

CJO/D/LM (10/07)

8 Feb 07

PSO/CDS

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OP TELIC - FORCE PROTECTION (FP) ASSESSMENT

ISSUE

1. You asked for a comprehensive assessment of the FP risk at the Basrah Combined Operating Base (COB) and the measures in hand to mitigate that risk

KEY JUDGEMENTS

2. CDS is requested to note:

- a. The FP risk to our people is the aggregate of the Indirect Fire (IDF) threat, the Surface to Air threat, the IED and Direct Fire threat and the ability of our enemies to gain specific information about our dispositions and vulnerabilities.

- b. Notwithstanding presentational difficulties, it is our judgement, underpinned by Operational Analysis, that our post Op ZENITH force laydown represents a safer overall force posture principally because we become less exposed to our enemy's most effective means of attack (IEDs) and also because we can concentrate resources to ameliorate risk.

- c. We must accept that there is no single FP workstrand which eliminates all risk. A comprehensive and persistent approach to ameliorating risk is therefore required and is already underway. As a priority this attends the need to reduce the likely impact of a successful enemy IDF attack.

3. CDS should further note:

- a. That continued development of IDF capability is the enemy's most likely COA. Mitigation of this risk includes effective Active measures (focused C-IDF patrolling, IO, ISTAR and C-RAM) and Passive measures (warning, protection and infrastructure).

- b. That represents the enemy's most dangerous COA.
We continue to mitigate this risk through a combination

as well as close

coordination with the coalition threat assessment community.

c. That IEDs are the most effective enemy COA in the MND (SE) AO. The IED threat has been mitigated through equipment (ECM and physical protection (individual and vehicle)) and procedures (TTPs and exploitation). We continue to investigate further options for regaining the IED initiative from the enemy through the Coalition IED Task Force and the EC community².

d. That Locally Employed Civilians (LECs) represent a common and enduring source of information for the enemy in the execution of attacks.

4. CDS is asked to agree:

a. Strategic definition is needed on the time frame of Op TELIC, and our likely force contribution, in order to inform our longer term investment in FP.

b. A presentation strategy needs to be developed to explain, to internal and external audiences, the rationale behind our FP posture. But this must be mindful of OPSEC.

BACKGROUND

5. Recent concern has been expressed about the level of FP which our people will have in the COB once we have moved to the post Op ZENITH force lay down. Much of that concern relates to the increased incidence of IDF against all our current bases and the fact that the COB only provides Tier 1 and 2 level accommodation. This in turn leads to the presentational difficulty that some of our people are moving to a less protected environment. However, FP should not be viewed in the isolation of a single threat to our people but in the context of the aggregate threat. This consists of the threats from IDF, SAM and SAFIRE, IEDs and the ability of our enemy to gain intelligence on our vulnerabilities.

6. Counter-IDF (C-IDF). IDF attacks represent the most likely COA for the insurgents to disrupt UK operations from the COB. The current threat against the COB is primarily from 107mm rockets. The current status of the C-IDF 'battle' is:

a. That the likelihood of a successful attack (i.e. within a populated area) has increased to an estimated 95% probability within the next 3 months

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²

Op ZENITH offers the potential to reduce the number of convoys operating into Basrah City by approx 50%.

³ We have written separately on the threat from imagery proliferation: D/PJHQ/3/350/1, The Threat from Overhead Imagery in Afghanistan and Iraq dated 11 Feb 04.

(based on December's and January's attack rate).

(this is a worst case prognosis prior to ameliorative measures being taken). It should be noted that the attack frequency is currently increasing; this has included a small number of 240mm calibre rockets. The most effective ways of reducing the potential scale of a successful IDF attack are through physical compartmentalisation of communal areas and the introduction of procedures to limit the number of people in any given area.

b. When current construction work concludes in Jun 07,

Only a move to suitably protected structures will offer a notably higher level of protection. The priority for Tier 3 infrastructure is communal areas: we have decided in principle to provide hardened dining facilities (estimated at \$14M and 20 months to complete) and to begin expansion of our Tier 3 footprint (current estimate additional \$60-70M and an additional 10 months).

We should now form a judgement on the cost/benefit of proceeding with a more extensive Tier 3 build in the context of our enduring Overwatch posture.

c. C-RAM promises (subject to proof of capability trials) to provide a significant enhancement to FP. However, there are a number of integration issues to overcome which include programme coherency⁵, and collateral damage risk. Op TACHBROOK⁶ will be refocused on the areas currently being used for IDF attacks,

This, with the economies of scale that centralisation bestows, delivers a much more effective and integrated approach to the threat.

d. We are not fully confident the requirement for increased persistency of ISTAR coverage around the COB and over Basrah City can be achieved. The UOR programme to deliver TUAV is on track to deliver an ISD of Jul 07, although the funded provision may not fully meet our original statement of requirement⁷. A programme to deliver the (US) SCAN EAGLE UAV through an , by Apr to cover the capability gap is progressing well. We intend to expand our ISTAR capability through further TUAV or SCAN EAGLE support which may involve UOR action. It makes no operational sense to be parsimonious in the provision of ISTAR when it is such an important element of FP.

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⁵ MAMBA (Wpn Loc Radar), LEAPP (Land Environ Air Picture Provsn), ANSARIAN (COB remote loudspeaker sys), PHALANX and how these systems integrate.

⁷ We are scoping this with DEC ISTAR and HQ MNDISA.

7.

8. Counter-IED (C-IED). IEDs have killed and injured more UK personnel than any other threat. The post Op ZENITH force laydown provides a reduced off-base footprint and potentially reduces the exposure of UK personnel to IEDs. There has been significant investment in the C-IED battle over the last 12 months including equipment programmes (M' and the L suite) and the development of Tactics, Techniques and Procedures. The IED threat is constantly reviewed through coalition C-IED task forces and the national EC community.

9. Hostile Intelligence Collection (HIC). The greatest threat from HIC stems from LECs.

of the local workforce are currently being progressed by staff in theatre. We are also educating LEC 'employers' regarding the inherent risks with their use.

10. Protection of Key Equipment. Although this paper has focused on the protection of people it is also important to ensure maximum protection of key equipments especially helicopters and aircraft. Estimates are underway to ensure optimal dispersal and physical protection.

PRESENTATION

11. However well based the judgements on FP are we inevitably face some presentational challenges. First, is the fact that our own people, on moving into Tier 1 and 2 level accommodation will judge that their individual safety is being prejudiced. Second, is the potential public, parliamentary and media scrutiny of our FP plans, particularly in the event of a multiple casualty incident. We therefore need to produce presentation strategies for potential use with both internal and external audiences. Such strategies will need to be sensitive to OPSEC requirements.

CONCLUSION

12. We cannot guarantee absolute FP integrity or the complete mitigation of the array of dynamic threats that face us. The enemy only requires one lucky day. It is our judgement however that reposturing at the COB will allow us to further exploit the technical advantages of improvements to ISTAR and infrastructure as well as the opportunities of centralised location and the layered FP that the Op ZENITH force posture allows us. This judgement sits within the context of a coalition approach to transition in Iraq which, it is hoped, will reduce the level of our exposure to the threat and will also reduce the actual level of that threat.

CJO