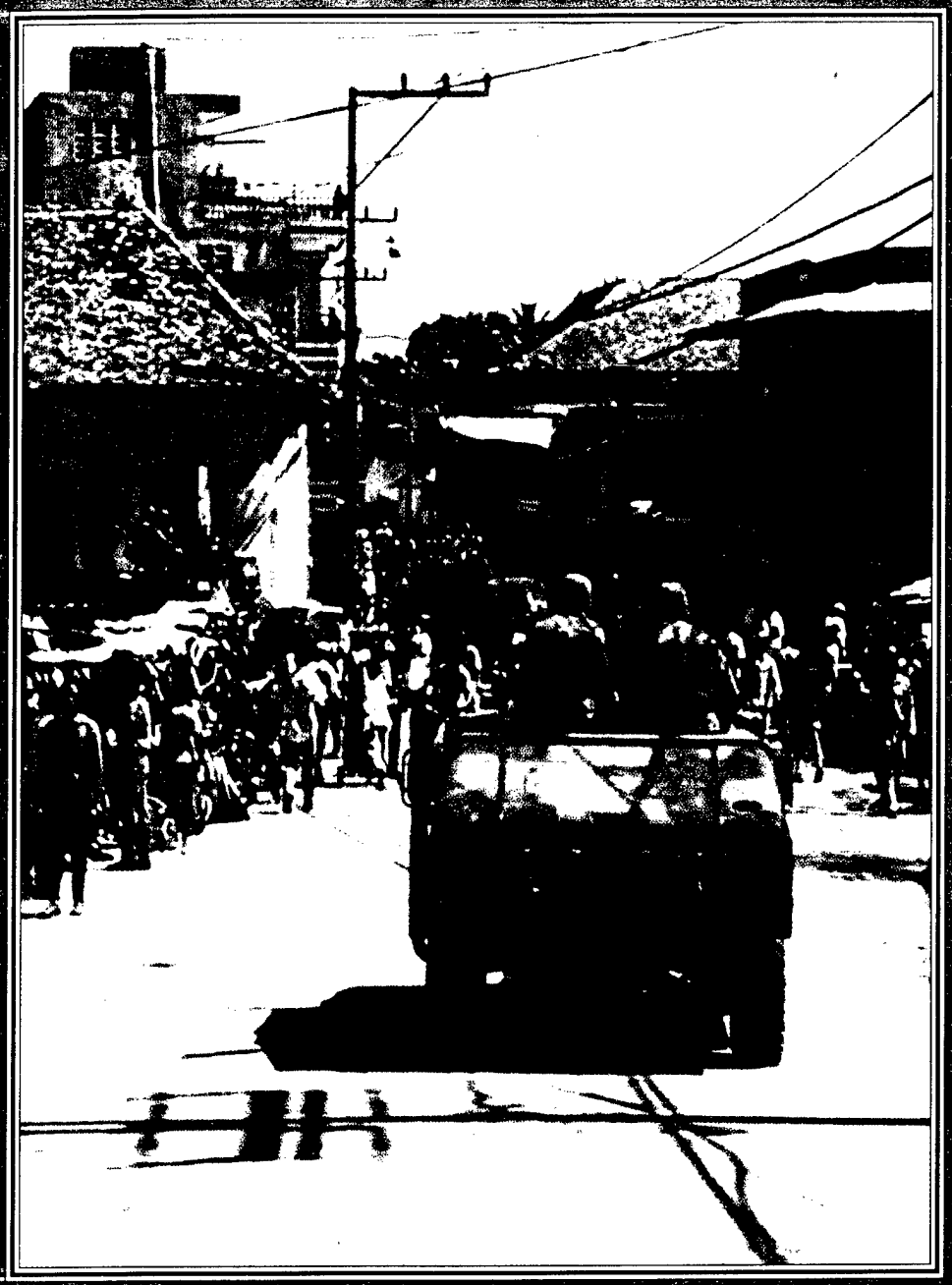
LEADERS' GUIDE FOR CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS: THE HUMAN DIMENSION



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Leaders' Guide for Contingency Operations: The Human Dimension

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United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

Foreword

The U.S. Army Research Institute conducted research examining the attitudes and opinions of soldiers who deployed in contingency operations to identify people issues impacting effectiveness. Data were collected from soldiers participating in support of Operation Restore/Continue Hope in Somalia, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, and Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. This guide identifies recurring issues that impacted leader effectiveness and unit success.

This guide represents a synthesis of research findings from a number of contingency operations. The objective of this guide is to provide Army leaders with a succinct guide of leadership lessons learned and recommendations based on feedback from soldiers and leaders who have participated in recent contingency operations. Portions of the research findings have been briefed after each of these operations to the senior leadership of the Army (e.g., Chief of Staff of the Army, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army).

Edgar M. Johnson
Director

Acknowledgments

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Executive Summary

Research Requirement:

The U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) has conducted research on a number of contingency operations. The research requirement included examining the contingency operations for recurring people issues that impact on leader effectiveness and unit success.

Procedure:

The issues that impact on soldier attitudes and opinions were determined using interviews and surveys. Interviews were conducted with soldiers after they had returned from deployments for Operation Restore/Continue Hope in Somalia, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, and Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. Surveys were administered to soldiers who participated in a deployment in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. Topics in both the interviews and surveys included training, leadership, morale, stress, and impact of deployment.

Findings:

Thirteen recurring issues that impacted on soldier attitudes and opinions emerged across the contingency operations: Mission Clarity, Situation Stability, Amount of Threat/Lethality, Complexity of the Force, Complexity of the Environment, Specificity of Advanced Preparation, Duration of Deployment, Media Visibility, Range of Job Tasks, Quality of Leadership, Quality of Life, Amount of Family Support, and Quality of Rear Detachment. The issues were based on soldier and leader perceptions of their experiences both prior to and during deployment. These perceptions reflected areas that were successful as well as those that needed improvement.

Utilization of Findings:

This guide provides Army leaders with leadership lessons learned and recommendations based on feedback from soldiers and leaders who have participated in recent contingency operations. Army officers and senior NCOs can use this guide as a tool for enhancing leader effectiveness in preparation for and during contingency operations. The leadership lessons learned can be used in a variety of ways. They can be used by leaders in preparing their units for deployment, in officer and NCO professional development conducted at the unit, and in self-development. Also, those designing leadership courses (at both the installation level and Army-wide) can use the lessons learned to create teaching vignettes.

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Background

Purpose:

This guide provides Army leaders with lessons learned that are vital to their success in contingency operations. Leaders can increase their effectiveness by addressing the issues discussed in this guide and implementing the relevant recommendations.

The 13 issues presented here emerged repeatedly as problem areas in several contingency operations. They are "people" issues (as opposed to tactical, technical, or strategic ones) and arise from the demands of contingency operations. The issues are based on feedback from soldiers and leaders who have participated in recent contingency operations. They reflect perceptions of experiences both prior to and during deployments. They also reflect areas that were successful as well as those that needed improvement.

Two overarching themes underlie the leadership lessons learned presented in this guide. The first theme is the need to anticipate and adapt to change. Changes often occur due to differences: (a) from garrison to the operation, (b) across different operations, and (c) at different points during the same operation. Leaders need to recognize that these changes will occur, understand the reasons for the changes, and help soldiers to adapt to the changes.

The second theme involves communication between leaders and soldiers. There is a clear need for more and better communication during contingency operations. Frequently the challenge is simply recognizing: (a) what message needs to be communicated, (b) who needs to hear it, (c) when they should hear it, and (d) the appropriate mode of communicating it.

