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U.S. Army/ U.S. Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center (COIN)

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U.S. Army/ U.S. Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center



A JOINT MISSION....



U.S Navy Photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Samuel C. Peterson

Links from his ammo belt and brass fly as Sgt. Juan Morales, attached to 2nd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO), lays down a vicious barrage of gun fire on insurgent positions to cover U.S. Marines movements while on patrol in the city of Ramadi. The mission was part of the continuing support by ANGLICO to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team/28th Infantry Division (2/28th BCT). 2/28th BCT was deployed with 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (IMEF) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Al Anbar Province to develop the Iraqi security forces, facilitate the development of official rule of law through democratic government reforms, and continue the development of a market-based economy centered on Iraqi reconstruction.

PREFACE

As we prosecute the current campaigns in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and the Philippines, the military must also prepare for an uncertain security situation beyond the present theaters of conflict. It is a future that will be heavily influenced by global competition for declining natural resources, rapidly rising populations in underprivileged and underdeveloped areas, unstable economic markets, and the continuing resurgence of violent religious and secular ideologies challenging democracy as a credible political theory. Additionally, U.S. Force must account for the impact of rapid information transfer, porous national borders, globalization, increased indigent migrating populations with elevated expectations, and a proliferation of technologies associated with making and employing weapons of mass destruction.

To prepare for future contingencies in such a world, we must build capabilities that enable forces to rapidly adapt to crises emerging from unanticipated events. "Rapidly adapting" in this context means acquiring the ability to quickly change not only weapons and the way we supply ourselves, but the way we think and train to deal with new challenges in unfamiliar circumstances. To deal with this security environment, we must cultivate a whole-government intra-service and interagency culture of flexibility.

It was for the purpose of enabling U.S. land forces to see more clearly, understand more readily, and transform more quickly that the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Center (MCCDC) at Quantico, Virginia, took action to jointly establish the Counterinsurgency Center (COIN Center), located at Fort Leavenworth in 2006.

The information in this pamphlet outlines the COIN Center's origin, current missions and purpose, and vision for the future. The COIN Center is still a work in progress. But it is one that is vitally needed to facilitate the development of a culture that enables us to more effectively adapt as a whole government when called upon to deal with future COIN or COIN-like threats.



DANIEL S. ROPER
Colonel, Field Artillery
Director, COIN Center



Graduates from the Iraqi Border Patrol Academy hoist US Marine Corps (USMC) Corporal (CPL) Horton, an instructor from their class, onto their shoulders in celebration after the class graduation ceremony during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Iraqi Border Patrol Academy was conducted at Al Asad, Iraq and taught by instructors working with the USMC II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF).

COIN Center

In 2006, U. S. Army Combined Arms Center Commander, LTG David Petraeus, and the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Center (MCCDC) Commander Lt. Gen. James Mattis established the COIN Center in response to a need to better educate and train all U.S. ground forces on the principles and practices of counterinsurgency, and to better integrate COIN efforts among the services. To this end, the original COIN Center mandate was to “connect the dots” among the diverse operational elements to facilitate the implementation of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and the U.S. Marine Field Manual 3-24 (Counterinsurgency), and to foster integration of COIN efforts among service components preparing to deploy or already conducting COIN operations. Though it continues to function under that original mandate, the COIN Center focus has expanded its focus to sister services, the inter-agency, and coalition partners dealing with COIN and broader COIN-like threats.

Founders of COIN



LTG David Petraeus



LTG James Mattis

“In the conventional war, military action, seconded by diplomacy, propaganda, and economic pressure, is generally the principal way to achieve the goal. Politics as an instrument of war tends to take a back seat and emerges again—as an instrument—when the fighting ends....The picture is different in the revolutionary war. The objective being the population itself, the operations designed to win it over (for the insurgent) or to keep it at least submissive (for the counterinsurgent) are essentially of a political nature. In this case, consequently, political action remains foremost throughout the war. It is not enough for the government to set political goals, to determine how much military force is applicable, to enter into alliances or to break them; politics becomes an active instrument of operation. And so intricate is the interplay between the political and the military actions that they cannot be tidily separated; on the contrary, every military move has to be weighed with regard to its political effects, and vice versa.” Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice, by David Galula, Praeger Security International: Westport, Connecticut (2006 – First printed in 1964) p. 66.

