that can get a mortar tube, hide it, and drop rounds in on you. When you eliminate that threat, whether it's detain, destroy, whatever, we did a combination of both, what happens is we went from nine to twelve mortar attacks a day to zero.

**MAJ Thornton:** Now the insurgents can't regenerate the skill set.

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah. Two to three months later you've got a mortar guy shooting, but he's missing stuff, and he's way off the mark, and sometimes he helps you because he's hitting targets he shouldn't be hitting, and then you build that IO campaign against them, going, "Hey, look what he's doing to your schools, look what he's doing to your local neighborhood." But then you also have to do what? You have to eliminate him. If you let that weed branch off into the soil it's going to be very hard to remove, so the delicate balance of weeding is... I could go out right now in my grass, and I'll have weeds out there. I can take herbicide and destroy all of it, but I'm not really achieving my purpose am I? - because I need the grass. So I have to do the delicate balance of going through and systematically weeding it out; very slowly, removing those weeds out of there. So it goes removing mortar crews, extortioners, kidnappers, racketeering, whatever it happens to be. So, you build a synergy with the MiTT, the PTT, and redefine their roles. The MiTT team got more into instead of just saying, "Let's do combat operations with the IPs," because they got that piece, you have to transition now into more of a traditional cop role of collecting evidence, collecting statements, and making sure that we're pushing that system along because we have to get them doing this totally themselves. Where the IPs were very proficient at doing raids and going out and getting caches and everything else, they lacked in relation to collecting evidence, doing the daily cop beats, going through the cities and making sure the local citizens were not in fact extorted. And when you show the people that you're out there not to shut down the cement plant, not to shut down the flour plants, not to shut down the car dealerships, but to eliminate those bad shadow structures that are there extorting you, you can be successful. And that was more of where the IPs transitioned to, and that's what the PTTs' roles transitioned to.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you have enough... and I said I'd come back to it, but I remember one of the comments, we sat with Colonel Senters and we sort of said, "Hey look, I don't know that back-fielding us with another MiTT team is really the best use of bodies coming in," and I think he probably sat down with you and sort of gave you what our going out assessment was on ourselves and etcetera. Did you have the authority to say, "Well, I'm not going to put anybody here at Eagle," or, "I'm not going to put much here at Eagle, instead I'm going to move it down to..."

**LTC Welsh:** No, because the MiTT teams don't work for me, you know that. MiTT teams work up under MNSTC-I, just like PTT teams do.

**MAJ Thornton:** So that never changed?

**LTC Welsh:** No, they were out there, but...

**MAJ Thornton:** No, I meant the authority never changed?

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, I rated them and stuff like that; I had ADCON relationships with them, but having said that, that whole... how we see our lines of infrastructure and command structure are totally different than the reality on the ground. The reality on the ground is when you get the reservist police chief who works at a state prison somewhere and stuff, you define roles of personalities, and you go, "Well this guy's really good and experienced in the correctional systems, and this guy has really good experience in relation to forensics, and collecting evidence and administrative skills in relation to this." Was it something that was clearly defined on paper? No. Was it understood man to man, "Here's what we need to do," and then constantly staying on top of it? Yes. Same thing with MiTT teams.

**MAJ Thornton:** We talked to some of the guys down at 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade (ed. note – the 2/1 CAV interviews collected for another study), some of the other folks, and we asked them the question, if you knew you were walking into a similar situation, rather than fall in on a bunch of stuff or whatever, if you were given the year and said, "Okay, battalion or BCT do the mission analysis and tell me where you come up short," and let's say you've got the MiTTs, you've got the PTTs, you've got whatever else it was that you identified as required resources, maybe it's just bodies and you figure out where they go in; is that a better system, so they go through with you from start to finish?

**LTC Welsh:** No.

**MAJ Thornton:** Why do you think that?

**LTC Welsh:** Right now the new battalion coming in right now is inheriting the existing plan; ninety percent of their training and what they need to accomplish is already told and dictated, whether it is fielding for new equipment and new training, or required 350-1, or warrior tasks, or whatever it happens to be, and what needs to really happen is, based on what environment you have, is getting those guys to you in enough time... I'd say they meet you in Kuwait. Honestly and realistically, with personnel shortages through the army and the bigger picture of what's going on, the soonest you should get them is probably down in Kuwait.

**MAJ Thornton:** There's too much stuff going on right now.

**LTC Welsh:** There is. There are too many competing demands in our Army. We sent people needing a year, or twelve months of stability back to stateside, family obligations, it goes on and on. The tax and burden we're putting on the Reserve and National Guard, it goes on and on. So, being realistic and understanding the bigger picture, if you're asking me, because I don't make those decisions, the soonest you could honestly really get them and really truly make an effect would be probably Kuwait or PDSS; before that, sixty days or ninety days before you go, having them come with you so they have an assessment of what's going on, go with the ground owning

maneuver unit that's going to be there, and then they have that sixty to ninety days to define roles and obligations and requirements based on the intel that they're getting, because you know and I know that you could send them to me right now for our deployment that's going to happen whenever, in the next twelve, fifteen months, whenever it's going to happen, and that's wasted or borrowed military manpower that we just don't have to give. Let those guys go through a reset, let them stay with family, let them do what they need to do. Realistically, ninety days out, when that battalion or that brigade has definitely got orders and definitely going to be ramped into going into theater, PDSS, they go together, and they spend that ninety days together and build that relationship, and then they understand based on the intel and the RIP/TOA briefs they're getting before they ever transition over there, they come back and spend that last sixty days and go, "Alright, where do we think we're at and what do we think we need to do?" And then, "What are the guys doing there that's working, based on their assessment of what they think we need to do better or what we should improve upon, build that into our plan." Giving those guys a year out or whatever, I think it's unrealistic and it's just wasted effort.

**MAJ Thornton:** What about an MRE? What about going to the MRE with you, or going through it with you?

**LTC Welsh:** That would be nice, but MREs all vary and differ in times. Sometimes you do them nine months out, six months ahead of time; nice, but not necessary. In an ideal situation with enough manpower and everything, perfect, great, send them.

**MAJ Thornton:** Part of what we're doing right now, we've got a guy in Iraq that went down with members of the Joint and CENTCOM staffs, and they're trying to assess requirements in 2009, 2010. What's it going to look like when you don't have as many BCTs next... whatever that number is, and that's still kind of soft right now, but once that infrastructure is so maybe MiTT teams can't go to... you know, there is no BCT at MAREZ or whatever, maybe it's at SYKES, or maybe SYKES has got all of Ninewa in terms of support; what does that stuff look like? So that's the reason I asked you those questions is it kind of informs on different possibilities for the future.

**LTC Welsh:** Here's what I would tell you again, and I'm not trying to push the answer off, but it really is a matter of the contemporary operating environment you're in. It really matters what that commander is telling you that's been there for twelve to fifteen months, what the needs are and the requirements are, and getting that ground honest assessment, and then scaling back what you need. I think us right now saying, "We need more MiTT teams," or, "We need more PTT teams," or, "We need more of this, more of that," our pockets for our country are not that deep, they're just not. We've honestly got to be flexible enough and agile enough that we adjust our plan, and I think realistic is sixty to ninety days out is doable, meaning this: by sending the MiTT or PTT teams to a unit that's going through an MRE six months out, five months out; okay, what if the environment doesn't require it? For instance, was there a need to have a MiTT team full time co-located on those FOBs that only had to add to more force protection requirements and everything? And the answer to me at the time is it wasn't necessary about six months into deployment. Those guys could have been better served back on a FOB going through some other mission analysis and other requirements that we need with daily engagements that they had

with those guys; getting them stronger and smarter and more reliable on themselves. So, to have a one cookie cutter solution, one shot fits all kind of thing just doesn't work.

**Mike Lee:** So you ran, you really... the leadership thing brought that out very well, and you kind of had, I don't know what term to use, the advisor attitude, and you did it with Iraqis and you did it internally with the U.S. side as well, trying to bring them around to see, "This is what the picture is," building on that what you wanted to have, that unity of command, but people had to be looking in the same direction, and it took the same kind of effort; not the same format maybe, but you're doing that with the U.S. side that you're doing with the Iraqis, and they wake up and say, "Hey, now I understand what you're talking about."

**LTC Welsh:** And we did. It's sort of like, and I'm all into analogies here, it's sort of like baking a cake. It takes certain ingredients, salt, sugar, flour, everything else; you've got to roll it, you've got to cook it at a certain temperature, and sometimes you've got to turn the heat down or turn the heat up, or put more of this in or more of that based on the personalities of the people eating the cake. I'm not saying we did nothing because I think we had great effects, and I would say, and I'm sort of biased here, but it was the model, it really was. By force of will happening, more of a happening than a plan, but by the grace of God and fate, we really had a great common understanding and a common operational picture of what we needed to achieve, and what my soldiers achieved in the course of fifteen months is absolutely phenomenal, and unfortunately it was 500 kilometers away from Baghdad. But it really should be... and I heard people refer to it; it was where we needed to go. I'll give you an instance, sometimes the insurgents would plan and prep, and then all of a sudden they would plan an attack on an IP station to try to show that the IP and IA couldn't work together. And we had the big eyes in the sky and everything, we could see everything that's going on and know what's going on, we're monitoring everything, and sometimes you just have to let it go. Sort of like the kid that... again, going back to the training wheels; you pull them off, what's going to happen to the kid? He's going to fall a couple of times. And I'm not saying Iraqis are kids, what I'm saying is that when they're out there, sometimes they're going to fall and get hurt a little bit or get their nose bloody. So, if you look at it, you can look at statistics, when I first started this methodology, the Iraqi Security Forces took a lot of losses, but it was sort of a natural process because it was necessary for them to understand the true cost. "I don't want to lose my brother, my cousin, my tribal family member, how do I prevent that from happening?" "Alright, you don't drive down the same road." Make them ask you and you sort of tether back and watch, and you're always there and able to react so if it got out of control, wham, you stomp right in on it, and we did that. But sometimes when a big VBIED went off in an Iraqi compound or something, and people died. Sometimes it was necessary for them to understand force protection is important, because a MiTT team could sit there and say, "Force protection, force protection, do what you need to do, this company commander sucks, blah blah blah, build this, build that," and they go, "Insh – Allah" You pull the MiTT team out of there, and almost like a crystal ball, you just know within six or seven days it's going to come, whoom, and then they're going, "Oh my God, this is terrible, this is horrific," "I'm not saying I told you so, but I told you so. Now, what are we going to do here? What's your plan?" "Well, we need to do this and that," and you have to help them through it based on the situation, and you're there to evac them; you know, when the 4 West police station got blown up back in February, you knew it was going to happen, it was a matter of time. You told the police chief time and time again, "Hey, you're infiltrated, you're

this, you're that," and sure enough, three VBIEDs in there, and it was timing, luck, whatever, we were within a hundred meters when that happened, and we reacted immediately, and the best thing that happened that day was they reacted, the city reacted. You had the crisis action emergency response from the governor, from the mayor, from the fire teams, from the other police chiefs, all descended to take care and CasEvac people out of there, and prevented eleven people from dying. And that was a huge wakeup call for them to say, "Wow, you're right. I do need to have my own force protection, you can't do it for me." "No, I can't do it for you. If you want to ride this bike, you're going to fall down a few times, but you know what? Get back on the bike and start riding again." And then they eventually go, "Oh, that hurts; I don't want to fall again." "Yeah, you're right it does hurt," but that was good for what we were doing. Can you apply that template to everyone? No, because there are different stages in that developmental process of getting where they want to go.

**Mike Lee:** With that particular area, but if you draw back or draw up another level for what you were doing and using, you could probably take your unit and fall in on another area and eventually get the gist of what's going on, and do the same thing.

**LTC Welsh:** Absolutely. And you go in with the full... it's sort of like a traveling arms room. If you look at it in the sense of I, as a commander, based on my estimate say, "Here's the situation we're at this point. Okay, I need more MiTT, I need more PTT, I need more PRT, I need more of this or that," and I plug and play based on circumstances and what's required. And as a commander, you've also got to understand that if you do it too long or too much, they'll redevelop their TTPs and they'll find and circumvent that. So you've got to pull things out, push things in to get the desired effects you want. And I know that sounds simple but it really works.

**MAJ Thornton:** No, it's a great point, Sir. So, maybe it's not so much that you need those assets way early on, but if you get them, say, in Kuwait where you can build a common vision for what it's going to be based on what you know; maybe more importantly that you have unity of command in order to say, "I'm going to move this over to here," so you don't have one set of guys that can't be moved or can't be rearranged or re-rolled based on the change in conditions. (ed. note – at this time I departed to interview the 2-7 CSM and Mike Lee took over the interview)

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, and you had a division commander... and I'll tell you what, General Mixon is a genius because he saw things that other... I mean, people would have said, "What are you thinking," but he saw that; he had the vision... because he went down, he rode on patrols, he understood the city, and he went down there, and he knew what had to happen. And he understood as a commander, "I don't need to tell you how to do your job, what do you need from me? Show me what's going on, what you're doing; what can I do for you? What capability do you need? I'll push that capability to you." And he did, and then the brigade command, the same thing. It was truly a cascading capability based on the desired effects you wanted to achieve to get you the end state that they shared, your commanders shared too. So, the unity of command really from division to brigade, and brigade down to battalion where you're actually executing this stuff, pulling that unity of effort together and getting their emphasis and capabilities from them, absolutely essential, and it works. You sit there at first going, "Man, I'm not really sure about this," you have some doubts, and then you start doing it and you go, "Wow,

this is powerful.” And it just had some effects that just couldn’t be measured. (XXXX 72:15) would be able to measure it, and you had to execute it and do it, and it worked.

**Mike Lee:** So if you took this whole... you know, you just went through this thing, obviously it’s well in mind and you’ve given it some thought during and after; where is it recorded?

**LTC Welsh:** That’s a good question, very good question. It’s recorded in our After Action Review that we have, Sergeant Major has a detailed one he can give you, the skill level of the soldiers; and I’ll essentially put it this way: we have four basic pillars of how we do stuff in skill level one. Every soldier is a soldier first, meaning every soldier has to be an expert on their ability to do marksmanship, and we do marksmanship about twenty-five meters out; we do marksmanship in the sense that it’s all the way through night fire, stress fire, flex fire, you name it. Every E-1 to O-5 can do that; they are shooters, and they are very competent and disciplined with their weapons system, whether it’s a crew-served weapons system or it’s an M-4 rifle.

**Mike Lee:** That’s at the battalion level?

**LTC Welsh:** That’s at the battalion. Then the other thing we’re all experts in is our first responder capability, not CLS, but first responder; our ability to do our basic immediate triage, whether it’s a gun shot wound or it’s a compound fracture to the wound, or whatever it happens to be, you’re an expert. And we go through deliberate (XXXX 73:41), and we (XXXX 73:43) to the brigade commander will talk about where we’re going with that. The other thing is battle drills. The platoons are executing these things, it’s not a detailed battalion order. It is daily battle drills; enter and clear rooms, react to contact, break contact, reengage the enemy, they just come second nature to them. And the other thing that is common to any soldier is physical training. And it’s not just pushups, sit-ups, run; it’s combat focused PT. Obstacle courses, road marches, getting used to all your kit. You know, you’re operating with eighty to ninety pounds worth of kit on in a contemporary operating environment that ranges from forty degrees in the winter to a hundred and twenty-five degrees in the summer. You start with those basic building blocks; everything else, the leader tasks and all that come, we build that right into it. So, the answer to your question is how do we capture that? We captured it in AAR. There’s a classified version and unclassified version we have, and then we have our XO/S-3... my S-3 that just left here that was over there with me, he just got... he’s the Chief Editor of Doctrine over at the armor school, Mark Reeves, and he’s putting an article together of how we operated over there. So that will come out shortly, he’ll be able to give a draft copy of it.

**Mike Lee:** Reeves?

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, Mark Reeves.

**Mike Lee:** And he’s at Knox?

**LTC Welsh:** Major Mark Reeves. Yeah. He’s the editor of the armor magazine.

**Mike Lee:** If you can depend on those basic skills, and you know all your soldiers, so whenever the trial comes they’re going to have that fortitude or capability to answer.

**LTC Welsh:** Yes, Sir.

**Mike Lee:** And that's your basis, that's your building block that you're starting with, then you take those guys out and you say, "Okay, now we're going to have that capability, but we're going to instill some of this capability in foreign security forces."

**LTC Welsh:** Yes, and we did.

**Mike Lee:** So that attitude, there's got to be some other kind of... there's more to it suddenly than there was before. So first of all, on your part, probably, and I don't want to just put words down here, but you've got to realize, "Some of my guys are very good soldiers, but they just aren't meant to do this part of it."

**LTC Welsh:** So they do other things.

**Mike Lee:** You put them where they can?

**LTC Welsh:** I put them where they're going to be best utilized on the battlefield, and that means sometimes a chemo, when we're not out doing NBC, is an S-4, a system S-4; or your fire and effects guy, who might be a captain but he's not school trained and he doesn't know anything about working the (XXXX 76:43) and everything else, but you have a great sergeant first class who's been doing that because he was a special operator for three years, he is operating your effects cell. Or an armor guy who has a mentality of, "I'm tied to a tank," you make sure he's cultivated in warrior ethos where he's a rifleman first because it's about being on the ground and interacting and the dynamics of people, and not being in some type of machine, driving down the road. So yeah, we were a hodgepodge, you could sort of guess here. We put the best personalities, which I can affect, in the right jobs. For instance, it's not taking a 35-Delta intel guy necessarily, who's never really done tactical intel, and making him your S-2. It's taking a former company commander who's been on two to three deployments, who has experience, and making him your S-2, who understands better than anybody, who's been out there fighting the fight, what intel we need to collect, what intel we need to have in order to execute a good CONOP. And that's how we operate, and it works. I mean, I can't overemphasize, if you're willing to take those people and put them in the right sets, you can have great effects.

**Mike Lee:** If this is the most critical thing, then you put those people, that's where you put your emphasis.

**LTC Welsh:** And you're taught that from day one in doctrine.

**Mike Lee:** We definitely are, but I think that it's a whole new application of it for people to realize; I think it takes some... in other words, from what I've done going around talking to people throughout the division, 1<sup>st</sup> CAV, that I don't think that every battalion commander would have been able to do the same kind of thing, or see the pictures so holistically of the parts, and understand the interrelationship between the parts.

**LTC Welsh:** A product of my experiences, Sir. I've grown up with leaders that have taught me it's about assimilation of information, and it's not about a cookie cutter solution, and you've been to Ranger School, and you've operated in that type of special operations environment and a contemporary conventional environment, and I didn't even talk about all the synergy we got from all our unconventional forces which is another tape measure in here. We got with Ranger and SF, and all that, I mean, wow. What we got from our JTACS, we were dropping 500, we were dropping whatever, and precision guided munitions. Understanding that there are some good tech sergeants out there that understand what they're doing, you've just got to be able to listen to them. "I can go riding with you, Sir. I can drop it on there now." He'd go into the side of an industrial area where they've got five VBIEDs rigged and ready to go, but we caught them with it in an underground facility where they had a bunch of their munitions storages and stuff, and he cleared the area out a thousand meters in each direction and you've got your JTAC right there talking straight up to those J-10s or F-17s or whatever it happened to be and "boom," we leveled it. And that sends a message; people are like, "Well, you destroyed all this area." "Absolutely. Here was the evidence, here's why we did what we did. Now, tell me how many civilian casualties." "Well, there are no civilian casualties, you just destroyed this area." "You allowed them to come in here and build this." The message to them, which Arabs understand is, it's an eye for an eye. You want to build it here? I'm going to destroy it. You obviously don't need it for your own commercial economic growth. You want to feed and allow the insurgents to operate there, and they understand, "Well, wait a second here. These guys found a cache." Our trademark was, find a cache, destroy the cache and destroy the building it's in. You clear the people out, you don't destroy innocent people. You clear the area out, then you level the building, and they're like, "Wow." That's a powerful message to them, and they understand that. They truly understand, "If I'm going to allow something to happen, they're going to destroy it," and you destroy it, and you do it totally within the confines of the legality of the law. You clear the people out and you destroy the cache. If it's a mobile cache, like a vehicle, and it's loaded full of RPGs and S-Vests and everything else, you destroy the cache. You don't indiscriminately go around and level cities and towns. It gets back to that weeding thing I was talking about. It's about the amount of force in relation to what you're trying to achieve. If you have a rifleman sniper, you don't drop a 500 pound bomb on the building, you eliminate the threat. Eliminate it with an escalation of force. That doesn't mean you're just out there shaking hands and handing out blankets, because we did that too. Those neighborhoods and those areas that worked, they were rewarded. They were given... we got the power back on, we got the water running, we got the sewage and the trash cleaned up; but if you want to live in filth and squaller and allow insurgents to operate, then we had more of a presence there.

**Mike Lee:** Insurgents themselves, and you talk about some people who obviously were in the business, but they were higher up who said, "I'm tired of this." How about the lower level, the fighter that would say...?

**LTC Welsh:** The fighters were predominately the cronies, the thugs as I called them. A lot of them were from outlying villages and towns. They were poor kids, poor people that didn't know any better, uneducated, that were brainwashed and doctrinized into, "I can give you a better life, I can take you away from this, you can fight the big evil threat." So it was an education process too. You take them in, you detain them, eighteen, nineteen year old kids, sometimes a sixteen

year old kid, and you just treat them with dignity and respect. You pull this kid in, and then they go back through the echelons of the detainee process, and then they're educated, and they go, "Yeah, you're right. What was I doing this for? What was I even thinking?" So, when you start eliminating the true diehards and elimination meaning detain or whatever it happened to be, then what happened is the rest of it said, "Well, I don't need this." And then you had some of those little thugs that were brought from the outlying villages that enjoyed the better life. They had a car now, they had power and prestige, what they thought was power and prestige, and they didn't want to give that up, and they would sort of rise through the ranks; and those guys you sort of kept a bead on, you kept an eye on, then you scarfed them up. But, we had great effects because it was really a combined effort, a joint effort in a lot of ways because of the other capabilities we had out there with forces, whether it was the Air Force, or the Navy, because we had those capabilities out there with us and systems they brought with them. It was absolutely phenomenal, absolutely phenomenal. And we all worked well together, we lived together, we played together, and we executed our mission together.

**Mike Lee:** Did you... this is talking to something else because I'm trying to gauge the development of Iraqi air assets - Iraqi air was almost nonexistent?

**LTC Welsh:** Yeah, it was nonexistent.

**Mike Lee:** Building, but not at the point where you could use it.

**LTC Welsh:** No, we could not use it. We used... our scout weapons teams were phenomenal, the two squadrons that we had with their OH-58 Deltas, those guys, I'll will tell you what, Lieutenant Colonel (XXXX 84:18) and Lieutenant Colonel T.J. Jamison from 1-17 Air CAV in 4-6; those guys were absolutely invaluable. Invaluable in the sense that we had the over the shoulder capability; when we executed these cordon searches and raids in these communities, we had them in there, whether it was ambush locations or over the shoulder capability when we went in and executed our intel-driven raids, they were phenomenal. I could show you tape after tape of things that they did, whether it was eliminating tier one hotspots or IED implacers or going in and providing us a suppression capability when we were in direct fire contact, on and on, and then just another ISR platform that we were able to get good intel of what we saw on the routes or what they saw. And we had constant meetings and joint integration with those guys inside our TOC.

**Mike Lee:** And as you got that information then, and you're getting more of the HUMINT side from your counterparts, you're feeding them at the same time what you have.

**LTC Welsh:** Well, yes and no. Did we feed intel to the Iraqi army? Yes. I was very close hold, like a poker player would be, with disclosure; you can't give them too much information because there is infiltration. They knew they were infiltrated. There were some people that were infiltrated, whether it was the chai guy or whoever it happened to be inside their organizations, and they were good at policing up who those guys were and taking care of them and putting them back through their legal system. But yeah, there was things that we disclosed to them as part of our information campaign, things that we disclosed maybe from a disinformation campaign to find out where the leaks and possibilities of where the information might be going. So, yes and

no. We shared a lot of information; they shared everything with us because of trust and confidence we had with them that they knew we would react to the information. I mean, the Iraqi army doesn't like to give a lot of information out if they don't think you're going to do anything with it because their life is in jeopardy. People have to understand that. They live there, and that is their home, we will leave and they will always be there. They have families, they have friends, and if you don't react to that information and do something in relation to affecting it, they could be the affected to the adverse. Because of that trust and confidence we were able to get a lot of very good intel, and it was incredible the amount of intel that we got and what we were able to shape the battlefield with.

