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This study investigates the organization to support media on the battlefield training at the National Training Center (NTC) and the standards by which rotational units are assessed in their ability to facilitate news media representatives under simulated combat conditions. The National Training Center's media on the battlefield organization is compared against those developed by other combat training centers (CTCs) and the pillars of the CTC model as established in Army Regulation 350-50, The Combat Training Center Program (1997).

This study reveals the resource shortfalls and lack of doctrinal standards that mitigate against challenging, doctrinally correct, effective, and consistent media on the battlefield training. It then presents feasible solutions to provide adequate resources to conduct this training despite the constraints of a zero-growth environment. Further, the study analyzes the different standards in use at each CTC, recommending specific tasks, conditions, and standards for inclusion in brigade and battalion mission training plans and soldier skill manuals. This would fill a critical gap in Public Affairs doctrine and provide tactical units with the necessary guidance to train in order to facilitate media on the battlefield.

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THE NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER:
A QUESTION OF RESOURCES

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

JAMES P. CASSELLA, MAJ, USA
B.A., The Citadel, Charleston, South Carolina, 1985

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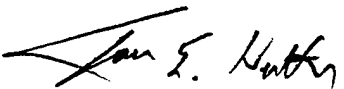
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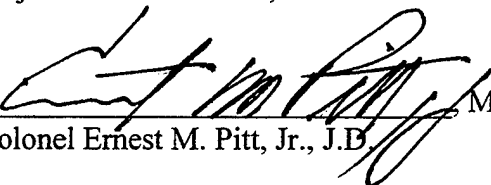
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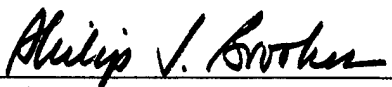Philip J. Brookes, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

MEDIA ON THE BATTLEFIELD TRAINING AT THE NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER: A QUESTION OF RESOURCES by Major James P. Cassella, USA, 102 pages.

This study investigates the organization to support media on the battlefield training at the National Training Center (NTC) and the standards by which rotational units are assessed in their ability to facilitate news media representatives under simulated combat conditions. The National Training Center's media on the battlefield organization is compared against those developed by other combat training centers (CTCs) and the pillars of the CTC model as established in Army Regulation 350-50, *The Combat Training Center Program* (1997).

This study reveals the resource shortfalls and lack of doctrinal standards that mitigate against challenging, doctrinally correct, effective, and consistent media on the battlefield training. It then presents feasible solutions to provide adequate resources to conduct this training despite the constraints of a zero-growth environment. Further, the study analyzes the different standards in use at each CTC, recommending specific tasks, conditions, and standards for inclusion in brigade and battalion mission training plans and soldier skill manuals. This would fill a critical gap in Public Affairs doctrine and provide tactical units with the necessary guidance to train in order to facilitate media on the battlefield.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	after action review
ARTER	Army Training and Evaluation Program
AWE	Advanced Warfighting Experiment
BCTP	Battle Command Training Program
CAC	Combined Arms Center
CMTC	Combat Maneuver Training Center
COB	civilians on the battlefield
COG	Commander, Operations Group
COMDOC	combat documentation
CTC	combat training center
CTT	common task testing
DAC	Department of the Army civilian
DINFOS	Defense Information School
DOD	Department of Defense
ENG	electronic news gathering
FORSCOM	U.S. Army Forces Command
GTA	graphic training aid
JIB	joint information bureau
JIBEX	joint information bureau exercise
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Center
MOB	media on the battlefield

MOU	memorandum of understanding
MPAD	mobile public affairs detachment
MTP	mission training plans
NMR	news media representative
NTC	National Training Center
OC	observer-controller
OCPA	Office of the Chief, Public Affairs
ODP	officer distribution plan
OPFOR	opposing force
PA	public affairs
PAD	public affairs detachment
PAO	public affairs officer
PAOC	public affairs officer course
PAPA	Public Affairs Proponent Agency
PAT	public affairs team
RSOI	reception, staging, onward movement, and integration
SASO	stability and support operation
SOP	standard operating procedure
STOW	synthetic theaters of war
STX	situational training exercise
TDA	table of distribution and allowances
TEO	training and evaluation outlines
THP	take-home packet

TNET	teletraining network
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
TTP	tactics, techniques, and procedures
USACOM	U.S. Atlantic Command
USAREUR	U. S. Army Europe
VI	visual information
VICOMDOC	visual information/combat documentation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

> The observers had gone to great lengths to make the [after action] review site difficult to find, putting it deep in a ravine. But the task force leaders found it, squeezed their tired and smelly bodies into the briefing van, and listened to what the observers had to say. Although the graphic descriptions of the errors stung, they were in every case accurate. At appropriate moments particularly glaring errors were played back on voice recordings and video tapes . There was a great shot of [Lt. Col.] Always' face, bleeding and dazed, peering out of his Bradley into the destruction of B Company at CP 2, followed by the tape of Captain Baker reporting that he was through the obstacle. No one chuckled.
>
> When it was over, some two excruciating hours later...the commander [made] a little speech to his men, a speech that avoided apology or accusation, but did not deny failure. He praised the...men for their resoluteness in the face of the enemy, and rededicated their mutual effort to figuring out what went wrong and putting it right.[1]
>
> James R. McDonough, *The Defense of Hill 781*

What went right, what went wrong, and how do we fix it? This basic question underlies the after action review (AAR) process at the Army's premier warfighting center, the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California. In his fictitious account based on his own experiences during several NTC exercises (known as rotations), Colonel James R. McDonough captured the essence of the AAR. The lead character, Lieutenant Colonel Always, and his soldiers were learning on a bloodless battlefield. Here soldiers train under the most arduous conditions that can be safely achieved in peacetime. No effort is spared to enhance the realism. This near-war experience stresses units, leaders, and their soldiers to their limits, and in so doing uncovers a host of lessons. The NTC, one of four combat training centers (CTCs), is

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perhaps the Army's most powerful tool for change, unleashing the power of self-discovery in a high-stress, yet nonthreatening, learning environment.

Omnipresent observer-controllers (OCs) facilitate discussions to draw out these lessons learned during sophisticated, multimedia after action reviews. These after action reviews typically begin with a seven-to-fifteen-minute "battle execution summary tape," a video that describes the mission, the commander's intent on how to fight the battle, and a brief description of how the battle actually unfolded. Included in this video are excerpts from the NTC's instrumentation system, combat camera footage of key battlefield events, and recorded radio conversations. Together, these systems replay an absolutely accurate account of a unit's battlefield performance. With near flawless fidelity, the instrumentation system depicts the maneuver of forces and their engagements, all represented by various icons, on a computer-based map. This unparalleled situational awareness strips away the proverbial "fog of war," allowing leaders to clearly see their mistakes and learn from them.

Observer-controllers facilitate after action reviews from the platoon to brigade level. Every combat, combat support, or combat service support element found within a brigade combat team conducts after action reviews, addressing various battlefield functions, combat multipliers, and associated considerations.[2] Even Army chaplains discuss the performance of their unit ministry teams in administering to soldiers' spiritual needs on the battlefield. The Judge Advocate General Corps also invests in the training, providing a full-time observer-controller to coach brigade commanders and their staffs in handling wartime legal considerations. For a commander focused on the complexities of modern, mechanized, maneuver warfare, these and other considerations may seem

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distracters. Indeed, adding a task not directly related to warfighting is done carefully, even reluctantly.[3] Nevertheless, tasks deemed vital are integrated into training when warranted. Commanders at all levels have accepted media on the battlefield training as fitting into that category. Less consistent at the NTC, however, is execution of training on unit public affairs operations, chiefly for lack of a full-time observer-controller. Full-time observer-controllers, a dedicated countertraining force, contingency-based scenarios, and feedback via the after action review characterize all training at the combat training centers, with one exception. Media on the battlefield training fails to achieve this model at the National Training Center. As a result, sustaining quality media on the battlefield training is problematic. Studying how the National Training Center and other combat training centers organize to conduct media on the battlefield training and comparing that against the CTC model will provide key insight on how to standardize this vital training. Table 1 illustrates the components of this model.

Table 1. The CTC Model

	NTC	JRTC	BCTP	CMTC
FULL TIME OBSERVER-CONTROLLERS				
DEDICATED COUNTER-TRAINING FORCE (OPFOR)				
AFTER ACTION REVIEWS (specify medium used)				
SCENARIO-BASED TRAINING				

How does the National Training Center organize to support media on the battlefield training and how does this organization compare to other combat training

centers and the CTC model? This is my research question. Further, by what standards does this organization measure a rotational unit's ability to facilitate the media?

Media on the battlefield training at the combat training centers varies widely. Little standardization exists. Combat training centers are resourced differently, but not always adequately. As a result, each has developed its own unique approach to media on the battlefield training, often with great success despite the limitations. Sustaining that success, however, has proven problematic. Still, significant improvements could be made by a better exchange of lessons learned and by a greater understanding of the unique missions and challenges faced by each. This could serve to improve media on the battlefield training across the combat training centers and better synchronize training with the requirements of rotational maneuver units as well as Reserve Component Public Affairs units training at combat training centers. This comparison of CTC media on the battlefield training might also illustrate training resource shortfalls and thus serve as a tool for corrective measures.

Researching the National Training Center's media on the battlefield organization will shed light on current initiatives to standardize media training at the combat training centers. The purpose is to produce a comprehensive review of such training, researching possible solutions to long-standing training resource shortfalls. The study will compare the different organizations that support media on the battlefield training at each combat training center, their methods for conducting this training, and the products they produce (e.g., after action reviews, illustrative news stories, instructional videos, etc.). It will compare the National Training Center's program against that of each combat training center and the CTC model and document training standards. Further, this research will

produce a media on the battlefield training model that can be effectively employed by the National Training Center to train units to conduct public affairs operations as a key part of gaining information dominance.

Of the various organizations responsible for media on the battlefield training, no strong, single advocate of such training emerges. The Public Affairs Proponent Activity (PAPA), Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, is the overall proponent, as it is for literally anything having to do with public affairs doctrine. The Combined Arms Center (CAC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, next exercises proponency. Forces Command (FORSCOM) owns two of the four combat training center installations and by default their installation public affairs offices (the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California, and the Joint Training Readiness Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana). Rotational training at both, however, falls under the purview of their respective Operations Groups-- Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) organizations. The Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) in Germany falls under yet another command (United States Army Europe), while the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) at Fort Leavenworth is a TRADOC organization, again servicing FORSCOM units. Coordination of media on the battlefield training developments, then, is a challenge at best, and one that runs across organizational lines.

Within the past year, the Public Affairs Proponent Agency has taken up the challenge of standardizing media on the battlefield training at the combat training centers, but the recent publication of a revised Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (1997), may require a revision of work accomplished to date.[4] Further adding to the challenge are complex organizations. Who, for example, is the one proponent for media

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on the battlefield at the National Training Center? It is *not* the post Public Affairs Officer (PAO). It is instead a broadcast officer (specialty code 46B) in Operations Group with the *additional duty* of Senior Public Affairs Trainer, who actually supervises media on the battlefield training and is thus the National Training Center's one proponent. The research for this thesis will likely add to work perhaps already in progress at the Public Affairs Proponent Agency, providing additional insight as well as a National Training Center perspective.

While no history of the evolution of media on the battlefield training exists, it is clear that in 1993 then Army Chief of Staff General Gordon R. Sullivan directed its incorporation into CTC training.[5] With the exception of BCTP, which received one observer-controller, no additional resources were allocated to the task. Installation public affairs offices (as opposed to the trainers of the respective Operations Groups) were designated to conduct the training. Each developed a different approach, obtained different levels of resources, and implemented different standards of training.

The research question arose from the author's experiences conducting media on the battlefield training at the National Training Center from October 1994 to October 1995. Prior to that time frame, media on the battlefield training was the responsibility of the media relations officer assigned to the installation public affairs office. This officer's focus, understandably, was to facilitate a significant number of news media visits to the Army's premier training center. Such newsworthy events as the Advanced Warfighting Experiments (April 1994 and March 1997), an ongoing land acquisition campaign opposed by environmentalists, and the like competed for this one individual's time. Media on the battlefield training was necessarily relegated to a secondary role with few,

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if any, resources. This unhappy compromise led to the realization on the part of all involved that the mission should reside with the trainers of Operations Group, an organization of considerably greater depth. With two full-time public affairs officers (46Bs), fifty combat camera soldiers equipped with electronic news gathering (ENG) equipment (albeit with a mission of combat documentation), and twenty-five contractors for production of after action reviews (some with broadcast reporting experience), the Operations Group was clearly more capable. Further, this decision synchronized *all* rotational unit training under Operations Group.

Still, media on the battlefield training remained an *additional* duty for this organization, the Tactical Visual Information (VI) Section. Its chief responsibility was to assist observer-controllers to document, prepare, and present lessons learned in support of multimedia after action reviews. Still, its depth allowed for the expansion of media on the battlefield training to several events per rotation (one per task force), where previously only one such training event had typically been conducted. This training employed habitual if not dedicated media role players, a public affairs observer-controller (though still part-time), and provided feedback in the form of a two-minute news story followed by teaching points to be sustained or improved.

It was these short videos that quickly captured larger audiences during multimedia after action reviews. They allowed senior task force trainers (none PAOs) to quickly and comfortably cover an important task with strategic implications, then move on to the *focus* of the after action review, combined arms operations from the previous day's battle. These news stories/teaching videos were popular with senior trainers for their utility and with rotational unit commanders, often including their commanding general, for the

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unique training opportunity. Soon, the Commander, Operations Group (COG) mandated the inclusion of a media news story into every after action review. Media on the battlefield training had arrived at the NTC, *but it was still an additional duty, with no dedicated resources typical of the combat training center model.*

The Information Age continued to revolutionize training, and the NTC was no exception. During the period from April 1994 to October 1995, the Tactical Visual Information Section of Operations Group increased the scope of its mission to leverage emerging technologies. In addition to assuming the media on the battlefield mission, they designed, built, and *manned out of organic assets* a mobile teletraining network (TNET) section to conduct video teleconferences between observers-controllers in the field and various external audiences (e.g., TRADOC schools).

The Tactical VI Section next hosted the Department of the Army Combat Camera Test in May 1995, which proved the value of digital video editing systems to speed the production of after action reviews (and similarly time-sensitive media on the battlefield products). The demonstrated capabilities, in turn, eventually led to a $3 million upgrade of the NTC's instrumentation video subsystem and the resultant challenge to leverage the new technology to produce, for the first time, *multimedia* after action reviews at the company and platoon level.[6] All of these additional tasks were accommodated from existing personnel assets. Further, combat camera tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) were improving, providing a more relevant product and thus creating an ever greater demand for tactical VI products to support after action reviews.[7] Combat camera teams maneuvered into position to record key tactical events on a fluid, highly mobile battlefield. Observer-controllers and their supporting analysts then culled useful teaching

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points from the video footage to facilitate after action reviews. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then these videos, at thirty frames per second over the course of a seven-minute battle tape, might be said to be worth 12,600 words! An exaggeration to be sure, but one that goes to the power of video as a tool with which to train the force.

Success bred demand, and within a year, the mission requirements of the Tactical VI Section exceeded available personnel assets. For every initiative there had to be a bill payer. To some degree, media on the battlefield, never fully resourced to begin with, was that bill payer. This seemed especially limiting to the author, as media on the battlefield training itself had much room for further initiatives. Emerging public affairs doctrine called for the employment of a public affairs team in support of brigade combat teams under just such a force projection scenario as that portrayed by the NTC every month. That same scenario might support a Joint Information Bureau exercise (JIBEX), or even incorporating civilian media pool representatives into training as the JRTC has done, a concept approved by the NTC's commanding general in October 1996, but never acted upon for lack of a dedicated observer-controller (the logical advocate).[8]

The question of adequate resources, then, became absolutely key to the effective conduct and sustainment of media on the battlefield training at the NTC. Requests for assistance met with mixed, if sympathetic, results (e.g., an observer-controller position added to the table of distribution and allowances, but not supported by the officer distribution plan).[9] A popular, high-visibility training program thus could not be consistently sustained without proper resources, and soon the frequency and quality of media on the battlefield training events suffered.

Much of the popularity of the NTC's media on the battlefield program could be attributed to the useful and "user-friendly" video news stories.[10] This unique approach provided realistic training and greatly facilitated after action reviews. Observer-controllers had only to play a two-minute "news" video, complete with areas to sustain and improve, to facilitate discussion of a unit's performance in conducting Public Affairs operations. To observer-controllers with little or no public affairs training, this was a quick, easy, and effective way to cover a subject only ancillary to the real subject of the AAR--the unit's performance on the battlefield, not in front of the camera. Much ground had to be covered in the two hours allotted for the after action review, so a short video and brief discussion, all the time that could be spared, proved nonetheless effective in improving a unit's ability to facilitate the media.

The focus on resources and methods to conduct media on the battlefield training at the combat training centers is a direct result of the author's experience during this time frame. It seems logical to apply the CTC model in answering the research question. If the coaching of full-time observer-controllers, the opposition of a dedicated countertraining force, and timely feedback via multimedia after action reviews works across the battlefield functions, then it should work equally as well in support of media on the battlefield training at all the combat training centers.