This guide is intended for use by Army officers and senior NCOs as a tool to be used both before and during contingency operations. It is designed as a practical guide with a focus on usability. Because this guide is designed for a broad audience, including leaders at many different levels, not all the recommendations will be appropriate or easily implemented by every leader. Leaders, therefore, need to decide which recommendations to implement at their level and which to raise with leaders at other levels.

The leadership lessons learned can be used in a variety of ways. For example, they can be used by leaders in preparing their units for deployment, in officer and NCO professional development conducted at the unit, and in self-development. Also, those designing leadership courses (at both the installation level and Army-wide) can use the lessons learned to create teaching vignettes.

Methodology:

The lessons learned reported here are based on interview and survey research. Interviews were conducted with soldiers after they had returned from deployments for Operation Restore/Continue Hope in Somalia, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, and Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. Surveys were administered to soldiers who participated in a deployment in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. Topics in both the interviews and surveys included training, leadership, morale, stress, and impact of deployment. To ensure that relevant issues were covered, interviews were designed to allow soldiers and leaders to raise additional issues of concern to them.

The surveys were designed to gather information about the attitudes and experiences of soldiers and leaders who participated in a deployment in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. Questions asked about their experiences before, during, and after deployment. Topics included training, leadership, morale, stress, and impact of deployment.

Findings are organized around the following 13 issues:

- Mission Clarity
- Situation Stability
- Amount of Threat/Lethality
- Complexity of the Force
- Complexity of the Environment
- Specificity of Advanced Preparation
- Quality of Leadership
- Duration of Deployment
- Media Visibility
- Range of Job Tasks
- Quality of Life
- Amount of Family Support
- Quality of Rear Detachment

The issues are not presented in order of importance, but rather in approximate order of occurrence. The first few issues focus mainly on pre-deployment, and the remaining issues have more of a during-deployment focus. Since it is important to see the picture as a whole and there is some overlap among issues, it is recommended that they be considered in the order presented.

For each issue, a quote is provided to illustrate the link between a soldier's words and the issue. A brief definition and then a more detailed description follow the quote. Finally, several recommendations are provided to help leaders address the issue.

ISSUES

Mission Clarity

"We did the same thing day in and day out. And it mostly included guarding a spot on the road. Our leaders said we had a very important job. I have yet to see what the mission was."

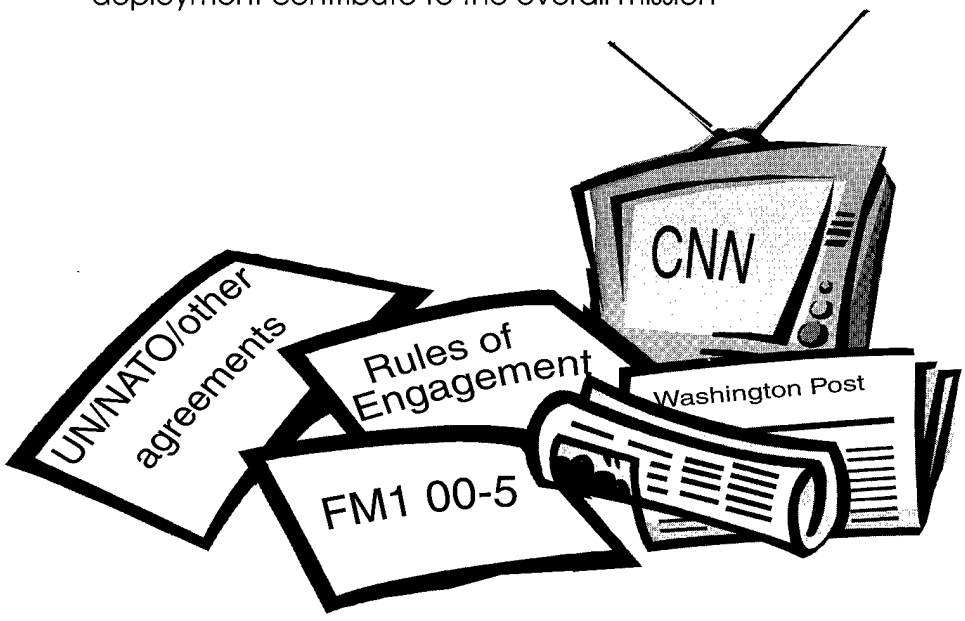
Issue:

The degree of mission clarity, both prior to and during the operation, impacts the extent to which soldiers and leaders question their participation in the mission.

Description:

Several factors contribute to soldier and leader understanding of the nature of the mission. Sense of mission clarity is impacted by:

- public debate, both prior to and during the operation, regarding the nature, purpose, and desired end state of the mission
- changes in mission focus (e.g., from humanitarian to peacekeeping to nation building) during the operation. (Some soldiers refer to this as "mission creep.")
- terms for describing the purpose of missions that do not always cover the full range of activities required during the operation (e.g., humanitarian mission that includes combat elements and nation building)
- difficulty in seeing how the tasks they carry out during their deployment contribute to the overall mission



Recommendations:

- ✔ Provide soldiers with a broader framework for operations, explaining that "all operations are composed of 4 basic and ever-present categories – offense, defense, stability, and support... the categories of operations apply to both violent and non-violent environments" (revised FM 100-5, Operations, p. 12-1).

- ✔ Help soldiers to understand how the tasks and details they perform support the overall mission.

- ✔ To bolster support for the mission, provide opportunities for soldiers to see/hear about current conditions that demonstrate the need for the mission (e.g., show videotapes/newscasts, invite locals to meet with soldiers). This is particularly important for soldiers who are not exposed to the local population/conditions.

- ✔ To continue support as the mission progresses, provide opportunities for soldiers to see/hear about improvements that have resulted from the Army's presence (e.g., population no longer starving, children going back to school). Again, this is particularly important for soldiers who are largely restricted to base camps.

- ✔ Explain to soldiers that maintaining a military presence acts as a strong deterrent, thereby contributing to the overall mission.

Situation Stability

"I think soldiers should be flexible and prepare for anything. No one knows exactly how things are going to happen."

Issue:

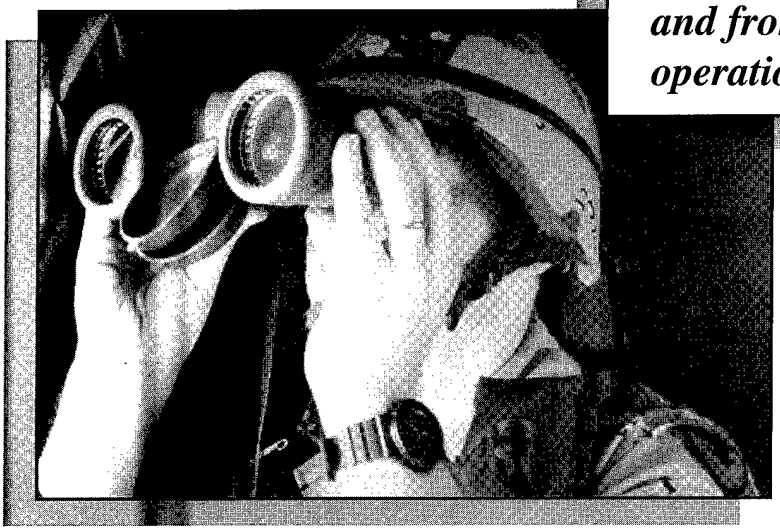
Situation stability and predictability, both within and across contingency operations, impact readiness and soldier attitudes toward the mission.

