Tactical Culture for
Marine Expeditionary Forces

What it is… and is not

How to develop it

How to disseminate it

How to validate it

How to archive it

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What is CuI? A “Doer’s” View

What it is not:

cookie cutter... an unemployed German is not a shaykh
Bosnian negotiation skills are not Iraqi
Not all Marines are same

static... “in the can” lasts as long as it takes to get canned
not same from pre-start to finish

dictated by the “experts”... How do training staffs know?
What do academicians know?
What use best material from last conflict?

a commodity... not box to be checked, not bureaucratic logic

Adjunct Icing... “Do you want to win” SASO/OOTWA/LIC?
“I don’t see how we can hope to operate without it”
What is Culture?

Can you define an ever-changing phenomenon:

over time, over place, and according to the nature of the operation?

Is indigenous culture, or tactical cultural intel the same for

LAR… Force Recon… FSSG…

CAG… CAP?

So, the answer through a question:

What does an operator need in a local environment to get the job done…

and how will indigenous people’s values, mores, practices, preferences, ways of mobilization influence mil ops?

In other words…What do experienced Marines ask for? (and they do!)
On the Way to Cultural Intel Races…

There is neither one mil customer; nor one cultural intel

Job: Service, MOS, rank
Time: Deployment date, deployment timetable
Kind: Nature of deployment
...humanitarian-to-war continuum
Place: AO, sub-AO
... rural/urban, secular/religious...
Mind: Basic education and aptitude of “customer”

Amounts to “culture guy’s” METT-TC
...need for flexible, time-place-specialty specific
...continually evolving project
...maximizes Marines’ own knowledge

If we do CuI chicken right:

Tactical Culture for Marine Expeditionary Forces (TCMEF)
One Approach… (a perpetual process with dynamic products)

A “12-step program,” September 2003 through July 2004

**Step 1:** exit interviews
- Marines/soldiers/SOF
- Marines best responders

**Step 2:** evaluate existing materials
- October 2003, all non-OIF:
  - MCIA, DoS, limited USArmy

**Step 3:** adapt academic materials...
- Paltry Harvest

**Step 4:** begin training cycle 1
- USA/NG OIF 2-1

**Step 5:** repeat steps 1-3
- Begin dissemination of surveys

**Step 6:** training cycle 2
- IMEF OIF 2-1
The 12-step program, continued

Step 7: rpt steps 1-3 incl think tankers, journalists interviews, correspondence

Step 8: CONUS AAR test the teach feedback returning personnel units immed. pre-deployment

Step 9: training cycle 3 IMEF OIF 2-2

Step 10: In country AAR training w/units, collect data (P/O) A/A: IO, G-2, CAG, CAP, FAO, Bns, trainers

Step 11: repeat steps 1-3, 7 with additives from step 10

Step 12: Pay-back time train, debrief, tool-up for IIMEF/OIF 3

More than 12 steps helpful: Sure!
Less than 12 steps workable: Absolutely not!
What can be in the box?... It is a live box

a) Tribal Culture and Mission-Relevant History

b) Use of Translator

c) Islam and Cultural Customs, HumInt-Relevant

d) Communication/Negotiation tips and Scenarios
   VCP, Arrest, House Search, 1st Mtg w/ Leadership, TOA

e) Cultural impact on Inf/Intel TTPs, and Dealing w/ Media

f) Body language, Do’s, Don’ts, and Gender Dynamics

g) Info Share

On Request
History, Politics, Govt Structures
Ethnic Geography
Regional Dynamics
Training Iraqi Security Forces
Survival Iraqi Arabic
Bugs to be worked out

1) Commanders at each level need to engage in active process:
   do you know what you want to know, don’t need to know?
   What do you want?
   What will you be doing?
   Where will you be going?
   When will you be doing it?
   “…go do your culture thing”

2) Need more seats at table
   “culture guy” knows culture
   Returning Marine’s “been-there-done-that”
   Operator knows ops (?)
   Div trainer knows training (?)
   Lang trainer knows language

“Culture guy” or “gal” is expert IF recognizes not an expert.

DO you want me to decide for you what you need? How much?
De-Bugging, cont.

3) Keeping it Fresh

If \( \Delta \) METT-TC

Then \( \Delta \) CuI

If \( \Delta \) CuI

Then \( \Delta \) TCMEF

If \( \Delta \) TCMEF

Then TCuIT in AO = categorical necessity

I’d wager that the best trainers are NS community civilians…

time in regions interaction with civ pop

Intellectual linkages rounded skills

different “conknow,” well-suited to TCuI

IF kept fresh by time in country during deployment.

Access forward interdicted by danger or mindsets:

“Non-essential” “show boater” “Magic Wand”

But, in July, what use previous December’s “best” CuI?
De-Bugging, cont.

4) TCMEF: tough sell to mid-level planners, trainers
   Bureaucratic, kinetic priorities
   “look, it’s either this or gunnery.”
   Not enough trainer-operator nexus:
   “Marines think they know what they need, but we do know.”
   Operators’ repartee:  “do you want to win?”
   “If this is the kind of war we got, it’s mission essential”

5) Culture not “piece,” but a way of thinking, approaching
   Time (when/duration), substance
   NOT dictated by bureauc/logistical deployment logic
   Dangers of “did you get the culture thing”:
   Reductionist message
   “Train the trainer”
   commodification… the left hand thing
   Big Ideas

but… a firmer integration into the ConOp as a non-lethal weapon
The Way Ahead

Solution 1:  4-Step method for Live Training

1. Teach concepts
2. Illustrate through operational anecdotes
3. Work through scenarios linking concepts-anecdotes
4. AAR training on back-end

Solution 2:  Extended 6+4

1. Basic written material
2. AV
3. Live Training
4. Take-Aways
5. Immediate pre-deployment refresher
6. AAR/group therapy

Solution 3:  Heretical 2 that makes 6+4

1. Tweak enlisted/officer PME at every stage
2. Systems, human/data resources/networks for global contingencies’ TCuI cultivation, training, archiving