This research question will lead to the most effective organization and methods for training media on the battlefield at the National Training Center. Using the CTC model, it will consider the benefits and qualifications of full-time public affairs observer-controllers, a dedicated countertraining force of media role players, scenario-based

training, timely feedback via the after action review and preservation of lessons learned for later use.

In reviewing the qualifications of media on the battlefield observer-controllers, this research will consider such issues as prior public affairs assignments, professional education, grade and seniority vis-a-vis other senior trainers, length of assignment, and professional development. Officer distribution plans (ODP) and available resources will also figure prominently. Table 2 illustrates desired observer-controller qualifications.

Table 2. Observer-Controllers

	NTC	JRTC	CMTC	BCTP
FULL-TIME				
DINFOS-TRAINED				
PRIOR PAO ASSIGNMENT				
NUMBER & GRADES				
TDA & ODP SUPPORT				
LENGTH OF ASSIGNMENT				

In studying the composition of a dedicated countertraining force, this study will look to the opposing forces (OPFOR) as constituted at the combat training centers, not because media representatives are the enemy (they are decidedly not), but because useful parallels may be drawn (for example, the OPFOR fights to win, they do not take the field just to shoot; so too, should media role players be after a story, not just out to ask a bunch of questions). What are the qualifications? The required skills? What training do they receive? Are they comprised of public affairs soldiers, reserve component units, or contractors? How does the Army field such a force in such a tightly resource-constrained environment? Table 3 illustrates media countertraining force variables.

Table 3. Countertraining Force/Media Role Players

	NTC	JRTC	CMTC	BCTP
FULL-TIME				
TRAINED AS JOURNALISTS				
ELECTRONIC				
PRINT				
ORGANIC PAO SOLDIERS				
RESERVE COMPONENT MPAD				
GOVERNMENT SERVICE EMPLOYEES				
CONTRACTOR				
REAL WORLD CIVILIAN MEDIA REPS				

These media role-players will likely be asking questions related to a contingency-based scenario, the basis for all combat training center training. Do they stick to the script, or do they ask questions pertinent to real-world concerns (e.g., sexual harassment)? What tactics, techniques, and procedures do they employ in their role as media? Are they friendly, neutral, antagonistic, or a mixture of all three? What approach best trains U.S. soldiers to appropriately deal with battlefield media encounters? Is the focus print journalists or the electronic media? All these questions should be addressed in shaping a challenging countertraining force.

Feedback to units in training is also key, for lessons learned would be lost for want of an effective after action review process. How is media facilitation measured? How are after action reviews structured? What products are used: print, video, or both? How timely must this feedback be in order to be effective? How do OCs preserve lessons learned for inclusion in unit "take-home" packages? Finally, how do OCs coordinate the media on the battlefield training efforts of all the combat training centers, so that during

the course of their careers soldiers receive challenging, doctrinally-correct, effective, and consistent training?

The research will answer these subordinate questions as well and provide the public affairs community with a thorough study of combat training center media on the battlefield training consistent with new public affairs doctrine as established in Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (1997).

Assumptions

1. Deployed brigade combat teams and their subordinate units will be required to facilitate media with limited public affairs support.

2. The long-standing CTC model of full-time observer-controllers, a dedicated countertraining force, and discovery learning through the after action review process is as valid for media on the battlefield training as it is for combined arms and services training.

3. The effectiveness of media facilitation can be measured using generally accepted principles as set forth in such training aids as the National Training Center's "Guidelines for Dealing with Media on the Battlefield."

4. Any solutions proposed must represent no real growth in military personnel allocations.

Key Definitions

Combat Training Center Program. "An Army program established to provide realistic joint service and combined arms training in accordance with Army doctrine. It is designed to provide training units opportunities to increase collective proficiency on the most realistic battlefield available during peacetime. The four components of the CTC

Program are: (1) National Training Center, (2) Combat Maneuver Training Center, (3) Joint Readiness Training Center, (4) Battle Command Training Program."[11]

Observer-Controller. "An individual tasked to evaluate training, and provide administrative control and constructive feedback to participants."[12]

Countertraining Force. The opposing force (OPFOR) for maneuver training; for the purposes of this thesis, the dedicated media role players who interact with units in training to provide a challenging, realistic portrayal of the press.

After Action Review. "A method of providing feedback to units by involving participants in the training diagnostic process in order to increase and reinforce learning. The AAR leader guides participants in identifying deficiencies and seeking solutions."[13]

Scenario-Based Training. Training that reflects real-world contingencies; realism based on the likelihood of having to conduct a similar operation on short notice, worldwide.

Media Facilitation. "The range of activities such as providing access and interviews that assist news media representatives covering military operations."[14]

Limitations

The lack of established doctrinal standards and techniques for media on the battlefield training is both a limitation for this research as well as its imperative. Similarly, what has been written specifically about this subject consists mainly of articles in professional journals. All the more reason to take up the subject.

Delimitations

This research will not consider, in general, the relationship between the media and the military per se, except as it relates to the tactics, techniques, and procedures to be

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employed by the media countertraining force derived from anecdotal or historical examples. Nor will it attempt to measure the effectiveness of media on the battlefield training (a subjective call not unlike a commander's assessment of his unit's mission essential task list, or METL). Instead, it will determine what organization and standards the combat training centers employ to coach unit media facilitation in a simulated combat environment. Lastly, the study will not address possible future direct support from public affairs detachments (PAD) to brigade combat teams as only recently allowed in a revised Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (1997).

Significance of the Study

Media on the battlefield training tends to enjoy periods of sporadic popularity, but no real attempt at definitive media on the battlefield doctrinal training organization or techniques has been collected. Resource shortfalls continue to go uncorrected. By collating the best of the combat training center approaches, a valuable model will emerge. This will greatly facilitate media on the battlefield training, the value of which senior Army leaders attest to frequently. General Dennis J. Reimer, Army Chief of Staff, had this to say: "It is essential that all senior leaders set the example by taking a positive, forward-looking approach to dealing with the news media....This approach applies to rotations at the Combat Training Centers and contingency operations around the world. Every soldier should be prepared to answer questions pertaining to his/her area of responsibility. I have great faith in our soldiers and truly believe that they are our best spokespersons."[15]

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[1]James R. McDonough, *The Defense of Hill 781: An Allegory of Modern Mechanized Combat* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988) page no.

[2]As defined by U. S. Department of the Army, FM 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1993), 53, the battlefield functions are: intelligence, maneuver, fire support, air defense, mobility and survivability, logistics, and battle command.

[3]An NTC deployment approximates a real-world deployment by design. In the NTC scenario, units deploy to the country of Mojavia, a long-time U.S. ally threatened with invasion by Krasnovia. Soldiers falling-in on prepositioned equipment in Mojavia follow much the same procedures as they would in, say, Kuwait. Mojavian stevedores, refugees, the threat of terrorism and more are all factors for which soldiers must account. It seems logical, then, to replicate a media presence, much as any real world deployment.

[4]U.S. Department of the Army, FM 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1997), for instance, details Public Affairs Detachments (PADs) to support deployed brigade headquarters in exactly the same scenarios as those trained monthly at the NTC. Yet applicable regulations (e.g., FORSCOM Regulation 350-50) do not authorize PADs on brigade troop lists for NTC rotations, nor is there any full-time OC to coach such a unit. Without this OC, there is no proponent at the NTC to point out this error for possible corrective action.

[5]Commander, US Army Combined Arms Center, "Integration of Public Affairs Activities into Battle Command Training Program Warfighter Exercises," (official message traffic to DA and Corps Commanders, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, 3 March 1993.

[6]The NTC was the first to purchase this particular digital video system, a risk validated when Cable News Network purchased the second such system!

[7]For a more complete discussion of combat camera at the NTC, see the author's article entitled "Video Helps Train the Force at the National Training Center," vol. XXI, no. 2, Army Communicator, U.S. Army Signal Center, Fort Gordon, GA, Spring 1996, 33-34.

[8]It is important to note that the NTC, by its charter as established in regulation, trains brigade combat teams. A JIBEX or similar exercise is by its very nature an operation normally conducted at echelons above division. The NTC is manned to observe and control brigades. Division operations are deemed largely unsupportable due to a lack of sufficient maneuver space and insufficient manpower to observe and control division operations. Still, simulations promise to link the brigade in the "box" to distant units in either constructive or virtual simulations.

[9]Resource Planning and Force Management (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: USACGSC, 1998), 14.9-14.10, describes the officer distribution plan (ODP) as a needed management tool for officer assignments as inventories do not match authorizations established in the TDA. The ODP "equitably distributes...officers...by command based on DA priorities and special guidance."

[10]Not to be confused with "Road to War" videos, which enhanced the realism of scenarios. In these videos, media role players did not interact with troops, since the videos were not a part of media on the battlefield training. Nonetheless, some mistakenly believed that the NTC media training somehow did not include interaction with rotational units!

[11]U.S. Department of the Army, FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1990), G-2.

[12]Ibid., G-6.

[13]Ibid., G-1.

[14]FM 46-1, 71.

[15]General Dennis J. Reimers, Media Coverage of Operations and Deployments (Memorandum, Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army, Washington, DC, 8 December 1995.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

How does the National Training Center organize for media on the battlefield

training and how does this organization compare to other combat training centers and the

CTC model? This research question is the point of departure for a review of pertinent

literature. Given its narrow focus on a specific area of training, the available literature

(as opposed to source documents) is modest in scope. It is the *subordinate* question--"By

what standards does this organization measure a rotational unit's ability to facilitate the

media?"--that lends itself more fully to a review of a greater accumulation of applicable

literature. Since the question implies reviewing the needs of media on the battlefield,

with its goal of better facilitation by the military, the pertinent literature expands to

include accounts of the media's experiences in interacting with the military. That

interaction might include actual battlefield environments in traditional conflicts or more

recent deployments in support of operations other than war.[1] Much, then, has been

written about relations between the media and the military.

Generally, this review of media-military battlefield interaction is best focused on

the past thirty years, from the peak of the Vietnam War to current operations in Bosnia.

Since the very word *media* (as opposed to its predecessor, *press*) reflects technological

advances in the medium used for war reporting, it is logical to start with America's first

"television war," Vietnam, and proceed forward. The needs of media news

representatives are driven by the medium they employ. The ascendancy of television

reporting in the 1960s makes military facilitation of electronic news gathering (ENG) of

prime importance. While accommodating print journalists (whether their medium is the traditional newspaper, or, increasingly, an internet home page) remains an important and indispensable part of public affairs operations, the so-called "CNN curve" has the most immediate impact.[2] The military has dealt with both only since the Vietnam War.

Public affairs operations in Vietnam are the subject of William M. Hammond's two-volume treatise entitled *Public Affairs: The Military and the Media, 1962-1968*, and *1968-1973*. It is a detailed history of media relations in that protracted conflict. This work is particularly apropos since Vietnam, in addition to being the first "television war," was also the first in which field press censorship was not invoked. Implementing field press censorship would be nearly impossible today, with real-time satellite uplinks available to journalists virtually anywhere in the world. In fact, the relative freedom of movement of correspondents in Vietnam has become the standard by which the press judge "open access." With media representatives now deploying *before* the military to such places as Somalia and Bosnia, military control of access to the battlefield is moot. Combined with new satellite technology, it is the Vietnam War that may very well prove the model for reporting of the next war, *not* the Gulf War, as perhaps some would expect. Thus, the significance of Hammond's work to this study is substantive. Army doctrine calls for open and independent coverage, while simultaneously requiring military escorts accompany all media representatives. Achieving that balance is, presumably, a key benefit to be derived from CTC media on the battlefield programs.

To those who argue that biased media reporting precipitated the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, Col. Harry G. Summers' *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (1982) offers this salient observation: "There is a tendency in the military to blame

our problems with public support on the media. This is too easy an answer...the majority of on-the-scene reporting was factual...reporters honestly reported what they had seen first-hand...what they saw was horrible....It was this horror, not the reporting that so influenced the American people."[3] These sobering comments give impetus to the imperative for units to assist reporters put such events in context. Certainly, media on the battlefield training can help train units to do so.

Other works dealing with media relations in Vietnam include a number of good articles. Gole's "Don't Kill the Messenger: Vietnam War Reporting in Context," (*Parameters*, Winter 1996-1997) makes a number of pertinent observations, among them that reporting was out of balance, making it seem more of an American war than South Vietnamese participation justified. A lesson for units undergoing media on the battlefield training in fictitious Mojavia might be to work closely with the host nation's public affairs to showcase allied and coalition efforts, not just our own.

In Vietnam, days' old video was matched up to news just off the wire, producing short, out-of-context, yet dramatic fare for the evening news. This view is supported in Peter Braestrup's *Big Story* (1978). From this, the importance of facilitating the media's ability to quickly file stories seems to be something potentially advantageous to the military. Whether through timely access to military communications or by allowing use of their own satellite communications, this seems a task suitable for CTC media on the battlefield training.

A recurring theme in this literature is that the experience of correspondents accompanying U.S. forces in Vietnam often did not match official U.S. accounts, something supported by Neil Sheehan in *A Bright Shining Lie* (1988), Peter Arnett in

Live from the Battlefield (1994), and David Halberstam's *The Making of A Quagmire* (1965). All of these works tend to validate some key tenets of the Department of Defense Principles of Information, chiefly the importance of providing only factual, objective information to the press. Again, this is a skill to be practiced during media on the battlefield training.

The U.S. intervention in Grenada in 1983 touched off a howl of protest from a press corps that had been essentially shut out of the operation. The Sidle Commission, convened in 1983 by Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger, studied the issues and recommended improvements. Their product, the Department of Defense's Principles of Information, remains a cornerstone document for public affairs planners, and is thus important to this study. It is reproduced in Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (1997), and thus has become doctrine.

Gole observes that today correspondents often take part in training for operations alongside soldiers readying to deploy (often at the Joint Readiness Training Center). He also laments a generally poor attitude towards the press on the part of some Army officers. All these observations are fodder for this study. Certainly, a positive media on the battlefield experience at the combat training centers could do much to effect a culture change among those Army officers who retreat from dealing with the press.

The Sidle Commission's findings had little ameliorative effect for Operation Just Cause, the U.S. intervention in Panama in 1989, again drew sharp criticism from the press over a perceived lack of facilitation consistent with the DOD Principles of Information. Jacqueline Sharkey's *Under Fire: U.S. Military Restrictions on the Media from Grenada to the Persian Gulf* (1992) takes this view. Bob Woodward, in *The*

Commanders (1991) relates how then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, personally wrote to senior commanders in the wake of Just Cause on the importance of including the media in military operations. Including the press in combat training center rotations is an effective way to promote this goal.

The media were not shut out of the Gulf War (although they were dependent on military transportation in the vast expanses of the Arabian desert). This mother of all newsworthy events, however, was not without its own problems in media facilitation. John J. Fialka's *Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War* (1991) details the challenges associated with covering that conflict. Fialka asserts that military public affairs, in general, and the Army, in particular, did not dedicate sufficient resources to effectively facilitate the media. Further, he highlights the differences between the services, generally approving of Marine Corps public affairs. This book has been called "required reading" by General Dennis J. Reimer, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. It is particularly relevant to this study for any number of lessons which can be applied to media on the battlefield training tasks. It is replete with concrete examples of how media facilitation fell short, a disservice to the American soldiers whose stories were not fully told. These tasks can and should be incorporated into media on the battlefield training.

Similarly, a number of other works about the media-military relationship are of value in determining the needs of the press. Pete Williams, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs and currently a network television journalist, addressed the issue in "The Press and the Persian Gulf War" (*Parameters*, 1991). The Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism also looked at the issues in a study entitled *The Media*

and the Gulf: A Closer Look (1991). Both works are potentially useful in providing anecdotal evidence to tailor a media on the battlefield program that stresses credibility and meeting the needs of the press (media facilitation). Douglas V. Johnson II's monograph entitled *The Impact of the Media on National Security Policy Decision Making* (1994) is of similar use.

Doctrine does not address media on the battlefield per se, but such field manuals as FM 100-5, *Operations*; FM 100-6, *Information Operations*; and FM 100-7, *Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations*, attest to the importance of a commander's ability to employ public affairs to assist in gaining information dominance. Justification for an aggressive media on the battlefield training program abounds in doctrine.

Doctrinal definitions of the CTC model by which this study will compare media on the battlefield programs, can be found in the Army Regulation 350-50, *Combat Training Center Program* (1995), and various field manuals (FMs), including FM 25-100, *Training the Force* (1988); FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training* (1990); and FM 25-4, *How to Conduct Training Exercises* (1984). They describe standard Army training systems that apply across the battlefield functions, thus including media training, a function of command and control. These manuals will define this study's use of the terms observer-controller, after action review, countertraining force, scenario-based training, and other key terms.

A number of minor articles specifically address media on the battlefield training, most published in the Army's *Pubic Affairs Update*. These will be used as primary research material as well. In a remarkably prescient article, James B. Brown called for "live media reporting [on] major military exercises such as those at the U.S. Army's

National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California."[4]   That came to pass some three years later, but only by coincidence. Again, a training goal for which no dedicated resources existed.

Both the Joint Readiness Training Center and the National Training Center have produced instructional video tapes on the subject of media on the battlefield. Copies are available from the Combined Arms Research Library and the Center for Army Lessons Learned, respectively. Both scripts yield unique insights to their respective approaches to media on the battlefield training.