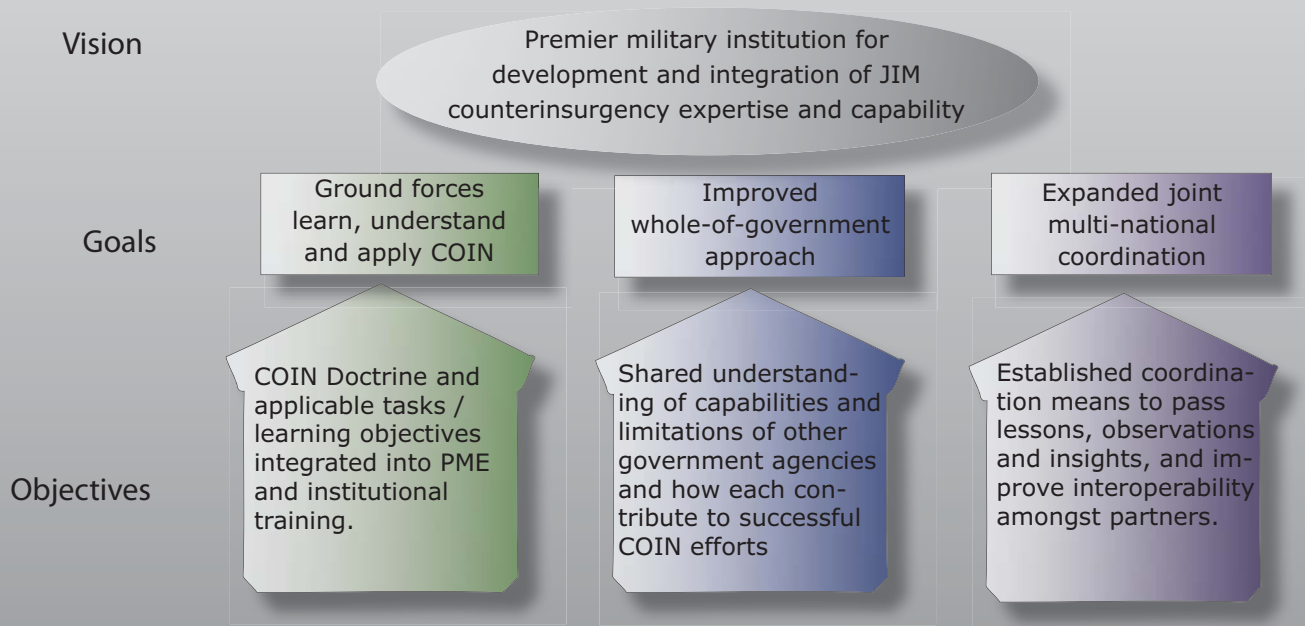
COIN Center Vision

While the development of a single military peer competitor is unlikely in the near term, we must be realistic about the challenges posed by less well-equipped hostile national, transnational entities or coalitions/alliances that challenge traditional centers of power and leverage niche technologies. We must also remain cognizant that a well-led and well-trained force can effectively challenge even the most advanced technology. (The future of armed conflict for the foreseeable future will likely be waged in densely populated multi-ethnic and multi-racial areas by belligerents who routinely employ a greater variety of elements of power than mere force as opposed to major conventional battles and engagements fought by national armies on battlefields devoid of population.

In such conflicts, victory will be gauged differently than in wars past. Success will not be measured by the quantity of ground seized or the number of casualties inflicted or POWs captured. Victory will be measured by trust and support elicited from local populations and social order and stability established with minimum internal social oppression. Progress in COIN conflicts will be measured in enhanced host nation competency, capacity, and legitimacy. How well a stable order that is both satisfactory to its people and no longer poses a threat will be the final arbiter of success.

To prepare for future complex conflicts, a strategy that integrates joint, interagency and multi-national (JIM) is needed to ensure that required capabilities are available to future commanders.

A Way Forward



TRADOC Intelligence Support Activity, *The Contemporary Operational Environment*, Pg. 21 July 2007

A COMBAT MISSION....