**Mike Lee:** My big concern is that all of this information isn't going to flow, and that's beyond what I do, but still for the overall benefit of all those that are going to follow after you to even get a feel if they can look at the picture, look down at a sand board or something and see, "Hmm, so this is what's going to happen." I mean, obviously it's not a sand board, but it's kind of the diagram to get them thinking that way, just to think that way because like I said, I don't think your counterparts in your division would have come out the same way.

**LTC Welsh:** Well, maybe it's because we're... again, we're a product of our experience. There's a certain part of this, there's a certain level that's just intuitive, you know?

**Mike Lee:** To you it is.

**LTC Welsh:** Well, it's intuitive in the sense that some have it, some don't, and some never will. It's intuitive, it's just there. It's like you just see it. It's like General Mixon as a division commander being able to say, "Now, what you really need here is this, and we're going to do that," and at the time people were going, "I got your intent, Sir, but I don't necessarily share that common operating picture." But it's a trust and confidence you have in your leadership to go do it; and when I say experience, we were the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> CAV Division. We were out here, we stood up from scratch, we had nothing. This wasn't even here when we got here, we didn't even have soldiers. We literally, within twelve months got equipment, got people, and everything, and we knew that we had to do more with less. It's just the way it is. We're an army and a nation at war. And you have to have the trust and the assumption that you know you're going to get what you get when you need it, and then ultimately, it is what it is. It is what it is, meaning this; that my leadership, the national command and authority and everything, decided that the main effort was in Baghdad, and that's what with all the information they had, determined it would be. So that's where the American battalions went, that's where the surge went. And they surged there, and they purged other places to put more combat power and effort into there. What was our job and our role? Not a glamorous one, but it was a role that had to be done. It was a role that... prevent this from falling, prevent this from being what it is, and it was sort of like, almost like an experiment in some cases because you said, "Here, I know I'm asking you to do this, but I need you to do it," and it worked, and it worked in a good way because when you took the support structures away from them, and we were forced to interact directly and not indirectly through the MiTT or PTT or something else, I didn't have a layer of filter to dilute the information that was coming, it was real time. Now, what it took was... I'll tell you, I was exhausted by the time I left there – seven days a week, fifteen, sixteen hour days, everyday; constant engagements, driving, and doing what had to happen, and it came at a cost; it came at a

severe cost. We lost fifteen soldiers. We had over a hundred decorated for Purple Hearts; we had a hundred plus decorated for valor. Some incredible soldiers with multiple tours over there with experience in agility and flexibility to do what needed to be done, and we did that not alone, but we did that as a collective effort between scout weapons teams and AirCav, our Ranger brothers and Special Forces brothers that were over there, our Navy brothers in support of us, the intel collection from other government agencies that were over there, and then our Iraqi Security Forces, and it just was phenomenal. I wish... it's hard for me to articulate the full spectrum of what those guys did, but Mike Yon, he was an imbedded reporter that was there and stuff, he's written a book; I'm curious to read it, it's out now, of his view of what we did and guys like him that rode and out of their own dime, were never paid a thing, just rode along with us, and they liked what we were doing over there. They really enjoyed how we had taken it to a different level. And I think it's beyond... it's where doctrine meets reality. From a conventional sense, it wouldn't have worked. From the unconventional sense, and you being a special operator yourself understand, sometimes unconventional is the best way. Someone, I forget who phrased it or coined it, someone said, "We're fighting a COIN battle over their, but we're fighting it in the reverse. We're fighting insurgent tactics against them." Meaning that when they would come out and try to put out tier one hotspots, we would have small kill teams set up in ambush locations, and it got to the point where we were engaging and destroying them as they were placing IEDs against them, and they were in a tizzy, going, "I don't know where I can operate in my own city because I'm being ambushed and interdicted, disrupted before I ever get to what I want to achieve."

**Mike Lee:** Which is that COIN (XXXX 92:17) once you get over the top...

**LTC Welsh:** They're reacting to you. We got them... I mean, really, we went from reactive to like, "Where's the IED?", and we're hitting it and stuff to proactive, and they were reacting to us. They insurgents were reacting to us, and that's really where you want to be as maneuver forces, them reacting to you.

**Mike Lee:** Who was the guy who wrote the book did you say?

**LTC Welsh:** Mike Yon wrote a... he's coming here for our ball on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, Mike Yon wrote a book; I'd tell you talk to Mike Yon.

**Mike Lee:** How does he spell his last name?

**LTC Welsh:** Y-O-N. Yeah, Mike Yon. I would talk to Mike Yon, and I would talk to Jim Spurry. These guys basically lived with us for the majority of the time in different aspect levels and they're all coming to our ball, and we do have contact information for all of them, and I think it would be a benefit to you if you wanted to interview them or talk to them. See how they saw what we were doing. I can give you the contact information for them.

**Mike Lee:** That would be good.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 2 August 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Jim Holtsnider

**Provincial Reconstruction Team**

**Governance Section Leader**

By Major Robert Thornton

Date of Interview 06 MAR 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** This interview is for the SFA case study in Mosul from September 06 to March 07. I'm speaking with Jim Holtsnider, who was one of the PRT members in Ninewa. Jim, could you tell me a little bit about how you saw your mission, and if you think the mission changed from the way you went in to how it evolved?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Certainly, Rob. When I came in October of 2006, Dr. James Knight was already there. He had laid down that mission broadly; the role of the PRT, our job in terms of supporting provincial governments, really focusing at the provincial level. Some of our efforts in terms of bringing what was going on at the district level, tying that into what was going on at the national level, really finding a place there. Also, building capacity for those government leaders. When I first arrived, I spent a chunk of my time working as a reporting officer, and then in the last seven or eight months I was there, switched over to being the Governance section head within the PRT. So, my internal mission changed, but the PRT mission remained fairly consistent throughout the entire year that I was there.

**MAJ Thornton:** What did you view as the key tasks, both of the PRT and within the specific areas that you worked on?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** The PRT, as I'm sure you know, they vary around Iraq, but our PRT was divided into five major sections are relevant for the purposes here. We had a Governance section, which was responsible for capacity building within the provincial government; specifically focusing on the provincial governor, the deputy governor and the two vice-governors or assisting governors, the Provincial Council, both the chairman, the deputy chairman, and also the members, and also the rest of the apparatus of the provincial government; the director generals, and various other provincial folks. Anybody who was a provincial leader outside the security forces is someone we were responsible for directly in our view. Secondly, we had an Economic section, which was charged with both economic development and some of the economic reporting. They had a wide variety of issues to address, whether that was macroeconomic development working with the large state-owned enterprises, or some of the more innovative projects such as micro-lending, small business grants, working with the Tal-Afar business centers for example. We also had a Rule of Law program, headed up by Reid Pixler, our Department of Justice guy. He was working with the Coalition and a lot of other people, they really spearheaded the Mosul Major Crimes Court, the Ninewa Major Crimes Court program, doing a lot to really get the rule of law back in place, and I know that was a very tight cooperation with you guys. We also had a Reconstruction section, and this I think was a little bit of a misnomer; they worked a lot with the ICE sections and questions that you guys had, but they're really focused on how can we bring that large scale US money that's coming through non-military, non-DoD channels, bring that up here and help with large projects; things like the airport, and I know there's some stuff being done on the Mosul dam now. Our fifth section was Health and Education. They were really working on a lot of broad health issues there, they're working I know a lot on veterinary – a veterinary school, veterinarians working with medical clinics, working with the University of Mosul to some extent, working on textbooks and curriculum for some of the those schools there. But overall, the PRT mission was, and to the

best of my knowledge remains, to support the provincial government and to get them to the point where they can govern effectively on their own.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, the way you describe the way that the PRT was laid out corresponds to the things that we think of in terms of lines of effort.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Right.

**MAJ Thornton:** Was there a feeling within the PRT that there was one line of effort that was essential to get right in order to facilitate the other ones, or were they equally weighted?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Well, I wouldn't say they were equally weighted, but I think that there was broadly a sense that all these things needed to move forward together to have any serious progress. For example, while you may have some effectiveness with the governor or with the provincial council at various times, if that effectiveness wasn't also followed up by effectiveness in your job creation or effectiveness in increasing the rule of law, it was very difficult to see overall progress. With that being said, there were a few specific instances, for example, the Major Crimes Court was one of those where that went ahead more or less on its own, and that had a huge material impact, in my view, on the things that were going on there in Ninewa. I mean, as soon as that happened, you started seeing people got a lot more serious about what was going on in terms of rule of law, the conviction rates that were happening, and seeing bad guys get put away.

**MAJ Thornton:** Do you feel like with regard to that, that because that manifested itself in sort of a physical way that people could point at, that it supported confidence and legitimacy in terms of how the populous viewed the Ninewa government?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Yes, I certainly do; and going back, something that the minute it was instituted, I know when I would be out in town, we'd hear from our Iraqis all the time, the local Iraqis would say, "It's about time we got the judges back, and they're starting to put those guys behind bars," and there was a trust and confidence in those judges, and it was impressive to see. I think that some of the things we were able to do later on in terms of security was directly a result of having that confidence in the rule of law that was there; the idea that if there were insurgents out there that were committing various crimes, that when they got caught, they would actually be tried and tossed in jail instead of having the revolving door that had somewhat been going on in the Iraqi court system before that. I think part of it was definitely that tangible... Iraqis could see it. They could see these people being charged, they could see that it was an all Iraqi process, and they understood what was going on, so that was very effective. I think some of our other programs were harder to see in that sense; they weren't as tangible, and it made it difficult, I think, for some of the Iraqis to see right away what was going on.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you guys use an assessment process or some type of tool that sort of showed the level of effectiveness, or the measures of effectiveness that you were getting in terms of attaining those goals or maybe in terms of unity of purpose to make sure that your lines of effort were coordinated?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Yes, we did. We had numerous reporting metrics as I'm sure you can imagine. We had... I don't know if you know the structure of some of how the PRTs were reporting to the embassy, but we fall under the Office of Provincial Affairs. At the time, we fell under what was called the National Coordination Team. They have... there are several different reports, but there's one major one that identifies several what they tried to make quantitative measures to see how things are doing in the province. But within the PRT itself, we also had some internal reporting and a lot of internal coordination. You know, the advantage to having a PRT that was so much smaller, I think we had about 80 persons total, made it so that the five of us who were charge of each of those lines of effort and then the team leader, Dr. James Knight, we could all get together fairly easily and discuss those things to make sure we were coordinated. We had an equivalent meeting every morning of all the section heads getting together and talking about what we were doing. So, not only did those informal meetings, we also had... there was also a SITREP summary reporting structure that we had in place as well.

**MAJ Thornton:** In terms of interaction with the other units and efforts outside of the PRT, how did you guys view that in terms of making it a partnership, and do you feel like that it was reciprocal, that you were able to gain some synergy off of the efforts across the board?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Oh, absolutely. The only way to succeed out there is as a team effort, everybody in the U.S. government is out there for the same reason, well not everybody, but the mass majority of the people are out there trying to do the same things. And it was certainly for us... the partnerships there were absolutely the way to go. I had, and have, a great deal of respect for all the people that are out there, and whether it was working with the brigade, or working with the division, or working with the CAT-A teams, or the battalion; we spent a lot of time coordinating those efforts, and I think there's been some tangible success from that. Personally, I spent a lot of time working with the DCO for 4/1, LTC Boden, but I know that there were a lot of leads going on in a lot of different places. Our reconstruction spent a lot of time working with the ICE teams with the SWEAT teams, with the various officers who were there, and also when 3/2 was there as well. We spent a lot of time working with the CAD-A teams because they're the people who see the things on the ground that are out there, and also coordinating our efforts with the division as well, and the brigade-level. I would say our relationship with the BCT was very close, very cooperative, and absolutely the reason for our success there. It wouldn't have been possible if my boss and Colonel Twitty (CDR 4/1 BCT) hadn't been going in the same direction; it would have been very, very difficult to do that. I would say I was over at the TOC at least four or five times a week talking to people and going to some of the meetings over there, talking to different sections, talking to different shops, whether it's the 3-Shop or the 6-Shop or the 5-Shop, whoever it was about whatever it was that we needed to move forward on. I don't know if Dr. Knight talked about it as well, but the CAD-A teams (ed – can be thought of as PRT extension teams) that are going on now. This is a bit of an ancillary effort that started as we were leaving, and this was to put people... we put some people out at SYKES and we put some people down in Q-West, and that was to help project our PRT out a little bit, to help improve the governance out there, and really part of that function was to help liaise with those district, those CAD-A teams out there in the district and help them feel like the provincial government was supporting them because you had a lot of great officers, great NCOs out there, and they're trying to tell these mayors that the provincial government cares about them, but they're not getting the support necessarily; they're getting the support from the U.S. military, but they're not getting the support

from the provincial government. If we can talk directly to them, we were finding out as we were leaving that there was a lot of things, we could find out what those problems were and push them to the governor and push them to the provincial council at the provincial level, and then have some tangible effects out at those district levels when these guys didn't show up send representatives out. But of course we're obviously highly dependent on the support of the battalions there in Q-West and Tal-Afar for that.

**MAJ Thornton:** Can you give me an example of an event... one of the things I'm trying to do is capture the complexity, but an event that required coordination in order to work through; it's just one of those chance things, external, that required coordination not only between internal U.S. efforts, but external U.S. to Iraqi, that was kind of a significant event that just had to be worked through; it was unexpected, it was not forecasted, that sort of thing.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Well, there was... so you're saying not forecasted; we had a lot that obviously were forecasted, things like the outreach program, which I'm sure Dr. Knight talked about some, and I know General Wiercinski (ed. the 25<sup>th</sup> ID ADC-S at MND-N) will talk about because it was one of his key programs. You know, sometimes unfortunately after some of these major attacks, one of the things that I think everyone wanted to do was provide a presence of Iraqi officials out there to indicate that the government cares so that the local leaders could really see what was going on in many ways, and come back later and provide assistance. So there was often a lot of coordination immediately following attacks to get the Iraqi provincial leaders out there, and to get American officials out there as well. But in terms of positive things that were going on, productive things, I would say not too many of these were spontaneous just because the nature of movement up in Ninewa, but there were efforts. For example, out in the west, based on some of our trips, I know of some the brigade and some of the battalion trips out west, to really start expanding our efforts out there in terms of trying to get provincial government to focus more out there, to work on providing more supplies, etc. some of my trips down there, talking to a local mayor, he needs water for example. We'd come back and push that through the provincial council, we'd talk to the SWEAT teams about what can be done to our reconstruction section, really trying to coordinate everybody's efforts all in one direction; but I don't know if there was one specific unexpected thing, unfortunately. Not that I can think of off the top of my head anyway.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's okay. Let me change the question a little bit, and give you an example. There were times where because of real security concerns or to promote security in Mosul, there was a specific personality or individual that had to be targeted, either captured or killed, and because of the interconnectedness of the Iraqis to their social picture, there was some friction with doing that that caused problems in terms of how those Iraqi leaders were able to interact; it was a necessary thing, but it was just one of those things we had to work through with the battalion, brigade, and division commanders. For example, if 1-2-2 where I was at, captured a sheik's son, that was going to cause problems with the division commander, but we worked through it, and we got support from the U.S. commanders, and we let them know what was going on and where it was going to impact things, but it required us to coordinate outside of the Iraqi chain of command in order to gain support so that Iraqi leader continued to do his job. Is there anything like that, where a military action caused you to have to coordinate on the Iraqi side and

say, “Hey look, this is what we’re trying to do; this is our perspective,” or “This is how we’re going to have to adjust”?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Well, I think there were certainly some of those times, but one of the things that we tried to make very explicit right from the beginning was that the PRT did not have any... we tried to limit our involvement in any sort of operational, military operational, activity. We certainly represented what was going on to the provincial government from time to time, but that was echoing one of Colonel Twitty’s... that was his line of operation. We didn’t really want to get into a lot of that, he had a working relationship with the provincial governor and provincial council as well, and we tried to maintain that... something of a discreet distance there so when the governor thought, “I need help with the army, I need help with the police, I need help with some sort of ISF issue, I’ve got a bad guy,” he would call Colonel Twitty, call the DCO, he’d call Colonel Welch (ed. note – the 2-7 CAV CDR under 4/1 BCT), someone along those lines; but when he wanted to talk about elections, or fuel problems, or minority issues, he would call us. That’s not to say we never got involved, I mean, I’m sure you’re aware that both Dr. Knight and I had military backgrounds as well, so we both tried to help out where we could, but really one of our goals was to make sure that those two things were explicitly differentiated to the Iraqis.

**MAJ Thornton:** I was going to say, I think that’s important to point out; it shows how the various U.S. efforts can leverage each other to accomplish things.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Sure, and there were a lot of times where we definitely supported their either military action that needed to happen or had happened and that needed to either be explained or justified to the Iraqis, or in many cases there was perhaps upcoming operations and we would be asked if we could help explain that sometimes to some of the top Iraqi leaders, but for the most part that was definitely done by 4-1 senior leadership, and I think they did a great job.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay, this is switching gears a little bit; this is about sustainment issues. Really this gets to sustainment issues and force protection issues surrounding the PRT mission, whether it be life support, or whether it be movement, projection of influence in terms of working your various lines of effort, so did sustainment and/or force protection create any unique problems in the conduct of the PRT mission, and kind of talk about how you resolved them?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Sure, and I think they did definitely create some problems. Not, I think, problems that were unique, but they were definitely problems. Specifically, we had tasked to us usually a platoon minus from the BCT for movement, but this creates somewhat of a drain on the brigade. That’s a platoon down that they could be using for something else. So we understand that we’re using the resources that way, but that usually gave us two movement teams or so, about eight or nine HMMWVs which gave us two movements a day, five or six days a week. I would say the major limiting factor to what we were able to accomplish was in many ways the availability of movement assets. I think that’s in no way unique to the PRT. I think many people would agree that if you’re going to be working with the Iraqis on these kind of things, if you can’t get out and see them, it becomes incredibly difficult. But I would say that both brigade commanders that were there while I was there, when 3-2 was there and when 4-1 came in with Colonel Twitty, were exceptionally supportive to the degree that they could be. They both bent

over backwards to give us everything we asked for to the point where we didn't want to ask for any more because we knew that at some point that starts impacting brigade effectiveness. But for us, because we're civilians, we don't carry weapons, obviously we're very, very dependent on those assets to move around. Similarly, I know that we we're tasked by this division, we were given a CAT-B team as part of the PRT to fill in some personnel gaps, and I think that was tremendously effective. A lot of outstanding individuals came into the positions that were there and did a lot of fantastic work, but again, those were individuals that had possibly been considered for use at other levels. So, I certainly understand that in this instance the PRT was sometimes seen as those outside of it as something of a resource drain in many cases, but I think that we were able to explain what we were doing in such a way that people felt we were a force multiplier, at least in some sense. There was certainly a recognition that we did not have our own organic force protection support, our own logistics support in many cases, and I think that did create some challenges there.

**MAJ Thornton:** What... this original question was kind of intelligence as it related to force protection or as it related to pursuit of the enemy, but given the various lines of effort that the PRT was working, I think there's some important intelligence issues to talk about, such as understanding the existing bureaucracy, both the surface-level bureaucracy and then the underlying bureaucracy based on relationships and that sort of thing. So whether we're talking about rule of law line or we're talking about an economic assistance sort of line of effort, what were the key intelligence issues that you guys had to work through in order to establish "Okay, here's the system that exists that we're trying to build capacity in."?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Sure, and we're at the unclassified level here, right?

**MAJ Thornton:** It's all UNCLASS.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Okay. So, in general, the vast majority of what we were doing was to support the democratically elected provincial government, but as you know, there are times where there were people within that government who had significantly more power than they could be expected to have based on their position. For us, it wasn't necessarily so much whether they were a sheik or not, but you might find, for example, the deputy governor turned out to be, or really everybody knew, the he was actually probably the most influential person in the government; maybe not more powerful than the governor, but at least as powerful as the governor, and was responsible largely for all the Kurdish issues. Similarly, one of the assistant governors, was responsible for all the Christian issues, and the Christian turned out to be an important minority group there. So certainly mapping some of that structure out, figuring out who was who, sharing that information with the brigade, with the battalion, and with the division was definitely a key part of what we were doing, and also figuring out some of the demographics. The demographics in Iraq, as I'm sure you're well aware, are somewhat of a fluid situation in terms of our knowledge unfortunately. The Iraqis don't know themselves very well what the demographics are, and an accurate census hasn't been taken in a long time. So, a lot of that was figuring out what percentages we're talking about, even in the ballpark range can be a very helpful thing. But other things, as you know, figuring out who belongs to what tribe, how people are connected, what can we do to move some of these things forward. Sometimes that had a very tangible result. We had some issues in the Provincial Council where there was a