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[1]As defined by FM 100-5, *Operations*, G-6, operations other than war (OOTW) are those military activities during peacetime and conflict that do not necessarily involve armed clashes between two organized forces. This term will likely change to stability and support operations (SASO) with the soon-to-be-published revision of FM 100-5.

[2]Johanna Neuman, "The Media's Impact on International Affairs," *SAIS Review* 16, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 1996): 118. The "CNN curve" is a popular belief that the powerful video images telecast worldwide by CNN can and do impact foreign policy decisions. Clearly, that potential exists. Neuman sites the case of Somalia, where, she maintains, images of starving children prompted U.S. intervention, while images of dead American soldiers hastened the U.S. withdrawal. This is not absolute. Earlier images of suffering in Sudan did *not* precipitate U.S. action, and one could argue that an American public, braced for the possibility of U.S. casualties and informed by elected leaders of vital national interests at stake, would persevere in their support of stated U.S. goals.

[3]Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Stragegy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1982), 68.

[4]James B. Brown, "Media Access to the Battlefield," *Military Review*, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, July 1992, 10.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

How does the National Training Center organize for media on the battlefield training and how does this organization compare to other combat training centers and the CTC model? Further, by what standards does this organization measure a rotational unit's ability to facilitate the media? A number of research principles and methods can be applied in order to thoroughly study both the principle question and its subordinate question.

To determine the NTC's organization for media training (past, present, and future plans), the researcher can utilize multiple methods or sources. Source documents include regulations, briefings, standard operating procedures (SOPs), memoranda, and instructional materiel.

Applicable regulations provide for all training at combat training centers, so those portions that address media on the battlefield should prove useful to determine the *planned* scope of the program, that is, what is at least provided for by regulation. Next, CTC briefings that outline the mission, organization, and scope of media training (i.e., unit command briefs) will show how the intent of the regulations actually takes shape at the CTCs. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for media training are of similar use. Advance packets sent to rotational units to prepare them for media training are another valuable source in painting a complete picture of CTC media on the battlefield. Instructional material, such as graphic training aids (GTA) and video tapes, may also illuminate the conduct of media training. Applicable memoranda and correspondence

from unit historical files allow the researcher to trace the development of media on the battlefield programs. The utility of these historical data will be limited by their completeness (or possible lack thereof), but may nonetheless prove useful to the research at hand. Finally, a small number of articles in the Army's *Public Affairs Update* offer the researcher with a glimpse of media training as conducted at the CTCs at the time that particular issue of *Update* went to print.

A carefully constructed survey is another principal tool for this research (see appendix A). The survey will cover mission, organization, and methodology employed by the various combat training centers in conducting media on the battlefield training. It must be sufficiently detailed to allow for a complete analysis of a given CTC's media training program, thus facilitating answering a key part of the thesis question, that is, How does the NTC's media on the battlefield organization compare to other combat training centers and the CTC model? Further, it must determine the standards by which CTC's measure rotational units' performance in facilitating the media, another key part of this research. For a more complete understanding of this survey, it is enclosed at appendix B.

Similar in scope to the survey, interviews are another key research method to be employed. Survey results in hand, the author will follow-up with telephonic interviews, focusing on the differences between the CTCs and their rationale for unique approaches to media on the battlefield training. Interviewees will include those currently responsible for the conduct of media training at the CTCs, those who were so in the recent past (as far back as 1993, concurrent with the inception of media CTC training), and those key individuals who have had a hand in shaping media training Army-wide. Further, an

interview with action officers at the Public Affairs Proponent Activity (PAPA), may provide insight to current goals for media on the battlefield training as well as future plans.

Future plans for media training and the organizations that support it must be considered by this study, even as they evolve during the course of this research. To not stay abreast of these developments is to risk a moot answer to the research question. Accordingly, the researcher must and will maintain open lines of communication to remain abreast of developments in this area as they affect the CTCs. For example, as the author departed his last assignment at the NTC, proposals were on the table to resource the media on the battlefield program with a full-time observer-controller and contracted media role players. Whether or not these proposals were implemented is central to this thesis. Field Manual 46-1-1, *Public Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, is a soon-to-be-published document that will undoubtedly provide insight to this research. Other developments may also prove critical to conclusions reached in this research, and thus its value.

Finally, this research must determine the standards by which rotational units are evaluated in the facilitation of the media. Standards should conform to the Defense Department's Principles of Information, the guidance closest to doctrine currently available (until, perhaps, Field Manual 46-1-1 is published). Graphic training aids (GTA), produced by the CTCs and distributed to soldiers in wallet-sized cards, are a checklist of sorts likely employed in measuring unit media facilitation. Other criteria in use must be determined. These standards then, can be compared to real-world experiences in media facilitation to determine their efficacy in training. Sources include

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not only professional articles in *Public Affairs Update* and the like, but also the more numerous works written by journalists on their experiences in dealing with the military. Here, the review of literature is key, with works like John Fialka's *Hotel Warriors* (1991) being of extraordinary value.

These measures seem largely suitable to the task. Doctrine, such as it is, will be the criteria by which the programs are measured, particularly the new public affairs doctrine established in Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (1997) and FM 46-1-1. The validity must remain somewhat subjective, but a good cross section of opinion will lend itself to a consensus. The ultimate criteria by which the efficacy of the model will be judged, of course, are the resources made available to conduct this important training, particularly personnel dedicated to the mission to train the force.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

How does the National Training Center organize for media on the battlefield training and how does this organization compare to other combat training centers and the CTC model? Further, by what standards does this organization measure a rotational unit's ability to facilitate the media? A series of surveys and interviews with CTC proponents for media on the battlefield training provided the answers to these questions. In reviewing their responses, it is useful to review the CTC concept, the definition of each pertinent CTC pillar (observer-controllers, counter-training force, and after action reviews) and then compare that to conditions at the NTC and, by way of comparison, to other CTCs. The missions of each CTC vary somewhat, so first reviewing these provides additional context.

Combat Training Centers--The Most Realistic Training Short of Combat

The National Training Center's Command Brief, a dazzling multimedia presentation shown to visiting dignitaries, includes this quote from an unidentified company commander commenting on his unit's success in the Gulf War: "I had already fought the battle three times at the NTC."[1] That testament to the realistic training provided by all combat training centers is complemented by other Desert Storm anecdotes relating how units took advantage of brief pauses in the fighting to conduct after action reviews. The Army clearly owes much of its post-Vietnam War renaissance to its eagerness to learn from its mistakes. It is, according to Major General William S.

Wallace, former NTC commander, "an indication of the power of the culture, the power of this process."[2]

The purpose of the combat training centers sheds light on that process:

> CTCs augment home station training…[to] provide tough, realistic joint and combined arms and services training to increase unit readiness, build bold, innovative leaders through stressful exercise, embed… doctrine, and provide immediate feedback to participants.[3]

The first of the combat training centers, the National Training Center (NTC) was established in 1980. Its mission has remained generally constant:

> To provide realistic joint and combined arms training focused on developing soldiers, leaders, and units of America's Army for success on the 21st Century battlefield. Additionally, the NTC provides a vital source of experience-based information and data essential to doctrine, equipment, training, and force development in order to improve the force.[4]

NTC rotations focus primarily (though not exclusively) on heavy brigade combat teams--a multibattalion mechanized force usually consisting of armor and mechanized infantry units and various "slice" elements (supporting forces). A light infantry battalion is often added to this mix, just as heavy forces are often introduced into JRTC rotations (albeit on a small scale). This mix is important if one were to accept the premise that light forces require more media training (the presumption being they are more likely to encounter the media). Even were that true (and, as deployments to places like Bosnia prove, it is not), it would still be necessary to conduct media training at the NTC, even if only during frequent heavy-light rotations.

There are striking similarities in the mission statements of the various CTCs. Consider the mission of the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC):

> To provide realistic joint and combined arms training focused on developing soldiers, leaders, and units of our nations joint contingency forces for

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success on future battlefields. Train under tough, realistic, combat-like conditions across a wide range of likely tactical operations and mission rehearsal exercises capable of fully integrating into higher level exercises and scenarios.[5]

Like the NTC, it talks of joint, combined arms training for soldiers, leaders, and units, stressing realism. Both, then, seek to train soldiers and leaders. If, as Army Chief of Staff General Dennis J. Reimer has said, soldiers are our credentials (and, it follows, our best spokespersons), then there clearly exists the need to train media on the battlefield as part of the scenario.[6] FM 100-23, *Peace Operations* (1993), elaborates further, flatly asserting that "every soldier is a spokesperson."[7] In addition to training soldiers, both the NTC and JRTC also seek to contribute to a body of lessons learned, to the development of Army doctrine, something they share with the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), as seen in its mission statement:

> Conduct realistic, stressful training for Army Corps, Division, and Brigade Commanders and their staffs. Prepare Army organizations to operate in a joint or combined [multinational] environment as either the Army component or as the nucleus of a Joint Task Force (JTF) Headquarters. Serve as a data source for the improvement of doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, leader development, and soldiers.[8]

Again, realism is a key goal, but now the training focus shifts to include the commanders and staffs of formations larger than brigade. For the first time, division and corps public affairs cells participate in media training, responsible for unit public affairs operations. Individual skills, however, are still exercised, as senior commanders, like privates at the NTC or JRTC, find themselves being interviewed by media role players. The mission of the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) provides a similar focus:

> To provide tough, realistic joint/combined arms services training in accordance with...current] doctrine for brigades...in a mid to high intensity environment, while retaining the training feedback and analysis focus at battalion task force level for USAREUR [U.S. Army Europe] units.[9]

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<u>Observer-Controller--Teacher, Coach, Mentor</u>

Field Manual 25-101, *Battle Focused Training* (1990), defines an observer-controller as "an individual *tasked* [emphasis mine] to evaluate training and provide administrative control and constructive feedback [i.e., the AAR] to participants." Observer-Controllers have long been a fixture in Army training, pre-dating the establishment of the NTC and subsequent combat training centers. The CTC model, however, provided for the first time for *full-time* observer-controllers, as opposed to a short-term tasking filled, perhaps, by a sister unit. The CTCs instituted this professionalization of the observer-controller.[10] Indeed, at the NTC today, newly assigned OCs must first complete a month-long rotation in training at the Observer-Controller Academy. Products, such as the NTC's *OC Handbook* (1995), further refine their duties and responsibilities:

> Observer-Controllers (OCs) are the single most important resource at the NTC. OCs are responsible for observing unit actions and controlling both the training unit and the OPFOR to ensure rules of engagement are followed. Additionally, OCs teach and coach units through the use of doctrinally sound examples and provide feedback to units using the After Action Review (AAR) process.[11]

The observer-controller is the central figure in providing a quality combat training center experience, having evolved from umpire to teacher, coach, and mentor. An OC does not evaluate a unit in a test designed to produce a grade. An OC does not lecture. Ideally, the OC merely facilitates learning in a nonthreatening environment, the AAR:

> The most important job of observer-controllers is to make it safe to learn. They never criticize or evaluate individual performance. They encourage the team to teach itself. They reinforce the message that this experience is not about success or failure--it's about what each person takes away.[12]

The NTC is the only combat training center with no assigned *full-time* observer-controller for media on the battlefield training. This shortfall is *not* for want of recognition of the problem or lack of command support. Quite the contrary; the need for a media on the battlefield OC was documented in 1995, with a position added to the Operations Group Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) in 1996. Not all documented positions are or can be filled. The Officer Distribution Plan (ODP) determines which positions, in a resource-constrained environment, will be filled.[13] It can be no surprise that Operations Group, in reviewing its ODP in 1997, allocated available slots to OC positions long-established and already filled with officers on the ground, performing their duties in the field. Deleting a position from one valid requirement to fill another was not a viable option, so the NTC requested additional ODP support for a media on the battlefield OC from the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC).[14] This organization, while sympathetic, could not fill the requirement, instead promising to "revisit the plus-up in 46A [public affairs officer] ODP as we develop the FY98 [Fiscal Year 1998] plan."[15] Those efforts apparently proved fruitless, for as of February 1998 no ODP support was forthcoming and no officer had been identified for assignment to the NTC as a full-time media on the battlefield OC.

Were a media OC to report to the NTC, he would find plenty of work. Below is the duty description as cited in justifying the addition to the TDA:

> Observe, control, and train brigade combat teams and public affairs detachments conducting media relations during continuous tactical operations. Serve as 52d Mech Division PAO, producing public affairs annexes, anticipated questions and answers, and command messages for each training scenario. Responsible for the integration of Reserve Component public affairs units conducting training at the NTC. Staff proponent for media on the battlefield training. Provide training and guidance to maneuver OCs on unit responsibilities in media relations. Media

instructor for the Leaders Training Program (LTP) and OC Academy. Write, produce, and edit instructional videos for distribution to the force through the Center for Army Lessons Learned. Serve as technical assistant to the contracting officer, responsible to provide guidance to evaluate the performance of the contracted media counter-training force [at the time a planned future organization]. Additional duty as Operations Group PAO.

Imagine this new OC's shock to discover these responsibilities, as currently assigned, are to be accomplished as an *additional* duty (along with that of media role player) to his primary responsibility as Chief, Tactical Visual Information/Combat Documentation.[16] Clearly, the need is well established and just as clearly, given the scope of responsibilities, requires full-time support.

Other combat training centers suffer the same, ubiquitous resource constraints, especially in human resources. The first CTC to be resourced with a full-time media OC was the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). Immediately following the directive by then Army Chief of Staff General Gordon Sullivan to incorporate media on the battlefield training into CTC training in March 1993, the Office of the Chief, Public Affairs (OCPA) moved to resource the new requirement at BCTP. The OCPA moved a lieutenant colonel from the OCPA staff to BCTP in order to provide the manning for a newly created media OC position.[17] BCTP, then, has benefited from the service of an assigned, full-time observer-controller since the inception of CTC media on the battlefield training. This move of an authorized position for a lieutenant colonel from OCPA to BCTP was not, however, properly documented. Now, nearly five years later, the replacement for the currently assigned observer-controller remains an unresolved issue (as of February 1998). As a result of this oversight, authorizations for public affairs lieutenant colonels Army-wide have apparently been reduced by one.

The Joint Readiness Training Center, the CTC whose focus is training light forces, long ago developed a robust capability to portray "civilians on the battlefield," to include news media representatives (NMRs). There was, perhaps, a greater *perceived* need for light forces to interact with the media in contingency operations, so authorization and ODP support for a full-time observer-controller was quickly forthcoming. The Combat Maneuver Training Center in Germany also benefits from an ODP-supported TDA public affairs position to supervise its media on the battlefield training. Nonpublic affairs OCs, however, observe their counterparts (e.g., an infantry captain OC observing an infantry company commander) during media training events. These line OCs have previously received media training themselves, a "train the trainer" approach with applicability elsewhere. An aside is: All combat training centers employ augmentees when the number of units in training exceeds the number of available OCs. Although this violates the CTC principle of full-time OCs, it is nonetheless a required, if occasional, expedient to which all CTCs resort when necessary (albeit as augmentation to, not in place of, full-time OCs). Nevertheless, this raises the question of whether tasking units to provide public affairs OCs to cover media training events during CTC rotations would be a viable alternative. Currently, none of the "dirt" CTCs request division PAOs to perform OC duty. Tasking division PAOs to serve as OCs would do little to improve the media on the battlefield program. At least one full-time integrator is required to plan, prepare, and execute support to media events, such as media role players, combat camera, and after action reviews. Clearly, this would also promulgate still different standards than those already developed by individual CTCs, exacerbated by the current lack of doctrinal tasks, conditions, and standards. Further, as emerging

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information operations doctrine finds its way into CTC scenarios, accelerated perhaps by evolving synthetic theaters of war (STOW), it seems likely that division PAOs will eventually *participate* in rotations, and will thus become unavailable to serve as OC augmentees. Pressing PAOs into service as observer-controllers would be a temporary measure at best and an ineffective compromise.

With the exception of the Battle Command Training Program (with its focus on division and corps exercises without troops), all other combat training centers (the so-called "dirt" CTCs, since they involve actual troops on the ground, conducting force-on-force exercises) report that their media on the battlefield OC positions are authorized in the grade of captain. Typically, these captains have no prior public affairs experience, and, on occasion, some have yet to even attend the Public Affairs Officer Course (PAOC) at the Defense Information School, Fort Meade, Maryland. This flouts another standard CTC requirement, namely that observer-controllers have already successfully performed the duty for which they will serve as an observer-controller. Since the media OCs at the three "dirt" CTCs function as the notional division PAO (e.g., the higher headquarters facilitating media visits and providing units with command messages and other PA products), then it follows that qualifications to be a media on the battlefield OC would include previous assignment as a division public affairs officer, or at least a former commander of a public affairs detachment (PAD) associated with a division as its war trace headquarters. This, of course, is an elusive goal for a public affairs functional area seemingly hard-pressed to fill all valid personnel requisitions (for example, as of February 1998, the 11th PAD at Fort Polk, Louisiana, had been without a commander for an extended period). Still, it is a goal worth pursuing, especially in light of the superior

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qualifications of other observer-controllers. Alternatively, one way to compensate for inexperienced captains serving as media on the battlefield OCs in their first public affairs assignment is to augment them with a public affairs noncommissioned officer. These professionals typically bring a wealth of experience to the task at hand. Further, the workload clearly warrants the additional manpower, something to which the JRTC media on the battlefield OC attests. He cites the example of legal play at the JRTC, to which the Staff Judge Advocate Corps dedicates *four* officers, three field OCs and another lawyer assigned to the Plans/Exercise Maneuver Cell (the notional division staff). Indeed, the media on the battlefield OC is the *only* observer-controller dual-hatted as OC *and* a member of this notional division staff.[18]

All the combat training centers, then, have authorized and assigned media on the battlefield OCs, with the exception of the NTC, which has been forced to rely on one or two individuals to perform media OC duties as an additional duty. So resource poor is media training at the NTC that the OC is often simultaneously the media role player, clearly a difficult arrangement. It seems incongruous to be observed and controlled by the media equivalent of the "OPFOR."