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Kevin Nettin conducts a dismounted patrol to assess the progress of security measures in the Al Dora market area of Baghdad, Iraq, 25 May 2007. Nettin is from Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

*"In small wars, tolerance, sympathy and kindness should be the keynote to our relationship with the mass of the population." Max Boot, **The Savage Wars of Peace**, (New York: Basic Books, 2002) 285.*

*"In the first place the army has got to provide units which are trained, organized and equipped to carry out the sort of operations given to them, and in the second it is responsible for producing properly educated commanders and staff officers capable of advising the government and its various agencies at every level on how best to conduct the campaign. In this connection it is worth pointing out that as the enemy is likely to be employing a combination of political, economic, psychological and military measures, so the government will have to do likewise to defeat him, and although an army officer may regard the non-military action required as being the business of the civilian authorities, they will regard it as being his business, because it is being used for operational reasons. At every level the civil authorities will rightly expect the soldier to know how to use non-military forms of action as part of the operational plan, although once it has been decided to use a particular measure they will know how to put it into effect." Frank Kitson, **Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency & Peacekeeping**, Natraj Publishers: New Delhi, 1992) p. 7*

Mission of the U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center

The role of the COIN Center is to improve U.S. military counterinsurgency capabilities. It is a collaborative “Land Service” activity that reports directly to its co-chairs - the Commanding Generals of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) and the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Command. The COIN Center provides assistance to Army/USMC components in implementation/ application of the body of thought contained in FM 3-24 in order to improve US ground forces’ capability to operate in a full- spectrum- COIN environment. It is also the primary focal point for CAC matters involving COIN operations. The COIN Center is staffed with a cadre of knowledgeable Army and Marine Corps subject matter experts who have operational experience and academic education in counterinsurgency operations. It discharges its role using six lines of effort:

- Doctrine Implementation and “Best Practice Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP)
- Integration of COIN
- Research
- Advise Leaders and Organizations
- Improve Education
- Outreach

Developing robust COIN capability within the military requires a proactive vice reactive approach – and investment now for future success. To that end, the COIN Center is a small investment with a big return.



Afghan soldier fires RPG at Taliban forces.

COIN Center Engagement

Level of Engagement	Current Programs	Near term Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Government COIN • Interagency (IA) COIN Initiative (ICI) • Media Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to National Security Council (NSC) • Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Department of Treasury
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada, United Kingdom, Australia Initiatives Strategic Communications / Outreach • McCormick Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project on National Security Reform (PNSR) • Africa Command (AFRICOM) • Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • III Corps CAAT • Joint Publication 3-24 • Monthly COIN Integration Meeting • Irregular Warfare Forum: Joint Forces Command (JFCOM), Special Operations Command (SOCOM), U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theater COIN Assessment, Afghanistan • COIN / Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Integrating Concepts (JIC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FM 3-24.2 • COIN Handbook • COIN Leader Workshop • IED-Defeat Integrated Capabilities Development Team (ICDT) • Support to non-Brigade Combat Teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COIN Centers for Excellence Triad • FM 3-24 Update & Conference - Focused Research • School of Command Preparation & School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) • COIN Fellowship

Go to <http://coin.army.mil> for the most up-to-date information

The COIN Center supports agencies and initiatives that span the spectrum from policy formation to tactical unit assistance. Involvement ranges from participation in efforts to formulate interagency and international doctrine at the policy level down to direct involvement in the writing of doctrine for the Army/Marine Corps for use at the lowest tactical levels. The unusual span of engagement reflects the general character of COIN, the resolution of which involves a host of issues that no single Service or even combination of military Services is equipped and trained to deal with. Such must be handled as complex operations that require the participation by a wide spectrum of agencies both in and outside of the U.S. government. As a consequence, COIN Center responsibilities demand close coordination with a broad range of organizations.

A MULTI-NATIONAL MISSION.....



Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Peter MacKay arrives at Camp Nathan Smith, Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (KPRT) for the dedication of the Glyn Berry Room. The KPRT located at Camp Nathan Smith in the heart of Kandahar City is comprised of approximately 250 soldiers, drawn largely from Land Forces Western Area (LFWA) and 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (1 CMBG) based in Shilo, Manitoba and Edmonton, Alberta. Task Force Afghanistan is part of Canada's contribution to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Canadians and their international partners are helping Afghan people to rebuild their lives, their families, their communities and their nation. The mission is to improve the quality of life of Afghan people by providing a secure environment in which Afghan society can recover from more than 25 years of conflict.

Integration

Coordination and collaboration with other institutions involved in counterinsurgency issues (senior service colleges, theater COIN academies, schools and centers) ensures a consistency of doctrine, training, and education. It also promotes awareness of future trends and projections for the contemporary operational environment; underscores the importance of understanding the nature of insurgencies and the need to develop effective counterinsurgency strategies supported by appropriate DOTMLPF capabilities.

- Monthly secure Video Teleconferences with stakeholders
 - o Theater COIN “Centers for Excellence” (CFE)
 - o Combat Training Centers
 - o Service Irregular Warfare Centers
 - o 1st Army
 - o CAC Organizations
- Interagency Collaboration

Historic and recent experience has shown that a whole government approach to COIN is vital for success. COIN and COIN-like conflicts have a host of subtle dimensions that must be addressed by other than military means, but which the military must understand, appreciate, and incorporate into operationally planning without prejudice. Much of what needs to be done in COIN environments lies in the realm of public diplomacy and reconstruction conducted by non-military agencies.

A WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT MISSION....

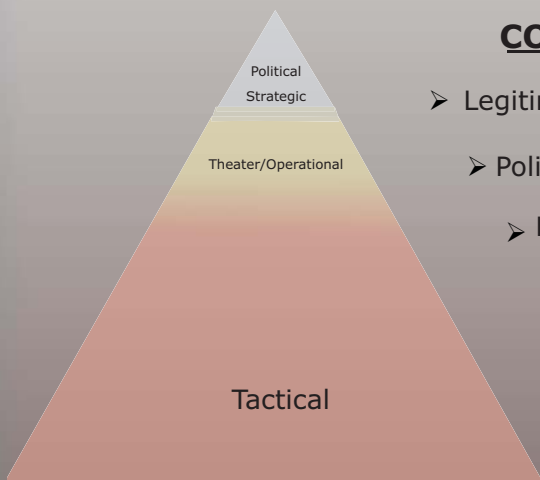


Some past practitioners of COIN have asserted that a COIN conflict is 80% political and 20% military. Though this estimated ratio cannot be mathematically confirmed, the comments of a large number of veterans verify that something like that proportional distribution of emphasis does exist. Most returning Commanders and other Soldiers have asserted that most of what they found themselves doing in their COIN experience was non-military in a conventional sense, but also vitally necessary.

Moreover, many critics of the current war's management have noted that the main burden for such non-military activities has fallen on the military in areas well outside its traditional areas of expertise in such roles as public diplomacy, and carrying the main burden of reconstruction and provision of aid. This latter observation signals that there is a great deal to be done to rectify misdistribution of responsibility with the U.S. government for COIN, which in large measure remains a key deficiency in our national ability to effectively prosecute COIN conflicts. The analytical construct the COIN Center uses for continued analysis of distributed responsibility for issues in a COIN environment is the acronym "DDD" or the "3Ds": Diplomacy (State); Development (USAID); and Defense (DoD).

The Challenge to the Way We Think

How we tend to view things



COIN Principles

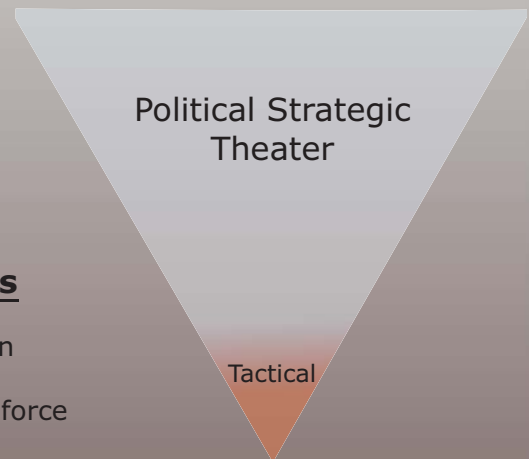
- Legitimacy is main objective
- Political factors are primary
- Long term commitment

