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(b)(3), (b)(6)

(USA)

9 July 2008

Phoenix Base, International Zone, Baghdad

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Abstract

We need to capture profiles on Iraqi leaders and maintain those. Things change rapidly here, and the force manning process (RFF & JMD) does not keep up well enough. It can't keep up with organizational changes, and our mission changes very rapidly. The reservists who just left gained a lot from the deployment and learned new skills. The aftermath of the April IDF attack brought us closer together. We're focused on the operational command centers, role of PM, Iraqi decision, and Corps command idea. The PM has been successful and things are going very well overall. MiTTs are the difference between ISF operations going well and failing.

Interview

It is important for you to talk with LTG Helmick and Brigadier Spense. Spence arrived in December and will leave in October or so. You want to capture his thoughts on things such as the Deputy Prime Minister and the Secretary General and how MNSTCI has influenced the development of the GoI, along with MNSTCI growth and re-organization. The J2 set up profiles on the Iraqi leadership, and we want to capture and preserve that. I sat down with Spense and J2 on the profiles. We need better collection and continuity. We want to know how to sway Iraqi leaders.

Another lesson we've learned concerns how rapidly things change for sourcing the forces. We did a complete bottom's up review for requirements, but it takes a year to implement. Our means are 1) Requests for Forces, and 2) the Joint Manning Document. It takes too long to implement changes through the system. We must be more responsive to forces in the field. When I Corps replaces XVIII ABC, it is going to be hard because they don't have a fully manned staff. I think I Corps is staff at just 60% of authorized. In comparison, XVIII was staffed at 100% and they were plussed up still more when they arrived. There are a couple of points to make on this. If they cycle holds true, the plan to downsize, we'll lose sourcing through FY 11. The normal process is unresponsive to guys on the ground here.

An example of a problem was an initiative that LTG Dubik had to create a [some cell I did not catch] for a particular mission. We did the JMD change, but it took over a year to fill. In the meantime, others performed the mission or it folded. By the time those guys arrived, it had been shut down. They way things work, we get a JMD change, but it takes so long to fill that we have a shortfall. This typically gets filled by somebody on TDY as a stopgap because normal sourcing can't keep up.

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As we've matured [in the theater and the campaign] our focus increasingly is on enablers. The Iraqi Air force and the Navy are a year behind the Army. LTG Dubik's new organizational structure [Dec 07] emphasized functional capabilities, but not sourcing. Helmick will probably ax it because there are no fills. The fills will probably arrive after he comes [?].

Then there is also the unique political situation. Overall, the operations in Basra and Mosul and leading us toward mission success. The sooner they're [Iraqis] up, the better. I attended a Taji STX for the IA yesterday. Dubik had a five-finger rule: We do it; we do it and they watch; we train them on how to do it; they do it and we watch; they do it." We're doing the training right now, and they're getting the trainers.

I discussed [redacted (b)(6)] likely visit in November, the need for MNSTCI to appoint a Unit History Officer, and CC 870-1. [redacted (b)(3), (b)(6)] took notes and expressed support for it all.

Everybody leaves this place with something. The 104th that just left, learned. We [Active Component] assumed that people knew how to do certain things, but they didn't. They did not know how to have a meeting, how to do an agenda, define a purpose, wrap it up. They gained new skills here, in addition to taking pride in having served the nation. We have three active component officers out of 100 in the J3. It takes time to get spun up for the mission. We found that the time the reservists spent at Ft. Riley—an extended train-up focused on tactical operations in Iraq—was useless for staff officers. Hence, we cancelled the Ft. Riley train-up for the latest batch, since it was a waste of time, and just hand them go through CRC on their way here.

Using unit fills for the JMD has not worked out. It should have just been done with the WIAS [Worldwide Individual Augmentee System]. We have to make sure they get force protection training, but that is enough. An example of someone for whom this has been very good is SGT _____. A reservist and a drill instructor, when she reported to us she was 100 lbs overweight. She was professionally embarrassed to be in the shape she was in, and she took it seriously. In the four months she's been here, she has lost 30 lbs. She still looks bad, but if you could have seen here four months ago, you'd know what strides she has made.

IDF Attack on 6 April (check date)

The IDF attack really devastated the command. I went back for Major Wolfer's funeral. The command handled it well. Thank God we had ramped up our mass casualty drill. Back in August '07, we were almost complacent about it. We instituted a drill program and had a mass casualty drill in February. When the rocket hit, I was over at Blackhawk. I got here ten minutes later, and by that time all the casualties had been evacuated to the hospital. On 1 June, we dedicated the gym to [redacted (b)(3), (b)(6)] and Major Wolfer. The memorial ceremony really touched people. Wolfer had arrived here at the end of January.¹ I had just been chewing him out in my office that morning over something, but he was a good officer who paid strict attention to detail. In the next rotation, we had a

¹ I talked with Major Wolfer a few times when I was at MNSTCI in late January. He had become a close friend of [redacted (b)(3), (b)(6)] who was handling details of my collection.

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guy who was Wolfer's next door neighbor. The funeral in Washington was very impressive.

In J3, we're working on operational command centers. The PM directs these organizations. In a crisis, the PM controls them, through the chain of command. When I arrived, the first ones we stood up were in Diyala and then in Samarra. In November we added Ninewa and Anbar. Odierno attended the openings. 1AD handled making them operational in April and May, and that was successful. Others were not so successful, including Basra, Samarra, and Diyala. The reason they were not successful is that we did not have advisory teams there to oversee their operations. We did an assessment and found that not all of the necessary investment had been done. Dubik focused on the communications packages they needed, but stressed it had to be with Iraqi funds, but we did not know what happened with the Iraqi funding packages, since we did not have a team to over watch the process.

The caution is that the Operations Command centers work directly for the PM, but we don't want to create an alternative kind of government. The intent is to select some of them as the basis for a Corps headquarters, three-star commands, but that is an Iraqi decision. The Anbar team is in Fallujah, but the center is in Ramadi. Diyala will probably develop rapidly.

The PM has been successful. He has shows the Iraqi people that the GoI is capable and competent. Basra started bad due to a lack of MiTTs. Corps sent MiTTs down and rescued the situation. In Ninewa and Amarah, they already had embedded MiTTs and it worked better. The Iraqis are enthusiastic about operations. In Taji, I talked to MPRI's (b)(3), (b)(6) His comment was they're training harder than normal. They are in uniform. In an AAR, after clearing a house, a jundi stressed that it taking a house, they wanted to capture the bad guy, not kill him, because we wanted intelligence. That was the 9th IA. I was very impressed. They executed training and focused. The intent, from Taji, is to get the training package out to all the regional and division training centers. We'll have another STX out at Taji in August.

To interview LTG Helmick, contact his aid, (b)(3), (b)(6)

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