Description:

The amount of situation stability and predictability differs within an operation (e.g., changes throughout Operation Restore/Continue Hope in Somalia) and from operation to operation (e.g., Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai vs. Operation Restore/Continue Hope). Changes in stability and predictability impact readiness and soldier attitudes toward the mission by influencing:

- required training and equipment
- U.S. public support for the mission
- operational planning and preparation
- family acceptance
- media exposure

The amount of situation stability and predictability differs within an operation... and from operation to operation.



Recommendations:

- ✔ Teach leaders to recognize that changes in stability and predictability require renewed efforts to ensure sustained support for the mission from both soldiers and families.

- ✔ Recognize that situational demands may require different responses from those in a previous operation (or earlier in the same operation). Further, anticipate that soldiers will resist change and that providing the reasons for change will help overcome their resistance.

Amount of Threat/Lethality

"More freedom of movement and less emphasis on 'battle rattle' should be allowed in some areas. When protective measures far exceed assessed threat, they create a prison-like atmosphere."

Issue:

Perceptions of the amount of threat and lethality affect soldier (and family) concerns about the conduct of the mission.

Description:

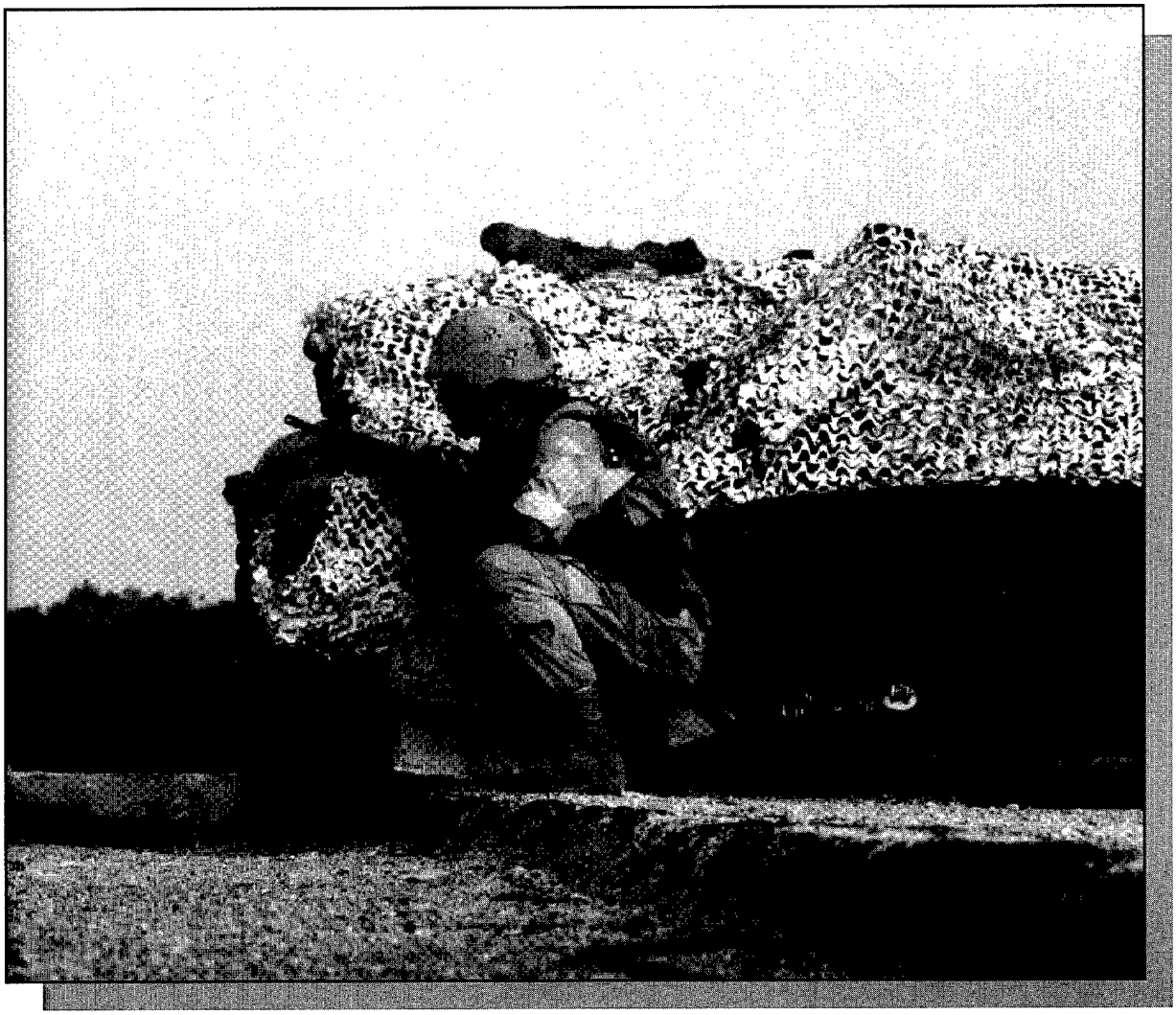
Perceptions of the amount of threat/lethality differ based on a number of factors, including point in time (both before and during the operation), location of the troops, recent events, information flow, and behavior of other militaries in theater. Perceptions of threat/lethality impact attitudes toward the mission, attitudes toward the local population, and attention to media reports. In addition, perceptions of the amount of threat/lethality influence soldier attitudes towards the:

- force protection rules (e.g., requirements for full-battle gear, alcohol restrictions, requirements to travel in convoys)
- rules of engagement
- approach to carrying out the mission (e.g., show of force/ overwhelming presence vs. a defensive posture)

Perceptions of threat are influenced by time, location, and behavior of others in theater.

Recommendations:

- ✔ Listen to and address soldier concerns about the match between force protection and their perceptions of threat/lethality.
- ✔ Throughout the deployment, identify and address soldier concerns regarding force protection rules and tactical security. Provide soldiers with explicit examples of how the force protection policies benefit them personally and therefore why they should be taken seriously.
- ✔ Prior to deployment, publicize policies that will differ from those in garrison or from those of previous deployments (e.g., alcohol restrictions). Provide the rationale for these differences. Note that making policies consistent across operations may facilitate their acceptance.



Complexity of the Force

"At my site all support for food, fuel, etc., was from the French. It would have been extremely helpful to have been given some type of language instruction or at least some learning tapes in that language."

Issue:

Contingency operations challenge soldiers and leaders to coordinate and interact with a complex force that differs from operation to operation.

