

Combined Arms Operations 1.

Combined Arms Operations effectiveness against Counter Insurgency

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Abstract

Counter Insurgency operations have been ongoing since the inception of our Army. Over the years we have had to learn different Tactics Techniques and Procedures to stay abreast of counter insurgency warfare. Today units must learn to integrate Battlefield Operating Systems to be effective in this fight.

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The use of combat arms in the past can be traced back to our nation's birth. During the Revolutionary War, the Colonial Army used Infantry, Field Artillery and Engineer elements to defeat the British. These elements have played a significant role in every conflict since our Nation's inception. An example that stands out is D-day. During World War II, all of these combat arms elements contributed greatly in the success of the operation allowing the Allies to gain a major foothold in Nazi occupied Europe.

The role of combat arms in the war on terror and all future operations is so important that we wouldn't have the ability to strike swiftly or defend our nation without them. These maneuver elements drive our Army and the other elements that support these branches. Today commanders have the ability to bring this power to bear swiftly in the newly formed BCTs. Most BCTs task organization consists of at least two Infantry Battalions, one Field Artillery Battalion and a Combat Engineer Company.

Just like the old Cold War doctrine on counter insurgency, the Army is adjusting and revising the TTPs of the entire Army to keep pace with today's current threat in the fight on counter insurgency.

Since the Army began transformation in 2003, the intent was to become smaller and faster, able to generate more combat power, using a combination of maneuver and fires to destroy any opposition on the battlefield. However, in 2003 existing doctrine viewed counter insurgency as "support to a threatened, but functioning regime". With the Cold War style doctrine outdated, combat arms Soldiers fighting in Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom have refined their

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(TTPs) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures to change with the current environment in which they now operate.

Today, Infantry (The largest branch of Combat arms) plays a vital role in combined arms operations in both Theaters, from Light infantry units with Airborne and Air Assault capabilities to heavy Stryker Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). These units all possess the ability to deliver deadly maneuver and fires in a short amount of time.

Another trait is their flexibility to multi task and executes missions they wouldn't normally be accustomed too. Although a sister branch to the Infantry, Field Artilleryman also play a key role in counter insurgency operations. In a traditional role, Field Artillery has the ability to direct fire on targets with CAS and or Naval Gun Fire in addition to howitzer and Infantry based mortar units. Artillerymen have had to quickly transition from not only placing "steel" on target, but perform roles as Light Infantryman as well. Infantry and Artillery units can be found operating throughout both theaters conducting missions to include: Cordon and Search operations, dismounted patrols, presence patrols, motorized convoys and police duties. They can also be found on MiTT teams serving as advisors to foreign armies.

Ground maneuver units have been extremely effective in their role against counter insurgency. Since 9-11 their many accomplishments include, the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan, capturing Baghdad in less than one week, killing and capturing thousands of insurgents as well as finding and destroying countless caches filled with munitions of all sorts. They have brokered peace between warring tribes in times of sectarian violence. Combat arms

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soldiers have also played a significant role in rebuilding destroyed infrastructure and bringing peace and stability to many regions in the area.

Another ground maneuver capability our Army possesses is the Combat Engineer, commonly referred to as “Sappers.” Engineers perform many tasks in the theater of operation; this includes one of the most dangerous and feared jobs ever, “The route clearance.” On a daily basis, these Sappers clear routes ahead of coalition convoys neutralizing Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) that are by far the most casualty producing weapons used against coalition forces. They are responsible for Forward Operating Base fortification, bridge and road destruction and construction. They are all trained as Infantryman and use these skills in a secondary role when necessary. Their role in the fight on counter insurgency is remarkable; their efforts are responsible for saving countless coalition and civilian lives on a daily basis. Thousands of civilians have running water, electricity, schools and livable infrastructure because of this branch.

In conclusion, I hope to have presented an argument that supports the obvious. Ground maneuver elements have to, and must play a key role in counter insurgency. If not combat arms units cannot be effective in Combined Arms operations.

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