

Civil Affairs Support to Brigade Combat Teams at the Joint Readiness Training Center: Adapting to an Operational Force Design

By: MAJ James R. Ahern

Civil Affairs (CA) Warrior-Citizens training at the US Army's Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, Louisiana can expect changes to the way that CA teams are integrated, organized, and utilized by Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) during Mission Rehearsal Exercises (MREs). To properly align the CA war-fighting function (approximately 92% of all CA assets are found in the Army Reserve) with the current CA doctrine (FM 3-05.40) published by the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS) in September 2006, the collective leadership of Brigade Combat Teams have been making incremental, substantive adjustments to their tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) for Civil-Military Operations (CMO) that will better integrate, effectively task/organize, and, ultimately, ensure the proper utilization of their attached USAR CA teams.¹

This change is a direct consequence of the realignment of the entire USAR CA force under the command and control of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC) (Airborne) from the Army Special Operations Command (ASOC) to the Army Reserve Command (USARC).² This realignment became official in October 2006 when General Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, signed General Order number 12. Now, all four USACAPOC (A) subordinate Civil Affairs Commands (CACOMs), 350, 351, 352, and 353, directly support Geographic Combatant Commanders (see Figure 2-1 of FM 3-05.40 for the Conventional CA USAR support model).³

Ostensibly, the oversight of USAR unit participation at Combat Training Centers resides with the Chief, Army Reserve, as per AR 350-50.⁴ However, the commander, USACAPOC(A) is the tacit executive agent for providing USAR CA troops to fill Combat Training Center troop list requirements for JRTC rotations.⁵ These CA troop lists are currently not synchronized with the new CA doctrine. The reason for this is because the governing regulation for training at the JRTC (FORSCOM Regulation 350-50-2) does not accurately reflect the dramatic changes to the Reserve CA force since OEF & OIF.⁶ Nevertheless, the quality of training at the JRTC still remains high for our Warrior-Citizens.

Indeed, Reserve CA unit commanders that send their troops to the JRTC to train with BCTs can expect their soldiers to participate in a vibrant, stressful training environment that will significantly increase the collective confidence and knowledge of their CA teams about CMO in the asymmetrical contemporary operating environment (COE). Combat Training Centers exist to prepare our Nation's military for fighting wars and other contingency operations. CA participation in the application of U.S. global power, particularly in the interagency process is essential.⁷ For Reserve CA to properly function in the asymmetrical COE, training at CTCs must be as realistic as possible. With this in mind, CMO training at JRTC's mock villages such as Suliyah, Mosalah, and Al Mawsil could be significantly enhanced by allowing CA Warrior-Citizens to demonstrate ingenuity and analytical decision-making methodologies gained from the civilian sector. Unfortunately, many BCT battalion and company commanders possess a skewed, ambiguous view of Reserve

CA and often restrict the ability of the CATs that have been attached to them to maneuver throughout a village. Instead, they favor hard, kinetic power. This attitude often leads to mediocre CMO results, which only serves to exacerbate the poor perception of Reserve CA by active-duty maneuver commanders.

As Colonel Christopher Holshek succinctly point out in his article *Civil-Military Power and the Future of Civil Affairs*, the “American bias toward coercive “hard” power is increasingly costly,” and has “alienated many Muslims.”⁸ To be clear, Colonel Holshek writes: “Soft (persuasive) power, however, is complementary to hard power. Accessed largely through the interagency process and the private sector.”⁹ He also contributes the poor integration and “inappropriate employment” of CA to what he describes as a “doctrinal fog.”¹⁰ Nonetheless, a solid base of doctrine still remains from which we can begin to reshape CA for the future.