Kurdish majority trying to bully around some of the minorities politically, and it was interesting to see some of the minorities come together, the Turkmen, the Christian, and Sunni Arabs actually, come all together into one party and politically fight back; but to see the dynamics for that, why it was working, to see what was happening outside of the provincial council, how we could support efforts like this with people coming together to argue politically rather than by violence was something I think we definitely spent a lot of time doing.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, I had a question up here about critical tasks and different elements. Yesterday, when I was talking to Dr. Knight, I'd sort of focused in on contractors, not necessarily in just those contractors providing security or security functions, but how contractors might be useful or how they're evolving in terms of supporting stability operations. The fact that we're seeing them more, the fact that they serve functions within Security Force Assistance and larger pieces of stability operations; what are your thoughts on how contractors influenced or affected that environment there, and how they might be of more use in the future?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Certainly, and I think it's a good question. Security force contractors did not have a lot of contact in Mosul and Ninewa, primarily because our PRT was not supported by Blackwater teams or the Triple Canopy teams that some of the other PRTs were. Because of our close relationship with the military and I think because of the fact that we shared so many of our goals with the BCT and the division and the battalion and down to the company-level, I think that wasn't a large issue. I think we were very effective at being able to move with the military. The contractors outside of the security forces, I think, are the most important force multiplier that we have. For example, one of the people that was working for me was a USAID implementing contractor, in my governance section. I think those are the people that are going to be there in a year or two years or three years down the road providing that institutional knowledge. They're the experts in many cases on specific issues. We brought in guys who were experts on elections, experts on training non-governmental organizations. The USAID Implementing Partners in my view are much of the future of the capacity building, at least in Ninewa. There was for a long time a push to eventually, when things stabilized, to transition the bulk of the PRT to a USAID mission, and I think that that would be justified in many cases. This is the same sort of mission that USAID implements throughout the world in many developing countries, and those contractors have that capacity, they have the local knowledge, and it's very successful in many cases. I know that as I was leaving, after my year there, we had seen exponential growth in the number and effectiveness of the contractors, whether that was through Research Triangle Institute (RTI) or IRD, one of the other implementing partners for USAID, but there were a number of programs with the universities, with civil society, with the media, programs focused on religion tolerance, programs focused on historical restoration and important archeological sites. There were a lot of things that the Iraqis were very happy see that were coordinated through USAID, their local implementing partners, which I think was a very important part of that, that really served to show what the United States was doing tangibly, and it was things that the Iraqis really wanted. It was well coordinated and very, very effective. There were of course a number of other contractors. We were sustained by the obvious contractors doing the vehicle work, running the DFACs, things like that, and I think it will be difficult any time soon to have that presence diminish at all. So in my view, the way forward is going to be increasing the number of contractors, but for me specifically, in the USAID arena, where those people have in

many cases served in many other developing countries have that experience, that knowledge, that expertise.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, one of the things we've recently been asked to do MNSTC-I was to develop a course for senior level advisors. General Dubik is working on something he calls the Enterprise Project, which is the idea that we focus on these institutions that allow them to be self-sustaining. The requirements came down to come up with a senior level advisor's course, now PKSOI up at Carlisle is working a senior level advisor/mentor handbook, which is turning into a pretty good product, and they've got some good guys working on that. That's the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute at Carlisle. But what I wanted to ask you was is some of the traits and attributes or focus areas of that, do you think a senior level advisor in your capacity or operating in the PRT; what attributes, traits, focus areas do they need to be knowledgeable on that may help us make better decisions on who we select to go do this, or what type of educational requirements we build in?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** I think that's a fantastic question. Talking to my peers, seeing the different PRTs around Iraq, I think that within the PRT structure at least, the success has been largely predicated on the particular team leaders who are there, the particular individuals who are at those PRTs. The kind of leadership that is needed, in my view, as a Provincial Reconstruction Team leader position, the person who needs to fill that job needs to be a dynamic leader, a person who needs to be able to make decisions quickly and effectively. In terms of past experience, I think organizational leadership experience is important, having that background. Both Provincial Reconstruction Team leaders who were there while I was there had served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at embassies, essentially the XO of an embassy, at least once and in Dr. James Knight's case, I think three times. Having that senior leadership experience, having led people before in large organizations, 60, 70; 100, 120; 200, 300 people I think is important. You don't want to be learning how to manage 100 people when you get to Iraq. Secondly, I think some Arabic knowledge can be useful, but I don't think it's a prerequisite. I think that more important than that is a knowledge of developing countries and their culture. We had people who didn't speak any Arabic at all who were incredibly effective because of their understanding of the needs of developing countries; their background, having traveled abroad largely. On the other hand, we also had fluent Arabic speakers who had served in the region in other parts of the Middle East who were also very effective because of their experience with the region. So, I think that can go either way. If someone doesn't have the Arabic experience I think they should have a strong background in developing countries. Interestingly enough, one of the key factors for success with the Provincial Reconstruction Team officers has been past military experience. I think part of that has to do with the ability to closely coordinate the mission with our military partners there. The fact that sometimes it seems as though the Department of State and the Department of Defense are speaking two different languages, many people find that that's sometimes a larger cultural gap than speaking with the Iraqis. So those people who have military experience can sometimes more easily transition across those lines, can speak in the same terms, the same acronyms are already understood, and the idea of lines of effort, lines of operations, those things come naturally to us. Whereas others, it's a different culture, it's a different environment, sometimes that can be difficult. But I think decisive leaders with past management experience who have experience either in the Middle East or developing countries, or senior folks I think are the kind of people we need out there.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, I'd like to come back to what you highlighted about... I think that's going to make for a nice thing to bring out, the idea of developing country culture at a level of importance, say with the way we normally think of culture in terms of whether it be Arabic culture, or Middle Eastern culture, or something like that, but the idea that there's a developing country culture that is important to understand in terms of the political instability that comes with that, the economic instability as perhaps that culture figures out where it plugs into things or where it's going, and I was wondering if you could talk a little bit more about that. I'd really like to capture that.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Certainly. I think that there's... all of your developing countries, it's not a cookie cutter, they're not all the same, but they do share many, many similar traits. You find there's certain ways that people react to things, a certain reliance on family and tribal structures that are much more prominent in developing cultures, although that wasn't always necessarily the case in Mosul, as I'm sure you saw. Once you got outside of Mosul, things changed, but in the city proper it wasn't necessarily the case that way. But the way citizens are viewed, the way that political leaders are viewed, the role of government is different. People see in many cases the role of government as something to restrain them but they don't see it as very effective, and that's certainly been true in my other experiences in Africa and the Middle East. It was interesting to see, as well, the experience that officers who served in some of those other countries have coming in. I know it was very interesting for me to watch colleagues of mine who served in Africa to come in to Iraq and talk about how developed the infrastructure was there and how many good things Iraq had going for it, and then to talk to people who had only been in the U.S. before coming to Iraq and their perceptions of it. I think that people's past experiences gave them different levels of expectation, but that was one of the key things I think in terms of cultural issues with the expectations of the local Iraqis in Ninewa. Sometimes, I think by the time we got there they were a little bit changed, but they had very, very high expectations for very immediate, very, very rapid change, which I'm not sure were totally accurate in terms of what was going to be able to be done. As I'm sure you know, a lot of the infrastructure projects, a lot of the capacity building projects are very long-term projects; things that don't necessarily have an immediate impact right away. That can make it very difficult for those projects to be supported where they can't see that impact right off the bat. But understanding the nature of developing countries just in general I think is an important thing. I'm not sure I could put my finger on one particular thing, but I would say that there's a lot of shared cultural values in terms of, as I said, family relationships, political relationships, dynamics within, to some extent the security forces, how people traditionally would be promoted and not necessarily be based on merit, for example, that differ somewhat from our values in the west.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's really helpful. I think we need to bring that out, particularly the piece about managing expectations or building expectations. My own time working around DOS as an enlisted guy when I was on MSG a year in Addis and a couple of years in Madrid; one, it gave me an idea for how the State Department culture views things a little different. I had some good friends in the Consulate section and some good friends in the Pol-Econ, and understanding from a very limited perspective, but understanding that they did something different than me and that they viewed life different, and reflecting back on that was helpful to me in terms of how I

stepped out of my personality that was useful as a company commander to one that was working as an advisor with foreign forces. But I definitely think I'm going to come back to that as an idea of a cultural aspect that we often overlook. That allows for some framework for some great ideas to come out. With regard to partnering, the level of... the question is, as it reads right now, is how important is partnering in developing Iraqi government capacity? The level of partnering that you guys were able to accomplish in Ninewa was probably higher than anywhere else in Iraq at the time. How do you feel about that in terms of the importance of being able to partner, the importance of being able to understand the operational environment and bring resources to that, or to help them work through and build capacity internally?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** It's absolutely critical, absolutely critical. As you said, there's different perspectives from different people and I certainly wasn't the smartest guy in Mosul, and there's something to be said about bringing a thousand eyes to a problem, and we would get good ideas, good results out of partnerships with everybody down to a PSYOPS team or a four-man patrol or a four-man PSYOPS team riding out with a patrol, all the way up to the generals that had very, very insightful ideas. I think it was total unity of effort in Ninewa, and it was one of the things that impressed me most about everybody that was there. I think you guys see us out in town and we would come over and just talk to you about what was going on sometimes, and talking to 2-7, and talking to all those guys that were out there doing their various work. But the only way to do it was by getting a team together in partnership because it was all the different levels. You had brigade leadership and PRT leadership focused at the provincial-level. You had the battalions down at the city level, and you had the CAT-A team and the company. You're working with the mayors of small towns, and the only way we're going to get those resources down to those people that they need is to find out what they need, and how that that's needed, and the people who were down at that level really, the captains, the majors, the lieutenants that are down at the district and up to the city of Mosul level, and even the lieutenant colonels who were running around Mosul, for example. They understand that city better than I ever will. So, when I come in and I want to know something about Mosul, the guy to go see is 2-7's commanding officer. We'll talk to him and he'll know this guy is the guy to see about sheiks, or this guy is the guy to see about mosques. There's only so much information one person can process and I think that sometimes things get a little too stove piped in a lot of places, and I think one of the reasons that everyone was so effective in Ninewa writ large was because so many people were committed to not allowing that stove piping to happen. Certainly reports had to go through their normal channels, but I think a lot of us spent a lot of time trying to check those reports with other people saying, "Here's what we're seeing. Is this what you guys are seeing?" with everybody that was there both on the FOB and in the AOR, whether it was people who were out checking with people out at Q-West, checking with people at FOB SYKES, really pushing it out there because there's a lot of things going on out in the province besides what was going on directly in our immediate vicinity, and a lot of people who are out in town seeing a lot of different things that we didn't get to see all the time, and a lot of really great, very, very effective ideas coming from people, sometimes from some of the unlikeliest sources; suggestions for how to improve the Major Crimes Court coming from some of the military guys who were there, who were only tangentially part of the process, but when they were asked, "Well, here's how we would improve it," great ideas taking that forward. I think from time to time we were able to contribute some of those ideas back to the Brigade on various issues. But partnership is absolutely the only way to go forward. I'm not clear that it needs to be a command and control relationship. I know some

of the PRTs are directly supported through BCTs or vice versa. I think we were able to maintain a very, very effective partnership and I think that was truly beneficial to everyone there in Mosul.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, earlier we talked about some of the projects that changed public perception, and I was wondering if you could spend a little bit more time talking about how we facilitated or enabled the Iraqis to change public perception in terms of the legitimacy of the government, in terms of what they were... those things which a government should do in order to gain legitimacy. How did we work with the media? How did we do those things which then got back out to the public and they could see tangible things, so we matched the narrative with our actions, so to speak?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Yeah, definitely. That's one of the big challenges; in the same way it's a challenge getting back to the American public what we're doing. It's a challenge of getting out to the Iraqi public what the Iraqi government is doing. We spent a lot of time trying to promote media outreach by all of the provincial officials, but also inviting the media along to things that we were doing. But I have to tell you, the projects and the programs that made the most effective impact were the ones that had a direct tangible effect, and in those cases we didn't even need to publicize it; it publicized itself. Things like the Major Crimes Court, when they finally started the budget spent, which was a long arduous process at the provincial level, once they start getting those hundreds of millions of dollars of Iraqi money spent on Iraqi programs, people start hearing about that instantly. Especially the outreach programs, both taking the governor and the provincial officials and top Iraqi Security Force officials, those guys down to Baghdad meeting with their counterparts, but also bringing those people from Baghdad up to the province; bringing the ministers up, bringing the deputy ministers up, bringing up senior officials, because those things make the news in Mosul, and they're a big impact when people are saying, "We're having problems with health," and then to have a Minister or a Deputy Minister of Health or somebody shows up. And that was very difficult for us to do. Those people are very, very busy, but on the few occasions we were able to get those kind of people up there, very strong impact immediately within the community. Some of the other programs, some of the micro-lending things that went on had a very solid impact, you would hear about those from Iraqi citizens, even though they weren't necessarily well-publicized. Similarly, some of the projects that were going on with regards to outreach, things like that, you'd hear very positive things back from Iraqis that we weren't really focused on a lot of publicizing necessarily. But with the governor specifically and the provincial council, I know that we spent a lot of time talking to them about the need to talk on television about certain issues. For example, we talked about the importance of upcoming provincial elections, pushing them on fuel crisis issues, to talk about the rights of minorities and how important it was for the people of Mosul and Ninewa writ large to come together and overcome those issues, and really manage a lot of the political challenges as well. Although the particular rhetoric might change from day to day, a lot of managing the tensions inherent in a lot of the Article 140 process was important to what we were doing. This is the discussion about which areas will end up being part of the Kurdish regional government and which ones will stay under the regional control of the province of Ninewa, discussing with those provincial leaders and having them push that out to the media, but also having them do it at a local level. The governor was holding weekly conferences with senior non-governmental people from Ninewa, and we'd have people in there, top bankers, top lawyers, top tribal individuals, top society folks who had a large impact. He would talk with them and they would take that back to

their communities. We set up some things with district and sub-district rotation programs where mayors from districts and sub-districts would come into the provincial council meetings and watch how things were done at the provincial level, not only just for their own edification, but also to lobby for their particular district or sub-district and its priorities. The provincial council had an enormous amount of money here. They had 250 million U.S. dollars just for Iraqi infrastructure support, but this is Iraqi money that they were distributing, so it was critically important that we bring those district and sub-district leaders in so that they could get some share of that money out to their towns out in western and southern and in some cases eastern Ninewa.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, you've mentioned something that I've hit on before, that when I interviewed Colonel Senters he hit on, it came up with Dr. Knight, and it's the role of personality, particularly among... really focusing on Iraqi leadership, and how that allows issues to be resolved even when there's interference or filters deliberately or inadvertently placed in between folks from Baghdad or things like that, or how leaders at the more local level will take advantage of those filters if they don't want to coordinate. We noticed a big difference between when MG Jamal (ed. - the former 2<sup>nd</sup> IA DIV CDR who was relieved) left and BG Mutah (ed. - MG Jamal's DIV XO and successor) took over. There was a palpable difference in terms of freedom of action, in terms of coordination with the IP, just a sense of leadership that was now there that was absent before. So I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the role of host nation leadership and some of the ways that it had to be overcome or some of the ways that it benefited the process.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Certainly. I think that's absolutely correct, and as you've seen some large senior folks have mentioned it to you. It's one of the most pivotal things. It's both the personality of the Iraqi leadership and then our relationships with them. As you talked about when Jamal went out and Mutah came in, the fact that he was a much more open and accessible person to top U.S. military leadership really made it so that we could do things that previously we had not been able to do. Similarly, I think we were able to establish effective relationships with some provincial officials to that level. I spent a lot of time personally with the governor, with some of the provincial council chairmen, there actually two while I was there, with provincial council members, with various other people. I think it made a big difference who was in charge. We saw a transition between the first provincial council chairman, retired Major General Chairman Issa, ran the provincial council very authoritatively, was not particularly interested in a lot of discussion in the provincial council proper, but ran things fairly smoothly and efficiently, and when he was replaced, his replacement was not as authoritarian but was much more willing to work with us on certain issues, so as a result the provincial council meetings didn't necessarily run as smoothly or as effectively, but we certainly had more influence in being able to shift things the way that we wanted them to go. But I think that personality is critically important. I've seen instances where we had Americans who didn't get along with the Iraqi counterpart they were supposed to have, and that usually did not work very well for anyone's interests. But the different kinds of Iraqis that you have in there, it's extremely important who they are. Part of that goes back to in some cases there's ones we'd like to change. It would be in the U.S.'s benefit to do so, but we have to be careful that in the long term we don't overrule ourselves because part of what the PRT is supposed to be advocating for is democratically elected government. If you get a democratically elected person into power, whether or not he's someone we necessarily agree with, we have to find a way to work with him. Otherwise we're going to be

undermining some of our longer term goals at the same time. But you're exactly right; we certainly saw there was some erratic behavior by various officials that made it very difficult in some cases to do things, but the personal effectiveness of leaders all the way up to the national level, I'm sure it's been said, but people like Dr. Barham Salih, the Deputy Prime Minister at the national level, or Chief Judge (XXXX 57:30) was very effective in his relationship with some of the people in our PRT. Chief Judge (XXXX 57:34) is the overall Chief Judge in Iraq based down in Baghdad, and our relationship with him allowed us to do some of the things that we did with the Major Crimes Court and things like that. I think those relationships were absolutely key.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, this next question is about tools or resources that you knew about, and I mean it could be as high level as the ability to draw on the IMF or World Bank or things that were back in Baghdad that may have been useful, but those things which were either partially or wholly unavailable to you, or you could even talk about key tools that were available to you that really made a difference that we want to bring out in the study and say, "This thing, we need to sustain this," or, "We need to improve access to it," that sort of thing that allowed you to leverage other areas and better fulfill your mission.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Sure, good question again. I think some of this goes back to partnerships. I think there was some stuff that we were able to do when the UN... when I first got there the UN was very actively involved in trying to reach out to some of the things going on in Ninewa from their base of operations in Irbil, and we were able to do some partnership things with them, but I think it was pretty (XXXX 59:13) at MAREZ with us. I think one of the biggest challenges was we had so much support, so much infrastructure that was available in some of the so-called more secure areas, for example in Irbil and Dahuk and the Kurdish regional government areas, or down in Baghdad. Sometimes getting those resources out to FOB MAREZ could be very challenging. There's the U.S. government implementing partners, NDI and IRI, for some of the democracy training programs and things. The fact that those are going on in Erbil, some of those capacity building programs are great to bring down into MAREZ, and I think it was a testament to James Knight's leadership that he had been able to get some of those implementing contractors, IRD for example, and some of the other USAID ones down on to the FOB proper and really operating out of FOB MAREZ. But I think that was one of our biggest challenges. There's a tremendous number of people and number of organizations that have amazing amount of resources available to us, but getting those beyond Baghdad and actually out into the provinces is a big challenge, and that's where, in my view, the gap still somewhat remains. I think our leadership that was there did a very good job of closing that gap to the extent possible, but it still exists, and part of that I'm sure is no doubt the security situation. But I think that's overstating it somewhat in many cases, and there needs to be an effort to move a lot of those resources and efforts that are going on in Baghdad out to the provincial level. I think that to reinforce the success that the PRTs had, that the BCTs have had at the provincial-level and really follow that up with the kind of national and international-level efforts that you're talking about, bringing in that sort of thing. We had partnerships also, for example, I don't know if Dr. Knight talked about it at all, but with the Turkish consulate, for example. There were some programs that were done there in coordination with the U.S. and Turkish governments for various projects, specifically, usually related to health and education. This allowed us to bring in all kinds of money and expertise and people with obviously regional knowledge. Partnerships like this are

hugely important, but it wasn't really possible to do that until the Turkish consulate had established itself in Mosul, and I think that's one of the big barriers. Until people physically come to the city, either in the city proper or on Marez, it's very, very difficult to get that kind of interaction that's needed.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, while I was there I did a little reading on the history of Mosul in terms of the various influences on it through time, about it's unique character and how that character has evolved over time, the sort of cosmopolitan aspect to its influences, to the perception of almost more of an oriental, in some cases, flavor than per se an Arabic one. As I started to do those readings, I started to notice things that I had not noticed before. I started to notice the commercial traffic patterns from east to west and west to east, the way that there were various competing influences within... not just the Kurdish and Arabic or the Sunni and some of the Yzidi temples and some of the Shia folks that lived out around Mosul and the Turkmen that lived within Mosul, but the greater context of, in this case, how that affected the security within Mosul, or how it changed the nature when I began to look to how Mosul was integrated as part of a larger system, and I was just wondering if because you guys had purview, you guys had influence in Tall Afar, you guys worked with folks down in Irbil, you guys worked with folks out at Q-West, you guys worked with folks in Baghdad, you touched Kurdistan. Can you talk a little bit about how you saw it holistically?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Certainly, and I think all your comments are exactly correct. Mosul, as a city, has been inhabited for thousands of years continuously. Whether it was its time under the Ottoman Empire or more recently, but the city's always been a major trading city and continues to be something of a hub not only for northern Iraq, but for the region. I hope when things settle down it will really resume the prominence that it's had and be able to recover, I think, much more quickly than other places in the region. One of the things that you touched on that I think is very important and can be somewhat carried along broadly to other parts of Iraq is the diversity of some of these places. I don't think anyone can talk about Ninewa and get every minority there. You're talking the Turkmen, the Yazidi, the Shia, for example, just outside of Mosul. You have the Sunni Arabs, the Sunni Kurds, the Shia Kurds. You've got some Shia Arabs that are there, the Assyrian Christians, the Chaldean Christians, and there's so much diversity and so many different competing factors and influences, I think it's appropriate to treat each region somewhat separately in many cases. Things that are effective in one place may not necessarily be effective in another place. I think sometimes we get a little too caught up in things that work in one place and try to apply them to another place. Sometimes that works, but I think sometimes it's also important to look at the fact that there is such diversity in some of these places and treat them individually. In Mosul particularly, we were lucky in many respects. There's a robust university there, a well educated populace, and for all the ethnic and religious tensions that do exist, there is a history there of thousands of years of living together. So I don't think those tensions are going to be resolved overnight. I think there are certainly small things we can do to ameliorate them somehow, but those are issues and decisions that the people of Mosul are going to have to work out for themselves over the long term. But it was definitely, as you know, the character of the place depends greatly on where you are. The farther you head south or you head west in Ninewa, tribes really matter, but that's not the case in Mosul city proper. Tribes are... people have tribal affiliation, but as far as we could tell was not nearly as important as it was say if you were at with the Shamar. It really matters out there, or you're

down south at Q-West, which sheik you work for or what family you're a part of is incredibly important, but not so the case when you're in Mosul proper and also here in some of the Christian areas, for example. So it definitely presented some unique challenges, but I think unique opportunities as well to bring people together to look at some of this. I think one of the things you mentioned you read up on Mosul, had a sense of history about it before you came. I think that's fantastic. I did the same thing, reading specifically about Mosul, not just about Iraq at large; probably most people did that, but also to read a little bit about the city where I specifically went. I think that really helped out a lot to know what sort of demographics you were expecting before you got there, to understand that sense of history. Certainly within Middle Eastern culture the idea that history is yesterday; they talk to you about things that happened four or five hundred years ago as if they just happened yesterday. I think it's very important and I would certainly recommend anyone going out to definitely read up on their cities. But the idea that we can't treat every single province the same I think is one that needs to definitely make it out there in whatever studies or reports that go forward. Again, some of the things that were often frustrating to me was to see senior leadership promoting ideas that had been extremely effective in other provinces and trying to implement those in our province. Certainly, with the best of intentions, and in many cases it would have a positive effect, but in many cases it had a negative effect, and I think that sometimes we were undermining ourselves in specific instances. So, just to really treat each province as an individual place and get those people at the provincial-level, and at the lower-level as well, talk to them. I mean, the experts that are out there with the MiTT teams, with the CA teams that are out there that really know their people, know their areas, talk to them before we implement programs and say, "Look, is this going to be something that's going to work in your area, why or why not?" and really getting that feedback before those decisions are made.

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the things that recently came up was, and when I say recently I mean over the last six months to a year, the idea that the CLCs (Concerned Local Citizens) as a product of the Anbar Awakening would be exportable to Mosul and greater Ninewa. I commented to a friend that Mosul is different based on its make up and who holds influence, and I was not sure that that type of program was going to be effective in Mosul without some adaptation to the peculiarities of Mosul.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** I think that's exactly right, and I've had many discussions along the way as well. Some of my colleagues, both from my past in the Marine Corps and also my time here in the State Department, served in Anbar, served in some of the provinces down in the very tribal south, and those programs were incredibly effective for them, but in Mosul I'm not convinced that necessarily without some modification these programs would be as effective. I think there's small places, small pockets in Ninewa where they could be implemented, but I think it's not necessarily applicable, for better or for worse, in Mosul. I think a lot of the efforts that we were pushing along on, working better with the Iraqi Security Forces, really working to strengthen their capacity I think is really the way forward, and bringing some of the minorities together and some of the disenfranchised majorities; something that wasn't necessarily talked about enough in the circles there, but it is bringing some of the Sunni Arabs back into the government, but not by way of the CLCs and things like that, but part of that is being ham-strung by efforts at the national level. Until there was a de-Baathification law, you couldn't bring back a lot of those senior people, so something of a complicated circumstance. But no, I agree with you, I don't

think that necessarily things that would work in other provinces would necessarily work in Mosul, and I think unfortunately the same is true the other way. Sometimes some of the successes we've had in Mosul in various things don't necessarily translate outside. But on the other hand, occasionally they do. The Major Crimes Court, the rotating judges where we bring judges up from Baghdad and they try terrorist cases in Mosul so that they're not threatened; the problem we were having before is that those judges would be local Ninewa judges from Mosul. Their families would be threatened by the terrorists, so they had very low conviction rates; they were letting these bad guys go. Being able to bring judges up from Baghdad where the United States is really providing logistic security support, but it's still an Iraqi process; the Iraqis are doing the trials and things. That had not only an immediate impact, but we were able to transfer it to other provinces too. I know they started running these programs, these traveling judges programs throughout Iraq with a large degree of success, so some programs certainly can be translated. The ones that rely on very specific cultural or tribal affiliation I have to agree with you, I'm not clear that's the way to go forward there in Ninewa.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jim, is there any questions that I should have asked you that you feel like would really be a benefit to get out there in this case study or in things that this case study may touch?

**Mr. Holtsnider:** Well, I think certainly there were specific issues we didn't touch on. I think some of the interesting things to look at would be the interplay between the provincial-level and the national government, and the provincial-level and the district government. I think those two areas, not the three levels specifically; I think we're engaging in all three of those levels specifically very well, that is, General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker work the national-level very effectively. I think at the provincial-level you've got the brigade commanders and PRTs engaging in the provincial-level very well, and below that you've got the CAT-A teams, PSYOPS team, the MiTT teams. In our case we sent some State Department guys out now to the district level to help out. All three of those levels are being engaged very well, but tying those issues together sometimes, I think, is where we still have the most room for improvement, and I think some of those challenges whether it's issues like fuel distribution and fuel crises could be done better. When you're talking about huge macro-issues like that, it's not something a five-man team somewhere is going to be able to solve, but it's not something that a two-star general in Baghdad is going to be able solve, unfortunately, by him or herself either. It's something you really got to have a huge unity of effort working in a lot of these programs to really connect the efforts at the national level, connect them at the provincial level, and the district level. I think we in Ninewa started doing a fantastic job of that. Certainly our efforts to liaise with the national government and liaise with the district government were certainly much stronger than they were. I still think there's a lot that can be done. Some of the political issues... I don't know that it's necessarily relevant, but they have an inordinate amount of influence in what goes on. When we'd go and talk to local Iraqis, aside from their usual issues of power and fuel, the most common political subject they would discuss is, for example, the Article 140 process, and really finding a way to help empower the local Iraqis so that they feel like they have a say in what's going on at the national level beyond the national elections once every four years I think is probably going to be one of the challenges as they go forward; providing forums so that people who want to talk about these things they want to advocate for change can do so in a peaceful way without necessarily going and supporting some of the activities going on. But in general, I think

you got most of it. I'm very, very thankful you guys are doing this. Please don't hesitate to call me or e-mail me about anything, and if you guys are interested in talking to people in other provinces I know I have a number of my colleagues who are back at the training center with me right now, so we can put you in touch with some of them, but in terms of Mosul I think I'm pretty much it.

