

Transition of Stability and Support Operations (SASO) for Pre-Deployment Training in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III

The Marine Corps War Fighting Laboratory (MCWL) has conducted urban experimentation since 1997. In order to prepare and train operating forces for urban experiments, MCWL developed a comprehensive Basic Urban Skills Training (BUST) and Stability and Support Operations (SASO) Training Syllabus. Training and Education Command (TECOM) will leverage all existing material and knowledge associated with the War Fighting Laboratory's extensive experimentation, and provide the operating forces with the same level of applicable training

synonymous with previous SASO exercises in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). TECOM has begun SASO training support for Fleet Marine Force (FMF) units preparing for OIF III deployments.

The SASO training package consists of theatre-specific pre-deployment training adapted to current operational environments as requested by OIF III deploying forces. The standardized pre-deployment training program consists of the following three packages:





Basic Urban Skills Training (BUST)

BUST is conducted at the deploying unit's home station. BUST focuses on individual and collective tasks associated with operating in an urban environment.

Revised Combined Arms Exercise (RCAX)

RCAX is conducted aboard Marine Air-Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTFTC). RCAX reflects the current revised CAX schedule based on OIF training requirements and is comprised of an

11-day training schedule. Specific events include a convoy operations live-fire event, a company live-fire and maneuver event, and a Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) company live-fire event. (This is based on the slated construction of an interim MOUT facility at MAGTFTC in winter 2004.)

SASO Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE)

SASO MRE is conducted at March Air Reserve Base, Riverside, CA. The exercise reflects current operational requirements and comprises an eight-day schedule. Specific events include five days of SASO-specific training events and a three-day Final Exercise based on current theatre-specific requirements. SASO pre-deployment training is the precursor to the institutionalization of an Urban War Fighting Training Capability (UWTC) within the Marine Corps. It is imperative that the transition ensures the success of future efforts to incorporate all aspects of urban training within the current Training and Education Continuum.