The CA mnemonic ASCOPE seems to work just fine, yet CMOC and CAT leaders need to better inform the BCT leadership of their respective team’s capabilities. Reserve CA functional specialists view the CMO landscape through a different lens of recognition and may be able to discern potential threats and centers of gravity that are intuitively obvious to them, but not immediately noticeable to the BCT primary staff planners. The input of Reserve CA functional specialists is crucial during the stages of doctrinal MDMP and the concurrent Effects-Based Operations (EBO) systems-of-systems analysis PMESII (political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, and information systems) that is regularly used by BCT primary staff planners.¹¹ It is imperative, however, for Reserve CA team leaders to constantly update and refine their SOPs and TTPs prior to arriving at the JRTC.¹²

Of paramount importance here is the fact that many Reserve CA field grade officers possess graduate-level degrees and hold professional licenses.¹³ This is a substantial force-multiplier for the BCT commander to leverage, which, if properly synchronized and applied to the comprehensive plan for CMO during the Relief-in-Place/Transition-of-Authority (RIP/TOA) phase of operations, can lead to an efficient transition to stability and support operations. Unfortunately, many BCT primary staff planners, battalion commanders, and executive officers are reticent to ask their Reserve CA officers and NCOs what their individual expertise is in civilian life.¹⁴ Furthermore, if they do ask, they rarely take the time to discuss with the S-9 how to properly task/organize these CA Warrior-Citizens to capitalize upon their unique civilian skills.¹⁵ Specifically, Reserve CA troops are often expected to quickly assimilate with the active-duty unit to which they are OPCON or TACON with little regard for their specialty skills. The end state of this type of integration and utilization is a *survival-of-the-fittest* mentality amongst the Reserve CA team members, which tends to degrade the overall training effect.¹⁶

Conversely, many Reserve CA officers that augment the BCT staff do not make a serious effort to inform the BCT leadership of their specialized skill sets. In addition, these officers are often intimidated by the technology used by the BCT staff; for example, the Command Post of the Future (CPOF). Remarkably, officers with graduate degrees that have recently graduated from the CA Officer Qualification Course, have difficulty properly integrating themselves into the BCT staff. To correct this deficiency, a USARC-led mobile training team (MTT) should engage BCT

leadership to gather pertinent SOPs from the BCT staff; simultaneously, the MTT could educate the BCT staff about the relevant capabilities of USAR CA units and the challenges of maintaining MOS proficiency in a Reserve Troop Program Unit during this period of high OPTEMPO.

Inevitably, BCT commanders and their primary war-fighting function staff will figure out how to efficiently conduct RSO&I with their USAR assets. Until then, however, senior USACAPOC(A) leaders must strive to review their respective unit's SOPs and TTPs prior to sending their soldiers to the JRTC for a MRE. To be sure, the viability and relevancy of the entire Reserve CA community depends on it.¹⁷

Adapting to an Operational Force Design: The current JRTC leadership has given clear guidance that BCT commanders need a vibrant, well-trained, and technically and tactically competent Reserve CA force to support BCTs during rotations. With this goal in mind, the JRTC will inevitably implement changes that shall result in the better integration and utilization of Reserve CA assets. What does this mean for the Reserve CA community? In the future, CA Soldiers should expect three significant changes to training at the JRTC: (1) Changes to task/organization; (2) Shift of observation & control and logistical support from the Special Operations Training Detachment to the JRTC Operations Group; and (3) Inclusion of the Civil-Information Management (CIM) Cell and more direct coordination with mock Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in JRTC rotational scenarios.

CMO Task/Organization: Perhaps the most significant change, the creation of a S-9 staff planner duty position, has already been noticed by Reserve CA Soldiers training with BCTs at the JRTC. The S-9 is the primary active-duty (38A) staff planner responsible for Civil-Military Operations (CMO), which was formally known as the S-5. This is a significant change in that the S-9 is an embedded permanent CMO staff duty position. Moreover, each BCT is authorized an active-duty 38B NCO to assist the S-9 officer. Unfortunately, due to the high operational tempo of the active-component CA force, the Human Resources Command has had difficulty filling these critical duty positions due to a shortage of qualified 38A officers and 38B NCOs.¹⁸ What this means for our Reserve CA community is a heavy reliance by the BCT commanders on USAR 38A & 38B Soldiers during JRTC rotations to simultaneously serve as CA planners and tactical team members.¹⁹