Description:

During contingency operations, soldiers and leaders are often required to interact with a complex force consisting of such elements as:

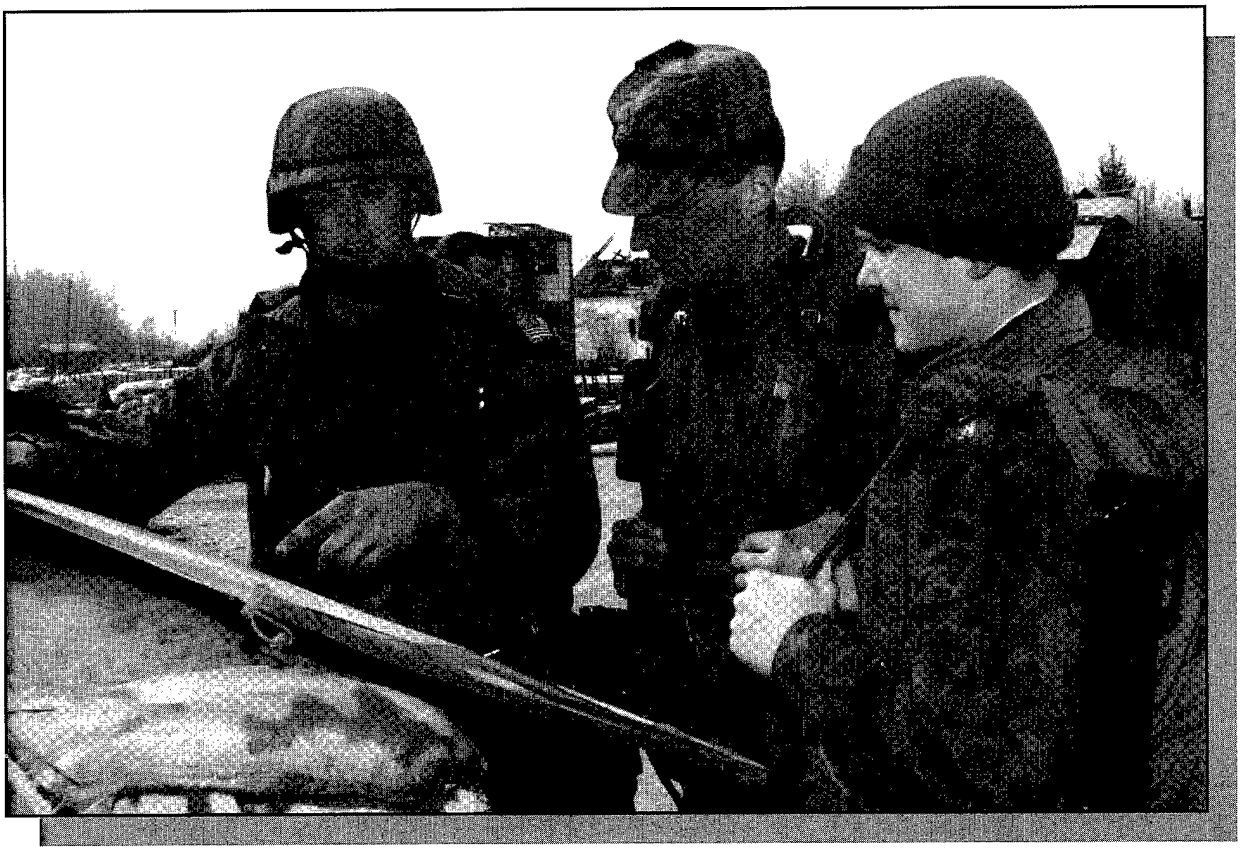
- different types of units (e.g., combat, combat support, combat service support)
- different Army components (e.g., Active, USAR-Troop Program Units, Army National Guard)
- different U.S. services (e.g., Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines)
- militaries from other countries (e.g., as part of multinational forces, United Nations, or NATO)

The complexity of the force introduces problems arising from differences in cultures, languages, religions, policies, equipment, etc. In addition, soldiers and leaders often make "we vs. they" comparisons and see inequities in job requirements, force protection requirements, and length of deployment. These perceived inequities can result in lower soldier morale.

Soldiers often make "we vs. they" comparisons and perceive inequities.

Recommendations:

- ✔ When possible, use a liaison, interpreter, or individual familiar with the other services and militaries to facilitate coordination and cooperation.
- ✔ Emphasize the importance of having units currently deployed provide their replacement units with lessons learned about coordinating and interacting with a complex force.
- ✔ Require that AC and RC leaders and soldiers demonstrate and encourage mutual respect between the components, both in theater and backfill locations.



Complexity of the Environment

"As a linguist I had the opportunity to converse with rival faction leaders and civilians... The civilian population was afraid of us because of Vietnam, and the rival factions played them against us using that fear."

Issue:

Contingency operations challenge soldiers and leaders to coordinate and interact with a complex environment that differs from operation to operation.

Description:

During contingency operations, soldiers and leaders are often required to interact with a complex environment that includes:

- a variety of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (e.g., relief organizations)
- contractors
- formerly warring factions
- host country security forces (e.g., local police force)
- local community leaders and members

In complex environments, leaders face the challenge of performing multiple roles. For example, they are called upon to: provide protection for members of NGOs, mediate between warring factions, confiscate weapons, develop security forces for the local community, legitimize local leaders, reconstruct the infrastructure, and deal with children begging for food. In addition, soldiers and leaders are faced with different cultures, and possible resistance from the local community they are trying to help.

Recommendations:

- ✔ Help leaders to recognize when it is appropriate/inappropriate for them to assume a particular role (e.g., negotiator, mediator, and coordinator with the local population) during a contingency operation.

- ✔ Use a liaison, interpreter, local national, or other individual familiar with the subtleties of the local culture to help interpret the reactions (or potential reactions) of the local population to initiatives or actions.

- ✔ Discourage soldiers from individually giving food to begging children (either directly or covertly) by establishing and promoting a formal unit-level policy and program for distributing food and gifts to the local community. Emphasize the benefits of a coordinated effort for donating food to the local community. For example, providing food only to the leaders of the local community to distribute might prevent local children from begging for food from soldiers (which sometimes puts them in harm's way or can make them sick).

- ✔ Do not assume that approaches that worked in the environment of one operation will necessarily work in the environment of another.

Specificity of Advanced Preparation

"From the beginning the rush was to get people deployed with no regard for facilities or logistics to support them. Once in our assigned area, no one knew where we were supposed to be or who could support us. There were times when we siphoned fuel from our vehicles to run our stoves. We hadn't had any laundry facilities for over a month, and the first time we sent out clothes, it took 2 weeks and all our T-shirts and socks were missing. These are just a few examples of the extremely poor planning in the initial phase of this deployment."

Issue:

The specificity and realism of advance preparation impacts soldier assessments of the adequacy of pre-deployment preparation and training.

Description:

In addition to assessing their advanced preparation based on the realism and mission-specificity of their training, soldiers and leaders also consider:

- their understanding of the region to which they will deploy
- their unit fill
- the success of logistics during the first few weeks of deployment (e.g., adequacy of equipment/supplies to cope with the terrain and climate)

Soldiers see specific and realistic preparation as very helpful.

Recommendations:

- ✔ Conduct mission-specific, scenario-driven training shortly before deployment, as it is viewed positively by soldiers and leaders and seen as very helpful.
- ✔ Ensure that pre-deployment training stresses those METL tasks that will be most important to mission accomplishment.
- ✔ Provide soldiers and leaders with written information about the background of the region to which they will deploy (e.g., history of the conflict, terrain, climate, language) and its culture.
- ✔ Reassure units that they will be "plussed up" for the deployment. If possible, when augmenting under-strength units, allow time for role clarification and development of cohesion prior to deployment.
- ✔ Develop realistic logistics for the first few weeks of deployment and communicate these plans to soldiers. Adapt load plans to take into account the climate and terrain of the deployment location.

Duration of Deployment

"The mission was too long for one unit. We stayed nearly a year. Also, having a return date boosts morale by giving a soldier something to look forward to."