**MAJ Thornton:** Well Jim, I really appreciate your time, and I think this is going to make a big difference because it shows the complexity of the environment and it shows the things that are going on beyond just combat operations, just security force assistance development, just beyond security sector reform, and even beyond rule of law, but the idea of how to get towards more stability and what all that requires and how those different elements are interdependent at times, but also at times are points of friction for each other that they just have to be worked through.

**Mr. Holtsnider:** And sometimes it's very hard to describe. That's the advantage of kinetic operations. Sometimes they can be very straightforward. When you start talking about non-kinetic stuff, it can be hard to describe what you're doing and that can be difficult. But I really appreciate what you're doing. This is, I think, absolutely the way forward is getting that next team of people to go out there, whether they're military or State Department or whoever they are, and making sure that they've got all the lessons learned from before and the way forward.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 21 July 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

Lieutenant Colonel Howard Brewington

**4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Military Transition Team Chief**

Mosul, Iraq

by

Major Robert Thornton  
Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Date of Interview  
07 March 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** This is the interview with Lieutenant Colonel Brewington for the SFA case study on Mosul, Iraq from September 06 to March 07. Colonel Brewington was the Brigade Military Transition Team Chief for 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> IA Division on the east side of Mosul. Colonel Brewington, we're going to go through this, and we're just going to talk about... we're going to use these questions as jump off points. They aren't meant to be constraining. We can pick up a thread based off a question and pursue that, or we can stay within...it's wherever you really want to go. We'll go through roughly these questions, and then at the end, the last thing I'll ask is there anything else that you feel like that I missed that you really want to talk about that you think will benefit the case study. So, the first question is about how you saw your mission, and did that change in the beginning, or did that change at the end from the way that you saw it in the beginning?

**LTC Brewington:** I was a little shaky on exactly what it was I was supposed to do when I first got there, so there was a little bit of discovery learning. I got there, got linked up with my counterpart, began to try to understand the overall strategy in Iraq with Multi-National Force-Iraq, which was, as I understood it, which was the U.S. and the Iraqis partnering at the army level at least, working towards Iraqi army assuming the lead with coalition in support, to having provincial elections and provincial Iraqi control, to ultimately Iraqi security self-reliance. And that was kind of the framework that I used as I kind of worked my way through with my counterpart. The brigade was able to assume Iraqi Army lead, and our assessment was that we probably could have done provincial elections in the Ninewa province, but we never quite got there before we left, and I don't know how the situation changed after we left, but while I was

there that was... as I worked with my subordinate team chiefs and with the coalition partner brigade, the brigade commander and my vision was from Iraqi Army lead, we would try to create a secure enough situation in our portion of Ninewa, help others do the same thing in theirs as we were able to, so that we could achieve civil security, civil control in Ninewa, which then allowed us to set the conditions for the government, the provincial government, to stand up and be effective and functional. The other thing we quickly identified was, as we transitioned with the coalition to Iraqi Army lead, we also found out that we needed to enable the police better than we were doing. And so, the Iraqi brigade commander was the one who came to me and said, "We need to increase the capability of the police as best we can," because now that we look back at the counter-insurgency manual where we say you know you're making progress and you're counter-insurgency when your military forces are no longer providing security and the police are providing security for the population. That's kind of how you know you're working towards good governance and the government taking responsibility for, in this case, security. The Iraqi brigade commander figured that out, and he and I worked together on ways that we could, within our capability, help enable the police at our level; acknowledging that in lots of cases, when you talk about governance, support really starts at the provincial level with having resources that they have received from the national level government. So you have national level government to sub-government/provinces down to our individual city. And we did the best we could from a bottom-up perspective trying to enable our counterparts, the police, and that was kind of...as you talk about how the mission changed over time, it was just that. When we got there, our focus was on getting the Army to take the lead from the coalition; by the time we left, it was getting the police to take the lead from the Army, working towards achieving provincial control so that the Iraqis were responsible for the entire province.

**MAJ Thornton:** Now, when you say brigade commander, you mean General Noor Aldeen?

**LTC Brewington:** Right, yes, and I'll go back and clarify that; when I say the brigade commander, I'm talking about my counterpart, and from now on when I'm talking about the coalition counterpart, I'll say the coalition brigade commander.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay. Could you tell me, if you had to sum it up for advisor teams going downrange, what would you say that the mission essential tasks that you focused on, kind of in retrospect, not the one that maybe you were told going in was going to be your mission essential tasks, but if you summed up what you did there, what would say was the mission essential tasks?

**LTC Brewington:** I'll say it like this; if you asked me after I got there and kind of figured it out, my sole reason for being there was to assist the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Division as they developed and increased their capacity to plan, prepare, execute, and sustain counter-insurgency operations in east Mosul.

**MAJ Thornton:** Okay. Did you have an assessment process... you kind of talked about that as the way that the mission changed and the way that you saw the next step is to transition this to police forces and let the military take a supporting role, but did you have an assessment process that you used to see if the Iraqi brigade was attaining its goals?

**LTC Brewington:** Yes, it was a collaborative effort, and I'll use that term precisely, between the brigade commander and I. Every day, he and I would sit down at the end of the day. We'd generally get together at 2200, 2230, and we would kind of review what happened that day, both tactically as well as our understanding of what was going on in the province, and what we were... one of our majors of effectiveness, if you will, one of the techniques that we used was how many patrols we ran jointly with the police, how much fuel we gave the police when they didn't have any, how many vehicles we were able to loan the police, and those kinds of things, although it was, for me, to assess if the brigade was reaching out to support the police. The other thing that we did was we started a weekly meeting with the police. So, we had a targeting meeting once a week where the police chief came, the respective district police chiefs, some of their substation chiefs, as well as the Iraqi Army battalion commanders and brigade commander, they brought their intel and ops officers. We exchanged intelligence, we did joint operations, and we would allow the police to be the lead with the army in support. So, the army would do the cordon and the police would do the search, and when I first got there, it was mostly army unilaterally. By the time we left, we were doing very few "Iraqi Army-only operations", most of them were police and Army, with the police actually being the executer. So the folks, the people on the street, the Iraqis, saw the police as the one who was providing their security. They were the ones knocking on the doors, they were the ones going to houses, they were the ones abiding by the rule of law or by the laws, and the Army just supported them in that area. Does that kind of answer your question?

**MAJ Thornton:** Absolutely. Changing gears just a little bit, as a brigade TT chief, under that structure, the way the MiTTs were structured where the brigades answered to the division MiTT

to a certain... in terms of kind of a chain of command, but you had battalion MiTTs up underneath you, so what actions did you take to help empower subordinate leaders?

**LTC Brewington:** That's a great question. We were all spread... all three of my battalion teams, my brigade teams, lived on Iraqi FOBs with our Iraqi counterparts. In many cases, my interaction with my team leaders was FM or email. We would get together once a week for the targeting meeting because they came with their counterparts, or we'd get together for planning, but for the most part, what I did was what we just said; I emphasized the key points of what it was I thought we were trying to accomplish nested with the Iraqi army, nested with the coalition objectives as best we understood them, and then told my subordinate team leaders, "This is what we're trying to get at, so let me know how your counterpart is doing." So, I gave them a great deal of latitude to do what they needed to do, and the reason was each of the battalions, the subordinate battalions, just like in all armies, they had different strengths and weaknesses. So, one size set of guidance would not have fit all, and each of them were at different levels in their ability to plan, prepare, execute, and sustain counter-insurgency operations at the battalion level. Each one of them had a different relationship with the police, and what I tried to do was reinforce with my team leaders what the brigade commander and I were trying to do together for the brigade, so that the brigade commander was telling his battalion commanders, I was telling my MiTT team leaders, and then I was getting feedback from my MiTT guys just like he was from his battalions, and then we were balancing that feedback to ensure that we all understood and operated inside a common framework that was set by the Iraqi brigade commander.

**MAJ Thornton:** That kind of answers also the following question which was about unity of effort, so I really don't need to ask that one.

**LTC Brewington:** Well, here's comment I'd like to make about unity of effort. There's multiple levels and I'm not sure we were always nested once... well, to be honest, I'm not sure sometimes that the battalion commanders, the Iraqi battalion commanders always got it, so sometimes we weren't nested internal to the brigade. Because when we talk about nesting and purposes and the complimentary nature of this, what you have to have is you have to have the MiTT at the respective level working with their Iraqi army counterpart; you have to have the MiTTs working towards a goal, you have to have the Iraqi army working towards a goal, and it has to be the same goal. Then, you have to take that and nest it with what the coalition BCT or the coalition commander who's responsible for that area is trying to do as well as nest it with what the Provincial Reconstruction Team is trying to do. And I'm not sure in all cases we were all on the same azimuth heading towards the same objective.

**MAJ Thornton:** And that's a great lead into the next question which is about in terms of helping maximize the effectiveness of our various partners out there, the BCT and the task forces up underneath the BCT, the PRT; what efforts did you take in order to enable those partners to meet those goals?

**LTC Brewington:** Here's what we started; if you think about just... we'll stay away from governance and I'll talk about security forces. One of my battalion team chiefs, Rich McConnell, came up with this notion, he called it the five fingers of the fist, and it was the military transition team, the police transition team, the coalition BCT or battalion, the Iraqi army, and the Iraqi police all working together. So with those five fingers, or the four fingers and the

thumb working together, you create a fist which if any piece of that's missing, you don't really have a fist; if one of the fingers doesn't join or the thumb doesn't join, you don't have a fist. So we had what we called the fist meetings where we brought the Iraqi army, the Iraqi police, the coalition, military transition team, and the police transition team together, and we had meetings together, all five, and then from a coalition perspective with the MiTTs and the police transition teams, we'd have a meeting kind of internal from an American perspective to make sure that we were talking to each other. Now, you're going to say the piece that's missing is the provincial reconstruction team. So, as you talk about those five fingers of the fist coming together, those five fingers of the fist come together to achieve civil security, securing the population from threats within and without, and civil control, controlling elements of the population that need controlling, the bad guys, for instance, or the criminals; you do those so you then support for governance. So, as we created a secure, stable environment in east Mosul and west Mosul, what did the government, the city government, do to then take advantage of that; much like we're talking about. See, we weren't using those kinds of terms, but that's what we were trying to do was create a stable and secure environment in the Ninewa Province at large and Mosul specifically so that you could have support for governance and good governance. So, the piece that... I never worked with the provincial reconstruction team. Should I have? I don't know, because I don't know how a brigade level guy fits in with a provincial reconstruction team. Maybe it was the division MiTT and the coalition brigade commander and the Iraqi division commander and the mayor and the governor and the police chief and the provincial reconstruction guys working together. How do you build that pyramid so that you take advantage... same thing we're seeing now countrywide; how do you set the conditions at the governance level to take advantage of the security that your security forces provide? And I think

what we learned over time is security isn't the end state, good governance is the end state and security enables that, and I don't know that we all got that. I certainly did not; I knew that I was doing it, but I did not realize at the time what I was doing. And I never met the provincial reconstruction guys, once again, maybe it was below my level, but you've got to be nested in all those things.

**MAJ Thornton:** I think that's one of those things that we're figuring out and we've gotten better at, and that is actually one of the objectives of the case study is to show the relationships between these pieces in terms of establishing security sector reform, rule of law, and governance, and how that plays out. So, I think that will make for a great section within the case study to talk about how these different pieces relate. With regards to the partnership, I wanted to ask what frictions occurred; and I don't necessarily mean personalities, although we can put personalities in there because that is a part of it, whether it's U.S. to U.S. or U.S. to Iraqi, but taking a look at why the frictions might have occurred is probably more important in terms of how one person saw a mission or their role or their loyalties or responsibilities, and how another might have come in, and then talk about how you guys worked through them and how those lessons might help benefit other people in similar circumstances.

**LTC Brewington:** Friction occurs, and I'll say it as definitively as I can, the friction occurs for some of the reasons we've already talked about, which is we don't all sit down and come up with a common desired objective or end state. So, each of us is left kind of to do what he thinks is right, so you have a bunch of well-intentioned people all doing what they think is right, which in the macro may not totally gather to ultimately achieve the overall right. That's where the friction

comes in because, and I'll say it like this, I think one of the great things that potentially is occurring is the fact that you don't have the MiTTs as a standalone kind of organization; now they're kind of rolled up into the BCT, whose area they work in and support, because that may help reduce some of the friction on common goals assuming that the MiTT leader and the coalition brigade commander have a common vision for the province from an American perspective. If not, then the ranking guy says, "This is what I want to have happen here," and all the rest of us get in line and work with our counterparts to support that. Now, you're going, "Yeah, that's a distinctly American way to look at it." That's right; the first thing we have to do as Americans is figure out what we're trying to do. Once we figure that out, then we can work with our counterparts to see if they have a buy-in as well. And see, one of the things that I learned over time is if your counterpart doesn't have buy-in to what it is you're trying to do, then you need to stop doing that, and figure out what it is that he wants to do or what he thinks is right, because remember, he understands the country and he understands the culture, he understands maybe better than the Americans what needs to happen; so you kind of get together on the American side and say, "This is what we think, let's bounce it against our host nation counterparts, see what they think in a non-confrontational way, get their feedback." We have achieved the meeting of the minds, now we're all working towards the same objective. If our counterpart comes back and goes, "That's not what I think we need to do," then we listen to them, we go back and come up with an American view, and go back to them again. Because remember, ultimately it's his country. So, this may come across kind of confusing, but the first thing we do is as Americans figure out what we think right is, then we go to our counterpart and see if his view of right is the same. If his view of right is the same, then we're on track; now we have nesting of effort, and we're all working toward a common objective, it reduces the friction.

If we're saying go east and our counterpart's saying go west, we need to listen to them because west might be the right answer. Then, we listen to his rationale and we come back and say, "Yeah, from an American perspective we're all going west with our counterpart," and what we find out is we make much more progress that way, rather than trying to steer our counterpart east. Or we never synched it American-wise; one American's going east, one's going north, one's going south, and all our counterparts are going west, and we can't figure out why we're not making progress. Does that kind of help?

**MAJ Thornton:** Absolutely, it kind of paints the friction and it also kind of gets the question of overcoming inertia and how do you do that. This is a related question; what was, as you saw it, what was the most important line of operation or line of effort, saying that they're two different things, but leaving you the room there to look and consider both; and then within that, do you think that the different partners on that five fingers, do you think they shared that? And if they didn't, why not? Was there reconciliation and how did we get there?

**LTC Brewington:** You're talking about a line of operation, and although I did not use that terminology while I was there, as I think about it now, my number one line of operation, my Iraqi brigade commander and I agreed violently on this, was providing a safe, stable, and secure east Mosul for the population. So, civil security was our number one line of operation in east Mosul. The brigade commander and I violently agreed on that. I think most everybody that was involved agreed, where we ran into our challenge was the methodology we used to achieve that. There were some who thought, I think, depending over time, that was more of an American responsibility than it was an Iraqi responsibility. So, what you saw was unilateral coalition

operations, which present a message to the population that my own security forces can't secure me; the Americans have to come in and do it. We fought through some of that, that kind of ties back to your friction; I think we all were working towards the same objective, even the provincial reconstruction team, because once we created that safe, stable, secure east Mosul, then they could come in with contract dollars and fix the streets and fix the plumbing in those neighborhoods that were safe and secure, and the brigade commander did that. He identified neighborhoods, "We need more patrolling presence in this one and this one and this one, and less in this one because the people there are generally on our side," for lack of a better term, are generally supportive of us. I don't know that from a macro perspective that we all understood that the Iraqi Security Forces need to be seen as the ones who were providing the security and as the ones that were conducting the operations and were the ones that were seen on the street. And we may have all said that, but we didn't all necessarily do that; so, it requires a great deal of trust on the part of the Americans, and what do I mean by that? I get some actionable intelligence; do I turn that over to the police? Do I turn that over to the army? Or do I as the American execute that operation myself? If the security forces are unable to execute, then maybe I need to do that, depending on the priority. If there's an adequate amount of time on that actionable intelligence, and the security forces are capable, maybe I give them my intel as a part of enabling civil security using the host nation's security forces to do that. Does that kind of answer... was that what you were looking for?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes, I think that gets to the question.

**LTC Brewington:** I think we all shared it as a priority, the security part, we just didn't always agree on the best means to achieve it. Well, I think it's true everywhere, and what it really requires is Americans sometimes to just take a knee and let the security forces work their way, the host nation security forces work their way through it. That is difficult for American military officers and NCOs and soldiers; the reason is because we are so trained and conditioned to quickly, efficiently, and effectively solve problems, and when the problems aren't being solved at the pace we think they need to be, we step in and do it.

**MAJ Thornton:** And there are times when I think we can look at conditions as problems, when in fact, they might just be something that's going to take time to work through.

**LTC Brewington:** Absolutely. So once again, when I briefed General Casey on Monday (ed. note- LTC (R) Brewington was working on T-MAAG and briefed the CSA in that capacity) , I used a term, cultural understanding. We went from cultural understanding to cultural competence to a term he used, which **as Americans, generally, we are culturally isolated. I had never thought about that notion, but it's true. We are very culturally isolated here, so as we travel around, our cultural isolation causes us to view conditions differently than other cultures view them, and so a condition to us becomes a problem. It's not a problem, it's just a condition of this environment, and you work inside the condition.** (ed. note- bold added by me to emphasize the role of cultural bias in perception).

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the things that one of the guys from the PRT mentioned yesterday that was useful was not just guys with Arabic cultural understanding or Middle Eastern cultural

understanding, but with an understanding of developmental culture; where a culture is at in terms of its development and the environmental development. And I thought that was a pretty good way to look at it.

**LTC Brewington:** I never thought about that, that is a great point. How could we teach the awareness and understanding of that as an institution?

**MAJ Thornton:** Let me move on to question number five. This one, the first one, really involves the MiTTs, so your organization and where it was located; equipment, personnel unique to the organization. So, did sustainment and/or force protection create any unique problems in conducting your mission, and how did you work through them?

**LTC Brewington:** Once again, because we were all on Iraqi FOBs geographically separated from our large support base, the large U.S. support base, and our supply lines ran through Iraqi Assistance Group, which was down in Taji with supplies and all the way into Kuwait with supplies, so we were dependant on the coalition for our sustainment. So, that would be logistical sustainment, maintenance; really all classes of supply for the MiTT we had to go to the coalition or to the U.S. FOB base to get. Because we weren't a part of their organization, sometimes we were priority, sometimes we weren't. And because we had drive to get there, you limp a broken vehicle in and then you've still got to get back to your Iraqi FOB at some point that day, spending eight or nine hours waiting for a vehicle to get repaired because you weren't necessarily a priority at that time, nor maybe should you have been, was somewhat problematic. One of the things, once again, about having a command relationship between the MiTT and the

BCT in whose area they operate is good because the BCT can establish maintenance priorities inside the organization where he ranks orders of MiTTs relative to the others, so when a MiTT guy comes in he knows where he falls out in the queue of the work that's going on. He also knows who his direct support maintenance guy is by name, and your vehicles, for instance, are in his ULLS box, and your supply records are in his supply box, and all the rest of those kinds of things, which really streamlines the support process, especially if you don't live with your coalition counterpart. How did we resolve them? Through trial and error and asking please and saying thank you.

**MAJ Thornton:** Sir, we're going to switch gears to sustainment issues regarding Iraqi forces, and you don't have to limit it to just Iraqi forces you looked at. I think much like your case, and in our case, because the IA had a better sustainment mechanism, not that it was superb, but better than the IP, there were many times where we supported... and when I say we, I mean the Iraqi battalion, supported the local police stations with fuel or with some type of sustainment type issue. So, as you saw it, what were the enduring sustainment issues that you encountered with regard to ISF?

**LTC Brewington:** I'm going to address that from multiple levels, and I'm going to say it like this; one of the things that we did with the Iraqi Army, or the Iraqi government did with the Iraqi army is kind of one of the things that we did with our own army with modular force conversion. The Iraqi Army, or the Iraqi government focused all their energy, at least initially it appeared to me, on building combat forces without building the sustainment tail that ran all the way through depot level to sustain all those combat forces. Some would say we've done the same thing with

modular force conversion; we have a lot of BCTs and not nearly enough tail. But I'll go back to the Iraqi army, in this case, security forces in general. Because people understand war fighting and people understand fighting, that's generally where we throw all our energy. Then, sustainment and logistics become some secondary not sexy kind of activity. The problem is that you need that to be able to fully develop your capability. Remember I said I worked with the Iraqi Army on their ability to plan, prepare, execute, and sustain counterinsurgency operations in east Mosul. The brigade could plan, the brigade could prepare, the brigade could execute; where the brigade ran into problems was sustainment, and the reason was it wasn't that they couldn't manage what they had, it's they didn't have anything to manage, and the higher level logistics system wasn't robust enough to support them at their level of development. So, the Iraqi fuel system wasn't adequate to sustain the pace of operations that a 2,500 person BCT was conducting. When the brigade commander said, "Alright, every battalion will run patrols twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week; the minimum size of a patrol is twenty-five soldiers, officers and NCOs, and five vehicles, and there will always be a patrol from every battalion out every day." So at least three patrols were out every day, twenty-four hours a day; you could call anytime, and there should have been three patrols out, one from each of the battalions, all day long, all night long, seven days a week. **The problem with that was the supply system could not sustain that pace of operation, so what ends up happening is you end up doing less patrols because you don't have fuel, and the fuel sustainment process can't fuel you so that you can sustain that pace of operation.** (ed. emphasis added in bold) So, that was Iraqi Army. The Iraqi Army was better sustained, as you said, at least Class III-wise and other supplies; the Iraqi Army was better supplied with fuel, the Iraqi Army was better supplied with armored vehicles that could withstand IED attacks, the Iraqi Army soldiers were better outfitted with

helmets and body armor and those kinds of things because, like I said, we started with the Iraqi Army, but I don't know if we ever made it... the government by the time I left, still was not outfitting the police to level at which they were outfitting the Army, which we've already said was kind of inadequate. So what the Army did as we tried to transition to the police being in the lead was the Army would give the police stuff, we'd send what little bit of fuel we had out to fuel police vehicles, and one of the ways we did that was through joint patrols. So, we'd tell the police, "Alright, we're going to link up with you at your police station, we will have five trucks; how many trucks will you have?" "We'll have five." "We'll bring a fueler with us, and we'll top off your vehicles so you can patrol with us." And so that kind of gets at how the Army supported the police; the challenge was we as a coalition often times had to step in and help supply the Army so they could continue their own operations, or step in and supply the police so they could continue their own operations. Several times we had to step in in other classes of supply besides Class III to get or find for our Iraqi army counterparts parts for their vehicles. In some cases, we also had to step in with mechanics and help them do maintenance. It wasn't an issue that they couldn't do it; it was an issue that they didn't have the resources to do it.

**MAJ Thornton:** We had a problem, the level of tactical effectiveness was tied to the capability to produce a regular sustained op tempo, which of course was tied to, at times it was tied to Class III (B), at times it was tied to Class IX; so if you had a bad mobility non-mission capable rate, the amount of patrols that you could manifest went down, and then your tactical competence, over time, suffered as well. I don't know, did you guys have the same problem with Class IX?