Previously, the S-5 staff section was unfilled until a Reserve CA Team-B (CAT-B) reported to the supported active-duty brigade for deployment missions and/or exercises. With the publication of the new Field Manual FM 3-05.40 in September 2006, the terms CAT-A and CAT-B are now obsolete. Instead, the optimal USAR CA force package for a typical light infantry or Stryker BCT is four CA Teams (CATs) of four personnel each, one Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) team of four to five personnel, a White Cell team of three to four personnel, which replicates a division-level G-9 or Joint Task Force J39 CMO cell, and four augmentee Observer/Controllers. Per the new CA doctrine, a Reserve CA company directly supports a BCT; however, the CA force package can be tailored to meet the CMO intent of the supported commander.

As described in FM 3-05.40, CA specialty expertise is “scalable and modularly employable.”²⁰ In addition, a CIM Cell, which is organic to USAR CA battalions, brigades, and CACOMs, may be included in the rotational scenario as a Joint Task Force 21 asset in lieu of or in tandem with the traditional White Cell.²¹

To summarize, then, the optimal total USAR CA force package for each BCT MRE, dependent upon unit OPTEMPO, should be 28-30 DMOS 38 qualified personnel. This has proved to be a challenging endeavor that USACAPOC(A) has been striving to accomplish since the beginning of GWOT. On this point, some dedicated Reserve CA officers with OEF and OIF experience have recommended that USACAPOC(A) be reorganized as a doctrine and training command.²² As a concept, this redesigned command would be more responsive to Geographic Combatant Commanders and would serve as a quality-control check ensuring that technically and tactically proficient Reserve CA generalists flow to maneuver units without all the headaches associated with the current command structure that is viewed by many active-duty maneuver commanders as more of a force hindrance than a force multiplier.

Lastly, Reserve CA Soldiers can expect to receive better logistical support from their supported BCT as the habitual relationship with the BCT staff will begin to coalesce months in advance of the MRE start date instead of weeks, as is the current trend.²³

Civil Information Management (CIM) Cell:

One of the most innovative capabilities of the new CA force structure is the Civil Information Management (CIM) Cell. This asset is located within the CMOC of CA units at the battalion level and higher. Its primary function is to collect, analyze, and fuse civil information gathered by tactical CA teams with non-lethal effects data from the supported unit’s staff sections. Once this information is thoroughly processed by qualified CA functional specialists, it is disseminated to all war-fighting functions above and below the supported element. For future rotations at the JRTC, the CIM Cell can enhance the White Cell (J39/G9 staff) to more effectively utilize the CA war-fighting function and to provide a clearer visualization of the CMO environment for the BCT commander.

To do this properly, commanders of Reserve CA battalions will need to be properly resourced by USARC with equipment and appropriate information analysis systems and software such as the SOF-inspired Asymmetrical Software Kit (ASK), which features a suite of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software.²⁴ Clearly, Geospatial tools such as GeoRover®, at the hands of qualified CA specialists, would dramatically enhance the BCT commander’s visualization of the CMO landscape.²⁵ This could be done by gathering and analyzing tribal demographics and cross-checking with tactical HUMINT teams to surmise the human domain associations in a particular province or village. To be sure, the Reserve CMOC team could be notionally linked with the Overseas Humanitarian Assistance Shared Information System (OHASIS) to improve the CMO training effect at CTCs.²⁶ Most importantly, Reserve CA unit commanders will need to reach out to the active-duty 95th CA Brigade (A) for technical expertise to stand up these CIM Cells and seek training opportunities for their troops to learn about available GIS tools.²⁷ Furthermore,

commanders of tasked CA units will need to ensure that the appropriate planning and technical preparation are occurring well in advance of D-180. Again, the MTTs can serve as a valuable conduit of information to Reserve CA units.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs):