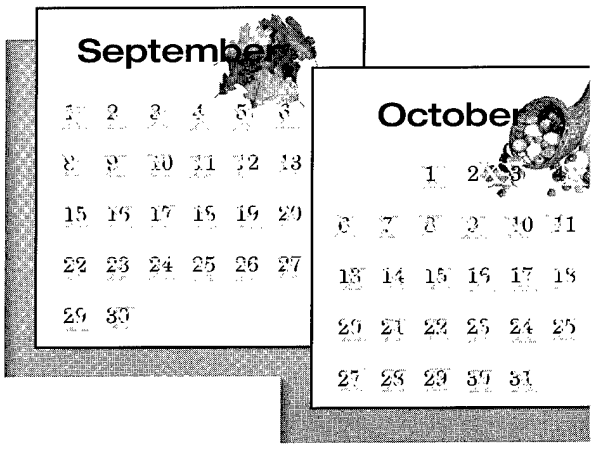
Issue:

The duration of the deployment impacts soldier satisfaction and is a function of many factors in addition to the actual number of months soldiers and leaders are deployed.

Description:

Several factors, in addition to the actual length of the deployment, influence whether soldiers and leaders evaluate their deployment as too long. Soldiers and leaders tend to feel deployments for contingency operations are too long when:

- the purpose of a long deployment is for peace operations, not for war
- they think they have been deployed too frequently
- their previous deployments have been long
- their deployment is longer than that of others (e.g., other U.S. services, militaries of other countries) involved in the operation
- the projected length of their deployment has been increased
- they think they have completed their unit mission (e.g., soldiers deployed for 3 months felt it was too long because they completed their unit mission in 2)
- the endpoint and accomplishments are uncertain



Recommendations:

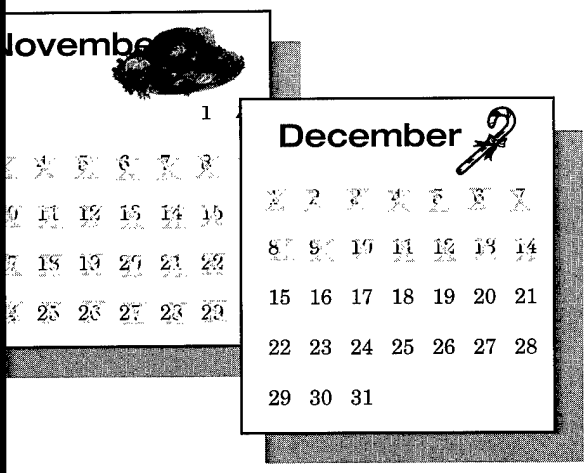
- ✔ Help soldiers to understand the many factors that determine the length of deployment (e.g., cost, legal considerations, agreements with other countries, manpower constraints).

- ✔ Prior to deployment:
  - provide soldiers with an estimated length of the deployment (when possible) that reflects the "worst case scenario". Keep in mind that soldiers use this estimate to plan other parts of their lives (e.g., college courses, property storage, civilian job). If the estimated time frame is either much longer or much shorter than the actual duration of the deployment, soldiers can experience significant problems.

  - let soldiers know that the exact return date and time will not be available until shortly before redeployment and explain why (i.e., not notifying the enemy, coordination). Remind them of this again during the mission, as needed.

  - explain to soldiers that they will be required to perform tasks that support the overall mission and not just the unit mission. Remind them of this again during the mission, as needed.

- ✔ Control rumors regarding changes in both the length of the deployment and the redeployment date.



Media Visibility

"Public opinion and interest definitely waned after the first 2 months."

Issue:

The amount and favorability of media coverage of a contingency operation affect soldier attitudes, not only towards the media but towards the mission itself.

Description:

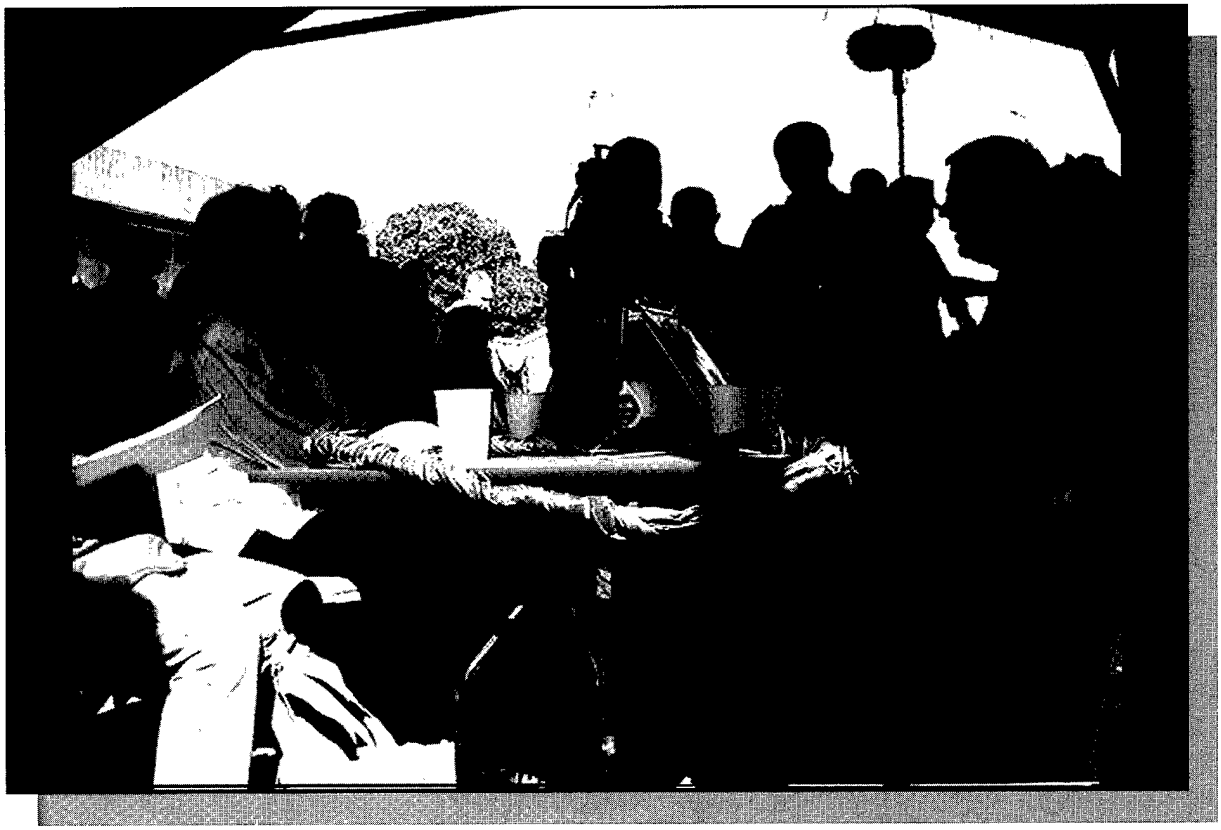
Soldiers and leaders use the amount of media coverage as an indication of the degree of public interest in the contingency operation. Too little coverage is interpreted as lack of caring by the American public. Low media coverage or low favorability demoralizes soldiers and leaders. Too much coverage may get in the way of job performance. On the other hand, soldiers and leaders express concern when there is excessive, uncontrolled presence of the media because it is seen as costing soldier time, energy, and resources.

Media coverage also impacts the operation by influencing:

- family support for the mission
- public support (which impacts operational planning, appropriation of money, determination of force size and type, scope of involvement, rules of engagement, phasing out of the mission, etc.)
- the need for rumor control. Media report information that is sometimes incomplete or inaccurate, especially when it is reported as events unfold.