**LTC Brewington:** Absolutely, and what I should have said was really all classes of supply. Even if I ran through them; there were times when food was an issue, there was times where Class III(P) was an issue, there was times when Class III(B) was an issue; when we wanted to go out and put companies out into neighborhoods where we were having a problem, create kind of this idea that we came up with as General Petraeus got there where you get off the FOBs and you establish company and platoon sized OPs in neighborhoods where you're having a problem; Class IV became an issue in our ability to do... so, as you look across, I don't know if you had this dynamic, Class VIII was a big challenge for us with medical supplies, and then Class IX with parts. What people didn't realize was we built all this combat capability, but without the sustainment across all classes of supply, exactly as you said; if I don't have fuel I can't patrol, if I don't have Class III(P) I can't patrol, or it potentially impacts my ability to patrol. If I don't have Class IV it impacts my ability to establish company and platoon combat outposts in neighborhoods where I have a problem; so why is that important? Well, if my farthest neighborhood it takes me twenty-five minutes to drive there from my FOB, and there's activity going on out there, then the bad guys have a twenty-five minute head start on me, or more. So, if I can have a company anchored in that neighborhood that's twenty-five minutes away and it's a five minute trip for him, the people see bad guys engaging in activity, immediate response from security forces, and they go, "Hey, if security forces can respond that fast, maybe the government just might win this thing," and we start getting to see the real center of gravity, the population, swinging to the side of the security forces. So, we built all this combat capability, but we didn't build a sustainment system that would allow it to fight to its fullest capability; so what ends up happening? Less presence patrols, less presence on the street, less combat operations, and so then the unit, the security force, is forced to go, "I'd like to do five patrols and

conduct this raid, but I've got to let the patrols go so I can do the raid." And now all of a sudden, the people aren't seeing the security forces out on the street anymore, and they're wondering, and the bad guys start with the whole IO campaign that says, "Where are the security forces? They used to patrol your neighborhoods, but they don't care about you anymore." And we worked our way through that; in most of those cases, that was generated by our lack of sustainment capability.

**MAJ Thornton:** You've touched on Class XIII, and I know that you guys had some of the same challenges we did, because if you didn't have a medical capability, you couldn't take them to AL Jamouri hospital, the local hospital for example, for serious injuries or for security reasons; you really had to take these guys to the coalition combat support hospital. And I know we made progress over time, but how did that ability, once we got it working, how did that affect combat effectiveness in terms of morale, in terms of partnership?

**LTC Brewington:** Well, Class VIII and health service support in general was a big deal. If a soldier's wounds were life-threatening and we lost... in my time there we had twenty-five KIA Iraqi Army soldiers and over a hundred wounded; if a soldier's injuries were life-threatening, the Iraqi Army expected us to take them to the U.S. combat support hospital, and we did. So, we were potentially enabling what we shouldn't have been enabling, but at the same time, if you live and fight with these guys and one of them gets hurt, you want to see him be taken care of as well as possible. Because of some issues with the brigade I was with being ninety-eight percent Kurdish and predominately sixty percent Sunni Muslim in east Mosul, they were very uncomfortable taking their soldiers to the hospital. (ed. note- 4<sup>th</sup> IA BDE on the East side was

predominately Sunni Kurd, on the West Side 2<sup>nd</sup> IA was more balanced between Kurd and Arab) So, if it was life-threatening, he went to the CSH, the U.S. combat support hospital, and if it wasn't life-threatening, they drove him back to Kurdistan, put him in an ambulance and drove him back to Kurdistan. One of the dynamics we had inside my brigade was on paper we were about a 150 percent trained on medics; the challenge was we would send those medics to school, they would come back and based on the sustainment process of the Iraqi army personnel-wise, we had over a hundred soldiers wounded and various in various states, but we weren't getting replacement soldiers, so rifleman became the default position. So, even though I sent you to be a medic, when I got down to less than comfortable rifle platoon strength, my medics got a rifle and moved out of the aid station, and they became riflemen. What we didn't do was keep real good track of where all the medics were in the formation; so a guy was a school trained medic, but he was a rifleman in Bravo Company, or he was a rifleman in 2<sup>nd</sup> Company, and so we'd go, "We don't have any medics," and we'd send more guys to school, and they'd ultimately end up with rifles in their hands trying to replace wounded soldiers. So, when we talk about sustainment, we're talking about not only the classes of supply, but the people as well, and because of that it adversely impacted our ability to provide medical support. Quite frankly, we never broke the code on health service support in terms of the Iraqi Army soldiers being comfortable going to the local hospital, and a sustained continuous raid of Class VIII resupply that matched the consumption rate; in my year there, we never got there.

**MAJ Thornton:** The issue of intelligence and this of course is an unclassified brief that's going to result in an unclassified product, but we had little visibility, although we had, I think, a good intelligence picture of northwest Mosul. As soon as you started to creep outwards from

northwest Mosul, no matter which direction you went, the intelligence picture started to fade, and there was a lack of connectivity to be able to plug into outside resources; we often wondered about what the intelligence picture... what was different about east and west. Now, we were able to facilitate some of that through the brigade TTs and through direct coordination between the battalion level TTs, but the Iraqis... their systems did not facilitate well the sharing of intelligence, either between adjacent Iraqi Army units or between joint perspective between IA and IP or, for example, what was available or what was going on out at Badush Prison. So how did you see... and there was some disparity also, I think, within coalition between TTs and our coalition partners. How did you see the key intelligence issues, and what do you think would be a good way to move forward on them?

**LTC Brewington:** Here's one of the things that I think we kind of have to understand maybe about intelligence in this particular theater or this particular country, and maybe it applies everywhere else as well, or it may apply everywhere else with host nations; the only intel capability my Iraqi counterpart really had, the only INT was HUMINT. And HUMINT is very much personality, trust, and relationship built, and it's very confined to where the HUMINT intel collector is. So, I can't pick guys up and move them from neighborhood to neighborhood because they are strangers in the neighborhood. So what you have is an intelligence system in east Mosul that was very neighborhood and personality driven with the brigade commander's contacts, that was the only INT he had. He couldn't SIGINT, he couldn't ELINT, he couldn't do any of those, he had HUMINT. The challenge with HUMINT, when you start trying to talk about cross-unit, is he tells me, I call you, now we're into some fuzzy kind of process of sharing information verbally. So generally what ends up happening is the call comes to me, I act on it.

Now, if someone tells me something's going on in someone else's AO, I either call them and go, "I've got something going on, I heard about something in your AO; is it okay if I go across boundary on it?" or "Let me tell you what I've heard, I would like your source... my source doesn't really want to cross into your neighborhood because he didn't really see it, he heard about it from..." and there's the intel system. So, if you know the host nation relies on HUMINT, then the next part becomes the relationships, whether or not we will call each other and exchange information over, in this case, our primary means of communication which is cell phones, and that's as unsecured as you could be. So, there's a whole bunch of issues. The next one becomes dudes who have assets, read the coalition, who can do ELINT, SIGINT, all the rest of the other INTs; how much of that do you share with your host nation counterpart? Well, if you want him to be the one fighting, if you have information you feed it to him so he can fight. That makes us uncomfortable sometimes because you've got all this American secret kind of stuff, the TS kind of stuff going on, and we're somewhat reluctant to share it with our host nation counterpart; he figures out that we don't necessarily trust him, and we're back doing unilateral operations again. So that's how all this intel kind of fur balls together to create challenges.

**MAJ Thornton:** I'm going to jump down to a sub-question on number nine, which is... because some of these you've already gotten after; but how did you go about understanding Iraqi Security Force capabilities and limitations, and how did that kind of develop for you where you said, "You know, I see how these things are compatible in places, or how they work best together," and how did you kind of express that to our different partners?

**LTC Brewington:** The first question, as I came in and did the RIPTOA, the guy I replaced said, “Hey, this is about where these guys are.” I ultimately identified the capabilities and limitations just based on observation, so what ended up happening is I had to go out on patrol with them, get out with them, watch their process so I could then understand how they did things so I could then provide them with useful, potentially useful, advice that might be listened to and heeded; and then the results of that advice determined whether or not they listened to me again on that subject. And I had a great relationship with my brigade commander built on trust and mutual respect, which then allowed me to encourage him to engage in joint operations with the police, it allowed me to encourage him on better ways to potentially do what he was doing. Because once again, I figured out early on because he told me, “I was fighting when you got here, I’ll be fighting when you leave,” and he was. The guy who replaced me has already left, and he’s still there, and he’s still fighting. So he understood the fighting piece, what he was looking for me for was ways to help him increase his own capability and increase the capability of his partners, the police. One of the things we talked about in this society in this particular culture, where it’s all about building somebody up verbally; we want to do operations with the police, anytime we’re out on the street and the reporters come and they see us with the police, and we talk about how brave the police are and what a great job they’re doing securing the population, and how capable the police are, and that we support them in their ability to live up to what we, the Iraqi Army, are saying about their capability.

**MAJ Thornton:** With regard to how the... what was your perspective on combined operations and joint level operations? And when I say combined I mean U.S. and ISF, what were the things

that you saw, the approaches that didn't work versus the approaches that did work or work better, and what about the same being said between IA and IP?

**LTC Brewington:** Well, when you talk about the progression, if the police are a forming organization and don't have a lot of capability, and you're doing combined U.S. and Iraqi Army, we'll use U.S. and Iraqi Army, it's who's doing what. Do we bring the Iraqi Army along and have them be the cordons so the coalition can search, or do we bring the Iraqi Army along and have the coalition cordon and have the Iraqi army search? What's the message we're trying to send to the population? When it gets to joint, who's doing the cordon... and what I figured out early on is who's doing the cordon and who's doing the search tells you whose operation it is, and it sends a big message to the folks. Is there an American coming in my house, is there an Iraqi soldier coming in my house, or is there an Iraqi policeman coming in my house? The guy who's coming in my house is the one who's in charge.

**MAJ Thornton:** I think that's a salient point.

**LTC Brewington:** And that gets at building legitimacy of... that gets you building legitimacy because who are you trying... you know, what we have to figure out as a US., as we talk about the "train, advise, assist," foreign security force development, security force assistance, is who are we trying to give the credibility to? Are we trying to give the credibility to ourselves? Are we trying to give the credibility to the police? Are we trying to give the credibility to the army? Are we trying to give the credibility to the foreign security force if it's a combination on police and army? And who are we trying to give the credibility to, the U.S. government or the host

nation government? Because I think sometimes we tend to lose sight of the overall objective, center of gravity population, and we are trying to show the host nation population that their government and their security forces are credible, that their government and security forces are capable of meeting their needs. We use life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; the government is capable of providing for protection so you have life, capable of providing for protection so you have liberty, and creating the conditions economically, infrastructure, so you can pursue happiness as you define it inside a legal ends. And so how do we, when you talk about foreign security force development and stability ops and actually making it to phase four and phase five of stability ops, where you are creating a stable environment, and when I say you are, the host nation is creating the stable environment, so you can then move to civil control, which is the last phase, phase five. So how do we enable that from start to finish for the government and security forces of the host nation? How do we increase their credibility, how do we increase their standing with the population, sometimes at the expense of our own?

**MAJ Thornton:** You touched on this several times, but I kind of want to ask this specific question; how did you integrate information operations into the purpose of gaining and maintaining local support, but within that, the idea that there's kind of a zero-sum game in some ways because at the same time you're increasing the host nation support and the host nation security force's support, you're also creating the idea of illegitimacy of those insurgent forces or criminal elements that are working with the insurgent forces? And this kind of gets to matching our actions with the narrative. So, there's probably different ways you went about this, and I was hoping you could talk about some of them.

**LTC Brewington:** Totally outside the coalition, the brigade commander got it, General Noor Aldeen got it. Here's what I mean by General Noor Aldeen got it; he had his patrols out on the streets telling the people, "If anybody comes through here handing out flyers to you, call us. If anybody comes through here telling you to get out of your house or they're going to come back and kill you, call us. Here's what we will do; we will come, run them down, and kill them, and take their flyers. If they put flyers up on the doors, we'll come rip them down and put our flyers up. When they see us coming they will run because they are illegitimate women." That was kind of the message. And so, outside of the coalition, totally unapproved by the whole IO theme thing, General Noor Aldeen at least once a week produced a little handbill or a flyer that he handed out to the target neighborhood. He took his brigade S-6, and made him the brigade's media officer, what we would call the IO officer; he created that position, moved to give him his own office, gave him three people, gave him a computer, and gave him the authority to bang out flyers, and so that's what he did. And we got flyers out that said, "The Iraqi Army is here to help you, the Iraqi police are here to help you," and we would go through, the patrols would come by and pick them up, and go through and hand them out. They were all in Arabic, handed out by Iraqi soldiers, unlike sometimes when the coalition handed out flyers; so you've got U.S. soldiers handing out U.S. produced flyers in a neighborhood vice an Iraqi army soldier handing out what was clearly Iraqi because they weren't in color, they were very generic looking with a strong message, and in many cases, they had the brigade commander's cell phone number on them, and the battalion commander's cell phone on them, and said, "Call me directly," and in lots of cases they did. That was one of the things that he did. The other is every Tuesday, he would get on TV with one of the district police chiefs; they would all make the typical kinds of speeches that they all make and then they would open it up to call-ins. And his theme going on was, "The

Iraqi Army is here to support the Iraqi police who are providing you with security. If bad things are happening in your neighborhood, call us; call the police, call us; if you call us, we'll call the police, and we'll both come together and solve your problem. We will kill the bad guys if you tell us where they are," and that was kind of the ongoing IO theme. And what we found out is you can drive through a neighborhood, but if you give people a piece of paper that they can read that tells them you care and has a way to contact you quickly, you're connecting; and if you immediately respond to the bad guys when they come in with their flyer campaign... it was almost like CCIR, and it was almost like contact, non-lethal contact; so if there were patrols out, we'd already said with our logistical capability there were always patrols out, if we got a call that somebody was handing out flyers, all available patrols moved there because we wanted to catch those dudes and kill them, and we wanted the people to see the response, and then we would immediately follow it up with a counter-flyer.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's really about the way that we were operating down at the battalion level; we've got some examples of that, we'd made some progress in terms of getting them wired to a computer and the Internet, using Adobe Photoshop, and they took to it real well. I want to ask a question about resources, and I don't necessarily... I phrase this about assets or resources were in your AO because when I initially wrote it I was thinking about things like access to training assets or things like that that reflected more the conditions in the area; in one case we wanted to create CTR teams with local Iraqi Army folks from Mosul so that we could put out plainclothes folks. The only folks that really had that capability to train that were the ODA, they were over tasked. But the idea that there were assets or resources within the AO or that could have been up in Baghdad or could have been up at the RSU, you know, the big deal we went through to get

sniper rifles released and then trying to get ammunition for those M76s, the Yugoslav versions. So, what things like that come to mind, and what do you think the sticking points were?

**LTC Brewington:** I'll go back to kind of how we started this conversation is there were a number of challenges that could have been resolved to the betterment of achieving our overall objective, and it gets back to whose fight is it, and how do we enable that fight? If you say developing the foreign security forces or security force assistance is the number one thing, then all the assets you have should go towards that. **So, putting the plainclothes guys out on the street; that would be a higher priority for an ODA than doing an ODA direct action, or should be. See, what ends up happening though is, I'll say it like this; you can say whatever you want, but how you apply your resources tells you what's really important to you. (ed. note – emphasis added.)** So yes, there were all kinds of resources that were available and although we were... the number one effort is MiTTs and developing the Iraqi Security Force capability. Okay, show me the resources you've allocated to that. Show me how you bring U.S. might in to get me ammunition so my snipers can kill dudes. Show me how you bring U.S. might in to get me sniper rifles. Show me how you bring U.S. might in so I can take Iraqi army soldiers and train them to a degree that I can put them in civilian clothes to do CTR. See, we say it's what we're focused on and our priority, but I will tell you, you can determine what's important by mapping it back to resources, and where do I apply my resources because that's what I truly believe is important. And so there was a bunch of capability that was solely inside of U.S. channels that could have very easily gone to Iraqi channels. Does that answer your... does that kind of get at the question? When you talk about resources... not saying we should step in and do it for the Iraqis, but if you have influence, and Americans had a great deal of

influence because of the resources we had; we had contracting cash, we had all those kinds of things, so how do use the resources that you have with your American might to further what you say is the number one objective, which is developing the capability of the foreign security forces to do “fill-in-the-blank”?

**MAJ Thornton:** I think is the key point is that it’s not the availability of resources, we all pretty much knew that those resources were out there, it’s the allocation and distribution based on a common understanding of where we’re trying to go.

**LTC Brewington:** Now you go all the way back to the beginning, and what process did we use to all come to an agreement on what the end state was? Because if we can do that, then we all agree at the very front, this is our desired end state; now, every resource we have should be applied to enabling that end state. And I’m not necessarily sure that that was the approach that we took, so when you get into unity of effort, for instance, or we talk about did we achieve what we wanted to achieve in Mosul? I would offer you that we did in pockets, and the reason we did in pockets is because everybody involved, all the stakeholders, may not have been working towards the same objective. So, as I worked towards what I thought was supposed to be doing down there, I was achieving unity of effort inside my little organization, but I wasn’t sure that my little piece of the puzzle, the larger puzzle, was necessarily synched. So, did we have a nested government; the province, the city effort going on, where I started with a high level objective that worked its way down to the bottom, and built from the bottom up towards achieving that objective? So that I start with a vision, have a bunch of supporting tasks that achieve that vision, start accomplishing those supporting tasks back up to achieving the vision.

See, I'm not necessarily sure that we were there. We wanted to be, but I'm not sure we were there.

**MAJ Thornton:** I want to ask a question about the RIPTOA at the MiTT and individual level. And I put some sub-questions under there such as did you feel like you moved the ball forward, did you feel like there was better unity of effort? But I think one of the most important ones is probably the one that is so difficult to do when somebody else comes in is ensuring that the lines of communication that you've been using to achieve things are open and left open, and that person can step in and that they have the flattest possible adaptation curve between their perceptions coming in and then how their perceptions were more closely aligned with the realities by the time they actually took over.

**LTC Brewington:** Let me walk you through...that's a great question, let me walk you through from start to finish. First, it starts with how you man this capability, how you man your team. We were individual augmenters for the most part. So in other words, no centralized screening process so, for instance, I ended up with some very young guys. One of them about thirty-eight months to the army; great guy, just did not have the experience behind him to train, advise, teach, and coach at the level he was expected. **The team that came in after us, using a more centralized process, where somebody looked at officer record briefs or looked at capabilities, and the team that came in to replace mine had a much better experience level, much higher experience level, than we did. So that shortened their learning curve just in the time that we overlapped, which was a good thing.** (ed. – emphasis added) The other thing that's kind of progressed on that helps with this process is doing the pre-deployment site surveys

where you allow the team leader to come over and make contact with the counterpart he's going to be working with, make contact with the team so that he can then go back at the start of training and say, "This is where we're going, these are some of the personalities involved, these are some of the strengths of the unit, these are some of the weaknesses, these are some of the things that we need to work on that are conditions that are unique to the place where we're going." Seeing all that in the RIPTOA process, starting all the way back with selecting the right guys to be on the team, to a pre-deployment site survey by the leader, to now starting a training process; all that contributes to less friction for the unit. As the brigade commander said, "I was fighting when you got here, I'll be fighting when you leave." The guy who replaced me has already left and the guy who replaced him is there now, and the brigade commander is still fighting. So, we as MiTTs are fighting the war one year at a time with a bunch of different guys with an organization that for the most part has maintained constant minus combat casualties. So how do we reduce the friction as we transition from fighting the war a year at a time with MiTTs, so that when I come in to replace you, I'm not coming in sixty degrees off of your azimuth. I'm coming in, at most, two to three degrees left or right of center because that's the direction the guy was already starting ahead; so we're complementing each other as opposed to giving him conflicting advice, and although he's seeing a different face, he's still seeing the ball moving in the same direction, and that's one of the keys. If you aren't going to put an advisor with a guy from start to finish, and you're going to have some kind of advisor rotation, then the advisors themselves, the incumbent and the replacement have to get together at some point and kind of agree that the path is the right one, otherwise you end up being unfair to your counterpart unit and not making progress because every year you get a different guy in who wants to change the azimuth of the organization. And organizational change is significant; it may take me four or

five months to change the azimuth of the organization, which means I then only have another, when you look at the timing, we only spent about eleven months with the unit; so if it takes me four or five months to change his azimuth, I get six months of working time on that azimuth, and if the next dude comes in and changes then we're back to this, and what you get is only six months of a year of useful time, moving towards an objective. So, although my replacement did not get to do a pre-deployment site survey, the guy who replaced him did, and since he came from here, he and I talked about... the guy who replaced the guy who replaced me came here from Leavenworth; key, because we talked about the brigade, he went off to do pre-deployment survey, came back and said, "This is kind of what's going on," and I said, "Wow, this has changed, that's changed," and we were able to continue. Now, the guy who replaced me, I stayed in email contact with him all the way through his tour over there, and we were exchanging ideas in email. Because after a year, I felt I had a vested stake in the success of 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade 2<sup>nd</sup> Iraqi Army Division; in fact, I still call the brigade commander on his cell phone from the States a year plus after I left. So, going back to your question, yes, I think we moved the ball forward; I also think we developed a process that continues to allow us to move the ball forward in the same direction, on the same field towards the end zone.

**MAJ Thornton:** Is there anything else that you think that interview questions have missed, or that you think would be beneficial to the case study that you'd like to talk about?

**LTC Brewington:** No, that's it.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 7 August 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Security Force Assistance Case Study Interview

with

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by

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Date of Interview 02 April 2008

**MAJ Thornton:** The concept of support that you started with regard to the mission analysis that you did and as things changed a little bit, because you guys were originally headed to Ramadi but then you inherited all of Ninewa. You realized you had to provide, that you had to sustain units across the breath and depth of Ninewa that were of different types, with different equipment, and that you also had to work the sustainment piece with the Iraqi Security Forces,

and any other cats and dogs you had to herd along the way. So wherever you want to pick up and talk about is great and we will pick up questions from there.

**MAJ Maguire:** To start off with I think the concept of support is really an old term that the Army hasn't caught up with. I think as logisticians go you always start out with your concept of support, but I think a concept of support in COIN or whatever the Army's term, asymmetrical warfare, COIN, or whatever it is going to be called; concept of support is only, in my opinion, is only to be made if the plan is brand new. In other words it has never been done. Like going on the attack, how are you going to support this? So once we got there, there was already a plan in place to support it. To support the environment and the operations that were going on.

**MAJ Thornton:** You inherited some steady state operations?

**MAG Maguire:** There were steady state operations; we fell in on an existing infrastructure. It was more like how are you running support operations? Once the old guy got out of the seat then I said this is what I want to do after a period of time. The unique environment between Ramadi and Mosul is that Ramadi's support tail was in Al Taqaddum. You had your ASL in Al Taqaddum separated from the brigade headquarters essentially, which in my opinion, that's bad. Your lifeline is your ASL. So you had to traverse Route Irish times twice a day or as needed to push parts from Al Taqaddum into the battle space itself. Battle space being relative but into Ramadi to support current combat operations that were going on there. In Mosul you had your ASL there with you, and you got supported by our hub which was at Q-west. We had two hubs really, one in Mosul because we had a landing strip in Mosul on the FOB which helped throughput greatly. But we also had supplies coming out of Harvard Gate in the north and FFE coming out of Harvard Gate, Turkey, and some of it came it out of Kuwait as well. But in general, the units we inherited were many. We had, I think, 26-28 MiTT teams, the largest MiTT contingent in Iraq. We had an SFAOB; I think times three or times four ODAs at any given time, and had OGA elements out there too that needed some support. But they really had their own funding stream and they had their own air freight so we really didn't help them too much. There were some times when we did but very transparent to what was going on. Other than that we were running about 7 clips a day to all the outstations. I think we grew to about 28 outstations. So it was pretty large.

**MAJ Thornton:** Colonel Twitty kind of outlined for us the border to border and from East to West in terms of BTT teams and then you had elements inside of the Tal Afar AO over at SYKES. Then you had elements inside of Mosul kind of spread throughout Mosul. Then you had...down at Q-west and then you had some folks down at Hamam al Alil. How did you tie all that together? Where did you come up short do you think or what adjustments did you have to make to make it all work?

**MAJ Maguire:** As far as synchronizing the brigade, when I say brigade I'm talking about every brigade operation that we had going on that I knew of. I knew of all of them. I had to know because I had to make sure the support was in place to make sure these guys were enabled to do their missions, or their mission sets or whatever they were going to do. As far as adjustments I didn't necessarily need to make any adjustments, there were times when I thought that the logistics piece was going to encapsulate operations to the point where ops no longer drove

logistics but it was logistics driving ops. I remain convinced to this day that logistics does drive ops in COIN much more so than in just a one area battlefield because it is so intensive in nature and because these guys are isolated they are by themselves, the guys I'm talking about at the COPs away from the super FOBs. The guys that are living in the street corner hotel surrounded by a couple of T-walls and they're calling it their headquarters. Those are the guys I am primarily talking about. Can they do operations? Sure, they can do ops if they don't shoot a round and they don't drive their humvees, but once they start them up and drive them down the road they are going to need a full tank of gas the next day. The security threat being what it is you can't just automatically create a mini-FOB out in locations like that. Because of either assets you don't have or threat mitigation. You are not going to put a fuel tanker out there just to stay out there. I don't think any commander would do that worth his salt. It's not large enough to do that and you are taking an enormous risk by doing that. That was really one of my main concerns is keeping it all transparent to the maneuver guys. But even that term is a war definition too. What is a maneuver guy in COIN?