JRTC CA planners and scenario writers have begun to incorporate mock Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in the scenario play for BCT MREs. PRTs are a hybrid Department of State asset managed by the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS).²⁸ Each PRT is specifically designed to “lead, coordinate and institutionalize U.S. Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy.”²⁹ PRTs are often filled with Reserve CA officers who work in tandem with professional diplomats, personnel from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), agents from the Department of Justice, specialists from the Department of Agriculture, U.S. military engineers, and other Governmental agencies to assist with the rebuilding of devastated provinces in Afghanistan and Iraq.³⁰ S/CRS is essential to the non-lethal fight against insurgent forces and, as such, the PRT effort needs to be fully understood and supported by BCT commanders that have PRT personnel functioning in their operational environment.³¹ To fulfill this endeavor, the JRTC has sought the support of USACAPOC(A), which has provided dedicated support by CA Warrior-Citizens with OEF and OIF experience during several MREs.

The Way Ahead

To better leverage the unique CA skills found in the Army Reserve, JRTC CMO planners and CUBIC scenario writers need to become more thoroughly versed about the six CA functional specialty areas: *Governance, Rule of Law, Economic Stability, Health & Welfare, Infrastructure, and Education & Public Information*. For instance, specialty professional skill positions such as:

- Public Education Officer (6D)
- Civil Supply Officer (6E)
- Public Transportation Officer (6F)
- Public Facilities Officer (6G)
- Public Communications Officer (6R)
- Agricultural Officer (6U)
- Cultural Affairs Officer (6V)
- Archivists (6W)
- Field Veterinary Service Officer (Branch 64A)

are not being fully utilized during JRTC rotations, which tend to specifically focus on CA generalist tactical activities such as hasty village assessments and disbursement of the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds.³² According to FM 3-05.40, “only USAR has functional specialists organic in the CA company CMOC.”³³ CA functional specialists with these ASIs can be found in USACAPOC(A) units. With the exception of 64A branch officers, these

ASIs are validated by USAJFKSWCS, which is still the proponent for all Army Civil Affairs.³⁴

Consequently, while rehearsing for their real-world missions in Afghanistan or Iraq at the JRTC, BCT commanders and their S9 CMO planners are not currently able to fully utilize the unique skills of our Reserve CA community in the non-lethal fight during stability operations. In the future, as we continue to fuse and synthesize our tactics, techniques, and procedures from OEF & OIF with emerging CA doctrine, this trend will change for the better as the Army Reserve continues to transition from a strategic reserve toward an operational force.

Indeed, the Chief, Army Reserve, Lieutenant General Jack Stultz, has emphasized the unique civilian skills found in the Army Reserve, and he has stressed the fact that the Army cannot go to war without the Reserve.³⁵ Moreover, the CAR has communicated his intent and vision for transforming the Army Reserve by stating: "My job, as Chief, Army Reserve, is to give Soldiers the full support of the military in terms of the equipment and training they need to do their jobs."³⁶ In order for Reserve Civil Affairs training at the JRTC to significantly improve and transition to an operational force design commensurate with the CAR's intent, senior Army leaders will have to give deeper consideration to the utilization of CA Warrior-Citizens at Combat Training Centers and to the broader context of proper CMO planning for Brigade Combat Teams.

END NOTES

¹ The source for the percentage of Army Reserve CA forces is Mr. Ron Fiegle', CMO subject-matter expert, DOTD, JFKSWCS.

² For the latest issues affecting the CA community see the Civil Affairs association web site:

<http://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/CAA%20Issues%20Papers-Feb%203%2007%20Draft.pdf>

³ FM 3-05.40, *Civil Affairs Operations*, 15 September 2006. The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne) is now a direct reporting unit to ASOC and primarily supports Special Operations Forces (SOF), but it retains an initial-entry force capability for the conventional Army (FM 3-05, paragraph 3-60).

⁴ AR 350-50, *Combat Training Centers Program*, paragraph 2-12, 24 January 2003.