Recommendations:

- ✔ Invite local press to soldier send-off and welcome home ceremonies to give high-profile recognition to returning soldiers.
- ✔ Anticipate that there will be intense media coverage at the start of the contingency operation, when the status quo changes, whenever casualties occur, and during visits from VIPs.
- ✔ Prepare soldiers for talking with the media.
- ✔ Develop procedures to provide the media with access to information and, at the same time, minimize the intrusiveness of an excessive, uncontrolled presence. For example, require media representatives to coordinate with a unit POC in charge of media affairs. Then ensure that soldiers know the appropriate person or office to refer reporters.
- ✔ Monitor relevant information provided by the media and be prepared to address soldier concerns that may arise.



Range of Job Tasks

"I feel that while being deployed, you should do more of what you're trained to do. I did not do much of my own MOS work while deployed. The deployment consisted of filling sandbags, more guard duty than one person could handle, and details that had little or no importance. So I guess I would say that if you are deployed, you should be deployed there to do what you're trained to do."

Issue:

The types of job tasks soldiers and leaders are required to perform during contingency operations affect their acceptance of their individual participation in the mission.

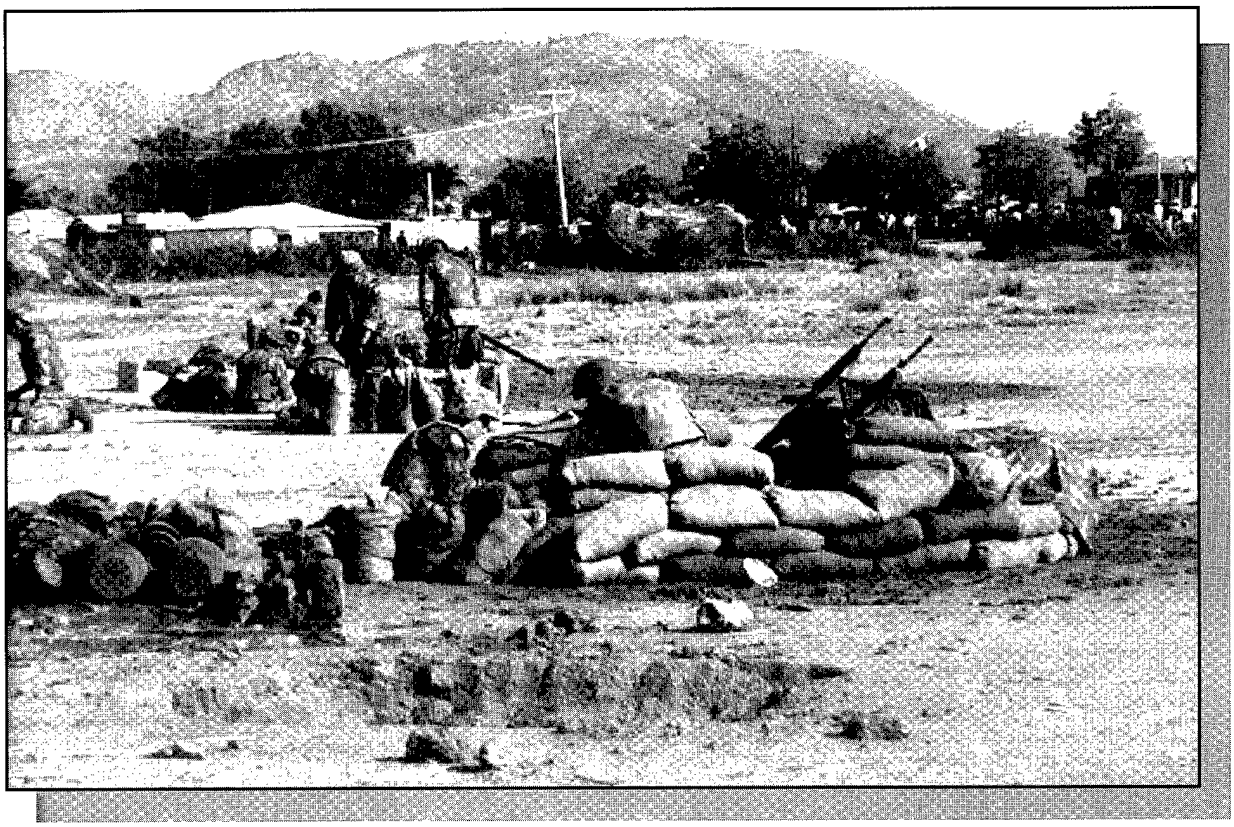
Description:

During contingency operations, soldiers and leaders are often required to perform a variety of job tasks that do not fit within a narrowly defined MOS. Soldiers and leaders sometimes question why they are required to perform certain tasks. They assess the appropriateness of their assigned tasks based on perceived:

- consistency with the overall mission. (Soldiers often do not understand how their individual tasks contribute to the overall mission.)
- consistency with their MOS. (Soldiers often believe they are doing the work of other MOSs. For example, Infantry consider some of their tasks MP tasks; Engineers consider some of their tasks Infantry tasks.)
- need for the task. (When soldiers do not know the reasons behind doing the task, they often attribute the work to busywork or leaders trying to enhance their careers.)
- equity of the distribution of the workload. (Soldiers often believe they are pulling more than their share of the workload.)

Recommendations:

- ✔ During deployment, provide soldiers with a framework that connects the contribution of their individual tasks to the overall mission.
- ✔ Prepare units and soldiers for the additional details that will be required (e.g., guard duty, filling sandbags, 4-vehicle convoys).
- ✔ When time allows, provide valid reasons for requiring soldiers to do tasks, especially when requiring them to redo work or when their units take on extra missions.
- ✔ Do not give soldiers busywork. Make sure that the tasks you give them are meaningful.
- ✔ Prepare leaders for the additional roles they may need to perform during the operation.



Quality of Leadership

"Unfortunately, many officers micro-managed. They had little faith in the NCO corps, failed to take advice from their NCOs, used little or none of their NCOs' expertise, and basically were looking out only for their own welfare and career progression. This greatly affected morale of the units."

Issue:

The quality of leadership affects soldier morale as well as attitudes toward the operation and the Army as a whole.

Description:

The quality of leadership is judged more critically by soldiers during contingency operations than in garrison. Good leadership is seen as including:

- standing up for soldiers (e.g., providing higher-ups with soldiers' perspectives)
- pitching in to help soldiers with details (e.g., helping out with guard duty when unit is under-strength)
- setting a good example (e.g., following rules that soldiers are required to follow)

Poor leadership is seen as including:

- lack of caring for soldiers (e.g., pushing soldiers to work too many hours; telling subordinates to "just do it, don't ask why"; cursing or degrading soldiers)
- micro-management (e.g., not trusting subordinate leaders to get things done correctly; bypassing the chain of command by going directly to soldiers; telling subordinate leaders both what to do and how to do it; making decisions at a higher level that should be/have been made at a lower level)
- leader careerism (e.g., assigning unnecessary tasks to boost the appearance of leader productivity; volunteering for missions to enhance careers; pursing media attention; creating a dog-and-pony show for higher-ups and VIPs; contributing to a zero defects environment)
- unethical behavior (e.g., jeopardizing soldier safety; requiring soldiers to violate rules; breaching confidentiality)

Recommendations:

- ✔ Strengthen communication up and down the chain to help soldiers understand the rationale for leader actions and to increase leader awareness of soldier concerns.
- ✔ When possible, provide the rationale to soldiers for leader decisions and actions.
- ✔ Anticipate soldier questions and address them.
- ✔ Both before and during deployments, provide soldiers with the rationale for the level at which decisions are made and address concerns about micro-management.
- ✔ Demonstrate Army values.