COIN Imperatives

- Manage Information
- Use appropriate force
- Empower lower levels

* FM 3-24

How the insurgent views things



Compression of Strategic, Operational, & Tactical levels

To deal competitively with adversaries we face in similar situations in the future, the U.S. must have exercised and seasoned collaborative partnerships within the interagency with support from the best and brightest drawn from not only government but private sector industry and academia. Successful COIN will require a myriad of cultural lenses to understand the perceptions of all the stakeholders. The challenge is understanding how factors relate and influence each other – an adaptive system of systems. Preparing for such conflicts will require greatly increased sophistication in distinguishing between solving the problems we can solve versus the problems we should solve.

However, such collaborative relationships will take time to develop. That said, in an area of persistent conflict, preparation for dealing with determined enemies who rely on asymmetric approaches to attacking the U.S. and its interests requires a proactive approach now, not a knee jerk reaction amidst the confusion and frustration of some future crises.

Consequently, one of the chief objectives and purposes of the COIN Center is to work towards establishing and institutionalizing an interagency planning framework that promotes intellectual collaboration across a range of agencies both within as well as outside of government. To this end, it is seeking to establish relationships and identify opportunities for collaboration with experts from the military, U.S. government, academic, and private sector to ensure the development of well thought out solutions.



HADITHA, Iraq-Samir Miflih Hamid, a local program manager in Haditha, Iraq, speaks with members of the Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team and US Agency for International Development in a newly refurbished technical school Monday. The ePRT and USAID members have funded more than \$2 million in projects since February in efforts to rebuild Iraq. The technical school will offer machinery and mechanical classes to both men and women once completed. , Cpl. Shawn Coolman, USMC



Service Centers

- USA & USMC COIN CENTER ★
- USAF Irregular Warfare Center ★
- USMC Irregular Warfare Center ★
- U.S. SOCOM J10 ★
- U.S. JFCOM IW Center ★

COIN Centers for Excellence ★

- Camp Taji, Iraq
- Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan

Combat Training Centers ●

- National Training Center (NTC)
- 29 Palms (Marine)
- Joint Warfighting Center (JWFC)
- Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC)
- Joint Maneuver Readiness Center (JRMCM)

FORSCOM/1st Army ●

- FT Dix

Academia ●

- Harvard
- U.S. Military Academy (USMA)
- John Hopkins University
- Kansas State University
- University of Kansas
- University of Alabama
- Pritzker Military Library
- Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI)
- Consortium for Complex Operations (CCO)



International Partners ●

- Patewawa, Canada
- Shiloh, Canada
- Kingston, Canada
- Land Warfare Center, United Kingdom
- NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, Netherlands

Media ●

- Wall Street Journal
- Chicago Tribune
- Kansas City Star
- Congressional Quarterly
- Asharq Alawast

Think Tanks ●

- RAND
- U.S. Institute for Peace (USIP)
- McCormick Foundation

Outreach

The Coin Center establishes and maintains professional, collaborative relationships with joint, interagency, multinational, educational, intellectual, research, media, nongovernmental, and international organizations that have a professional interest in COIN to foster a better understanding of insurgencies and how to counter them effectively. Maintains connections with COIN centers for excellence in Afghanistan and Iraq in support of campaign planning. Sponsor/participate in COIN conferences.

- Sponsor COIN symposia
- Participation in Consortium for Complex Operations (CCO)
- Maintains public and internal working webpages
 - o <http://www.coin.army.mil>
 - o [https:// www.combinedarmscenter.army.mil/SO/COIN/default.aspx](https://www.combinedarmscenter.army.mil/SO/COIN/default.aspx)
- Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) COIN Forum
- Sponsors professional writing for publication on COIN topics
- Partnership with academia and think tanks
- Media



COL Daniel Roper, Director of the USA/USMC COIN Center, participating in a forum about the "War on Terror" at the Pritzker Military Library's Front & Center with John Callaway (January 31, 2008)



COL Roper joined the Roe Conn Show to discuss the positive progress made in Iraq and Afghanistan (January 31, 2008)

Media Outreach

"This is a democracy, and a free press is the fundamental underpinning of everything that we stand for, fight for, and believe in. Now, it doesn't make any difference then whether you like the media or you don't like the media, they're here to stay. It is healthy for the American military to be exposed through the media to the public. After all, they pay our salaries. The American people need to know what happens in war. Perhaps if more people understood the horror, we would be less inclined to go to war." USMC General Walter Boomer, "Stop Whining" Proceedings (July 1998).