**MAJ Thornton:** I tell you it really made things a lot easier on us when the brigade started delivering Class III (B) or whatever we were requesting. You guys would bring out Class I to us Class III (B), Class III (P), and occasionally if we needed Class V or something, we didn't burn through too much of that, but whatever we needed we could count on a LOGPAC coming out to Eagle once a week usually. But for the majority of my time there, the first 9 months or so, we would drive in, do a kind of a service station type thing and would back haul it back to Eagle. So that really changed. What made you guys decide that needed to change to where you guys more in the direct support role as opposed to having units come in?

**MAJ Maguire:** I think as far as the direct support, kind of general support of the BSB is the lowest level of support to a brigade. So we are also going to be in direct support. The end user sees it as, this is my support unit. These guys are in direct support but it is really the brigade that is in direct support. If the MiTT team is attached or OPCON, then they are going to get supported by the brigade, because the MiTT doesn't have the assets that it needs to support itself. I remember the time of we are coming in today to pick up this and this and this. I tried to change that mentality. No, that is not your role. Your role is to stay out and fight. My role is the send guys to you. So very quickly that changed. There was no need for them to come in. I got support from the brigade XO and everyone else. We don't need these guys coming in. They need to be staying out there unless there is some administrative function they need, paper work or whatever it is individuals need to take care of.

**MAJ Thornton:** It may seem like a little thing to you guys but that really freed up, because we were working with so many different people within the MiTTs in terms of this trainer or this guy advising this guy, that one less trip that generally saved us a full day once a week, that really increased our effectiveness by not having to do that. I think that is a model for people to look at when they are doing their mission analysis. It could have gotten overlooked. It could have stayed business as usual.

**MAJ Maguire:** But that is why the Army pays people like myself and my staff and my colonel to figure that stuff out. A lot of it is a mental thing too. A lot of it is where you have been and what you have done and your attitude on things in the Army and how you want to perform too;

it's your attitude. But to answer your question, I think it really comes down to a level of trust too. If you the guy out at the outstation, Thornton is out there by themselves with 6 guys he's putting in a request every day for 7 days and he needs 5,000 rounds of 5.56 or he's NMC. He can't do his mission because he doesn't have force protection. Where is your faith in the system? There is none. So what are you going to do? Let's jump in our trucks, risk our lives and go back there and get 5,000 rounds. That's a variable, an element to what I saw when I inherited my battle space. Some guys, some MiTT teams were like that and some weren't. The guys that were in and around Mosul, they came in primarily because it was easier for them to do that. Why is it easier for you to do that? When you really peel back the onion, it's not easier; they just said that so that they could past it and just fix it themselves. It really came down to a test of faith between the tactical guy out there every day 24 hours a day and the support unit that wasn't supporting them because they didn't have the wherewithal and the backbone to get out there and actually visit all these places that you are going to be supporting and so you can actually see what the requirements are going to be. That's one element to it; the second element is you have to have the system in place to make sure that I know exactly what you need and I know when you need it and I know why you need it.

**MAJ Thornton:** Let's talk a little bit about the system. Overall did the way the request occur change...

**MAJ Maguire:** The RFS system you are talking about?

**MAJ Thornton:** Yes. Can you talk a little about how that facilitated bottom up feed from the TTs in terms of what logistics were needed and things like that?

**MAJ Maguire:** The RFS system is...well, let me just tell you the story. I got crushed by competing requirements, competing requests for support throughout the whole battle space. I didn't have the assets or the soldiers to...I didn't have enough trucks or enough drivers to take all the stuff every single day, 7 days a week. If I could have I would have but even then I would have been inefficient. I needed a method to be able to communicate with all these small entities out in the battle space. A few months into the rotation, I took what SOF uses and I changed it significantly to bring it over to the conventional side of the house. It took like an hour. It was that simple. The one piece of communications that everybody had no matter where they were was a VSAT. Everybody had a VSAT so I said, "Okay, why don't they just e-mail me the request? Simple. Everyone has a VSAT for MWR. Easy. It is not classified; supplies are not classified, so why don't we just use that? Instead of the Iraqi cell phone, which I had like three that never rang but if they did it was some Iraqi guy that I never could understand, and some of you guys were on the brigade net, some of you guys...and FM, there was really no way to work that. You have landline phones that never work. My phone was probably the best, the most reliable piece of communications equipment I had with me. The MiTT outstations, but even then it was hit or miss. Not all the guys had phones, but they did have e-mail. I just said one day, fill this out in an e-mail in the subject line put who you are and what MiTT team you are on, daytime group, your RFS number and that was it. I put out an example. I have it here. I think I sent it to you. Didn't I send it to you?

**MAJ Thornton:** I don't think so. I'll have to go back and check.

**MAJ Maguire:** Well, I got really frustrated with everybody telling me, they needed help. When you have all these people telling you they need stuff now or else they are going to fail, it gets kind of tiring.

**MAJ Maguire:** It really came down...one day I just asked the question, how do we support all these guys? They're battle space orphans. They were so small but they enabled the brigade to meet combat requirements that they became so important we needed to figure it up. This is how it worked. What is missing off this chart and it's on purpose is the MiTT team. I forced this battalion MiTT XO to field and scrub the MiTT team RFSes. I put their XO or their chief in the interrogation process to make sure that when their logistician comes up with some bizarre "requirement", that that request doesn't make it all the way through and then all of a sudden they have got a hundred million dollars worth of stuff sitting in my SSA. So I felt that someone at this echelon needed to...

**MAJ Thornton:** Scrutinize?

**MAJ Maguire:** Scrutinize based on their leadership because who am I to tell a MiTT team no. I'm a staff guy sitting on a super file answering 400-500 e-mails a day, answering radios, answering phones. I don't have very limited visibility on your CONOP, not to say that it's little but do you know what I mean.

**MAJ Thornton:** You mean in the grand scheme of things, it's a bunch of little things going on.

**MAJ Maguire:** Exactly. All though I'm aware of all CONOPS that are going on and I did have a staff that reviewed all the CONOPS that were going on, unless it was a major movement or there was something I needed to get involved with to enable that unit, that's all it was to me, just another CONOP. I did have people monitoring all these things in the battle space, but if I did that myself I would just go crazy. So I needed someone at the battalion MiTT to tell me that, yes this was a valid requirement. Then I went to the brigade, the same thing. This brigade guy would tell me, technically it should be the division MiTT, but the division MiTT really didn't do that much for us. What ended up happening was this became me. Okay? But in a perfect world that's the way it should work in my mind.

**MAJ Thornton:** I think part of that problem was is that while we had an O-5 logistician down at our battalion, the division met up at Al Kindi had an O-2(P) or he might have been an O-3 by the time you guys got there and he was just way out of his depth.

**MAJ Maguire:** That's just another problem all together. This guy said it to...I had in my SPO shop, a MiTT cell. It was a lieutenant, and an E-8 and that is all they did was MiTT logistics. It was there primary focus. Then they had another cell that all they did was brigade logistics. So these guys did all the itty-bitty logistics. Not just the MiTTs, they did BTT, they did SF...well, they did MiTT and BTT. I really handled the SOF and the OGA guys if they needed it. This RFS, this document would get sent to everybody. Everybody in the loop got it in one shot. Then it's a routine request and all I asked was, "Hey, you guys know what you need. Is this a routine push, a standard push, or is this an emergency?" If it was an emergency then that would mean

this was my agreement to those guys...here is what an emergency means. It means I'm dropping everything for you right now, but I need your battalion commander to validate that. He would call my battalion commander and say, "Yes, this is in fact an emergency." We had several of those where I had the 3-IA DIV MiTT Chief, he would call me on the phone and say, "Jay, I have a meeting with some Iraqi general tomorrow and my humvee just broke. Now I can't meet the force protection requirement and I have an emergency." So I would have to kank my whole transcycle for that day to allocate two PLSs, you know, the gun truck requirement, all the soldiers, and have to pull that off. Okay, I can't service this COP now so I have to go do this emergency RFS so the whole transcycle for the week would get slid to the right. That's why it was so important that I needed that commander validate that for me.

**MAJ Thornton:** We rotated out in like March of 07, and a new unit rotated in. Did you notice, one of the things we were trying to get was some of the friction just as units, you get new units in on a different rotation schedule so they have to learn the system, did you go through any hiccups or was it pretty seamless or did it effect anything at all, the change in units and in personalities and things like that.

**MAJ Maguire:** Personalities are always going to cause friction. There is nothing the Army can do to fix that. Everyone has got there quirks and that's just the way it goes. I think for me it was just...part of me said I have been here and done this before, so I was a little more relaxed about it. I knew it would all work out in the end anyway so I wasn't, I didn't get too wrapped up in that. There was friction but I let the commanders deal with that at the 0-5 level. Yes, I had my frustrating days but I really didn't get too wrapped up about it.

**MAJ Thornton:** I talked to you on the phone and we talked a little about ISF support and how that got ramped up over time. Everything from moving around T-walls, to moving fuel, to class IX, to back hauling IP vehicles out of One West; I wonder if you could cover some of those things and how that evolved, maybe some of the more serious problems that you said, "Maybe we are going to have to be creative on this one."

**MAJ Maguire:** We were creative on everything. I mean that is just the bottom line. That talks to the soldiers and the officers in the line. But it also talks to the ability of certain people to read, the battlefield and understand what is going on. I think the brigade commander knew that he had to enable the Iraqis. The way in COIN, I think a battlefield gets weighed these days is with logistics period. You can't weigh the COIN battlefield any differently than giving them...let me define that for you. Now, let's go back up a couple of years ago here. In NTC you would weigh them in with what?

**MAJ Thornton:** It might be forces; it might be in priorities of fires, and priority support depending upon who you were and how far you were going, different ways.

**MAJ Maguire:** Right. But in COIN, that priority was never really set. There is no I'll give you fires or I'll give you "XYZ" 2-7 CAV or I'll give you this or that. It was more how can the brigade influence events on the battlefield? I think the brigade commander knew that 70% of our intelligence was culled from out of the environment from the IA, actionable stuff. So if that's the case how are you going to keep that good stuff coming? Well, I'll give you gas, I'll give you T-walls, I'll fix your trucks, I'll weld stuff for you, and that is how we got in the

business of doing that. I think he did it for that reason and I think he did it to make sure they had no excuse not to perform as an army as well.

**MAJ Thornton:** It was easier with you guys because we were there for three total BCTs, it's just the nature of catching one on the back end, one that came in for a little while, and then got pushed to Diyala, and then you all came in. It was a little easier to articulate to you guys that some of the logistical shortcomings could not be affected at the tactical end, some of them; that they were operation or higher level problems. For example, the Class IX for humvees or the recruitment education and retainment of mechanics. There were problems in that if we could not keep Iraqi HMMWVs in the fight, then we could not sustain the number of Iraqi patrols that were able to go out and that absence would create an opportunity for the enemy to regain freedom of movement because we just didn't have as much stuff on the battlefield. So there was a relationship between OR rate and level of effectiveness that the other two units had a little bit of trouble understanding because they were only looking at one aspect of development. I think you guys did a pretty good job of understanding that there were just some operational challenges such as ministerial capacity that weren't going to get fixed any time soon and that we were just going to have to continue to support them on in order to make them tactically effective. Then there were also some other things that weren't necessarily...that don't necessarily neatly fall in there for example, General Jamal, his pilfering of the available Iraqi Class III (B) and sending it north created an additional burden on the coalition side. But I think you are right. If we are going to walk into that environment you have to understand where the disconnects are and what can be fixed by the host nation and what can't for whatever reason. You have to weigh out where it is going to go from there. What do you want to invest more in at the time, what has immediacy.

**MAJ Maguire:** I think too, that you have to be pretty savvy to understand the environment specifically with fuel. I did a study about black market fuel and the cost of the street price because I wanted to know. I wanted my commander to know. All right boss, you are going to give this guy 5000 gallons of mogas. Here is the street worth. Just know that he is going to take 10% or whatever and this is what that 10% is worth. I have a little chart here of what I made. Real easy to put in your hand. But to get that Iraqi general to do what? To fulfill his intent, maybe it is worth it. Maybe it is worth the loss in fuel. But at the end of the day is it our guys running over IEDs or is it theirs? I don't know. I remember going round and round about fuel and giving the fuel away, and the division allowed us to bend some rules there too. We ran gas out to the BTTs too, the Iraqi border police out there too. Border force stations...you have 213 of those things along the border. You are never going to cover that void space.

**MAJ Thornton:** I talked to Colonel Welsh about maintaining a surplus on Eagle, for example. Our three trucks were only going to use so much fuel but we also had the platoon from 1-9 that would come out and it just made more sense. But in addition to that we kept a surplus to where if the fuel to the Iraqis stopped coming it would not generate new missions to go out and refuel and they could refuel right there because if you refuel at the brigade headquarters you had the dynamics of different units and personalities that would get involved. So for example, Triple Deuce IA would come in and make multiple trips back and forth between Tiger Base and Spear Base and keep refueling the same vehicles, and it would be difficult for 1-2-2 to get their vehicles in. Plus the time lost in going from, you know, the 15 minutes to go from Eagle in that

window that was provided by the IA, to go from Eagle to Spear with all your trucks and bring them all back. So there was some risk involved, but keeping a reserve of fuel there created some tactical flexibility on their part which worked out pretty good, especially once we put some things in place to limit the amount of pilfering – cameras that over watched the fuel site and that sort of thing. The Iraqis started policing themselves so that worked out pretty good, but we couldn't have done that with any other unit because there was not another unit that was willing to take the risk. Their thought processes had not matured to the point at that time. I don't know if that is a process of deploying a multiple of times or just the right guy at the right place saying, "You know what, if we are ever going to get these guys up to a level of tactical proficiency, we are going to have to maintain them on the streets. You guys were more interest in that.

**MAJ Maguire:** Well, Colonel Welsh is absolutely right. What does he care if he puts some gas out there? Its nothing to him. I'm swimming in gas; I don't care. So he is absolutely right.

**MAJ Thornton:** I was interviewing Colonel Twitty and looking at the challenges he had with the amount of forces he had to cover down on Ninewa. You seem to be echoing that here but I understand that you have to have the Iraqis in the fight all the time and he basically said that. He said you know we have to get these guys in the fight and keep them in the fight because we just don't have the amount of forces to do what we might otherwise if we had all three battalions engaged in one single event.

**MAJ Maguire:** He is absolutely right again. The problem will always be logistics. That will always be the problem. The crutch from now until we leave Iraq will be how do we get these guys to move away from corruption and into managing their own supplies themselves?

**MAJ Thornton:** How do you think the movement of logistics impacted other operations?

**MAJ Maguire:** There were many times I would have competing requirements and I would have to call the brigade and say "Okay Boss, what do you want to happen? Do you want this TCP to be built in support of this op today or do you want these T-walls constructed or put in place for this element today?" He would have to make the choice. There were plenty of times.

**MAJ Thornton:** There were different things going on but one of the projects we got started with 2-7 and then broader with 4-1, was when we said we want COP YARMOOK to be bigger than it is and more sustainable. Colonel Welsh, Colonel Twitty, different folks from the 3-shop, engineers, folks came out there. The scale that everybody wanted to do was pretty good size. A huge number of T-Walls, from my perspective, when I thought about how many you could put on a PLS or how many it takes...I thought, this is going to take some resources.

**MAJ Maguire:** Where was that at?

**MAJ Thornton:** Out by Yarmook Traffic Circle. I was told it eventually got built.

**MAJ Maguire:** Yeah, we built it.

**MAJ Thornton:** For a three or four piece tower that would look all the way down up Tampa, up toward Santa Fe, that was two or three trucks right there just moving that around plus the MHE (Material Handling Equipment) you had to move to get to the back end.

**MAJ Maguire:** I think the distance there was a five or six miles out the gate. Yeah, at night it was a pretty much a straight shot. I do remember we built that over a 5-6 day, 6 night period.

**MAJ Thornton:** That's it?

**MAJ Maguire:** But that's a lot, that took everything we had. It had to get done that fast because my other units had requirements. I had to get it out there so I had to free my assets up. Primarily I ran during the day, didn't run during the night. We switched it up depending on the threat. We did stuff like that because the exposure times were a lot longer. Bad guys see infantry; they didn't see support clout. So you have all these guys out there and their huge operation. It takes 50-80 people.

**MAJ Thornton:** It takes a certain size crane to erect these big concrete towers. Those cranes were hard to come by. Some of them had to be brought up from down south. How did you guys work around that?

**MAJ Maguire:** Well, we did an experiment with an M88. The 88 wouldn't...you could emplace the 12 ton T-walls with an 88, but it would take too long. So we needed, I think we came up with a 30 ton crane. It was on 8 wheels and KBR I think bought one, so we used theirs and just did it that way. No one else had the capability to do it. It was all on us to get it done, between us and the engineers to get that piece done.

**MAJ Thornton:** You talked a little about on the phone about back hauling all the destroyed IP vehicles and it turned into something, a number higher than you had anticipated. Once you started, could you tell us a little about it.

**MAJ Maguire:** Hundreds. Sure, this was another sweet deal for the Iraqi IP generals. I think they had complained that they had no place to park their IP vehicles inside their police stations. Their catalyst was well, we've drug all our blown up IP trucks into the parking lots of our police stations so we have no place to park so we can't patrol. Okay, well, that's easy. So we go into there and load up their broken stuff and take it up and that is what we did. We...I think it was a SC6 or some place close to the FOB. We first cleaned out that place and brought them all back into the tank farm, where all that Soviet broke stuff was. We cleaned out that place and we said you guys are good. Well, we cleaned it out and three days later they had drug from all their corresponding police stations all their other broken stuff, so it turned out to be a cannibalization point. We just let them continue and once a week I would go out there, we spent a week going out there cleaning the wrecked stuff. That turned into a weekly thing. I would just go out there and the Iraqis would drag all their broke trucks back from all their corresponding police stations, there by freeing up their parking lots and bring it back here and I would go clean out SC6 once a week and I had about 500-600 hulks.

**MAJ Thornton:** One of the things we wanted to capture was just the level of activity that was going on. They're all combat operations even if you are just going right out west or whatever so

that the security that is required and all the rest of the stuff and how it is managed. Mike, do you have anything in the sustainment lane based on some the stuff that been...

**Mike Lee:** You really didn't make the call as to the verification of it is what you were saying, right? So where along the line for requests from the Iraqis or for the Iraqis was it pushed to say have you tried all of your own systems to get this stuff?

**MAJ Maguire:** Oh yeah, we had LTT (Logistics Transition Teams) teams out there; we gave guys up out of hide to fill some of these logistics training teams. My battalion commander was personally involved in getting weekly maintenance meetings set up specifically regarding their ground equipment. Weekly maintenance meetings with those guys, and it was always, always, always – it came down to a stamp on a piece of paper releasing the part out of some place in Baghdad. Every time. I'm talking at the Iraqi GO level.

**MAJ Thornton:** If you went to the RSU out at Al Kisik and you didn't have the right stamp it was hard to get that part or whatever it was off and into the hands of the guy that needed it.

**MAJ Maguire:** The problems with Iraqi logistics are corruption, first and foremost you have to fix that, I don't know how you fix it, two, organization, and three, a system. Corruption – there is plenty of, organization – very little, and system – not functioning. If there is one, I haven't seen it. What I have seen is our solution to their problem and they don't want it. The wire box, here is how you request and it goes to Baghdad. This guy signs it, and this general...the part and then who is flying it? Well, we are. Okay, so who is going to release it? We are. Okay.

**Mike Lee:** But you didn't make the call, of is this a verified requirement. Somebody else was making that call from your system; I think you were saying you know you asked for one...

**MAJ Maguire:** Are you talking Iraqi logistics for the ISF?

**Mike Lee:** Yes.

**MAJ Maguire:** You're not talking log for MiTT guys, coalition forces, Americans?

**Mike Lee:** No because that isn't the same issue.

**MAJ Maguire:** Correct.

**Mike:** But what I am thinking is you didn't have to make the call. You want to push them as far as they can go to use their own system and then at some point, but you are not having to make that call. Somebody else is coming to you and saying, you got to have it now but the verification for the release came from someone else. In other words you did make the call if they had done all their own homework and if it was necessary or if they were just milking your system for what they could get.

**MAJ Thornton:** The MiTTs played a role in that because if there was a lack of fuel we would inform the U.S. Chain of Command through the brigade MiTT chief, "Sir, I'm being told there is

no fuel so that means instead of 11 patrols today we are only going to be able to do 4 and I think that you should probably go ahead and let Colonel Welsh (ed. the 2-7 CAV CDR) know. He may want to get involved with this. If you can't fix the problem at IA brigade level then there is probably a problem that's higher, a division MiTT level or IA division level." At that point different people got informed. So we kind of flattened out the communication structure by informing both the MiTT and BCT CoC. Early on I would say that the BCT chain of command was alerted in advance when there was going to be problems as long as the guys at the ground level, the MiTTs remained proactive. For example, we would walk upstairs to the Iraqi operations center and ask how many patrols are you going to run today and they would say "we are going to do 12." You had to take a look beyond the initial explanation because depending upon who you were dealing with, there might have been some other reason for the number that was given. It might have been they had fuel sitting at the IA brigade, but there was a rift between the battalion commander and the brigade commander and he wasn't going to release anything, but they were too embarrassed to say I have upset my boss.

**Mike:** He didn't have to worry about that.

**MAJ Thornton:** It was a leadership issue. So we had to inform this is what is going on here and here is the consequences of what's going on, lets get leadership engaged early on and then the wheels started spinning throughout. So whether it was Colonel Welsh, the go between was me to COL Senters, COL Senters to LTC Welsh, LTC Welsh to Colonel Twitty. It is also worth noting that the BCT did not rely exclusively on the MiTTs, they'd created a relationship with the IA so that the IA leadership could contact them via cell phone to their interpreter. He may have learned along a parallel line of communication that an IA unit was short on fuel and that he might have to refuel 30 IA vehicles sometime today over at Spear. This allowed for some verification and depth to the request. There were different ways to get that across, and then the commander could then make a decision about it.

**MAG Maguire:** But if the question is, who checked them?

**Mike:** You pretty much would feel that went through the system by the time that request was coming to you. Validating...

**MAJ Maguire:** Let's define the term validation and what it means to an Iraqi. What do you think it means?

**Mike:** I don't want to get too much off in there. I think it means that someone has gone through and said this is good and this is something that has to be done. The Sergeant Major was saying that initially Colonel Twitty's policy was lets keep them moving, let's keep the patrols out there give them what they need. Does that mean that you took any request and he said, "No, they had to show they had tried to get it through their own system and for some reason beyond their control they weren't able to it, or there was some emergency situation and that said let's not deal with this right now.

**MAJ Maguire:** Sure, and that came up all the time.

**Mike:** But were you the one that had to make that call or was someone else made...

**MAJ Maguire:** No, I wouldn't have had the authority to make that. What I did have to do is specifically for fuel...let's say a police station needed gas or they came upon the net requesting fuel. They would request just that a phone call from the IP station chief to Colonel Twitty or the brigade XO or somebody. In this case it would be Colonel Hamus who was riding herd on those guys. I'm out of gas and I can't get any more and I got no patrols out, none. You are not going to get any. No way to do it. Hamus would call me; I have a requirement to give these guys X amount of fuel. The request would have go up before the Colonel, he would have to be informed, the request was signed off on, sent to me, I have an Iraqi form 101 and the request and the approval. The gas was sent. That is an example of a request being validated for a lack of a better term.

**MAJ Thornton:** There were different levels within that. Like some Iraqi units may have a better relationship based on their performance with a battalion or a brigade than another one. Or there might be things within that Iraqi unit, or whatever history that might cause that guy to say well is this really going on. Or like Colonel Hamus probably had his hands pretty full because he didn't have a lot of resources to go out and verify all the times that every IP station requested fuel that they needed it. There were just not enough PTTs to go around. Among some of the MiTTs...we lived with our guys so that we could walk down there and check fuel tanks, but other folks couldn't. So there is all this stuff that adds different levels into how they get evaluated.