⁵ USACAPOC(A) conducts an annual Global Sourcing Conference to properly allocate, task, and determine resources and funding for all USAR CA support to the four Combat Training Centers (BCTP, JRMC, JRTC, and NTC) and Department of Defense named exercises.

⁶ The most recent version of FORSCOM Regulation 350-50-50 is dated 15 June 1998. Available online at: <http://www.forscom.army.mil/pubs/Regulations.htm>.

⁷ Cotton, Norm, Col, *Civil Affairs Policy Update*, Assistant for Civil Affairs Policy, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Capabilities (SO/LIC). Available online at: http://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/Feb%202007%20briefs/Civil%20Affairs%20-%20Policy%20Update_files/frame.htm, 2 February 2007.

⁸ Holshek, Christopher, Col, USAR, *Civil-Military Power and the Future of Civil Affairs, The Officer*, Reserve Officer Association, May 2007, 45. Available online at: <http://www.roa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=publications>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 46.

¹¹ See Center of Army Lessons Learned (TTP) Handbook 05-19, *A Special Study on Effects-Based Approach to Military Operations*, May 2005. Doctrine writers added the civil considerations mnemonic “ASCOPE” to FM 3-0 “METT-T” in 2001.

¹² See: Smith, Duane L., Maj, *Integrated Civil-Military Operations Reporting*, Center for Army Lessons Learned (TTP), CTC Quarterly Bulletin, No. 07-5, 3rd Quarter, April-June, 33-37. This article is a good starting point for CMOC and CAT leaders to update and refine their TTPs.

¹³ Florig, William R., *Theater Civil Affairs Soldiers: A Force at Risk*, *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 43, 4th Quarter 2006, 61.

¹⁴ This also seems to be a trend at the BCTP. Perez, Garth, Maj, *Civil Affairs at the Operational Level of War*, Center of Army Lessons Learned (TTP), CTC Quarterly Bulletin, No. 07-5, 3rd Quarter, April-June, 30.

¹⁵ This assessment is based on my O/C green book notes. This problem seems to be proportional to the attention given to non-lethal effects by the BCT Executive Officer and/or Deputy Commander. The executive officers and deputy commanders that are most knowledgeable about how to properly task/organize and employ CA assets and incorporate them into the MDMP and lines of operation often get the best results.

¹⁶ For a quick synopsis of how a USACAPOC (A) CMOC team integrated itself with a BCT during a MRE, see my article *OIF Mission Rehearsal Exercise at Fort Lewis, Scroll & Sword*, Vol. 60, Issue 1, Winter 2007, page17.

¹⁷ Florig, 61-62. This endeavor also requires a hard look at inherent civilian cultural issues in the Army Reserve. For insight on this topic from a senior CA leader, see: Jacobs, Jeffrey A., Col, USAR, *Transforming Army Reserve Senior Leadership: A Matter of Cultural Change*, *Army Magazine*, Vol. 55, No. 3, March 2005. Available online at: <http://www.ausa.org/webpub/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/KCAT-6CPHQG>.

¹⁸ Florig, 62-63.

¹⁹ The 95th CA Brigade (A) currently does not provide CAT or CMOC support to conventional BCT rotations, although an active-duty 38A officer and 38B NCOs are assigned to SOTD to work as observer/controllers. FM 3-05 Special Operations Forces (20 September 2007), paragraph 3-53 states that: "The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade's CA battalions are composed of CA generalists. The battalions provide GCCs immediate operational access to CA assets and are the only CA units available for immediate (time-phased force and deployment list [TPFDL]) deployment." Active CA battalions can perform CA generalist tasks at all levels until USAR CA units can be mobilized and deployed in to theater."

²⁰ FM 3-05.40 (15 September 2006), paragraph 1-25.

²¹ Per DOTD, SWCS, the most recent Rules of Allocation indicate that each CA company will be comprised of 32 personnel organized into a Headquarters Element, a CMOC, and four CA teams (CATs). Also see FM 3-05.40, Figure 2-11 for structure and paragraph 2-54 for capabilities.