<u>Countertraining Force/Media Role Players--A World Class OPFOR?</u>

A dedicated countertraining force of media role players is another area in which the National Training Center has been forced to economize, having only recently hired its first media role player. An essential pillar of the CTC model, a countertraining force of media role players, similar in concept to the opposing force (OPFOR) for maneuver training, would interact with rotational units to provide a challenging, realistic portrayal of the press. This group of media role players would aggressively pursue stories the same

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way the "world class" OPFOR pursues victory, in the same type of competitive free-play expected on a CTC battlefield. In addition to the additional duty OC/media role players (one or two at best), the NTC briefly pressed into service civilian contractor volunteers, video technicians with previous broadcast experience or training. The contractor enthusiastically allowed these two individuals to spend two half-days per rotation away from video editing of maneuver AARs to role-play media. This typically occurred during the early part of a rotation, the week prior to "move out," when units conduct training in Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration (RSOI).[19] When these two individuals left the contractor's employ, however, no replacements were forthcoming. No one else had the experience required to adequately and realistically portray media representatives. To fill the void, the requirement to provide two, *part-time* media role players was added as part of a new addition to the contract (January 1997) which provided for civilians on the battlefield. (The NTC, having instituted RSOI training in 1995, had previously been employing OPFOR soldiers as civilians on the battlefield; it proved more efficient to switch the responsibility to the contractor.) The identified contract employees, however, had neither public affairs nor journalist experience upon which to draw for their part-time mission. Much like the occasional mobile public affairs detachment (MPAD) deployed to the NTC, they were deemed largely unsuitable to the task. The initiative was only recently implemented, with only one media role player. That individual, however, is well suited to the task, being a former Army journalist. Nevertheless, media on the battlefield at the NTC remains a one-man show, one that does not play daily.

The Joint Readiness Training Center, like the NTC, also experimented with Reserve Component MPADs as media role players, with similar, often unsatisfactory results. Further, MPAD rotations to the JRTC were apparently unpredictable, something exacerbated by frequent real-world deployments. The quality of their role playing was spotty, according to sources at the JRTC.[20] It is perhaps too much to expect soldiers to behave like civilian press with little or no experience or training. Although a comparison can be made between command information products produced by public affairs units for internal use and stories produced by civilian journalists, the transition takes time and training. Further, with the Combat Training Centers' shared emphasis on realism, the most effective portrayal of the press should perhaps approach the level of CNN reporters. That may be unrealistic, but it should remain a goal in keeping with the CTC philosophy of providing the toughest, most realistic training possible. Use of mobile public affairs detachments as a countertraining force was mostly scrapped, although they are still employed in fulfilling wartime tasks (e.g., "escort media") on the JRTC's battlefield or in training soldiers on how to deal with the media (e.g., during situational training exercise lane training).

The JRTC also benefited initially from the presence of an active component public affairs detachment (PAD). The 11th PAD was aligned with (although not a part of) its war trace headquarters, the now long-deactivated 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized). It assisted sporadically with media training at the JRTC, providing much needed assistance to a very small public affairs staff. A Forces Command unit (unlike JRTC's Operations Group, a TRADOC unit), the 11th PAD is now assigned to the Warrior Brigade, a composite unit of various, individually deployable FORSCOM units.

Although assigned to the 5th Personnel Services Battalion, it generally operates in support of the installation PAO.[21] The 11th PAD remained at Fort Polk after the deactivation of the 5th Infantry Division ostensibly to support media on the battlefield. That mission has apparently faded over time with the continual turn over of personnel endemic to any Army unit and the lack of a memorandum of understanding (MOU), which would have preserved the agreement. The 11th PAD still supports media training on occasion. Regardless, the JRTC not only benefits from an assigned, full-time OC, but also two Department of the Army Civilian (DAC) employees who are *full-time* media role players in addition to being exceptionally well-qualified PAOs. Ms. Margaret Brewster, Public Affairs Training Officer at the JRTC and dedicated media role player stresses the importance of quality role play. To ensure realism, she studies interview styles of noted reporters, extensively researches the issues on which she will "report," evaluates the battlefield situation, and looks for a newsworthy *story*.[22] Her opinion of what constitutes quality role play is heartily endorsed by the JRTC's media on the battlefield OC, Captain Christopher C. Garver, who emphasizes the need for an "actor's flair" to best portray media. In his opinion, soldiers do not "look" the part and tend to be less aggressive than would real reporters when questioning their seniors. Fortunately, the JRTC has a standing agreement with the post public affairs office to provide civilian employees to role play reporters during the rotation, while the media on the battlefield OC works in the installation PAO office outside the rotation. In summary, then, the JRTC fields at least one full-time OC and two or more media role players throughout a typical rotation, a credible effort that seems effective.

The Battle Command Training Program also boasts, in addition to its full-time OC, a credible countertraining force of media role players, in this case exclusively contracted. Mr. Ron Mazzia (a retired lieutenant colonel and PAO) heads up a team that includes two additional contract role players (former PAOs with journalist training and experience) augmented with part-time contractors (again with journalist experience) and occasionally with journalism students from local universities (as during the annual Prairie Warrior exercise, a corps-level simulation involving students of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College). The journalism students are the only unknown quantity, so a robust, realistic portrayal of the press is routinely a part of division and corps Warfighter exercises.

The Combat Maneuver Training Center also achieves a synergy with its post public affairs office and other U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) public affairs organizations. Media role players come from the ranks of their fourteen civilians on the battlefield (COBs) and routinely present a credible media countertraining force. What distinguishes the CMTC are its media awareness class and integration of media events into lane training. Both are provided to units prior to real-world deployments, such as Bosnia. Those who have rotated through CMTC rate the media training as excellent.[23] Three situational training exercise lanes test soldiers' ability to effectively deal with the media in a tactical setting under realistic conditions. In one scenario, a media role player, accompanied by an electronic news gathering team (ENG, the ubiquitous television news crew), records soldiers as they inspect vehicles at a checkpoint. When asked for interviews, the senior soldier present takes charge, checks the media representatives' credentials, establishes the ground rules, and allows soldiers to be interviewed in a

manner consistent with the tactical situation. Immediately after the event, an observer-controller conducts an informal, on-the-spot AAR, which is said to be very effective.[24]

Training at the National Training Center can be, and often is, similarly effective. It is however, less pervasive, a situation made only slightly better with the recent addition of its first, full-time media role player. Despite the addition, manning levels provide at best an inadequate media countertraining force. Given the extended lines of communications presented by the NTC's vast desert, a media role player typically requires an entire day to reach a unit, coordinate and conduct interviews, and return to the Operations Center to begin the editing of a news story for inclusion in an after action review. It simply takes longer to conduct media training in a desert environment in which maneuvering units are moving targets. One media role player, even conducting continuous operations, would be hard pressed to ensure that all battalion-sized units receive media training during either RSOI or force-on-force training (a period of twelve days). A media counter-training force of only one clearly limits the number and quality of media training events and after action review products available at the NTC.

The After Action Review (AAR)--Assimilating Lessons Learned

An AAR is a review of training that allows soldiers, leaders, and units to discover for themselves what happened during the training and why. It is also used to solicit ideas on how the training could have been performed better. It is a professional discussion that includes the training participants and focuses on the training objectives....AARs are not critiques because they do not determine success or failure; rather, AARs are professional discussions of training events. Leaders...use AARs to tell a story about what was planned, what happened...why it happened, and what could have been done differently to improve performance.[25]

Field Manual 25-101, *Battle Focused Training* (1990), goes on to differentiate between formal and informal after action reviews. Formal AARs are scheduled events,

typically conducted at company level or above, and involve a greater degree of planning, preparation, and resources. Informal AARs take place when resources (e.g., time available) are not available to support a formal AAR. Informal AARs typically target platoons and below.

The combat training centers have elevated the after action review to something of an art, leveraging sophisticated instrumentation systems to produce detailed (i.e. formal) multimedia AARs. The NTC's *OC Handbook* (1995) even calls AARs "the most important event at the National Training Center...an art and science which must be mastered by all OCs." All CTCs also conduct after action reviews to facilitate learning from media on the battlefield training. Observer-controllers employ both formal and informal AARs, limited only by resources (e.g., time available, training aids, observer-controller availability, etc.).

According to training doctrine, units follow Training and Evaluation Outlines (TEOs), training on specified tasks to an established standard, under given conditions. Since the after action review is the "critical link between training and evaluation," it follows that certain media on the battlefield tasks should be assessed as part of training and addressed as appropriate in an AAR.[26] (An aside, CTCs are quick to point out that they do not evaluate, but rather facilitate self-discovery of lessons learned in a non-threatening, learning environment; nevertheless, tasks derived from TEOs, as set forth in mission training plans (MTPs), are integral to every CTC after action review).

The Public Affairs Proponent Agency (PAPA), has recently proposed and staffed four unit-level tasks for a public affairs detachment mission training plan that could easily be integrated into unit-level media on the battlefield training at CTCs. This would

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provide the much-needed doctrinal basis to facilitate discussion during after action reviews. These tasks include: (1) implement a public affairs plan, (2) facilitate the media, (3) participate in a media interview, and (4) participate in a media briefing. The first three apply to media on the battlefield training at the three "dirt" CTCs, while all four apply to BCTP. Though not yet doctrine (and thus not yet incorporated into unit mission training plans), these are essentially the same tasks that have been trained at the combat training centers, in one form or another, since the inception of media on the battlefield training in 1993. By dividing these tasks into individual (soldier) and collective (unit) tasks, the more appropriate type of after action review may be determined.

The task "participate in a media interview" is an individual task most appropriate to an informal, on-the-spot AAR immediately following the training event. In as much as an interview is part of the collective unit tasks of both "execute a PA plan" and "facilitate the media," then it would be appropriate to include in formal AARs as well.

All combat training centers provide AAR comments to soldiers and units via both formal and informal AARs. What differ somewhat are the products they employ and the timeliness of the AAR feedback.

The JRTC employs a checklist to guide an observer-controller in gathering after action review comments during media training events. It focuses on the individual task to participate in an interview and is depicted in figure 1.

During each JRTC rotation, media role players interview all brigade and battalion commanders, at least two company commanders, and as many noncommissioned officers and soldiers as possible. Using the above format, meticulous notes are kept both for immediate on-the-spot AARs as well as inclusion in comments in the unit take-home

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package (THP). The THP includes an executive summary of the unit's collective performance in media on the battlefield training and videotape of the interviews themselves. Units can then use these findings to tailor home-station training to correct deficiencies identified during the rotation.

Observer/Controller AAR Format
(Individual Interview)

A. Introduction
B. How did you do on the interview?
C. What was your theme/message (wanted reporters to take away)?
D. Did reporters get that?
E. Hardest line of questions?
F. Individual questions/comments (danger spots OC noticed; message examples)
G. What themes did reporters focus on? What's their story?
H. Report it higher!
I. One thing you would do different next time?
J. One thing you would do the same?
K. Copy of tape in Take-Home Package

Figure 1. JRTC Interview AAR

The Joint Readiness Training Center makes use of video, showing excerpts from media interviews at the Tactical Update to the Commanding General (known as "1600s"). During this update, observer-controllers responsible for a particular battlefield function will brief unit training trends, including the media on the battlefield OC. This provides a needed update to both the command group of the JRTC and a rotational brigade's parent division. It is not, however, an after action review per se. Rather, it is an update of a unit's progress in the rotation in which video excerpts serve to illustrate the scenario.

Key leaders who want to review interviews captured on video in order to improve their unit's media facilitation or individual interview techniques must await receipt of the

Take-Home Package at the end of the rotation. The Tactical Update, while certainly highlighting the role of media on the battlefield and the importance of media training, does not provide the same feedback as a formal after action review. As a result, key leaders interviewed may see this as a potential source of embarrassment without connecting it to the training value to be derived. The training value would be clear if these videos were used solely to support a battalion or brigade after action review. Playing video excerpts outside an AAR environment risks reinforcing a negative perception of media interviews as "high risk, low pay-off" events. That is especially powerful in an Army culture that remains, many assert, wary of talking to the press.[27] If combined with a solely antagonistic press corps of media role players, the effects of the training would likely be counterproductive.

Fortunately, all CTCs report that media role players run the gamut from friendly to neutral to antagonistic, offering a realistic mix that is situation dependent. The rotational unit's approach to the press to a large extent determines the reaction of the media. Treat the press in a positive manner, and the resulting coverage is often positive. Have a plan to tell your story, and the more likely it is that your story will be told. These varying attitudes on the part of the press are more likely to offer the right mix of challenge and support.

The Combat Maneuver Training Center, like the JRTC, conducts both informal and formal after action reviews, the latter multimedia events held mostly at battalion level. Video is the primary medium for feedback on performance, but written products (e.g., print journalism) are sometimes provided as well. The Battle Command Training Program also provides feedback in the form of news stories, both television and print.

Video products are produced occasionally, depending on the proficiency of media role players and time available. Video editing can be a tedious, time-consuming process, something which makes its timely inclusion in after action reviews a challenge.[28]

The Battle Command Training Program's *War Bird* is a take on the *Early Bird*, a compendium of print stories compiled daily from various sources by the Defense Department. This information in the form of print products provides timely feedback to commanders about the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of unit public affairs operations. It is an important tool used in addition to after action review comments, and, like the JRTC's videos, serves to heighten media awareness.

The NTC also provides AAR feedback on media on the battlefield events, both formally and informally. Individuals and key media facilitators (usually unit S-1 officers) receive this feedback immediately upon conclusion of the media event, usually from the same media role player who conducted the interviews, again for lack of a full-time observer-controller.[29] That media role player/OC must then rush back to the NTC's Operations Center to check on his full-time duties (producing dozens of formal AARs in support of *all* OC teams) before editing a video news story for inclusion in the *one* AAR that will contain a media event as a topic for discussion. The AAR for which the video will be produced is usually scheduled for the next day, so time, though limited, is available to produce a complete video news story. This investment in time pays rich dividends in the after action review, where units see the results of their media facilitation efforts in powerful, video images. The short pieces (typically two minutes) are followed by items to sustain and improve. The senior OC conducting the after action review then facilitates a brief but effective discussion of media on the battlefield before moving on to

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the main subject of the AAR: the unit's performance on the battlefield. Media on the

battlefield training, then, is inserted into task force and brigade AARs, and receives the

full attention and support of senior leaders.

All the CTCs conduct effective, high quality AARs for media on the battlefield.

The products they produce to support those AARs varies, as this observer noted:

> For the record, the broadcast feedback at the NTC is probably the best going
> (since I don't think the other CTCs are doing that at all). I have used tapes from
> NTC to train units here at Fort Hood. On the other hand, BCTP publishes daily
> print products that are used to critique commanders and soldiers--NTC doesn't.
> JRTC frequently incorporates civilian media into the battlefield play--NTC can't,
> usually. They are all trying to do good training.[30]

Training to Standard

As an integral component to the Army Training and Evaluation Program

(ARTEP), Mission Training Plans (MTPs) provide units with a tactical training and

evaluation outline. The MTPs provide guidance on how to train and on what to train.

MTPs include training and evaluation outlines (TEOs), which provide the training criteria

for all tasks that a unit must master in order to perform its wartime missions. TEOs are

training objectives that include task, condition, and standard. The task is simply the

action to be performed by an element (the staff member or section performing the task).

The condition describes the environment and situation in which the task is to be

performed. The standard prescribes the criteria which must be met to successfully

complete the task. Steps to complete a given task are listed sequentially, with detailed

standards for each.[31] Figure 2 is an excerpt from *Mission Training Plan for the Infantry

Brigade* (1989) and provides an example of tasks to be performed by a brigade S-1

section.

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ELEMENT: S1 Section
TASK: Perform S1 Operations (7-6-1902) (FM 101-5) (FM 7-30) (FM 71-3)
ITERATION: 1 2 3 4 5 (circle) TRAINING STATUS: T P U (circle)
CONDITION: S1 is located in the rear CP. The S1 is operational and coordinating staff
functions have begun. The S1 receives reports from brigade units.
TASK STANDARD:
  a. The S1 section provides personnel status figures that are 95 percent accurate.
  b. The S1 section continually monitors brigade operations and can become the command
and control center if the tactical CP and main CP become nonoperational
  c. The S1 section supervises replacement activities and ensures replacements are pushed
forward within eight hours of arrival at the rear CP.
  d. The S1 section provides personnel estimate.
  e. The S1 section processes EPWs promptly.
TASK STEPS and PERFORMANCE MEASURES: GO / NO GO
1. S1 section advises the commander and staff on personnel matters.
  a. Provides expert advice on 100 percent personnel-related activities and makes
recommendations that result in the commander making appropriate decisions.
  b. Advises on matters--
    (1) Directed by the commander or policy.
    (2) Identified by other staff elements.
    (3) Concerning legal, medical, and personnel services...
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Figure 2. Excerpt from *Mission Training Plan for the Infantry Brigade* (1989)

No such tasks, conditions, and standards have been established for public affairs

operations at the battalion and brigade level. Instead, the CTCs use locally produced

graphic training aids (GTAs) as to guide after action reviews.