Quality of Life

"The disparity of conditions is a great morale factor. It did not affect our unit directly, but I could see where it would cause morale problems in some units where showers and hot meals don't come as frequent. And the difference in regulations different countries have for uniforms and interacting with the local nationals also affects morale."

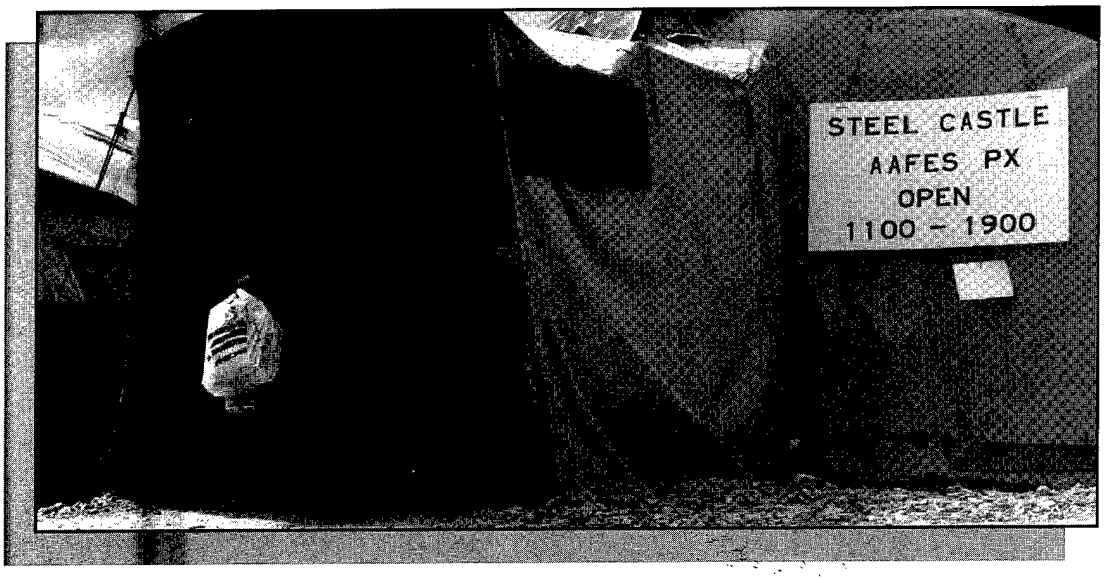
Issue:

The quality of life during contingency operations impacts soldier satisfaction and attitudes toward the Army.

Description:

The quality of life during contingency operations is assessed based on soldier expectations as well as actual conditions. Expectations are based on comparisons to experiences in other operations and/or "we vs. they" comparisons to experiences of others in the current operation. Factors that soldiers and leaders use in making quality of life assessments include:

- force protection rules (e.g., alcohol restrictions, flak vest requirements)
- living conditions (e.g., protection from harsh climate, accommodations, food, access to PX)
- R&R and leave policies (e.g., emergency leave, R&R leave, R&R passes)
- leisure activities (e.g., sports and gym facilities, Armed Forces Radio Network, live entertainment, movies/TV)



Recommendations:

- ✔ When possible, minimize the inequities in quality of life factors and explain the reasons for differences across groups in quality of life.
- ✔ Prior to deployment, communicate clear and comprehensive R&R and leave policies. Address any differences in policy between those in garrison and those downrange, or differences between current and prior deployments. Provide the reasons behind these policies or changes in policies. Also, clearly communicate any policy changes made during the deployment and the reasons for the changes.
- ✔ Offer leisure activities (e.g., helicopter/boat rides, sports and gym facilities, live entertainment) to help alleviate boredom/stress and improve quality of life during deployment.

Amount of Family Support

"Deployment is difficult for family members left at home. They need to know how important they are to the operation."

Issue:

The amount of family support for the mission and the Army affects soldier morale.

Description:

The amount of family support for the mission and the Army is a function of several factors, including the:

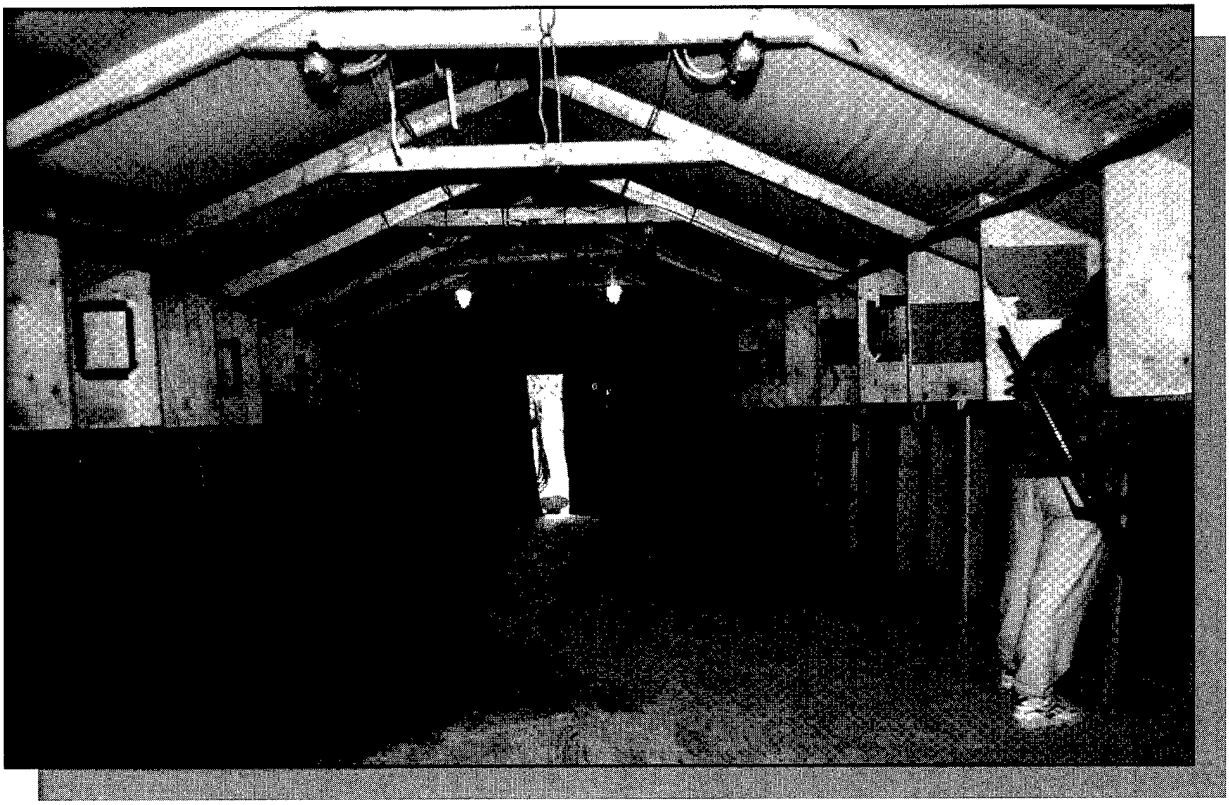
- family's understanding of the mission
- perceived level of danger to the soldiers and leaders
- perception of Army support for families during the deployment (e.g., financial services, housing assistance, transportation)
- amount and accuracy of information they receive about the mission and their soldiers
- ease and availability of communication with soldiers

Communication increases the perception of Army support for the family because it:

- contributes to families' understanding of the mission
- provides accurate information about the mission and soldiers
- helps to relieve family stress

Recommendations:

- ✔ Communicate to families the importance of the operation (and their soldiers' involvement) and the measures taken to ensure soldier safety.
- ✔ Communicate to soldiers, in garrison and downrange, the resources available to their families. Include information regarding the appropriate points of contact for different family issues.
- ✔ Use multiple formats (e.g., telephone, e-mail, videotape, video-teleconferencing, newsletters) and sources (e.g., individual soldiers, commander, family support group, spouse telephone chains, rear detachment) to communicate with families.
- ✔ Encourage spouse participation in family support groups, thereby facilitating the distribution of relevant, accurate information and eliminating rumors.
- ✔ Examine ways to reduce telephone costs and make access to telephones equitable.
- ✔ Let spouses know that the Army appreciates their efforts. Emphasize the specific steps the Army is taking to support spouses.