²² Kimmey, Mark L., LtC, USAR, "Transforming Civil Affairs," *Army Magazine*, Vol. 55, No. 3, March 2005. Available online at: <http://www.ausa.org/webpub/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/KCAT-6CPHQG>.

²³ The FORSCOM commander is responsible for providing program and budget funding for USAR units participating in JRTC rotations when these units are tasked to provide support based on troop-list requirements. See AR 350-50, Combat Training Centers, paragraph 2-16h, 24 January 2003.

²⁴ The best overview of state-of-the-art GIS and human domain association software for defense-related applications is a PowerPoint brief by Dr. Karen Guttieri, Naval Postgraduate School, *Stability, Security, Transition and Reconstruction: Transformation for Peace*, Quarterly Meeting of Transformation Chiefs, 11-14 February 2007. Available online at: <http://www.oft.osd.mil/initiatives/ncw/docs/C12%20Feb%20-%20Session3%20-%20SSTR.ppt>. The typical tools from the ASK suite of GIS software used by CA soldiers in theater are Analyst's Notebook®. An overview is available online at:

http://www.i2inc.com/Products/Analysts_Notebook/ and ArcGIS®. An overview is available online at:

<http://www.esri.com/software/arcgis/>.

²⁵ For an overview of GeoRover®, see the following web page:

<http://www.saic.com/products/software/georover/>.

²⁶ See the following Defense Security Cooperation Agency web page for an overview of OHASIS: <https://www.ohasis.org/ohasis/BrowserSupport.aspx>.

²⁷ I visited Iraq on TDY status in November 2006 as a member of a JRTC SOF Plans team to gather TTPs to improve JRTC rotational scenarios. While there, I received rudimentary training on Analyst's Notebook® and ArcGIS®.

²⁸ Cotton, Col, *Civil Affairs Policy Update*, Assistant for Civil Affairs Policy, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Capabilities (SO/LIC). Available online at:

http://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/Feb%202007%20briefs/Civil%20Affairs%20-%20Policy%20Update_files/frame.htm, 2 February 2007.

²⁹ See the following web page for S/CRS: <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/>. Click on the "S/CRS" link.

³⁰ PRTs are not a troop-list requirement for Civil Affairs in FR 350-50-50. Per DoD Directive 3000.05 Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR), 28 November 2005, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is responsible for coordinating with the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). See the following web page for DoD Directive 3000.05:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf>. For an overview of a typical PRT organization, see the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, "Status of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Program Iraq," SIGIR-06-034, 29 October 2006, Appendix B.

³¹ According to Mr. Ron Fiegle', CMO subject-matter expert, DOTD, JFKSWCS, the current PRT rotation in Iraq is comprised of 360 personnel, of which 120 are DoD military and civilian personnel. Also see: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations*. Available online at:

http://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/Feb%202007%20briefs/Military%20Support%20for%20SSTR%20Operations_files/v3_document.htm, 31 January 2007.

³² These officer ASIs are validated by USAJFKSWCS, with the exception of 64A Field Veterinary Service Officer, which is validated by AMEDD/VETCOM. For a

detailed overview of the most up-to-date Army officer additional skill identifiers listed in DA Pamphlet 611-21(22 January 2007) go to the HRC DA PAM Smartbook, web site, Table 4-3 at: <https://perscomnd04.army.mil/mosmartbk.nsf/>. For revisions, see DA MILPER message 06-117. Available online at: <https://perscomnd04.army.mil/milpermsgqs.nsf/>.

³³ FM 3-05.40 (15 September 2006), paragraph 2-54.

³⁴ DA MILPER message 06-117. Available online at: <https://perscomnd04.army.mil/milpermsgqs.nsf/>.

³⁵ Lieutenant General Jack Stultz, Chief, Army Reserve. Civil Affairs Association 2007 Winter Forum. *Scroll & Sword*, Vol. 60, Issue 1, Winter 2007, 12.

³⁶ *Army Reserve Magazine*, Winter 2006-07, 7.