Tactical units of battalion or brigade size have no organic public affairs units to

provide support in accomplishing the task of media facilitation.[32] The task falls instead

to the staff proponent, the S-1 officer, although no MTP lists any such public affairs task

under the S-1's responsibilities. To perform this collective task, soldiers would be asked

to participate in a media interview, an *individual* task common to all soldiers, and hence

appropriate for future inclusion in the *Soldiers Manual of Common Tasks*.[33]

Observer-controllers, then, have no established task, condition, or standard by

which to evaluate a unit's performance during media on the battlefield training at the

combat training centers. To fill this void, they have developed their own tasks, conditions, and standards, which are very similar to, but not universally consistent with those developed by other CTCs. They conform to the Department of Defense (DOD) Principles of Information (1983) and generally accepted standards of media facilitation as taught by such organizations as the Defense Information School, which trains public affairs personnel from all services. Further, they are generally consistent with advice published by civilian public relations firms, such as Barry McLoughlin Associates, Inc.[34] Many of these standards could be characterized as common sense, but to a unit completely unfamiliar with media facilitation, a published standard would be of enormous value, not to mention consistent with Army training doctrine.

The Public Affairs Proponent Agency (PAPA) has recently staffed, in draft form, mission training plans for *public affairs* units. Some of the media facilitation tasks that a public affairs detachment would execute in support of a brigade mirror what that brigade would be expected to do without support of a PAD. Thus a few tasks would translate almost directly to a tactical unit's MTP, with little or no modification.

Reproduced below are tasks developed from a *compilation* of those developed by each individual combat training center as well as tasks developed by PAPA for inclusion in common core classes for professional military education (e.g., the Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, etc.). Their incorporation into unit MTPs and soldier common task manuals, supplemented by the pending publication of Field Manual 46-1-1, *Public Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, would provide tactical units with the necessary guidance to conduct media on the battlefield training (see figure 3).

TASK
FACILITATE A MEDIA VISIT
Planning and Wargaming ➢ Determine commander's intent for visit; develop themes (unit's agenda) ➢ Research reporter (media IPB) ➢ Anticipate media needs for photo/video shots ➢ Determine what constitutes news in the AO ➢ Wargame possible questions and develop appropriate responses ➢ Develop command message matrix; distribute to lowest levels ➢ Identify media support requirements ➢ Develop proposed itinerary that tells the unit's story ➢ Develop/employ a media facilitation SOP ➢ Notify perimeter security to expect NMR
Greeting the Media ➢ Be friendly and time conscious ➢ Check credentials and escort ➢ Coordinate itinerary with reporter; adjust as necessary and appropriate ➢ Explain rules, safety, and security concerns
Conducting the Interviews ➢ Review interview TTPs with interviewees ➢ Monitor interviews for OPSEC violations, time limits, confusion, inaccuracies ➢ Position interview to avoid OPSEC violation
Assist NMR in filing story as necessary ➢ Provides access to military communications ➢ Provides courier service to rear ➢ Tracks media products to ensure accountability
Reporting Results ➢ Conduct an AAR ➢ Report to higher: lines of questions, attitude of reporter, OPSEC violations, slant to story, overall impression ➢ Share info with other units via SITREP ➢ Analyze resulting story; adjust media facilitation procedures as necessary

Figure 3. Facilitate a Media Visit

Figure 3 represents those collective tasks a unit would accomplish in order to

facilitate a visit by news media representatives. It is a model that can be incorporated

into all battalion and brigade mission training plans.

TASK
ESCORT A NEWS MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE (NMR)
Receive the mission from Public Affairs: ➢ Name and news organization ➢ Purpose and length of visit ➢ Draft itinerary ➢ Logistical support plan ➢ Ground rules
Movement: ➢ Assist NMR in preparation to move ➢ Conduct TLP with NMR before movement ➢ Instruct NMR on actions to take in event of enemy contact ➢ Move NMR to unit: expedite movement; listen to NMR to pick-up possible story lines or questions they might ask
Actions upon arrival in unit area: ➢ Escort NMR through perimeter security ➢ Link-up with chain of command representative ➢ Introductions Brief interviewees: away from media; review ground rules; set time limit; everything said is "on the record;" safeguard OPSEC; NMR interests/possible questions: interview TTPs (e.g. bridge to command message, etc.)
During the Interview ➢ Monitor the interview; keep time ➢ Note OPSEC violations or inaccuracies ➢ Assist reporter to understand any confusing military terms ➢ Record any commitments of additional support made by interviewee
Assist NMR in filing story as necessary ➢ Provides access to military communications ➢ Provides courier service to rear ➢ Tracks media products to ensure accountability
After Action Review with Public Affairs ➢ Conduct AAR immediately upon return ➢ Impression of interview; attitude of reporter ➢ Lines of questions ➢ Ground rules violations, if any ➢ Additional requests for information, access ➢ Logistical issues

Figure 4. Escort a News Media Representative

Figure 4 represents the individual task to escort a news media representative. It represents those subtasks that a soldier assigned to escort a news media representative (NMR) would be required to perform. This training would take place during common task testing (CTT) or during collective training for media facilitation at either home station or a CTC. It is suitable for inclusion into soldier skill manuals.

The final task, "participate in an interview," is also an individual task suitable for inclusion in soldier common skill manuals and would be a subtask for collective media training events as well. It is depicted in figure 5.

Each of the CTCs' graphic training aids contain the majority of the elements as presented in figures 3-5, although each is organized somewhat differently. Common core course instruction promulgated by the Public Affairs Proponent Agency also contains many of the elements as well. The tasks presented above represent a more succinct yet complete systemization of unit and individual media facilitation tasks. They more closely resemble the checklist format typical of a mission training plan and serve as a model for inclusion into MTPs. CTC graphic training aids and PAPA course outlines are reproduced in appendix B.

The Joint Readiness Training Center was unique for its production of a command message matrix, a graphic training aid which assists soldiers to frame appropriate responses to common questions. For each of fourteen anticipated subjects a ready made response can be tailored and completed to fit practically any situation. Under the category for investigation, for example, is this response: "We will conduct a thorough investigation in an effort to preclude this form ever happening again." The utility of such

a statement is wide-ranging. The JRTC's command message matrix is reproduced in appendix B.

TASK: PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW
Prepares for the Interview ➢ Reviews interview TTPs ➢ Reviews anticipated questions and answers ➢ Reviews command messages/info themes ➢ Practices relaxation techniques as necessary

Talks on the Record (Print/Camera)
➢ Checks appearance/uniform; removes sunglasses/eyeglasses/helmet as practicable
➢ Projects positive attitude: confidant, relaxed
➢ Looks at reporter, not camera
➢ Answers questions:
  ▪ Succinctly, bridging to command message; always makes a positive point
  ▪ Stays in lane; does not speculate; safeguards OPSEC, but is not evasive; avoids jargon; asks reporter to repeat question if necessary; answers truthfully

Figure 5. Participate in an Interview

This analysis has compared the National Training Center's media on the battlefield program to each of the combat training centers and to the CTC model. The NTC has comparatively fewer resources than other CTCs to support media training. It is the only CTC with no full-time media observer-controllers. The recent addition of its first dedicated media role player represents significant progress, yet this counter-training force of one is eclipsed by the other CTCs and serves to limit the number of training events per rotation. Nevertheless, the video news stories produced by the NTC are excellent feedback and powerful agents for change. Regardless of resources available, media on the battlefield training, whether at home station or a combat training center, would be greatly improved if common tasks, conditions, and standards were incorporated into unit mission training plans.

[1]National Training Center. "Command Brief," 25 March 1997. Accessed 27 February 1998. http://www.irwin.army.mil/command/default.htm. Fort Irwin, CA.

[2]Richard Pascale, "Fight, Learn, Lead," *Fast Company*, August-September 1996, 65.

[3]U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Student Text 22-3, *Leadership Selected Readings* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: USACGSC, August 1997), 4.6.

[4]National Training Center. "Command Brief."

[5]The Joint Readiness Training Center, "Mission." http//146.53.33.3/jmission.htm. 27 April 1998.

[6]General Dennis J. Reimer, Chief of Staff of the Army, "Senior Leader Communications," (letter, 3 August1995).

[7]U.S. Department of the Army. Field Manual 100-2, *Peace Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, December 1994), 48.

[8]U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Student Text 22-3, *Leadership Selected Readings* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, August 1997), 4.7.

[9]*Ibid.*

[10]See generally, Anne W. Chapman, *The Origins and Development of the National Training Center, 1976-1984* (Fort Monroe, VA: Office of the Command Historian, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1992.).

[11]Operations Group, National Training Center, *Observer-Controller Handbook* (Fort Irwin, CA: Operations Group, National Training Center, 1995), 3.1.

[12]Richard Pascale, "Fighting to Learn, Learning to Lead," *Fast Company*, August-September, 65.

[13]U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. C430 Advance Book, *Resource Planning and Force Management* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1997), 14.9-14.10, describes the officer distribution plan (ODP) as a needed management tool for officer assignments as inventories do not match authorizations. The ODP "equitably distributes ...officers...by command based on DA priorities and special guidance.

[14]Commanding General, NTC, to the Chief of Staff, TRADOC, memorandum, 17December 1996.

[15]*Ibid.*

[16]The VI section at NTC, for which the Chief, VI/COMDOC is responsible, assists all OC teams with the documentation, production, and presentation of multimedia AARs. It includes 50 combat camera soldiers and 25 contractors, who perform literally hundreds of missions during continuous operations every rotation.

[17]Commander, US Army Combined Arms Center. "Integration of Public Affairs Activities into Battle Command Training Program Warfighter Exercises." Official message traffic to Headquarters, Department of the Army and Corps Commanders, 3 March 1993.

[18]Captain Christopher C. Garver, Media on the Battlefield OC, JRTC, in a letter to the author, dated 5 February 1998.

[19]Reception, Training, Onward Movement, and Integration (RSOI) is the doctrinal process by which units deploy overseas for a contingency operation, draw pre-positioned equipment, build combat power, and deploy to tactical assembly areas, prepared to conduct combat operations. Since such real-world contingencies invariably lead to interaction with the press, the NTC incorporates media on the battlefield training into its weeklong RSOI training. See, generally, U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 100-5, Operations* (1993) and *Field Manual 63-11, Logistics Support Element (1993).*

[20]Garver.

[21]Warrior Brigade Homepage, http://146.53.33.3/warrior.htm. Accessed 27 April, 1998.

[22]Ms. Margaret Brewster, Public Affairs Training Officer, JRTC, in a letter to the author, dated January 21, 1998.

[23]Major Sonny Reeves, in an interview with the author, January 1998.

[24]*Ibid.*

[25]U.S. Department of the Army. FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training,* (Washington, DC: GPO, September 1990), G-1.

[26]U.S. Department of the Army. Training Circular 25-20, *A Leader's Guide to After Action Reviews* (Washington, DC: GPO. 1993), 1.1-1.2.

[27]See, for example, Harry F. Noyes III, "Like it or not, the Military needs the Media," *Army*, June 1992, 30.

[28]The industry standard for post-production editing is approximately 30 hours per finished video minute. NTC products averaged half that, while new digital video editing

equipment promises to reduce it still further. Nevertheless, it was typical for a media role-player to spend several hours *after* an all-day media training event to produce a two-minute video news story for use in an AAR the following morning. The more experienced the role-player at getting a story, the better organized the editing and production, and thus the quicker the turn-around of higher-quality AAR products. This is another advantage to having dedicated media role players *vs.* part-time help.

[29]This violates a key training principle as set forth in *Field Manual 25-101, Battle Focused Training* (G-3): "Those selected for observer-controllers should not be involved in the training. They should not have other duties which detract from their observation and evaluation of the training,"

[30]MSG David W. Kuhns, NCOIC, 4th ID Public Affairs, in a note to *PA Forum*, 15 October 1996.

[31]U.S. Department of the Army. ARTEP 1-385-MTP, *Mission Training Plan for the Attack Helicopter Battalion*, 1989.

[32]*See Field Manual 46-1, Public Affairs Operations* (1997). Only separate brigades and armored cavalry regiments have an organic public affairs team. Brigades deployed on high profile operations such as current peacekeeping operations in Bosnia may receive a public affairs detachment under their operational control, but that is a peacetime luxury. There would simply not be enough PADs available in wartime for each brigade to have its own PAD, hence the need for tactical units to facilitate media visits without the presence of assigned public affairs support. Under these circumstances, the staff proponent for public affairs, the S-1, plans, prepares, and executes the plan to support a media visit.

[33]Task contained in the *Soldiers Manual of Common Tasks* drive common task training (CTT), which all TO&E units conduct, usually once a quarter so that all *selected* tasks are trained during the course of a year. Tasks to be trained are directed by higher, since inadequate time exists to train on *all* CTT tasks. Still, it seems likely that soldiers would benefit more from training to "participate in a media interview" (not a CTT task) than "react to a nuclear explosion," a task from the current CTT manual.

[34]See generally, Barry J. McLoughlin, E*ncountering the Media* (Pocket Tips Booklet, Washington, DC: McLoughlin Multimedia Publishing, Ltd., 1996).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most Americans are likely to associate the Gulf War with images of smart bombs,

Scud missile strikes as seen by reporters on hotel roofs, and masterful briefings by

Generals Powell and Schwarzkopf. Few, however, would likely know the story of the

Battle of 73 Easting. The heroic stories of the soldiers of VII Corps went largely untold,

chiefly for lack of adequate support to the media. Nevertheless, public support of Desert

Storm was never in serious jeopardy, a fact detractors of media facilitation might think

justifies limited access. Harry F. Noyes III refutes that argument:

> Too many soldiers, taking a superficial glance and drawing the wrong
> conclusions, treat the Gulf War as proof that the way to win a war is to ignore
> public opinion, stonewall the media, and shoot everything in sight...the Gulf War
> proves exactly the opposite....All wars are public opinion-processes, in which
> combat is but one factor....Without public backing, wars fail....We need public
> support to turn combat success into political victory....Articles and letters in
> periodicals imply that most soldiers believe the media were in fact throttled (and
> should have been throttled even more) and think that's why we won....If this
> totally false "lesson learned" is applied in a future war--with cloudier issues,
> shakier public support, and longer, bloodier fighting--we will relive the Vietnam
> public-opinion disaster that lost a war and ruined our forces for a decade.[1]

John Fialka in *Hotel Warriors* (1991) offered many such examples of this

counterproductive attitude towards the media in the Gulf War, an attitude that still

lingers. During a rotation at the NTC in 1995, a noncommissioned officer even drew his

sidearm and pointed it at media role players in an effort to force them to leave the area.

As Noyes said, "If we don't get better control of ourselves, someday an American soldier

may murder a journalist, and we will find out how shallow our public support is."[2]

Many have asserted that the U.S. Army was simply unprepared to handle the large numbers of news media representatives who brought the Gulf War--or parts of it--home to American living rooms in real time. That failure did not affect the outcome of the last war, but as Noyes states, it could very well affect the next. These powerful arguments support robust media on the battlefield training at the combat training centers (CTCs).

Regardless of the progress made at the CTCs, the United States Army remains largely unprepared to adequately facilitate news media representatives during contingency operations. Media on the battlefield training, directed by the Chief of Staff of the Army and implemented in the wake of the Gulf War, was intended to correct this deficiency. While improvements have been realized, tough, realistic media training, especially at the National Training Center (NTC), remains an elusive goal. As a result, the approximately 40,000 soldiers whose units rotate through the NTC annually are shortchanged. What media on the battlefield training events can be conducted more closely resemble home station training than CTC training. Media training, a function of battle command, is simply not provided the same resources, in accordance with the CTC model, that nearly every other battlefield function receives, despite enthusiastic command support.

Providing those resources in an environment of zero growth has been problematic. Indeed, an army of researchers could find deficient resources in any number of unrelated training areas. Further, the commitment to continue to dedicate resources to media on the battlefield training is eroding. The observer-controller position at the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), never documented and now in risk of going unfilled for the first time in five years, testifies to this trend, so, too, does the fading of the 11th PAD's

mission to support media on the battlefield training at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC). Even the NTC, at the peak of media on the battlefield training in 1995, benefited from the services of an additional, dedicated captain whose position, following the officer's departure in 1996, remains vacant. Clearly then, any recommendations offered by this research should represent a *zero sum gain solution.*

In presenting possible solutions, this study will first recommend an ideal organization for media on the battlefield training, recognize the reality of zero growth, and suggest three viable courses of action by which media training may be improved at the NTC. Finally, this study will recommend additional measures that build on the recent success of the Public Affairs Proponent Agency in establishing mission training plan (MTP) tasks, conditions, and standards for public affairs units and integrating media training in common core courses at the schoolhouse. Similar strides can be made in establishing MTP tasks for media facilitation at the unit level. This study will recommend proposed tasks to guide Table of Organization and Equipment brigades and battalions (and their supporting division Public Affairs office) in conducting home station media training. These three tasks will also serve as a guide for OC observations and a point of departure for discussion in after action reviews (AARs).