**Mike Lee:** I was going under the premise that it wasn't a black market type of thing, that fuel was going to be put in their trucks and was going to be used for that but had they exercised there own logistics system first?

**MAJ Thornton:** Mike, there were times when a sister IA BN, Colonel Senters caught them out in Mosul siphoning fuel out of their tanks that they had just filled up on Spear and selling it. I think Colonel Welsh came along right after that and Colonel Senters was chasing a guy down the road. There are all different levels because enemy activity plays a role too.

**Mike Lee:** MAJ Maguire I just wondered what onus they put on you opposed to somebody who was on the site.

**MAJ Maguire:** I am brigade logistics and below. The BDE S4 is brigade logistics and above. So I was at the tactical level with logistics. When Colonel Twitty calls me or my boss and says get out there and fix 50 of these Iraqi humvees...okay.

**Mike:** That's his priority.

**MAJ Maguire:** Not a problem. But the parts to go on those vehicles are coming out of my SSA. I'm releasing all those parts against those vehicles. I'm releasing all the fuels. I'm releasing all T-walls because I control it all. I had the largest SSA in Iraqi, almost 7,000 lines, an all multi-class warehouse.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did your authorization of Class IX cover down on, if you had to hand parts out of your stock on Iraqi humvees?

**MAJ Maguire:** No it wouldn't have affected it.

**MAJ Thornton:** I don't mean affected...I mean in terms of keeping it on hand...

**MAJ Maguire:** They had different humvees.

**MAJ Thornton:** I remember we (the 1/2/2 IA) had some old Level 2 armor M -998s, we had some -1025s, they were starting to get -1114s and there were even some -1151s. If you took it off a FOB runner or something like that or controlled substitution or whatever, what impact did that have on maintaining brigade internal equipment? Any?

**MAJ Maguire:** None.

**MAJ Thornton:** Ok.

**MAJ Maguire:** None. My customer wait time on parts was pretty good. Being at that level, big army logistics level, I am fairly impressed with the volume that was able to move; the velocity thru my warehouse was incredible. But at any given time I was waiting 20 days for a part which is, I mean for a modern conflict in the war that's unheard of so that is an impressive fact that often gets overlooked.

**MAJ Thornton:** So the major thing was just what, the number of mechanics and bay space or something, or the hours in a day?

**MAJ Maguire:** What's hours in a day? There are 24 hours in a day. So however that company commander sliced that mission, I gave her the mission and fixed these humvees and I need them done by this date and they got done. It is really that simple. I had to look at the scope of the problem to make sure that my soldiers, my unit was weighted properly. They do have different priorities but she puts people down at her level to figure that out.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you guys have the ability to leverage the contract maintenance type assets on Diamondback and Marez or the sustainment unit that was down on Diamondback?

**MAJ Maguire:** They were a sustainment brigade.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did that enhance your ability?

**MAJ Maguire:** No.

**MAJ Thornton:** You weren't able to touch those guys at all?

**MAJ Maguire:** Nope. Nope they ran out the Harvard Gate they did through put from Harvard Gate but that is a long run.

**MAJ Thornton:** You guys had moved into a train and advise with the LTT teams and I can remember you coming out to Eagle once or twice and doing that and I remember us sending guys to Marez for some courses. Did you guys touch Al Kisik at all?

**MAJ Maguire:** Yes.

**MAJ Thornton:** How did you guys touch Al Kisik?

**MAJ Maguire:** We had 3 IA or was that Kindi?

**MAJ Thornton:** No, 2 IA was headquartered at Kindi. Kisik was the RSU and 3 IA headquarters.

**MAJ Maguire:** We went out...my colonel went out there once a week, I think. I went out there a couple of times. We went out there all the time.

**MAJ Thornton:** Did you help them develop the RSU as an enabler?

**MAJ Maguire:** No, that was...well, my colonel did. He went out there and if you have the time I encourage you to go out and talk to him about what really his thoughts are on that because he'll have some insights on the friction involved out there. Just off the top of my head, I do remember there was some Navy guy involved out there. I'm not sure what he was doing out there. That kind of struck us as odd because...but there were certain problems out there too because they didn't have the manning, the Iraqis didn't have. There was a laundry list of things they didn't have for awhile. I think toward the end of our rotation they did an M-4 fielding out there, if I remember correctly.

**MAJ Thornton:** That was after I left. When I was leaving, the MTR (ed. the IA Motor Transportation Regiment) was coming but it wasn't there yet up at Al Kindi; how did that work out? Did you guys play a role in helping the MTR reach operational capability?

**MAJ Maguire:** Yes. I think they just were getting up and running when we left but don't quote me on that one.

**MAJ Thornton:** Mike, the MTR is the division's Motor Transportation Regiment.

**Mike Lee:** And they had to build these really after the fact? These were units that came around later? There was a guy I spoke with that came out of MNC-I, a colonel who was a logistics wizard and he developed some of this stuff. He wasn't down at the troop level.

**MAJ Thornton:** Jason, we don't want to take up too much of your time. We understand you have a maintenance meeting and some other things going down. Is there anything that we didn't ask you about that you would like to cover down on? It could be anything too.

**MAJ Maguire:** Iraqi medical support. Several times and I don't think this has been defined too well by big Army. We had to build, remember where SPEAR was, and remember where the T-walls ran up close to Charlie Med? We built a gate and the problem is if an Iraqi guy got blown up or shot; he would go DOW right there in the compound. Why? Well they don't have anybody qualified to fix this guy nor do they have proper the M Class VIII to properly fix this guy. After a while it got so bad that the brigade wanted to help. The MiTT team was having a hard time responding. Either they would be doing different operations at different times or the wrong place, wrong time or the MiTT medic was at the chow hall. You couldn't get a hold of this guy, so we had to create this...we just basically took out 2 or 3 of the T-walls, put a fence in with a lock and as soon as something bad happened they made a radio the call over the MiTT TOC. MiTT TOC would call me and I would tell Charlie to undo the gate and we essentially, I think we requested a change into the MEDROE to be able to let these guys in and fix these guys in our TMC. These soldiers were getting blown up and killed. So if the MiTT couldn't assist it made too much sense for us to assist. We were literally separated life and death because of a T-wall. That doesn't make any sense. We changed that and it seemed to work for a while, and then somewhere along the line we ran into this conflict between what is the definition of life, limb or eyesight. You would get these guys coming in with a scratch on their eyeball and it's not really what the spirit behind why you did that. Nevertheless I think this is something you need to be delved into.

**MAJ Thornton:** I remember when it really started to work and we had lost guys DOW. There was a stigma attached going to Al Jamouri which was...

**MAJ Maguire:** The stigma was still there and that was part of the driver behind why they wanted us to fix them.

**MAJ Thornton:** I remember once we started to get the ability to bring a guy over who was life, limb or eye sight, it improved moral because they knew they were going to be taken care of. One of the challenges with providing medical support was tracking them through our system. When a guy got a head trauma and had to be EVACed to Balad because they had no social security numbers they would be assigned something new every time he changed locations. So tracking the guy through the system was a bit of a problem. So the guy might be down there three months getting the best treatment in country, maybe in the region, but the family might not hear from them, or would assume the worst – it was made worse since we could not track them ourselves. We would say you have to trust us on this; he is getting the very best treatment that he can get. When he came back it was a different story because he would come back and he was talking about the treatment that he received and when he walked out there everybody thought this guy is a goner. When he came back with full use of an appendage it was a huge, huge impact at the battalion and below level in terms of knowing they were going to be taken care of.

**MAJ Maguire:** To kind of sum it up, there is a huge disconnect between what the Army thinks is going on and what is really going on regarding the MiTT element interacting and doing combat ops with Iraqis. I think more so in American minds than in Iraqi minds, the perception is reality. How often say that in the Army, that perception is reality. We are smart enough to move past that and figure out what the facts are. Generally in our bureaucracy we can figure that out, who to talk to to get the facts. In the Iraqi Army you can't necessarily do that to figure out what the facts are. That's one problem; perception is reality in the Iraqi culture in the Army. The way

the Army at the top perceives what's going on at the bottom in regard to the MiTT and the Iraqi linkage, I think is some what at odds with what we are really trying to do there. Especially when it comes to enabling these guys. We are giving them fuel, we are giving them Class IX, we are fixing their trucks, we are supporting them, we are medically saving their lives, and it's a war of...I don't really know what it is. And then to say that...I don't really know what to recommend.

////////////////////////////////////END OF INTERVIEW////////////////////////////////////

Transcribed by Historical Transcription Services, Inc. 12 August 2008  
Syracuse, Kansas

Interview

with

Mike Howard  
(APR 2008)

DOJ Contractor  
Badush Prison  
Mosul, Iraq

By

Major Robert Thornton  
Joint Center for International Security Forces Assistance

Interview conducted on 29 FEB 2008

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, you were brought on as a DOJ contractor. Can you tell me a little bit about what you were told in terms of a job description or a mission?

**Mr. Howard:** Before I went over in March, 2005, I was initially hired by SAIC who is one of the defense contractors. I worked for them for a month. Then unbeknownst to me they lost the contract and turned me over to another company. Basically, they told me that, I don't know how much detail you want, but basically they told me that was either going to be working in the city of Baghdad, working at the prisons in the Baghdad area - there are probably four or five Iraqi prison - or I could possibly be working out of the Abu Ghraib Prison which is still Baghdad. If I worked in Baghdad I would be living at the Al-Rasheed Hotel in the Green Zone. What happened is that I shipped over to Iraq. I spent about two or three days in the Green Zone and then I went out to the Abu Ghraib Prison. I worked there for nine months. Right before Abu Ghraib closed, I shipped out to Mosul where I worked at Badush Prison and at several of the IP jails that have large inmate and detainee populations. So basically, they gave me very little information. The people in Washington, D.C. that hired me didn't really know much what was going on over there. That was perhaps because DOJ, the people that hired me - I really wasn't working for DOJ when I got there. Nothing they told me helped me out very much because it was substantially different when I got there.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, when you got there on the ground and you started to evaluate the scope of what you had to do in terms of working with the Badush Prison in particular, what things did you note and how did you go about assessing where to begin or did you just jump in with both feet? How did you guys approach that?

**Mr. Howard:** Well, the way it worked at Badush is that they hadn't had a DOJ presence out there. They had the DOJ people that came through maybe two or three times up until the point where...I reached Mosul in December of 2005. The prison guys had probably gone through there, made day trips out there from Mosul, probably on two or three different occasions and there had never been any civilian advisors like me and my crew out there. We didn't know what we had. We didn't know any of the people that were running the place. We didn't really know anything about many of the inmates that were out there or how anything operated. We were just coming in... we didn't...the military had been going out there, PRT guys had been going out there probably once a month and then we had some contacts in IP jails in the city of Mosul. The information that they gave me in Baghdad wasn't any good when I got up to Mosul so I had to reestablish contact with everybody up there. Now as far as what was going on at the prison, we just jumped in and had to figure out who was running things, who is running it and who is actually getting things done and just a lot of prison work, figure out how the place runs and where they need work basically, and they need work in just about everything. The Iraqis had a substantially different method of running a prison that they have there as compared to how we do here in the States. Don't interpret this wrong, but the inmates pretty much run the areas of the prison. They don't have really the structured lifestyle that they have here. They put in their own, they spend a lot of time in their cells and they don't have the degree of staff interaction that they have here in the States. And another thing that is different in Badush is that out of the number of correctional officers working there you probably have about 5% that know how to write. So you really don't have a lot of paperwork being generated and you've got at Badush sixteen hundred inmates and generally speaking, that should produce a pretty high volume of

paperwork. There was next to nothing there. It was just... basically, what I was told over there was when you go to work in the morning, you have a certain expectation of the work you are going to get done and when you are in Iraq, you can expect to achieve about ten percent of what you had originally anticipated to accomplish. Everything is slow motion and just repetitive day after day after day because they don't have the westernized American way of doing things. It is a totally different culture and the Western style prison stuff is a hard fit over there.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, one of things I have asked everybody is given the number of folks that you took over there with you or that you had working with you in terms of American advisors, and you mentioned earlier the scope of the task or the magnitude of the task, did you guys identify some keys areas to focus in on to see if you could make progress in terms of working with the Iraqis to help them build up a more capability or more capacity?

**Mr. Howard:** Well, for instance, one thing, I worked nine months at the Iraqi prison at Abu Ghraib. Abu was kind of a different situation in so far as the prison is located in the middle of an American FOB. We did some cursory training in Abu Ghraib with firearms with the correctional officers there, but when we got up to Mosul to Badush, one of the things that we did we were fortunate to get some good support from General Rife who was the MNF-North Commander. He actually...we took this to him and he actually agreed to get a bunch of HESCO barriers. The PRT took the HESCOs out to Badush. General Rife got good engineers out there. He built a firing range out of the HESCOs. One of the things we were able to do to help them defend their prison which was out in the middle of nowhere...they didn't have any U.S. or Iraqi Army support...was to teach these guys how to shoot AK-47s because a large majority of them had never been formally trained in something like that. Someone who hadn't been in the Iraqi Army for the most part, your average correctional officer had either never fired an AK or he had only fired a handful of rounds. That was one of the things we did to help them defend their prison. Some of the other stuff...we formed a little reaction team inside the prison like what we would call an Emergency Response group to do basically riot control formations, stuff like that, to resolve any kind of disturbance situation that we had. Like I said, as far as a big thing in corrections is report writing but there wasn't too much of that going on in Iraq. We also taught them how to search inmates properly, contraband control is a big thing over there.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, it sounds like you guys had your hands full with just sort of creating the basics that other folks that maybe come behind you can build on. Is that a fair assessment?

**Mr. Howard:** Oh yes. The thing up at Badush when I was up there, we had to convoy...it was an eighteen mile trip from FOB DIAMONDBACK up to the prison...we were only able to get out there two or three times a week and only had a couple of hours on the ground while we were there so we really had to maximize the time that we had out there. It's a little different situation now where they have a U.S. military presence at the prison and the DOJ advisors are out there full-time. I think right now the security situation is a lot worse, too. And the situation has gotten much worse for the prison since I left. They are doing the best they can. When your life is in jeopardy for you to go to work as an Iraqi, You gotta kinda set your priorities and you struggle just to staff that joint and get everybody fed, get them a little recreation, keep them as healthy as you can. There is no way you are going to excel in what you are doing out there.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, you guys were, if I recall, about twenty minutes outside of what we refer to as Mosul or Tall Afar Gate, the stone gate where we had our final entry control point on the Tall Afar Road so response time from inside the city was slow. Your closest Iraqi response was anywhere between twenty minutes and greater depending upon the type of communications that you had and depending upon how fast the Iraqis inside of the city could get out there. How did that complicate things for the Iraqis at Badush? If you have anecdotal stories or something like that, that would be great.

**Mr. Howard:** One thing you have to say about Badush is that there is a real big rivalry between the people that work at the prison and the Iraqi police, kind of like there is a rivalry between the IPs and the IA, any brother vs. brother relationship. And the Iraqi correctional guys are kind of the little brother who didn't get any respect, especially if something happened at the prison. We had cell phone contact with...if something happened at the prison, they would be calling the DOJ guys on the phone. They would call me or Bill Davis or whoever was around, whoever they could get hold of. They pretty much relied on us to...they were like, "Mr. Mike, Mr. Mike, you've got to come." How that would work is they would call the IPs but because there wasn't much respect there so they wouldn't get much response out of them. When the IPs would show up, the IPs would typically come in and try to take over the place. They would run it like they owned it. Strictly speaking, the Americans would get there before the IPs would. In other incidences when it would get really ugly, they would call the Iraqi Army guys. Those guys couldn't bring the numbers that the IPs could or the fire power that the American Army could. But I think they had a much better relationship with the IAs than the IPs. There was a little more respect there. If they had a problem, they relied on us to orchestrate a response because they knew that if we were made aware of the situation out there, then we would get people rolling. They knew that sometimes when they called the IPs, they just don't show up, but if they get the Americans involved then things get done.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, we were talking earlier before we started recording about the danger of transiting the battle space the couple of times that you guys either hit IEDs or narrowly missed IEDs. Can you talk a little bit about the challenges of getting to the work environment from where you were living and how that affected your ability to help the Iraqis at Badush improve?

**Mr. Howard:** Well, the security situation was always pretty tenuous up there. I'd say at best we could make it out to the prison three or four days a week and when we were doing that we were being escorted by the U.S. Army on some days and by the private security contractors on other days. The private security guys had a quicker reaction time. We could call them and say, "Hey, we need to go up to Badush tomorrow and they could generally get us out there. The military usually had to have a forty-eight hour notice to them so they could get you put into somebody's tasking for the day. So it was a little more difficult to get out there with the Army. Between the two of them, we always managed to get out there. It would take us...I think it was eighteen miles from Diamondback to the prison...it would take us anywhere from 20 minutes to get out there, but the average easily was probably an hour and fifteen minutes. If nothing happened and the traffic was good...I spent fourteen months up there and I came about half a second from getting blown up by a car bomb, got IED'd probably six or seven times, small arms fire several times. There was a lot of stress just to get to work. If the security situation had been a little better we could have gotten more done. It was very stressful going out there. As I said,

things are different now because they have them out there because of the mass escape incident. They have the DOJ guys living out there now so that is a good thing, but I mean, just because you live at the prison doesn't mean you're getting any more work done because you are fighting for your life. They had an incident last week. They dropped three mortars inside the compound of the prison so now instead of spending your time working with the Iraqis, you get to spend your time, and you get to stay up all night sitting on the roof of your hooch waiting to see if someone is going to make a run for the prison. That's another distraction to you getting your job done. If there is all that drama at the prison it probably means that the Iraqi, the correctional officer used to rotate every two days so if something gets really hot outside the walls of the prison, chances are there isn't a whole lot of fresh guys coming to work every two days so it kind of puts you into the slow-down mode and it's all about survival and not about training anybody; it's about making it till tomorrow.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, I've asked some of the other folks about this and got different responses. There were so many people working with the different Iraqi forces doing different things. There were so many other types of operations going on. Do you feel that everybody sort of knew what was going on or knew, for example, what the key issues were out at Badush? I know that the coalition folks had made several trips out there. I know that some of the Iraqis in the different security forces, whether they were IPs or IAs, had made trips out there. Do you feel like there was kind of unity effort on both the coalition and the Iraqi side? How do you think that the other folks viewed Badush?

**Mr. Howard:** The DOJ cooperation with the military was pretty good. If it weren't for the military, we wouldn't be going out there. And depending on who was around. When General Rife was in the area, and this must have been early 2006, he would take us out there once a month. He would commit to at least once a month. He would have him; his PSD and would take us out there. He would do his meet and greet with the Badush warden out there. The leadership would stay with General Rife, but the other guys would go out and interact with the Iraqis and try to get some things done. General Rife left summer of 2006, somewhere around there, and then (**Maj. Thornton:** General Mixon and the 25<sup>th</sup> ID came in behind them.) I'm not sure what all the titles were, but Colonel Lowe kind of picked up the slack from when General Rife was there... General Rife's replacement had a bigger piece of the action than Rife had. He needed a slightly different attitude towards the prison out there, but Colonel Lowe stepped in. He would take us. Again, he took us out there at least once a month. He and his PSD would go out there, would take us out there once a month and he would just let the guys take us out there probably not more than once or twice a month. They helped us out. There was an electronics type guy, a soldier who has electronics knowledge and worked for Motorola back in the States here. He was actually helpful in getting the Iraqis to set up some equipment that we, the DOJ had gotten from Baghdad, and get the radio systems on our ...the military...I mean we lived by the military. We pretty much...if they gave us any time...They were very interested in what was going on out there. They weren't always able to do as much as they wanted to because it is all about priorities. Let's face it, when you get insurgents on the street killing people or insurgents inside a prison wall, not killing somebody. You have to figure out what your priority is. But we had a lot of cooperation from the military; help getting out there and getting that stuff like the HESCOs for the firing range, T-Walls, barbed wire. The PMO for 3-2 gave us a couple thousand AK rounds so we could get some more guys qualified out there. We couldn't live without the

military. The DOJ didn't have a stack of money to spend on it, we had bodies to go out there and teach people, but we didn't have any money to buy anything.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, you've mentioned a couple of times about the Iraqis not having enough ammunition or the Iraqis not having some other things. Now, the prisons come under MOJ – Ministry of Justice. Now, I'm aware of some key sustainment issues with the IA at MOD and I'm aware of some key sustainment issues with the IP at MOI, but how did things work with the Ministry of Justice, and did they, were they able to get you the things that you needed? When I say you, I mean the Iraqis at Badush, and what were some of the key shortages or things that you had to overcome?

**Mr. Howard:** The biggest problem is that MOJ headquarters is in Baghdad which is heavily staffed with Shiites and probably almost all the prisons, definitely all the prisons in Baghdad, were run by Shiite wardens and staff. Badush Prison was primarily staffed... Sunnis live in the area of the prison... and a pretty large majority of the staff there are also Sunnis and we all know there is no love between Shias and Sunnis. Badush was 225 kilometers from Baghdad so there wasn't a whole lot of stuff coming up from the city because of the distance and the logistical issues of getting stuff up there, and because there were Sunnis working at the place and Baghdad didn't care about what the Sunnis were doing. Stuff that MOJ was able to give the prison, it was pretty much limited to uniforms for the officers. For the MOJ, that was about it. The Americans, the DOJ guys were able to get radio equipment, ammunition, weapons, some training materials, stuff like that. It is all about survival. These guys get need gasoline to run around and get stuff done. You can't get any gasoline and part of that is because of Baghdad and the other part of it is because there's a shortage problem. Electricity is nice to have, but you can't always get that for whatever reason because nobody's got it or because they don't want to give any to the prison. Water is nice to have if you can get it because you couldn't always get water. Some of that is provincial politics. Some of it is just part of being in a war zone. Baghdad wasn't able to haul up to Badush. You couldn't transport anybody by ground. The only way you could move around was by air pretty much. You'd clear 2000 guys at Abu Ghraib Prison, about 1600 of those ended up being at Badush flying on an American C-130, not getting hauled by the Iraqis. (ed. Note – they'd fly them into LSA DIAMONDBACK and then ground transport)

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, when I was talking to Dr. Knight and Jim Holstein (from the Ninewa PRT) and some of those guys, the question came up about some of the things that they were doing. I'm wondering, was there the ability to coordinate with the PRT or the BCT in terms of getting them to work through the Iraqi, either the provincial government or some of the military IP leaders, to help out in supporting Badush, be it physical support or be it logistical support, getting them something just to at least keep their heads above water? Was there anyway to coordinate some of the different American efforts to raise the standard of things at Badush?

**Mr. Howard:** Well, it all comes down to which increment of the PRT was in town. When I was there, when I went up there in December of 2005, there was a good crew there. They're the ones that we initially started riding out there with. They were pretty active in interacting with the staff out there and trying to coordinate between the prison and the provincial government. They weren't able to... there was a lot more communication from that first group; I think it was a Civil Affairs unit, a reserve unit out of New York, western New York was up there. They left in the

spring of 2006 and another crew came in with different leadership and different priorities. Whereas the other crew had been going out there monthly, the new crew that came in initially continued the monthly visits. I think they lost interest in the prison and they stopped going out there. I think they concentrated more on the stuff that was going on in the city of Mosul, more government kind of things. They tried to do some stuff, but it was about priorities and I don't know if there was enough...one thing we tried to get out of PRT was some sewing machines so we could run a small vocational training program out there. They floated a couple of programs, but just didn't have a clue. That's the kind of thing the PRT can do I would think without a whole lot of difficulty. It just never happened. It would have been a big thing for the prison, but it just never happened for whatever reason, because they lost interest or whatever. I don't know what the circumstances were exactly. By the time I left, they were hardly going out there at all. They were refocused on working with the government in the city. Frankly, I don't know what they were doing. There wasn't any interest in liaising with us and so we did what we had to do to get out there. They did what they were doing.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, I wanted to ask you a little bit about the inmate population in the correctional system. I know that during my time there, towards the end they had just started the traveling judges deal where they brought those guys up and were actually able to start trying some cases with some better rate of conviction. For a number of reasons, that process, when trying to get guys tried and convicted, before that because there were relationships, there were tribal ties, there were familial ties, all those types of things. It was tough to do, and that caused some grief within the Iraqi Security Forces in terms of they would catch a guy pretty much red-handed, but they wouldn't be able to get him convicted so you had this kind of dynamic going on where you had guys in the local jails like out at 4-West or 1-West or whatever and you try to get them through the judicial process and then get them either convicted or acquitted. How did that work? What did that do in terms of the impact on the prison?