Quality of Rear Detachment

"Get better rear detachment training. Staff a rear detachment like a unit — don't just leave the 'duds'."

Issue:

The perceived quality of the rear detachment affects unit and soldier morale.

Description:

Factors that contribute to negative views of the rear detachment include:

- over-generalization of the responsibility of the rear detachment, incorporating such functions as those of the family support group and other groups at the installation
- preconceived notion that rear detachment is made up of "broken" soldiers (e.g., profiles, pregnant females, malingerers, and short-termers) who are not motivated to do their work
- perception that lower quality leaders are "left behind" to command rear detachments
- lack of understanding of the contributions the rear detachment makes to the overall success of the mission

The role and contributions of the rear detachment need to be understood.

Recommendations:

- ✔ Clarify the role of the rear detachment for both soldiers and families. Ensure that soldiers and families understand the difference between the role of the rear detachment and those of the family support groups and the general reception unit at the installation.

- ✔ Minimize the negative stigma associated with the rear detachment. Recognize the importance of the rear detachment and assign a competent rear detachment commander, providing the necessary training to ensure strong, reliable support for the deployed unit.

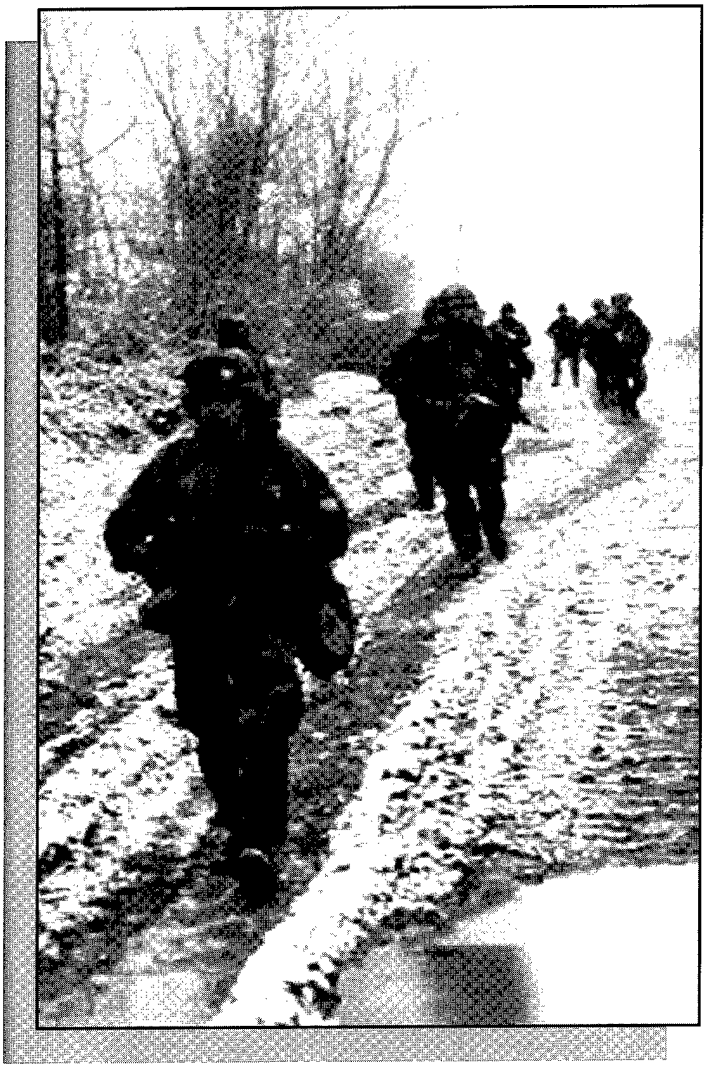
- ✔ Minimize conflict between those who deployed and the rear detachment, both during and after the deployment.

- ✔ Be prepared to diffuse any tensions that arise between soldiers who return from the deployment and soldiers in the rear detachment.

Conclusions

This guide presents issues or dimensions that have recurred in multiple contingency operations and are likely to occur in future ones. It is intended as a tool for leaders to increase their effectiveness by helping them to anticipate the recurring issues in contingency operations and to address them.

Recommendations are included with each of the issues. Together, the issues and the recommendations represent leadership lessons learned that can be used both before and during contingency operations. Before an operation, these lessons serve as a tool for effectively preparing leaders and soldiers for the mission. During the operation, these lessons serve as a reference guide and reminder of important factors leaders need to address.



Clearly, how leaders use the lessons in this guide will depend on their unit and level of command (e.g., company, battalion, brigade). Also, the guide focuses on the before and during deployment phases of an operation, and not on post-deployment. Thus, it does not address additional areas such as the redeployment process, reunion with spouses and families, and reuniting the deployed unit with either the rear detachment or other units that did not deploy for the operation.

Two themes are common to the issues described in this guide. The first is the need to anticipate and adapt to changes. Leaders need to stress to their troops that change will occur for many reasons (e.g., phase of the operation, occurrence of critical events, implementation of improved equipment and systems, incorporation of lessons learned). Addressing the issues as dimensions that they can vary on a continuum, both from operation to operation and within a given operation, can help reinforce the need to anticipate change. When soldiers expect change, they are more likely to accept, prepare, and adapt to it.

The second theme is the need for more and better communication. Leaders need to increase the information flow to soldiers, particularly with respect to the issues addressed in this guide. Further, leaders need to recognize and to take into account that the frame of reference of subordinate leaders and soldiers may differ from their own.

In using this guide, leaders should consider how the issues presented here will affect their deployment and prepare for them in advance. The next step is for leaders to develop their own action plans. For example, leaders can develop a communication plan for their unit to make sure they are listening to and addressing soldier concerns during an operation. Discussing the action plan and the reasons for it with subordinate leaders should help them buy into it and should also contribute to their leader development. It is important to recognize that the use of an action plan developed for one unit in one deployment may not fit another unit or even the same unit a different time.

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13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*:

Interviews and surveys were conducted to examine the attitudes and opinions of soldiers deployed in support of Operation Restore/Continue Hope in Somalia, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, and Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. This guide identifies 13 recurring issues that impacted on soldier attitudes and opinions regarding their deployment experiences. These included: Mission Clarity, Situation Stability, Amount of Threat/Lethality, Complexity of the Force, Complexity of the Environment, Specificity of Advanced Preparation, Quality of Leadership, Duration of Deployment, Media Visibility, Range of Job Tasks, Quality of Life, Amount of Family Support, and Quality of Rear Detachment. The issues and their descriptions allow leaders to anticipate issues likely to occur in contingency operations. Recommendations are included with each of the issues. Together, the issues and the recommendations represent leadership lessons learned that can be used both before and during contingency operations.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

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