The Ideal

If media on the battlefield were resourced at the same level as, say, chaplain or staff judge advocate CTC training, then the model that would emerge would include a major (a former division Public Affairs Officer) as full-time observer-controller. He would be assisted by an additional observer-controller in the grade of sergeant first class. These OCs would observe unit performance in media training events that included

professional media role players. Two *very civilian* contractors would from the nucleus of electronic newsgathering (ENG) teams, constituting a dedicated countertraining force that closely resembled the toughest, most skeptical CNN crews. Theses news media representatives (NMR) would be augmented by local journalism students, DOD media pool members undergoing their own CTC training (education being a core process for Public Affairs according to Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations*), and others as the opportunity presented itself. This small-scale effort would nonetheless pay huge dividends in ensuring that media facilitation became as much a part of the CTC experience as coping with civilians on the battlefield, drawing equipment from Army War Reserve stocks during Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration (RSOI) week, or putting steel on target during live-fire. Training "along the entire road to war" would at last be complete, robust, and, as recent deployments to Kuwait and Bosnia have shown, include reporters waiting at the ramp to interview the first U.S. forces to arrive in "Mojavia."[3]

The Reality

Given the ubiquitous post-Cold War resource constraints, media on the battlefield at the NTC must seek to accomplish its mission without additional growth. Besides the obvious and unsatisfactory course of action--that is, no action--there exist three additional courses of action, each of them viable, that promise to greatly improve this high pay-off training. The first would be to restation a Public Affairs Detachment at the NTC specifically to conduct media on the battlefield training. The second option would provide officer distribution plan (ODP) support for the existing, unfilled OC position by withdrawing ODP support from another Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) or

Forces Command (FORSCOM) organization. This option would still require adding an additional employee to the contract, as would the third option, which would transfer media on the battlefield OC responsibility to the existing Adjutant/S-1 trainers. These OCs observe the brigade and battalion S-1s who are the individuals with staff responsibility for public affairs in the absence of any attached public affairs units. S-1 officers prepare, plan, and execute media facilitation at the unit level.

The first option, the restationing of a Public Affairs Detachment (PAD) at the NTC, most closely resembles the ideal model organization cited above. Giving added impetus to this course of action is the Public Affairs Proponent Agency's recent addition of the task to conduct media on the battlefield training to the PAD's draft mission training plan. Where better than to conduct this training than on the most realistic battlefield available in peacetime? Certainly a PAD at the National Training Center would be well suited to the task while assisting in many other arenas, such as media facilitation during perennial Advanced Warfighting Experiments (AWE) and other frequent media events at the Army's showcase training center. Although typically commanded by a captain, his or her relative inexperience would be offset by the experience of the assigned noncommissioned officer. The other three soldiers of this five-soldier detachment could form an electronic newsgathering (ENG) team, constituting the dedicated countertraining force. They would daily practice innumerable soldier common tasks under challenging conditions as they maneuvered about the NTC (albeit as media role players). They would also be performing the same tasks involved in producing a command information product while instead producing news stories for use in after action reviews. This unit could easily become one of the best trained PADs in the

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Army, and could train other Public Affairs units rotating through the NTC as well as share its own lessons learned throughout the Public Affairs community. It is beyond the scope of this study to suggest where such a unit might be found, but any PAD that has lost its wartrace headquarters due to the draw down would be a likely candidate. Taken a step further, the concept of a PAD as the media training cell at all "dirt" CTCs could actually free up some Public Affairs positions for duty elsewhere. If the Commander, 11th PAD, for example, becomes the OC for media on the battlefield at the JRTC, then the current OC position would become redundant, and available to fill the OC position at the NTC, or even to command a PAD forming to support media training at the NTC. Again, since media on the battlefield training is now an MTP task for all public affairs detachments, it seems logical, even compelling, to assign PADs to all three "dirt" CTCs.

The second course of action to improve the resources available for NTC media training is to provide support for the observer-controller position currently authorized but not supported by the ODP and thus still vacant. Whereas FORSCOM would provide any forthcoming PAD support, this issue is one that TRADOC must address. The NTC's Operations Group, like JRTC or BCTP, is a TRADOC organization, even though it operates on a FORSCOM installation. This addition, as well as the aforementioned addition of another media role player to the contract, would provide a credible training capability and, perhaps just as importantly, a full-time advocate for media training at the NTC. Indeed, the NTC's commanding general requested this addition in 1997, a request that TRADOC, while recognizing the need, could not then support. It seems unlikely that TRADOC's situation has improved any, so filling this position remains a difficult task. If the first course of action were to be implemented at the JRTC, this would make a

captain's position available for use elsewhere in the TRADOC account. Alternately, the "bill payer" might be a FORSCOM position, such as the PAO position in a separate brigade. While that may be a legitimate need (and one likely to be defended heartily by the losing unit), the benefit that would accrue to a far larger number of soldiers is significant. Again, an average of approximately 40,000 soldiers rotate through the NTC annually.

Lastly, media on the battlefield is not only important for the capability it fosters, but also for the visibility it affords Public Affairs among the warfighting community. As the Army moves to make information operations an integral part of military operations, the need for Public Affairs play at the combat training centers will increase. Already, brigades deploying to the JRTC are routinely augmented with both Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations teams, but not Public Affairs.[4] The information operations triad is incomplete. Clearly there exists the need to foster among warfighters the appreciation of Public Affairs as a combat multiplier. The National Training Center provides that venue. Those who argue that light forces require information operations training at the JRTC, but heavy forces at the NTC do not, should be given pause by the example of recent deployments. Heavy brigades in operations in Bosnia and deployments to Kuwait were augmented with Public Affairs units under their operational control to meet information operation requirements. It violates Army training doctrine for such units to operate together for the first time only when deployed. The Army must, as FM 25-101 reminds soldiers, "fight as a combined arms and services team."[5]

The final course of action is to assign observer-controller responsibilities to the Adjutant/S-1 trainers, the OCs who monitor unit S-1 officers at the battalion and brigade

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level. This seems a logical alignment of OCs with their counterparts' duties and responsibilities. It is also attractive in that it can be implemented immediately and leverages existing OCs to train unit S-1s. With the addition of one more contractor to the media role player/countertraining force, a credible organization to support MOB would be created. The current MOB proponent in Operations Group, the Chief, Visual Information/Combat Documentation (VI/COMDOC), while retaining staff responsibility for media on the battlefield training, would also assume the additional responsibility to "train the trainers," most likely at a special Observer-Controller Academy class for S-1 trainers/OCs. He or she would also perform duties as the contracting officer representative for the media role players and would schedule support (both role player and combat camera ENG) for media on the battlefield missions. Each S-1 trainer/OC would request media training events through the Chief, VI/COMDOC, to support at least one training event per task force per rotation. This option, while not ideal, requires the smallest addition of new personnel (one contractor) and is the most facile to implement.

Common Tasks, Uncommon Results

Regardless of which option proves more advantageous, the Public Affairs Proponent Agency (PAPA) can immediately take two positive measures to improve a unit's ability to train media facilitation tasks to standard, whether that training is at home station or at a combat training center. PAPA should coordinate with proponents of all brigade and battalion level mission training plans (MTP) to incorporate tasks, conditions, and standards for media facilitation in all future training and evaluation outlines (TEO). The NTC's *OC Handbook* (1995) specifies task, condition, and standards as the first items to be addressed in an after action review.[6] *Training Circular 25-20, A Leader's*

Guide to After Action Reviews, echoes the importance of TEOs to focus both after action reviews and an OC's observations: "Training and evaluation outlines provide tasks, conditions, and standards for the unit's training as well as the bottom line against which leaders can measure unit and soldier performance....a trainer extracts TEOs from the ARTEP mission training plan (AMTP) or, if none exist, develops his own."[7]

It is this *comparison against a known standard* that characterizes CTC after action reviews. It is this *lack* of a known standard for media facilitation tasks that makes difficult both OC observations and a unit's home station preparation for media on the battlefield training. Establishing that task in unit MTPs as well as incorporating it in Field Manual 46-1-1, *Public Affairs Tactics Techniques and Procedures*, would fill a critical gap in doctrine and eliminate inconsistencies between CTC programs. Graphic training aids (GTAs) for media on the battlefield at the NTC and JRTC differ, for example, in advising units on how to handle unaccredited or unescorted media. The JRTC GTA advises "Do not refuse to talk to unescorted media...as long as it does not interfere with the mission, talk with them."[8] The NTC, conversely, requires a unit to first verify the news media representatives' status with higher headquarters, an often lengthy process that may result in a missed opportunity to tell the Army story. If their status cannot be determined, it advises, "respond according to rules of engagement." The Combat Maneuver Training Center provides still different guidance, advising units to notify higher headquarters to "send PAO down to accredit them" (perhaps a realistic request in Bosnia, but not in other environments).[9] Each of these standards has its own advantages and disadvantages. One might prove better than another, depending on the circumstances. It is beyond the scope of this study to advocate any one approach over the

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others. Regardless, one can only imagine the frustration of a young noncommissioned officer in the infantry, having served in Bosnia and later rotated through the JRTC, to discover, during a "heavy-light" rotation at the NTC, that he is subject to yet a third set of standards for media facilitation! Clearly, establishing an MTP task to facilitate the media will ensure consistent training Army-wide.

The task to facilitate media would also include a subtask of "Participate in an Interview." The Public Affairs Proponent Agency (PAPA) has already provided this task, with condition and standard, to the schoolhouse as part of a common core course for the officer basic and advanced courses, among others. PAPA should further seek to incorporate this, along with "Escort a News Media Representative" (NMR) into battalion and brigade MTPs as a sub-task to "Facilitate a Media Visit." Further incorporating these tasks into the *Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks* would facilitate units incorporating them into Common Task Testing (CTT) and would further inculcate these basic skills among soldiers Army-wide. The *Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks* includes the task "React to a Nuclear Hazard," which details the steps a soldier should take in the event of a nuclear explosion. Surely the task to "Participate in an Interview" has greater relevance and should be included as well, as others have pointed out. These three tasks, as outlined in chapter 4 earlier, are shown in figures 3-5.

Joining the Training Revolution

Brigadier General James Dubik, in his recent article "The Army's 2nd Training Revolution," goes on to define *codification* as the "systems approach" in doctrine, in which the tasks, conditions, and standards were codified in soldier skill manuals and mission training plans.

> The U.S. Army's first training revolution occurred during the decade that followed the Vietnam war. It had three main elements: *systemization, codification, and verification*....Systemizing training began with identifying specific tasks for soldiers, leaders, staffs, and units. We then described the standards to which, and the conditions under which, each task had to be performed....Our training became performance-oriented.[10]

Verification, the final element of this first revolution, is, in Dubik's estimation, perhaps the "most important." Verification involved the creation of the three "dirt" CTCs, which provide a "crucible experience" for the unit, identifying strengths and weaknesses and shaping homestation training.[11] "The net effect of the first training revolution, developed in the 1970s and applied in the 1980s, was a quantum leap in proficiency in our Army....Now the Army is moving to the next level of proficiency; a second training revolution is underway. We are applying the structured, repetitive, performance-oriented, experience-based learning methodology that worked so well in the real world to the world of simulations and simulators."[12]

In 1993, with the laudable if tardy integration of media on the battlefield training at the combat training centers, Public Affairs joined the first training revolution, *skipping* codification and jumping into the process of verification. Now, with the publishing of mission training plans for Public Affairs units, a synergy can be achieved by also arming soldiers and leaders at the battalion and brigade level with the codified tasks *they* must execute to facilitate media on the battlefield. It is especially critical that Public Affairs, having joined the first training revolution well into its second decade, move quickly to implement this codification in order to prepare for the second training revolution. Dubik calls the constructive reality of BCTP's computer-generated wargames a "harbinger" of this second revolution. The live simulation of the "dirt" CTCs can be enhanced by both

virtual and constructive simulations. Virtual simulators, such as the Close Combat Tactical Trainer recently tested at Fort Hood, Texas, hone individual, leader, crew, and unit tasks. Trainers at Fort Knox, Kentucky, are leveraging *constructive* simulation similar to the BCTP model to train combined arms staffs at the *battalion* level using a series of computer-generated vignettes: "Constructive reality now offers an alternative [to *augment* field training exercises]. A similar application of performance-oriented, structured training using constructive and virtual simulations is being developed in each combat function."[13]

Media facilitation is a function of command and control, and some key staff tasks involved in its execution should be incorporated into this constructive simulation. Failures to adequately anticipate and accommodate public affairs considerations into tactical plans should have the same type of immediate and significant impact that such failures invite in actual contingencies: "When hostilities begin, tactical field commanders are normally separated from the media's visual presentations, which are usually available at the theater and national levels. Since these images might condition the tempo of the operation, tactical commanders need to be aware of them so they can better anticipate."[14]

The ultimate expression of the second training revolution is perhaps the emerging capability to fight one brigade in live simulation at a CTC, a second at home station in constructive simulation, while a third brigade fights in virtual simulation to round out this unparalleled division-level training experience. Taken still further, this "synthetic theater of war" can train a joint task force (JTF), with the very real potential to support the live simulation of a Joint Information Bureau Exercise (JIBEX). Imagine the training value to

Public Affairs units or even students from the Public Affairs Officer Course (PAOC) in participating in a JIBEX at the headquarters of "JTF Mojave" at the NTC!

While training at the CTCs is generally considered "service specific," integrating it into JTF training via the synthetic theater of war (STOW) would likely be the responsibility of U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM), which began training JTF headquarters in October, 1994. Its Joint Training Analysis and Simulation Center (JTASC) at Suffolk, Virginia, includes the Information Operations Training Center, replete with a state-of-the-art television production facility and news media role players to replicate the "CNN effect." Media training is an integral part of all exercises.[15] CTCs will eventually join this JTF fight, as alluded to by Brigadier General Dubik. The JTASC Information Operations Training Center could then provide scenario-driven media products to the CTCs to further enhance media on the battlefield training. Fostering a symbiotic relationship between the JTASC Information Operations Center and CTC equivalents could allow the resource-constrained CTCs to better facilitate media on the battlefield training.

Army Public Affairs must position itself to leverage the emerging training opportunities offered by the second training revolution by first completing its integration into the first such revolution. Codifying the tasks that units must perform during media on the battlefield training, then providing the resources to conduct that training at the CTCs, is the first requirement. Establishing a vocal proponent for that training, with full-time counterparts at each CTC, will facilitate this progression to a new training paradigm.

A Big Return on a Small Investment

A meager increase in personnel to support media on the battlefield at the National Training Center, painful though it may be, will pay exponential dividends. When the "International News Network" first made its appearance on the NTC's battlefields in January 1995, rotational units were completely untrained. Within six months, a sea change had occurred. Just the rumor of a challenging media training event was enough to encourage units to provide a modicum of training at home station and handle the media in stride as they took care of the real business at hand, fighting the "Krasnovians." Ensuring that media on the battlefield training can be sustained is an obvious imperative.

Similarly, incorporating basic media facilitation tasks and skills into unit mission training plans (MTP) and the *Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks* is a facile method to arm our soldiers with basic techniques to more effectively tell the Army story.

Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (1997), includes public affairs training as a core process: "The underlying principle of Army training is to train in peacetime in a way that replicates expected wartime conditions. Public affairs training includes...media interaction training for non-public affairs soldiers."[16] Combat training centers are where the Army replicates "expected wartime conditions." Expected challenges at the CTCs drive home-station training as much as CTC outcomes. Army Public Affairs simply must better resource CTC media on the battlefield programs in order to accomplish its stated core process of public affairs training. That is the Army's training doctrine and anything less risks an Army that is less than ready to conduct information operations in the Information Age.

Towards Achieving Excellence

The Center for Media on the Battlefield, established in 1994 at the Combined Arms Center (CAC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, had two stated goals: providing lessons learned for the public affairs force, and educating Army leaders in the commander's responsibility for public affairs and its integral role in operations.[17] Public affairs professionals continue to instruct leaders at a number of professional military education courses, including the Combined Arms Services Staff School for captains, the Command and General Staff Officer Course for majors, and battalion and brigade precommand courses for lieutenant colonels and colonels, respectively. While the work of the Media on the Battlefield Center continues, the center itself has ceased to exist, another laudable idea for which there were insufficient resources. In fact, the Media on the Battlefield Center was in reality a *concept* supported by the existing public affairs infrastructure at Fort Leavenworth. That infrastructure continues to experience downward pressure, having recently cut staff. Still, the idea of establishing a Media on the Battlefield Center is an attractive one from the standpoint of having a central clearing house for media facilitation issues. Nevertheless, fewer resources would make such an initiative even less viable today than it was four years ago were it not for advances in internet technology. A virtual Media on the Battlefield Center, in the form of a homepage, might have real merit. Each combat training center would have its own page as part of this Media on the Battlefield homepage. Once the page is built (presumably leveraging expertise from existing organizations such as BCTP or CGSC), human resources would be required only for periodic updates on a quarterly basis. These updates could be reviewed by senior public affairs officers to ensure standardization. Units preparing for deployments or

combat training center rotations could access this homepage for the latest emerging doctrine in media facilitation in a combat environment. It is an idea worth exploring.