**Mr. Howard:** Well, the way the situation that I experienced up there was, we spent a majority of our time up at Badush, but we, especially in the beginning, we spent a lot of time at 1-West which is basically the provincial IP headquarters. Their booking goes on at 1-West, and they have a confinement facility there. Then they have another one on the other side of the river that is probably like within a mile of 1-West and that was called the transportation jail. Between those two facilities when I got there, we initially weren't able to get over to the transportation jail, but between those two facilities, the population when I got there was probably 200. A year later it was probably 800. The reason is because guys were getting scooped up on the street, getting booked, but nobody was going on trial because it was my understanding that...and it was all Sunni guys getting arrested up north. The word is that Al Qaeda says, "If you find this guy guilty, we are going to kill your family or we are going to kill you," or they just killed them. Either way, it is a major deterrent to you to doing your job as a judge to convict somebody that is guilty. Basically, there was nobody moving through the courts and the jail population is steadily going up and steadily going up in the prison because they were finding guys guilty – they have the faceless judge system in Baghdad. They were convicting guys and sending them off to Badush so the Badush population was going up with convicted guys and the jails were going up with unconvicted guys and no one was moving around in the jails. I think right before I left, like a month or two - real, real early 2007, there would be groups of twenty and thirty convicted going off to Badush so there was some movement there. The whole system was so foreign to the

American way of justice; I don't know how you would ever make it work. I don't know if that answers your question, but when they were able to bring the faceless justices up then things started moving through. Bribery is a big way of life over there.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, I think it informs on the question quite a bit. You know, I started...as we met people we started building kind of an ad hoc network and of course, that's how I met you and Bill and I met other folks and we started passing around the OPSUMs (ed. The daily summaries I put together) and it gave us some visibility on some issues that we didn't know about. I was wondering, and of course, this is an UNCLASS project, but in terms of key intelligence issues, did you feel like you knew what was going on in Mosul? Did you know what was going on in Ninewa and how did that affect things at the prison? Did you get guys that showed up that you felt like they were probably an important prisoner, but you just didn't know? What kind of situations did that create for you?

**Mr. Howard:** The only way we knew of anything that was going on in Mosul was by sitting on the FOB and hearing something blow up or talking to soldiers that we knew. Your system that you had was absolutely wonderful because we could get timely, accurate information on what was going on, on the road. It wasn't so much the stuff that we were not getting from you that helped us at the prison, but it was tough enough to get out there because we would find out stuff from you that the military wouldn't know because all the military really put out would be all the stuff that happened to soldiers and the stuff that we would hear from you would be stuff that was going on with IAs, with you guys, if someone got blown up or if you guys just scooped somebody up in the city, one of the big players. That helped us to get out there in a safer manner and you were probably our primary local source of information. We had a daily intelligence summary that DYNACORPS put out country-wide, but that primarily was for the Baghdad area and it was nice to know information but it really don't impact on you getting to work in Mosul. I was personally crushed when my information got cut off up there because I didn't know what was going on (ed. my MiTT redeployed). You know, the military, some guys would tell what was going on and other guys wouldn't so I mean, it is one thing if you know some road is hot or that something had happened there and then you can just kind of prepare yourself for it or you can take another road. If you don't know anything, it makes it a lot more stressful while you are out there. It certainly doesn't hurt to share information. If we knew something was going on, we'd tell anybody who was around, anybody who was interested. As far as Intel in the prison, we hooked up with some of the, I don't know if they were MI guys, actually, I think they were a little Ranger task force that rotates through there but I never thought to ask them; I believe that they were Task Force 134. These guys would develop timely intelligence to do raids in the city. They told us, maybe not a lot, but as far as what we had inside the prison, they told us as far as the Al Qaeda type people in the prison, they told us quite a bit and they, we cooperated in limiting the amount of cell phone traffic that was going on inside the joint because the MI guys they were able to monitor the cell phone traffic coming in and out of the joint. With their knowledge they were giving us and with their cooperation we were able to cut off quite a bit of that inside the joint. The Iraqi in-house, they'll have Intel on anyone they have, they'll know. It is difficult when you are dealing with an uneducated partner that you're working with. For instance, you go to a major or captain who is one of the senior administrative leaders that is present and when I ask who's the emir (AIF Cell Leader) at the prison, who's calling it, and a guy said well, there are forty or fifty emirs here. I guess they had an emir for every ... whatever.

Every platoon-sized element had an emir everywhere and every town in the country. The Iraqis were pretty useless as far as them helping us out. I believe, given time, we could have isolated the more influential people there and that was one of the things we were working on when I left before those 150 to 200 got busted out by Al Qaeda. That's where we were taking it when I left, but of course, that all got blown out of the water when they split in mass. The MI guys, we gave them information about who was in there and they were able to figure out who the higher ranking leaders were and that kind of thing. People could work with that if things remained constant inside the prison.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, one of the things I wondered about, for example, we bagged a pretty high-level sniper and they sent him down to Bucca and we figured it was just a matter of time before he made new connections down at Bucca and then eventually got released and then would come back to operate up north with new TTP and new contacts. Was there any effort made to establish interrelationships between prisons or did the fact that what you mentioned earlier about the majority of the folks down south particularly in Bucca and Baghdad being within Ministry of Justice being Shia? Did that pretty much prevent that from even coming up as an option?

**Mr. Howard:** Well, Bucca was an American detention facility so we didn't detain like Badush in Bucca. There was no contact at all. When I worked at Abu, the MI guys there, the MI Battalion was co-located with the prison, with the Iraqi Hard Site so they would come in quite a bit and pull guys out and talk to them and all that, but there was no communication between prisons. You don't have internet linking prison to prison here. As I said, the Iraqi prison system doesn't have any kind of data base to track any of that stuff anyway. But pretty much, military detention didn't want to give out any of that information. They would sneak information from us but they wouldn't give us anything. Like I said, at Abu the MI guys were pretty good, but they were separate from detention; there wasn't much getting passed to them. I'm sure they knew who the big shots were but we couldn't access any of the data bases that the U.S. Detention had (e.g. U.S. military detention). Whoever your guy was I'm sure he was, his freedom should have been limited, like should have been in his cell like twenty-three and a half hours a day. The actuality of it is that he was running around with a hundred other guys in the pen twenty-four hours a day. Not a smart way to do business if you know anything about running a jail. Something they need to work on and I know that they are to some extent.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, I've asked about all the questions that I can think of and I'm just wondering if there is anything I've missed that you really want to bring up that you think will help sort of paint the picture or tell the story?

**Mr. Howard:** No, not really. We've pretty well covered everything. I want to thank you for the things that you did for us up there, the information sharing and for the having your IA boys keep a little tighter track on the prison. It was comforting to the Iraqis stuck in Badush and all those guys because they would rather have had the IA come in there because they were more respectful of the officers at the prison and I want to thank you for that and just say that we couldn't have done anything without the American Army because they got us out there and they gave us a lot of stuff to keep that place safer and it would have went to hell a whole lot sooner if they hadn't been helping us out.

**Maj. Thornton:** Mike, I wish I would have met you guys sooner. I think we could have, we could have played a bigger role in helping you out. I'm glad we were of assistance and I want to thank you as well. You know, that is certainly a two-way relationship and I want to thank you for participating in this. I think it is going to be a pretty good deal and as soon as I get some more headway on it, I'll send it to you.

**Mr. Howard:** Have you been in touch contact with Bill?

**Maj. Thornton:** Not recently. I'm going to try and hit him again and let him know that I'm not really sticking to those twenty-five questions so he doesn't have to duck and weave on me.

**Mr. Howard:** What I'll do is I'll tell him I talked to you and I'll tell him to get hold of you. He was there after I was gone. Bill actually was living in the prison until June 2007. I'll tell him to get hold of you. He is dodging it because he is intimidated by the... "I was a reserve officer." Bill was a Navy guy. He doesn't have a clue what you guys are talking about. Some of the military guys weren't as respectful to him as he thought they should have been. He doesn't understand some of the acronyms and all that other stuff, but he'll talk to you.

**Maj. Thornton:** Okay, great. I would also be interested if you have a couple of key pictures that you think are going to add something to the story, and again, this is kind of like to show how conducting, now we're calling it building capacity, or building partner capacity in some of these areas, how that developed in Mosul in multiple areas at the same time that combat operations were going on. If you've got a couple of pictures, whether it be a picture of a vehicle that hit an IED on the way out to Badush or whether it be a picture out at Badush that you think shows hey this is what life at Badush was like, if you can send those to me, I'd be really appreciative and maybe just a brief caption on what it was. I'd really appreciate that.

**Mr. Howard:** I've got about 2000 pictures.

**Maj. Thornton:** Well, just send as many as you like then.

////////// END OF INTERVIEW //////////

8B. Lexicon White Paper

By Mark Lauber (JCISFA)

## **Why should Security Force Assistance be added to the current lexicon?**

It would appear counterintuitive to add another similar sounding term to a congested lexicon in order to achieve clarity. The term Security Force Assistance is designed to do just that. In order to understand how the term is intended to do this one must understand the differences between Security Force Assistance (SFA), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Counterinsurgency (COIN), Unconventional Warfare (UW) and other associated or related terms. This paper has been prepared in order to eliminate some of the confusion regarding Security Force Assistance and show why it is needed, not as a replacement for existing terms but as a term that defines a capability employed in association with the existing terms.

Security Force Assistance was first officially used in 2006 by the Secretary of Defense in a charter for the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance. JCISFA is chartered to “Serve as a DOD Center of Excellence and US Armed Forces focal point to provide advice and assistance for international security force assistance missions that include the tasks to organize, train, equip, and rebuild partner nation security forces”.

This charter is a partial response to the shortcomings identified in the 2006 QDR. The QDR emphasized the need to improve US capability and capacity to develop host nation security forces to safeguard their respective nations and people. The QDR required “Multipurpose forces to train, equip, and advise indigenous forces; deploy and engage with partner nations; conduct irregular warfare; and support security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations.” “They will understand foreign cultures and societies and possess the ability to train, mentor and advise foreign security forces and conduct counterinsurgency campaigns.”

The Secretary of Defense did not define SFA but fully expected JCISFA to institutionalize how DOD approached assisting foreign security forces. Several inconsistencies within existing doctrine contributed to inadequacies regarding planning for, generating, employing and sustaining foreign security forces. Special Forces doctrine, specifically FID and UW doctrine, encompass organizing, training, equipping, and supporting foreign forces. However, Special Forces FID and UW doctrine has not been adopted by any of the services to reflect service practice. SF FID and UW doctrine does not have enough detail in regards to building a holistic military establishment, and although it may be more universally applied, the doctrine was intentionally crafted to apply only under specific situations and conditions.

Security force assistance, on the other hand, was designed to fill in the doctrinal gaps by describing the principles used to develop foreign security forces regardless of conditions. It would define the tasks of organize, train, equip, rebuild/build and advise (OTERA) as they applied through a process of development of generating, employing and sustaining such foreign forces as they protect their own nation and people.

Recent experience showed that campaign planners needed to be able to plan not only for the develop of military forces but they also needed to ensure all other necessary civilian security forces were being developed by someone in order to provide a secure environment where the

other aspects of building partnership capacity or preventing or defeating external enemies or internal lawlessness, subversion and insurgency could function.

At first it appeared easier to merely “doctor” an existing term such as FID rather than creating a new term but the nature of existing terms required a clean functional approach rather than a situational, political or budgetary response. On a daily basis, established terms are used or combined or redefined to apply to situations that they were never supposed to cover and new terms appear that temporarily supplant doctrinal terms until the novelty wears thin.

Many of the terms relating to SFA are defined in doctrine. The doctrinal terms below have been underlined for emphasis to reflect key aspects of each term.

- **Foreign Internal Defense (FID)** – “Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.” (JP 1-02)

JP 3-07.1 Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID) states “US military efforts designed to defend nations against external aggression are extended through mutual defense treaties and are not the topic of this publication.”

Clearly, FID can be done by civilians and or military. It has to be in support of another government’s Internal Defense And Development (IDAD) program. It does not have to include organizing, training, equipping, advising. It does not have to include military or civilian security forces. When SOF does FID, according to their doctrine it will most likely involve such activities. When the USAID does FID, it may not include organizing, training, equipping or advising. If the US is doing organizing, training, equipping, or advising to prevent a foreign invasion, it is not FID.

- **Security Cooperation** – *(This definition recently changed to the following in DoD Directive 5132.03 Oct 24, 2008.)* “Activities undertaken by the Department of Defense to encourage and enable international partners to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives. It includes all DoD interactions with foreign defense and security establishments, including all DoD-administered security assistance programs, that: build defense and security relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, including all international armaments cooperation activities and security assistance activities; develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations; and provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to host nations.”
- **Security Cooperation.** *(This is the definition as it still appears in JP 1-02, Sep 30, 2008.)* “All Department of Defense interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with

peacetime and contingency access to a host nation. See also security assistance; security assistance organization.” (JP 1-02)

Security Cooperation (SC) is often a part of FID either as an indirect action or a direct action not involving combat. SC must be a DOD interaction. It may be with a foreign MoD, and now can include interaction with other foreign security organizations. A US Army Civil Affairs unit that is building a relationship with a foreign fire and rescue section and conducting a disaster response exercise could be doing FID but it would not be Security Cooperation. DOD has subordinated DoD administered Security Assistance underneath Security Cooperation. This conflicts with the range of military operations concept as reflected in JP 3-0 where “Military operations vary in size, purpose, and combat intensity within a range that extends from **military engagement, security cooperation, deterrence** activities to **crisis response and limited contingency operations** and if necessary, **major operations and campaigns** (Figure I-3).” This concept equates Security Cooperation and its activities, which include Security Assistance, with a low level of combat intensity. Security Assistance was called Lend-Lease during WW II and existed even though combat intensity reached levels that called for major operations and campaigns. This new definition or JP 3-0 will need to be modified to correct this inconsistency.

- **Security Assistance** – “Group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense related services by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives. Also called SA. See also security assistance organization; security cooperation.” (JP 1-02)

According to Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Security Assistance is listed as a subset of Foreign Assistance which “Provides a grand strategy of foreign assistance with friendly nations. The FAA intended to support friendly foreign nations against communism on twin pillars:

(1) Provide supplies, training, and equipment to friendly foreign militaries (**Security Assistance**). **22 USC §§ 2301-2431.**

(2) Provide education, nutrition, agriculture, family planning, health care, environment, and other programs designed to alleviate the root causes of internal political unrest and poverty faced by the masses of many developing nations (**Development Assistance**). **22 USC §§ 2151-2296.**”

DOD has put Security Assistance under Security Cooperation for two reasons. First, it has changed its Security Assistance Organizations to Security Cooperation Organizations which is more palatable by a larger number of Host Nations. Second, Security Assistance is managed and coordinated through the Office of Defense Cooperation. These offices manage both Title 10 and Title 22 programs.

“Under Security Assistance, general principles of fiscal law restrict the expenditure of funds to the purpose for which those funds were appropriated. Therefore, activities, programs and operations which are essentially Security Assistance, and which should therefore be funded with DoS Title 22 money, may not be funded with DoD Title 10 money. Personnel performing defense services sold under this chapter (relating to Security Assistance) may not perform any duties of a combatant nature, including any duties related to training and advising that may engage United States personnel in combat activities, outside the United States in connection with the performance of those defense services.” AECA § 21(c)(1) (22 U.S.C. §2761(c)(1)).

DoS provides the overall policy guidance even though U.S. military agencies administer many of the individual programs. Security assistance is a foreign policy tool employed by the Administration and Congress, and thus programs, funding, and eligible recipients will frequently change as political realities change. Security Assistance must be funded with DoS’s Annual Foreign Operations Appropriations commonly referred to as Title 22 money. Although DoD executes many Title 22 programs, it may not use Title 10 money to fund SA.

Security Cooperation is a Department of Defense policy term and covers all DoD and selected DoS international programs. It is Not a legal term used in the USC, but each individual program contained under it has legal and policy controls. Security Assistance according to DOD is an element of Security Cooperation funded/authorized by DoS to be administered by DoD/DSCA. According to DoS, Security Assistance is an element of DoS foreign operations administered by DoD/DSCA. In general the distinction between SA and SC is that Title 22 authorizes SA, while Title 10 authorizes SC, but there is cross-pollination! I.E., the 7 SA programs under Title 22 authority that are executed by DoD (and therefore are also considered within the broad definition of SC)! Likewise, certain DoD SC program authorities are also within Title 22!

What this means is that although DOD claims Security Assistance to be a subset of Security Cooperation, not all Security Assistance programs are under the DOD Security Cooperation umbrella. DOD is generally not allowed to develop foreign security forces using Title 10 funds and must use Title 22 funds except when specially authorized but it can conduct training that may have beneficial results for the unit they are training with. Common SC and SA programs are listed below.

### **Security Cooperation Programs**

- Combined Exercises
- JCETS
- General Officer Visits
- Seminars
- Partnership For Peace
- Exchange Training
- IRAQI SECURITY FORCES FUND
- Humanitarian Assistance and Mine Action Programs-Recently amended under 10 USC § 401.

- Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP)-Allows Commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements. 2006 NDAA authorized \$500 Million.

#### Security Assistance Programs

- Foreign Military Sales (FMS) DoD
  - Foreign Military Construction Services (FMCS) DoD
  - Foreign Military Sales Credit (FMSCR) DoD
  - Leases DoD
  - Military Assistance Program (MAP) DoD
  - International Military Education and Training (IMET) DoD
  - Drawdown DoD
  - Economic Support Fund DoS
  - Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) DoS
  - International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) DoS
  - Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) DoS
  - Commercial Export Sales Licensed Under the AECA DoS
- **Insurgency** – “An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.” (JP 1-02)

FID is conducted in support of another government’s IDAD. IDAD is supposed to prevent or alleviate lawlessness, subversion and insurgency. As defined, FID should reflect only lawlessness and insurgency since subversion is included as part of insurgency.

- **Counter-Insurgency (COIN)** – “Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency. Also called COIN.” (JP 1-02)

COIN unlike FID requires an insurgency. When insurgency does not exist, the IDAD is not considered COIN although the activities being conducted could be largely the same.

- **Guerrilla Warfare** – “Military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held or hostile territory by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces. Also GW. See unconventional warfare.”

Guerrilla tactics are often used during an insurgency but are not required.

“Conventional” military forces such as US Army Rangers can use Guerrilla tactics but because they are not irregular or indigenous, they would not be considered guerrillas. Guerillas may conduct legitimate and legal military operations that do not violate the Geneva Convention. However, when attacking an existing government or an occupying force, they may still be subject to criminal proceeding as most governments consider armed aggression a crime.

- **Counter guerrilla Warfare** – “Operations and activities conducted by armed forces, paramilitary forces, or nonmilitary agencies against guerrillas.”

Guerrillas operate differently than an underground. They may or may not conduct the same criminal or terroristic activities inherent with an underground element. They are a bridge between conventional and completely clandestine forces of the underground. COIN doctrine includes counter guerrilla warfare as well as dealing with and underground.

- **Unconventional Warfare (UW)** – “A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery. Also called UW.” (JP 1-02)

“Special Forces are trained to work with guerilla forces, the auxiliary and the underground elements of an insurgency. The capabilities that SF employs to perform its FID mission are those inherent to its UW mission; only the operational environment is changed. SF has been legislated by Congress as a primary FID player within DOD. SF personnel have extensive knowledge of unconventional warfare (UW), language, and culture that makes them uniquely qualified to advise and assist the HN in how to organize, equip, train, sustain, and employ combat forces in COIN operations.” (FM 31-20-3)

- **Irregular Warfare** – “A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will. Also called IW.” (JP 1-02)

Irregular Warfare captures insurgency and counterinsurgency in one term. Conflict requires two sides. To state that there is an insurgency only describes half the conflict. The state is conducting COIN at the same time. This definition does not allow the State to support an ally through indirect and asymmetric approaches and bolster that ally’s power, influence, and will. The Iran-Contra affair is an example where this occurred.

- **Subversion** – “Action designed to undermine the military, economic, psychological, or political strength or morale of a regime.” (JP 1-02)
- **Sabotage** – “An act or acts with intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of a country by willfully injuring or destroying, or attempting to injure or destroy, any national defense or war materiel, premises, or utilities, to include human and natural resources.” (JP 1-02)

- **Security Force Assistance** – The unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of legitimate authority. (FM 3-07)

SFA applies anytime OTERA is being conducted. OTERA may apply to other sectors other than security, but that has not yet been determined. As an example, in Viet Nam where NVA regiments and battalions were maneuvering against US and South Vietnamese forces, US Special Forces and conventional forces were developing both military and police forces in combat and away from combat. They were also fighting against a UW threat which supported an insurgency. While advising HN forces in actions against the NVA using guerrilla tactics and guerrilla Viet Cong, the US advisors were conducting FID while fighting against the Viet Cong but not when advising the same unit in the same fire fight against any NVA units. However, by definition, they were doing SFA because they were conducting the OTERA tasks to help develop their HN counterparts to provide security for their own people. Policy makers and COCOM planning staffs need to know and understand the nuances of all the terms involved and thread the needle to acquire the appropriate type of funds and ensure that there is only one campaign plan and that it includes all elements of security forces to react to both internal and external threats. These aspects are brought out in the JCISFA authored SFA Planners Guide. More importantly, the people that are executing the OTERA functions do not need to be bogged down with whether they are doing FID or something else because they are advising security forces but there is no legitimate interim government yet for them to be doing FID.

SFA is not really new. The United States has been conducting SFA for years. During World War II, lend-lease was one of the biggest security assistance projects ever. Supplying tanks, trucks and planes to the Russians to hold off the German army could not be considered FID by any stretch of the imagination, but it did improve the capability and capacity of a desperate Ally. In Vietnam, the US supported South Vietnam and its efforts to defeat the Viet Cong. At the same time, it was fighting a war of maneuver against the North Vietnamese Army that was using a mixture of maneuver and guerrilla tactics.

Terms change over time to support American Foreign Policy. They have been designed to meet the current psychological conditions and political environment and have not been based on reoccurring activities or universal principles, or looking forward to a time when US policy would require a more comprehensive capability to respond to a changing environment.

Security Force Assistance was designed for the user. It was designed to help the user develop a capability that could be used in changing conditions to meet America's needs now and in the future. It was developed to augment existing terms rather than compete with them. Short of rewriting the entire US Governmental lexicon and taxonomy, the term SFA achieves that objective.

## **Brief Biographical Information on the Case Study Authors**

John T. Fishel, Ph.D., is a member of the faculty of the School of International & Area Studies of the University of Oklahoma. He is also Professor Emeritus from the National Defense University. A retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel, he served in an Advisor role in Panama, El Salvador, and Peru. He is author, co-author, and editor of numerous books and articles involving contemporary conflict, most recently *Capacity Building for Peacekeeping: The Case of Haiti*, National Defense University Press, 2007 and *Uncomfortable Wars Revisited*, University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. Dr. Fishel has also taught at the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, American University, and the American Graduate School of International Management. He received his doctorate from Indiana University in 1971 in Political and Administrative Development where his research focused on development advising at the local level in rural Peru.

Rob Thornton is a major in the U.S. Army is assigned to the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas where he works as an Army Strategist (FA 59). He has served in several command and staff billets as an Infantry officer prior to changing career fields. Prior to assignment at JCISFA he served on a Military Transition Team (MiTT) in Mosul, Iraq during the 2006-2007 time periods. He has written several pieces for Army periodicals, and several for the Small Wars Journal, and kept an Advisor's Log on Company Command.mil. He has a B.A. from Austin Peay State University where he was also commissioned through the ROTC program, and is currently completing an online MMS with a concentration in Joint Warfare through the American Military University.

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Mark Lauber is an analyst for the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Mr Lauber has a B.A. in History from Bemidji State University and a M.S. in International Relations from Troy State University and taught Strategy and Operations, and Military Operations Other than War at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He served at the Joint Information Operations Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), U.S. Special Forces Command (Airborne), 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne), the Office of Defense Cooperation-Botswana, 7<sup>th</sup> Army Combined Arms Training Center in Germany and with the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division at Fort Drum, NY.