Another perennial initiative, never acted upon for lack of resources, is the concept of a public affairs mobile training team (MTT) not unlike the BCTP teams that deploy in support of division and corps Warfighter exercises. Certainly a team patterned after the CTC model is an attractive concept. Standardization would be optimal, and savings in terms of manpower might be realized, albeit at the added expense of travel. Synchronization with the Operations Groups of the "dirt" CTCs would likely suffer, as would the number of training events if only one such team could be deployed. At the NTC, for example, providing a media training event per battalion-sized unit translates to six or seven events per rotation, most within a fourteen-day period. Synchronizing such a busy schedule with other CTCs to provide a similar number of training events would be difficult at best. It is likely that only one mobile team would not suffice, and manning two would likely sacrifice any personnel savings to be gained from the CTCs. Still, if current resource constraints abate (however unlikely that may be), serious thought should be given to fielding one MTT to *augment* the lean programs at the CTCs.

Augmenting CTC programs with a mobile training team would likely result in tougher, more realistic training events, made better by inherent standardization. Further, such a team would form a natural organization to facilitate the participation of *actual* civilian news media representatives in CTC training. The value of this initiative would be inestimable.

Regardless of which organization facilitates it, actual civilian media representatives should participate in combat training center rotations. The JRTC has

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experimented with such training in the past, prompting this response from reporter Kirk Spitzer of Gannett News Service: "Journalists need training for how to conduct themselves on the battlefield....There is nothing like it. The Army trains for it all the time....We [reporters] don't have time to train to cover wars. So when the real war happens, boom, it is brand new....It would be extremely valuable to have some type of formal introductory training for reporters, even if it was being sent out to the NTC or JRTC for three days of battle scenarios."[18]

What value would accrue to the Army by implementing such training? Clearly, more thoughtful and accurate reporting would likely result. Further, journalists better trained on the ways of the battlefield might be less likely to either interfere with an operation or require inordinate support from the military. It would seem to be a mutually beneficial initiative, one that remains unimplemented at the National Training Center, chiefly for lack of a full-time observer-controller. Making this training mandatory for those members of the press who, in times of crisis, form the DOD Press Pool, seems a logical requirement and one that could give impetus to this interesting initiative.

Lastly, media on the battlefield training should be routinely included on the agenda of the annual Worldwide Public Affairs Conference to ensure visibility. This training, important though it is to the Army, can be easily overlooked, as it does not benefit from the advocacy of any one strong proponent. Regardless, designating such a proponent is imperative. The Combined Arms Center, with its close links to three of the four combat training centers, seems the best choice.

Continuing the Quest: Further Research

During the course of this research, a number of issues emerged that are beyond the scope of and time allotted to this project. Although only a very small increase in personnel would make media on the battlefield a world class training comparable to other CTC training, severe personnel resource constraints present an insurmountable obstacle. To recommended such would have consigned this study to oblivion. This begs another question: Is the public affairs force structure adequate to support emerging information operations doctrine? A number of facts surfaced in this research that suggest there may exist a dichotomy between organization and doctrine, not unlike the doctrinal shortfall exemplified by the lack of MTP tasks for tactical units. Certainly there exists ample fodder for further research in this area.

Similarly, a number of questions emerged over the future of media facilitation in combat. What effect will emerging information technologies have on media on the battlefield? The concept of correspondents using their own portable satellite communications raises a number of issues. The military's burden to assist with the filing of stories would be lessened, but so to would the ability to control the electronic emissions that could betray unit positions to the enemy. Clearly, the presence of so-called "unilaterals" will challenge media facilitators as never before. Further study in this arena is essential to the evolution of the Army's public affairs doctrine.

Summary

How does the NTC organize for MOB training and how does this organization compare to other CTCs and the CTC model? Further, by what standards does this organization measure a rotational unit's ability to facilitate the media? To answer these

questions, this study has compared the National Training Center's media on the battlefield program to that of other combat training centers and to the CTC model. In so doing, this research has discovered resource shortfalls, chiefly the lack of a full-time observer-controller and robust media role player countertraining force. At the same time, this study has recommended three viable solutions to correct these deficiencies despite the constraints of a zero-growth environment. Further, this study has traced the development of media on the battlefield training from its integration into CTC training in 1993 to the present, showing how each combat training center developed different organizations to support the training. Of these, only the National Training Center is so critically under-resourced that continuous sustainment of quality training is problematic. Nevertheless, the NTC is the only CTC that routinely produces complete video news stories in support of after action reviews, while other CTCs use both video outtakes and print products.

Perhaps the greatest value of this research is the discovery that no tasks, conditions, or standards exist to measure a unit's ability to facilitate the media under combat conditions. The study then compiles the best of the various CTC standards to produce a recommended model for inclusion into mission training plans for no-Public Affairs units at the battalion and brigade level. To develop this model, the research first documented the different standards employed by the combat training centers in administering their media training programs. While they share many common standards, a few contradictions were discovered. More importantly, each CTC can benefit by including standards overlooked, but incorporated by another CTC. The model tasks produced provide a complete set of known standards against which training can be

measured, both to guide OC observations and facilitate discussion in after action reviews. Further, these tasks can easily serve as a model for inclusion into unit tactical standard operating procedures (TACSOP). Providing our Army with common, doctrinally-based guidance for media facilitation is potentially of great benefit.

Public affairs is unique in that unit or even individual actions at the tactical level of war can have strategic implications, something to which doctrine attests: "Media coverage can be pivotal to the success of the operation and achieving national strategic goals....Soldier actions can induce public reactions, which in turn cause NCA reactions that impact operations without ever engaging U.S. forces....Adversaries can also attack the public opinion center of gravity and affect operations."[19] Media on the battlefield training that is challenging, doctrinally correct, and consistent is an imperative ignored only at great risk. This study has recommended a modicum of small, realistic improvements that can readily produce outstanding results in improving units' ability to tell the Army story, especially under combat conditions.

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[1]Harry F. Noyes III, "Like it or not, the Military needs the Media," *Army,* June 1992, 30-38.

[2]Ibid.

[3]National Training Center, "Command Brief" (Fort Irwin, CA, accessed 25 March 1997) available from http://www.irwin.army.mil/command/default.htm, accessed 25 March 1998.

[4]Captain Christopher C. Garver, letter to the author, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, dated 5 February 1998.

[5]U.S. Department of the Army, FM 25-100, *Training the Force* (Washington, DC: GPO, November 1988), 1.4.

[6]Operations Group, National Training Center, *Observer-Controller Handbook* (Fort Irwin, CA: Operations Group, National Training Center, August 1995).

[7]FM 25-100, 4.4.

[8]Public Affair Office, Joint Readiness Training Center, "Dealing with the Media during Military Operations" (Fort Polk, LA: PAO, Joint Readiness Training Center, 1997).

[9]Combat Maneuver Training Center Program of Instruction (POI), "Media Awareness," undated, Hohenfels, Germany.

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[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]U.S. Department of the Army. *Operations*. FM 100-5 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1993), 3.7.

[15]Ken Kerschbaumer, "Video Brings New Realism to JTASC Exercises," *Government Video* (New York) 9, no. 2 (20 January 1998): 18-20.

[16]U.S. Department of the Army, FM 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1997), 25-26.

[17]Colonel John W. Reitz, "Media on the Battlefield Center of Gravity Encircles Leavenworth," *Public Affairs Update* (Washington, DC) 2, no. 3 (May-June 1994),23.

[18]Patrick Swan, "How do Reporters View MOB?" *Public Affairs Update* (Washington, DC) 3, no. 3 (May-June 1995): 21.

[19]U.S. Department of the Army, FM 100-6, *Information Operations* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1996), 3.14.

GLOSSARY

AAR After action review. A method of providing feedback to units by involving participants in the training diagnostic process in order to increase and reinforce learning. The AAR leader guides participants in identifying deficiencies and seeking solutions. (FM 25-101)

AWE Advanced Warfighting Experiment

BCTP Battle Command Training Program

CAC Combined Arms Center

CMTC Combat Maneuver Training Center

COMDOC combat documentation

Countertraining force. The opposing force (OPFOR) for maneuver training; for the purposes of this thesis, the dedicated media role players who interact with units in training to provide a challenging, realistic portrayal of the press.

CTC Combat Training Center. An Army program established to provide realistic joint service and combined arms training in accordance with Army doctrine. It is designed to provide training units opportunities to increase collective proficiency on the most realistic battlefield available during peacetime. The four components of the CTC Program are: (1) National Training Center, (2) Combat Maneuver Training Center, (3) Joint Readiness Training Center, (4) Battle Command Training Program. (FM 25-101)

DINFOS Defense Information School

ENG electronic news gathering

FORSCOM U.S. Army Forces Command

GTA graphic training aid

JIB joint information bureau

JIBEX joint information bureau exercise

JRTC Joint Readiness Training Center

Media facilitation. "The range of activities such as providing access and interviews that assist news media representatives covering military operations" (FM46-1).

MOB media on the battlefield

MPAD mobile public affairs detachment

NTC National Training Center

OC Observer-controller. An individual tasked to evaluate training, and provide
administrative control and constructive feedback to participants (FM 25-101).

OCPA Office of the Chief, Public Affairs

ODP officer distribution plan

PA public affairs

PAD public affairs detachment

PAO public affairs officer

PAPA Public Affairs Proponent Agency

PAT public affairs team

Scenario-based training. Training that reflects real-world contingencies; realism based
on the likelihood of having to conduct a similar operation on short notice,
worldwide.

STX situational training exercise

TDA table of distribution and allowances

TRADOC U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

TTP tactics, techniques, and procedures

USACOM U.S. Atlantic Command

USAREUR U. S. Army Europe

VI visual information

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

Mission. Training the following to facilitate the media:	**Always** 1	2	**Sometimes** 3	4	**Never** 5
Individuals	O	O	O	O	O
Leaders	O	O	O	O	O
Units	O	O	O	O	O
Platoons	O	O	O	O	O
Company Teams	O	O	O	O	O
Battalion Task Forces	O	O	O	O	O
Brigade Combat Teams	O	O	O	O	O
Public Affairs Detachments	O	O	O	O	O
Reserve Component MPADs	O	O	O	O	O
Other (specify): _____	O	O	O	O	O
Organization: Our organization to conduct MOB includes:					
Full-time observer-controllers (OCs)	O	O	O	O	O
Part-time observer controllers (e.g., additional duty Reserve Component AT; or player OC augmentation)	O	O	O	O	O
Dedicated counter-training force (media role players)	O	O	O	O	O
Ad hoc counter-training force (*e.g.* RC MPADs)	O	O	O	O	O
After action reviews (AARs):	O	O	O	O	O
-Informal, on-the-spot AARs	O	O	O	O	O
- Individual	O	O	O	O	O
- Platoon	O	O	O	O	O
- Company Team	O	O	O	O	O
- Battalion Task Force	O	O	O	O	O
- Brigade Combat Team	O	O	O	O	O
- PAD/MPAD	O	O	O	O	O
-Formal, multimedia AARs	O	O	O	O	O
- Platoon	O	O	O	O	O
- Company Team	O	O	O	O	O
- Battalion Task Force	O	O	O	O	O
- Brigade Combat Team	O	O	O	O	O
- PAD/MPAD	O	O	O	O	O
-Written products	O	O	O	O	O
-Video products	O	O	O	O	O

| | Always | | Sometimes | | Never |
	1	2	3	4	5
Completed news stories are part of the AAR:					
-Print	O	O	O	O	O
-Video	O	O	O	O	O

Installation proponent for MOB training is:

a. Post PAO

b. Operations Group PAO

c. Other:_____

Observer-Controller (OC) Qualifications:

	Always		Sometimes		Never
	1	2	3	4	5
Full-time OC	O	O	O	O	O
OC as an additional duty	O	O	O	O	O
DINFOS-trained	O	O	O	O	O
Prior PAO experience	O	O	O	O	O
TDA supported	O	O	O	O	O
ODP supported	O	O	O	O	O
-Field Grade Officer (04)	O	O	O	O	O
-Company Grade Officer (03)	O	O	O	O	O
-NCO (specify grade) _____	O	O	O	O	O
-Other (specify) _____	O	O	O	O	O
24 month assignment	O	O	O	O	O
Also employed as a NMR role-player	O	O	O	O	O
Simultaneously an OC and NMR role-player	O	O	O	O	O
Number of OCs _____	O	O	O	O	O

News Media Representative (NMR) role-players

	Always		Sometimes		Never
	1	2	3	4	5
Full-time	O	O	O	O	O
Trained as journalists	O	O	O	O	O
Electronic	O	O	O	O	O
Print	O	O	O	O	O
Organic PAO soldiers (post PAO/Ops Group)	O	O	O	O	O
Reserve Component MPADs on AT	O	O	O	O	O
Government Service employees	O	O	O	O	O
Contractors	O	O	O	O	O
Real world NMR participate as role-players	O	O	O	O	O

Is the training scenario-based
(e.g. Krasnovia invades Mojavia)?

____Yes

____No

____Mixed with "real-world" questions

NMR role-players portray a media that is:

	Always		Sometimes		Never
	1	2	3	4	5
____friendly	O	O	O	O	O
____neutral	O	O	O	O	O
____hostile	O	O	O	O	O
____situation dependant	O	O	O	O	O

Real world NMRs receive training

In evaluating unit performance of media facilitation, the following criteria are used:	Always 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Never 5
Escorted	O	O	O	O	O
Credentialed	O	O	O	O	O
Imbedded	O	O	O	O	O
Interviews granted	O	O	O	O	O
Plan includes:					
-Itinerary	O	O	O	O	O
-Meets media needs (photos/video b-roll, etc.)	O	O	O	O	O
-Timely method to transmit/transport media products	O	O	O	O	O
-Assistance to NMR in filing stories	O	O	O	O	O
Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) integrated	O	O	O	O	O
Anticipated Qs & As considered	O	O	O	O	O
Command messages disseminated	O	O	O	O	O
Command messages integrated	O	O	O	O	O
Interviewees prepared	O	O	O	O	O
- interview tips	O	O	O	O	O
- rights	O	O	O	O	O
NMRs treated in a positive manner	O	O	O	O	O
NMRs safeguarded	O	O	O	O	O
NMR logistic support provided	O	O	O	O	O
OPSEC safeguarded	O	O	O	O	O
Appropriate responses (e.g. not speculative, stays in lane, does not discuss unit strength, numbers of casualties, ROE, classified info, etc)	O	O	O	O	O

Other (specify) _____

How can media on the battlefield training be improved, standardized, or better coordinated?

Please add any other comments:

APPENDIX B

MEDIA ON THE BATTLEFIELD GRAPHIC TRAINING AIDS

JRTC Reference Guide: Dealing with the Media During Military Operations

JRTC Reference Guide: Media Facilitation and media Escort Operations

NTC Reference Guide: Guidelines for Dealing with Media on the Battlefield

COMMAND MESSAGE MATRIX

Generic Command Messages

JRTC REFERENCE GUIDE

AIRBORNE

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA DURING MILITARY OPERATIONS

Provided by JRTC & Fort Polk PAO

▲ I — Plan to deal with the media

The media will be present during military operations.

Plan for all types of media contact: from scheduled, escorted, credentialed media to nonscheduled, unescorted, noncredentialed media. Determine a plan and proper COAs for each situation.

Plans include:

1. An agenda that includes interview with leaders and soldiers and provides photo/video opportunities.

2. Assignment of internal unit media representatives (not the PAO).

3. Wargamed questions based on the current news and unit past situations. Responses tied to a command message theme based on the realities of the unit's operation. PA guidance and message themes are shared with all soldiers.

4. Treatment of the media: logistical, transportation and medical needs; protection if unit is attacked while media is present.

Let leaders and soldiers talk. Follow guidelines and published PA guidance. Trust the soldiers to tell the unit story and the American public to listen.

▲ V — Interview Don'ts

1. Do not schedule or participate in an interview or an event if it will interfere with your mission. However, do not use the unit mission or being "too busy" as a "smokescreen" to avoid the media or interview.

2. Do not attempt to cover negative events with a cloak of security. However, do talk about matters over which you have direct responsibility or personal knowledge and discuss only obvious facts and events. Refer requests for details about serious incidents, accidents, investigations or other such situations to your higher headquarters or PAO representative.

3. Everything is "on the record." Never answer "off the record" questions. Say, "I can tell you off the record; however, I can tell you..." Watch out for the "turned off" recorder being "on."

4. Never lie. Always be careful of personal opinions, which may be viewed as representing the unit or U.S. Army.

5. Do not discuss exact numbers or troop strengths. Use terms like "approximate," "light," "heavy" or "moderate." You can give generalized details about obvious unit capabilities, but not specific details, procedures or ROE.

6. Do not discuss political or foreign policy matters. Don't be caught speaking for the President or State Department. Stay in your lane and talk about things within your specific area.

7. Do not provide the enemy with propaganda material by grumbling and thoughtlessly complaining. Remember the enemy watches CNN, too. Don't say or do anything you wouldn't want your friends or family to know, hear or see. Remember your key messages.

8. Watch out for characterizations of "terrorism." Higher headquarters and the State Department usually address suspected acts of terrorism. If your unit is involved in and is asked about an incident, stick to the facts and obvious events. You may be able to describe such incidents as criminal or belligerent.

9. Don't get trapped. If a reporter tells you he got information from corps or higher headquarters, refer him back to those sources for more details. Use common sense.

▲ VI — Helpful Hints

1. If you can't talk about something, tell the media why. Under investigation, OpSec, endanger lives, not my lane or I don't know. Then tell them what you want them to know, i.e., the mission was successful and we saved lives and helped a lot of people.

2. Be careful of statements of absolute nature, i.e., "We do not have a sexual harassment problem in my unit" or "All my soldiers have high morale." Only be absolute if you're absolutely positive. A better approach may be: "Morale is high overall, but everyone has high points and low points. The chaplain and first sergeant help monitor the situation...."

3. Generally, try to field the questions from the media and bridge to your message. It may sound silly to say the same thing three or four different ways, but it is how you get what is important out to the public. Update messages to the realities of your unit situation and current events.

4. Know what you can say and show to the media as well as the things you cannot discuss or show.

▲ II — Things to Know/Do

1. Remember, the media is a powerful communications device that you can use to tell the unit/Army story and support the overall information strategy. Treat it as such. All soldiers and leaders are potential ambassadors/spokespersons for your country and unit.

2. It's a leader's responsibility to present his/her unit to the media, and subsequently to the public, within the established guidelines. Soldiers do have the right not to talk; however, those who refuse to speak may send a powerful message that the unit is hiding something or the operation is going badly. This is especially true if leaders refuse to talk.

3. Media are influential members of the public. They are not the enemy and they're not trying to steal secrets. They are after a story. So, tell your story. Try to facilitate the event or even ask what can be done to help. This helps you guide the media to unclassified areas and events of your unit and gives you a better chance to select the best areas and soldiers to be seen and heard. Don't forget to help with photo/video needs too.

4. Secure classified or sensitive information and/or equipment at the source. Put it away or cover it up while the media is in the area. If it can be seen from the road or from across a field or if multitudes of civilians can see it, it's probably not a secret.

5. If you accidentally say or show something classified, remain calm and explain the situation to the reporter. Politely ask them not to use it. Report the incident to higher immediately. Let higher give you guidance. Never detain or confiscate any material or equipment from bona fide media. You will make matters worse.

6. Do not refuse to talk to unescorted media. During early stages of an operation, media are likely to be uncredentialed/ unescorted. In this case, be courteous and as long as it does not interfere with the

▲ III — Prepare for the media

1. Never go into a situation blind. Ask PAO for help. Ask for help wargaming issues, questions and response themes with relevant command messages. Ask the PAO about what types of media to expect and what the the unit operation has to larger issues in the national and international community. Train at home station.

2. Read and disseminate published guidance and how it applies to each level of command. Have a standardized SOP. Train soldiers on a variety of media situations and the proper COA to take. Notify security elements of possible media contacts. Rehearse plan. Rehearse messages prior to interviews.

3. Before interviews, think of the key messages your unit commander wants to convey. Try to generally answer the reporter's question and bridge into your message. Do this at every opportunity without sounding like a broken record.

▲ IV — Interview Do's

1. Be polite but firm. Before starting the interview, introduce yourself and tell the reporter how you would like to be addressed. Ask the reporters their names and try to break the ice. Use first names instead of "Sir" or "Ma'am." This helps you to view each other as equals instead of appearing subordinate or patronizing. Tell them you have about 10 minutes to talk before you have to go. Try to be conversational.

2. Respond to hard questions with "bad" news as willingly as you do to the "good" news questions. This will establish credibility and rapport with the reporter and help the media see your side of the issue. It can also help with future reporting about your unit.

3. Take your time and think before answering questions. Formulate your answer, then speak. If the interview is taped rather than a live broadcast, and you stumble on your words, stop and collect your thoughts and then ask to respond to the question again.

4. Be brief/concise. A good rule of thumb is 15- to 30-second responses. Use simple language and avoid military terms, jargon and acronyms. Remember, your message is going to the American public or to the world. You want them to understand your message.

5. Ignore the camera and talk to the interviewer.

6. Answer only one question at a time. Let all reporters have a chance to ask a question.

7. Remain in control of the interview even if the questions seem aggressive or silly. Reasoned responses will help you stay in control of the interview. Maintain a professional attitude.

8. Always think OpSec and protect classified information (see Things to Do / Know # 5). Anything you say could get into enemy hands.

9. STAY IN YOUR LANE or area of responsibility. If you don't know,

JRTC REFERENCE GUIDE

MEDIA FACILITATION AND MEDIA ESCORT OPERATIONS

PROVIDED BY THE JRTC AND FORT POLK PAO
9 DECEMBER 97

PURPOSE: The purpose of this training aid is to assist units with no dedicated public affairs assets in planning and conducting media facilitation and media escort operations. This training aid will also assist personnel with no public affairs experience who are assigned as media escorts in planning and conducting media escort operations.

REFERENCES: FM 100-6, FM 46-1

MEDIA ESCORT OPERATIONS (RESPONSIBILITIES)

-- As a media escort, you are the liaison between your command and the media.

-- You are a guide to, and interpreter of, the events your unit is conducting. Assist the media in obtaining their story and understanding what they see.

-- You are not responsible for the physical safety of the media. You should assist them as you would any other United States civilian in a combat environment. Instruct them and assist them in making combat-smart decisions.

-- You are to ensure the media does not violate standing force protection measures, such as noise and light discipline.

-- You are to assist the media with arranging logistical support as outlined to you by Public Affairs and your command.

-- You are to ensure the media abides by the ground rules (provided by Public Affairs) that they agreed to abide. Refer violations to Public Affairs.

MEDIA ESCORT OPERATIONS (PLANNING AND CONDUCTING)

I. Receive the mission from Public Affairs: name and news organization of reporter; purpose and length of visit; draft itinerary; logistical support plan; ground rules.

II. Assist the media in preparation to move: conduct TLP with media before movement; instructions in event of enemy contact.

III. Move media to the unit: expedite movement; listen to reporters to pick up possible storylines or questions they may ask.

IV. Brief the interviewee: away from the media initially; review ground rules; set time limit; all things are "on the record"; OPSEC concerns; don't speculate; stay in your lane; attempt to bridge to your message; anything the media talked about on the way.

V. Monitor the interview: timekeeper; listen for OPSEC violations or inaccuracies; help reporter understand anything confusing; record any follow-on commitments of support by the interviewee.

VI. Assist media in filing products as necessary.

VII. After Action Review with Public Affairs upon return: impression of interview; lines of questions; ground rules violations; attitudes of reporters; additional requests for information; logistical issues.

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SAMPLE COMMAND MESSAGE MATRIX

If the reporter asks about:	Formulate your answer with:
Casualties	1. Condolence to families 2. Classify as light/med/hvy 3. Best combat medical care
Fratricide	1. Condolence to families 2. Incident under investigation
Rules of Engagement	1. Can't discuss specifics -- give advantage to enemy 2. Trained to protect selves
Current or Future Operations	1. Can't discuss specifics -- give info to enemy 2. Trained for any mission
Collateral Damage	1. Sympathy to civilians 2. Trained on minimizing
Enemy Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction	1. Trained to protect selves 2. Condemn enemy for use

ADDING UNIT SPECIFICS

Develop specific questions regarding your unit, your mission and recent local events; then develop appropriate responses that tie back to your messages

---

MEDIA FACILITATION CHECKLIST

I. PLANNING AND WARGAMING
A. Determine Commander's Intent for the Interview; develop themes (your agenda)
B. Research reporters coming to your unit
C. Determine "what's the news" in your area
D. Wargame possible questions and develop appropriate responses; develop Command Message Matrix
E. Identify media support requirements
F. Develop a proposed itinerary

II. GREETING THE MEDIA
A. Be friendly and time-conscious
B. Coordinate itinerary with reporter
C. Explain rules, safety and security concerns

III. CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS
A. Monitor the interviews for time limits, OPSEC violations, confusion, inaccuracies
B. Position interview to avoid OPSEC violation
C. Review interview TTPs with interviewee

IV. REPORTING THE RESULTS
A. Report to higher: lines of questions, attitudes of reporter, OPSEC violations, slant to the story, overall impression
B. Share info with other units in SITREPs

MEDIA ACCREDITATION

Both badges are samples. DoD may issue operation-specific credentials; current Public Affairs Guidance will define the exact badges used.

Department of Defense	
(Reporter's Name) (News Organization)	CREDENTIALED NEWS MEDIA
PHOTO	
Note: The bearer of this card has been credentialed to cover U.S. military operations	

MEDIA BADGE
This sample badge indicates the reporter is credentialed to cover military operations. The current Public Affairs Guidance will contain instructions for dealing with uncredentialed media. Credentialing usually consists of verifying a reporter's employment with a news agency, agreement to the military's ground rules, and any required reimbursements to the U.S. Government for support.

Department of Defense	
PUBLIC AFFAIRS	
(Escort's Name & Rank) (Military Organization)	OFFICIAL DoD MEDIA ESCORT
PHOTO	

ESCORT BADGE
This sample badge identifies a Department of Defense-accredited escort. The escort may be military or civilian, in uniform or out. Additionally, the escort may or may not be a public affairs-trained individual. Escorts may provide valuable information about the media or their story. Escorts may also require logistical support, such as transportation or meals, from your unit.

Battlefield Media Encounter Flow Chart

Group Encountered Appear to be Media, are Unarmed, and Pose no Immediate Threat to Unit or Missions

— NO → **Respond According to SOP or Rules of Engagement**

— YES → **Media are Escorted and Credentialed**

— NO → (to Chain of Command box)

— YES → **Granting Interviews or Answering Qs Will Hurt Mission**

— YES → **Explain to Media and Decline Interviews Continue Mission**

— NO → **Brief Soldiers and Allow them Opportunity to Speak to Press and Express Opinions**

→ **Monitor for OPSEC Violations But do not Interfere with Free Info Exchange Otherwise**

**1. Notify Chain of Command for Instructions
2. Treat Media with Courtesy and Respect
3. Safeguard or Offer Them Escorts to Safe Area (If Mission Permits)
4. Safeguard OPSEC Sensitive Info and Equipment**

→ **Can Higher Headquarters Verify Press Status**

— YES → (to step 1 box)

— NO → **Respond According to SOP or Rules of Engagement**

**Always Remember:

Information Cannot be Withheld Solely Because it is Negative or Embarrassing.

With Modern Communications, Anything You Say or Provide to the Media May be Seen by Your Loved Ones or the Enemy Within Minutes, or at the Most Hours.

Everything You Say to a Reporter, or in Their Presence is *"For the Record"*

NTC Reference Guide

NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER
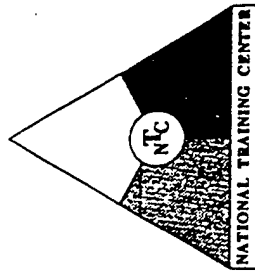
Guidelines for Dealing with Media on the Battlefield

This Card Provided by the NTC Public Affairs Office

A0712 93 176-001

Guidance Extracted From Applicable DoD and DA Policy:

"Commanders Will Ensure Maximum Unrestricted Disclosures of Unclassified Information to News Media Representatives Consistent with Operational Security, Guidance from Higher Headquarters, and the Privacy of the Individuals Concerned. . ."

Questions to Make You A Winner!

Is The Media Escorted? If Not, Ask the Reporter to Accompany You to the Command Post or Senior NCO or Officer and *Contact Higher Headquarters.*

If You Don't Escort Them, They May Not Go There and Simply Wander Off to Interview Someone Else.

If the Reporter Has a Media Escort from Your PAO, You May Agree to an Interview. After the Escort Has Explained Some Basic Ground Rules to You.

What Do I Talk About? Discuss Only Those Things Over Which You Have Direct Responsibility or Personal Knowledge.

Do Not Discuss:
-- Political or Foreign Policy Matters.
-- Specific Operational Capabilities or Future Plans Which Could be of Use to a Potential Enemy. (Think OPSEC)
-- Classified Information.

Do Not:
-- Allow Media to Videotape Recognizable Landmarks Nearby, Sensitive Equipment or Inside TOC's.
-- Answer Speculative Questions or Give Opinions On Real or Hypothetical ("What If") Situations.
• Use the Expression "No Comment." Say Instead, "We do Not Comment on Future Operations." "That Information is Classified." "I'm Not Qualified to Talk About That."
• Lie to the News Media.
• Make "Off the Record" Comments. Consider Every Thing You Say to a Reporter, or In Their Presence, "On The Record."
  ► Get Angry. If You do, You Come Off Looking Bad, and so Does the Army.

When Can I Allow An Interview?
-- Do Allow Interviews with Individual Soldiers Provided That:
• The Soldier Has no Objection.
• He/She is Familiar with the Area to be Discussed and These Guidelines.
• An Escort is Present.

How Can I Best Tell the Army Story?
- Relax... Be Yourself. Imagine the Reporter is a Close Friend, and Talk as if You Were Talking to Him/Her.
- If Cameras Are Present, Ignore Them and Talk Directly to the Reporter.
- Be Brief and Concise. Remember a TV News Story Will Use Only a 10 to 15 Second Answer.
- If You Need Time to Respond, Ask the Reporter to Restate the Question. Not For Every Question, But Sometimes It's O.K.
- Use Simple Language, Not Military Jargon. If You Must Use Jargon, Explain What It is... Your Spouse Doesn't Always Understand You When You Talk Military.
- Use Appropriate Posture and Gestures Don't Stand at the Position of Parade Rest... That Makes You Stiff. Again, Relax and be Yourself.
- Answer Only One Question at a Time. If You Are Asked Multiple Questions, Answer the Most Important or the One That You Are Most Comfortable with.
- Remove Sunglasses if You Are Being Photographed. Audiences Can't See Your Eyes - You Look Devious.

And Finally, Always Make a Positive Point. This is Your Opportunity to Tell the Army Story, and What a Good Story it is.

COMMAND MESSAGE MATRIX

ARBORNE

Provided by the JRTC & Fort Polk PAO

▲ SAFETY

- safety is a top priority with us ...
- people are our most important asset and their safety is one of our primary concerns ...
- we are proud of our safety record and continually strive to improve it ...

▲ HUMANITARIAN MISSIONS

- we are proud to be participating in this mission to save lives ...
- we are here because they need our help ...
- this exemplifies our ability to perform any mission anywhere in the world ...

▲ COOPERATION

- cooperation between military and civilian _____ reduced any further damage ...
- the teamwork we saw was vital to our success ...
- this is one more example of the base and town working together for the good of the community...

▲ ENVIRONMENT

- we are committed to protecting the environment ...
- we've dedicated people and resources to restoring areas damaged in the past ...
- we've identified ways to protect our environment, making it safer for our children and their future ...
- we're working hard to do our part in cleaning up America ...

▲ CONDOLENCES

- we extend our deepest sympathies to the _____ family ...
- we've lost a valuable member of the team and s/he will be sorely missed ...
- a loss such as this is not only felt by the post but by the whole community ...
- a tragedy like this is felt by each of us ...
- we'll do everything thing we can to support the family in this tragedy ...

▲ PEOPLE

- people are responsible for the success of our mission...
- the _____ has some of the best and most highly trained people in the world...
- people are our most important asset...
- there is no substitute for excellence in caring for people...

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▲ INVESTIGATION

● the incident/accident is under investigation...

● we will conduct a thorough investigation in an effort to preclude this from ever happening again...

● would require me to speculate, which might hinder the investigation...

● requires me to speculate, which might be unfair to the judicial process and the people under investigation...

▲ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

● we provide equal opportunity to each member of the _____...

● we are committed to practicing and promoting equal opportunity for every member of the _____...

● the _____ reflects the diversity of America, but we are all on the same team ...

● equal opportunity allows everyone to participate while serving their country ...

▲ JUSTICE

● we set high standards and won't tolerate anything less...

● ensure that everyone involved receives fair and just treatment...

● ensure that he/she receives the judicial process guaranteed by the constitution...

▲ SEXUAL HARASSMENT

● we do not tolerate sexual harassment, period...

● the _____ does not tolerate sexual harassment in any way, shape or form...

● sexual harassment has no place in today's _____...

▲ BASE CLOSURE

● we have had a long and prosperous relationship with this community...

● we want to ensure a smooth transition as we close this chapter of our history...

● _____ will continue to be an active part of the community until the last person leaves ...

● we are committed to minimizing the effects of rightsizing ...

▲ TAX DOLLARS

● our recycling program saved $ _____ last year ...

● strive to be good stewards of your tax dollars...

● we won't tolerate waste, fraud or abuse...

▲ TRAINING

● we train every day, in everything we do ... .

● we train like we will fight ...

● our training ensures we are ready to fight anywhere, any time...

● our training is tough and realistic, encouraging the most out of our _____ ...

▲ COMMUNITY RELATIONS

● we are proud to be part of the community ...

● we do our best to be good neighbors and we think it shows ...

● our families go to school here, play sports here and live here just like you ...

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