"It was the ethical in war, and the process on which the command mainly depended for victory on the Arab front. The printing press is the greatest weapon in the armoury of the modern commander, and the commanders of the Arab army being amateurs in the art, began their war in the atmosphere of the 20th century, and thought of their weapons without prejudice, not distinguishing one from another socially." T.E. Lawrence, Fourteenth Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, 1929.

Doctrine

COIN Doctrine Implementation and promulgation of “Best Practice” COIN Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP)

The COIN Center aims to promote, within the military and the interagency, a mastery of COIN operations by providing subject matter expertise to organizations integrating COIN doctrine in training and education curricula; and facilitating promulgation of state-of-the-art COIN material through discussions, dissemination through writing and on-line web portal exchange, and distribution through other media.

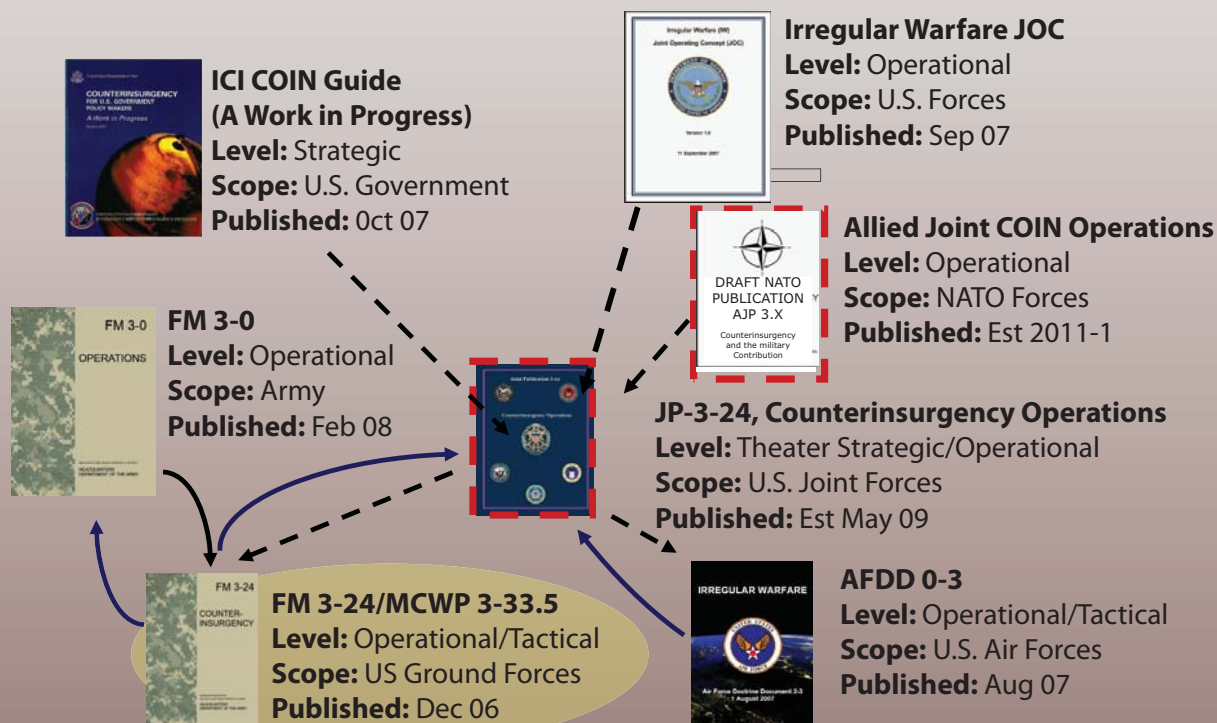
- **Strategic-level**

- o Contributor to U.S. Government Senior Leader Guide to Counterinsurgency

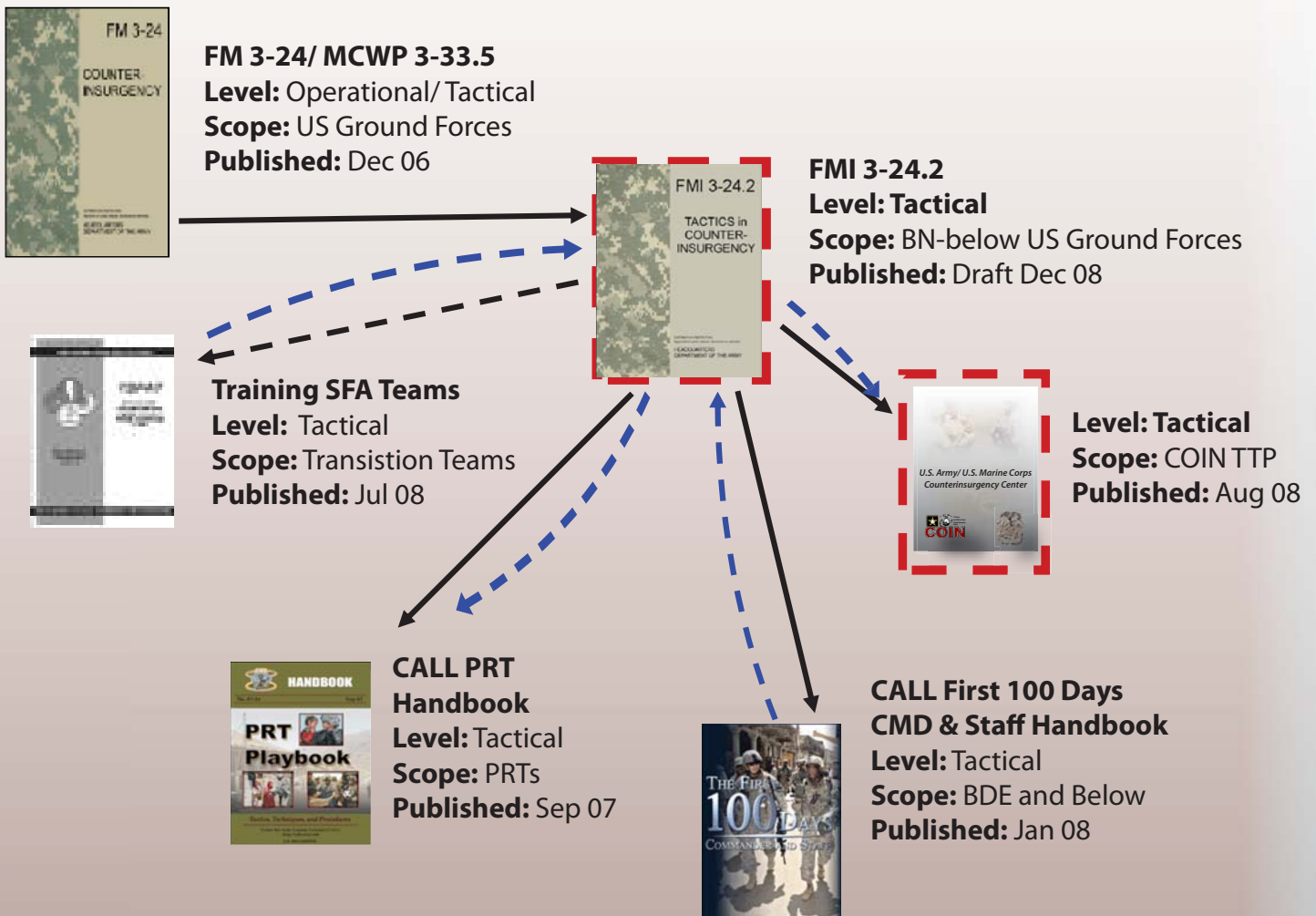
- **Operational-level**

- o Partner with Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD) in writing JP 3-24
- o Partner with CADD in writing NATO COIN Doctrine

Strategic/Operational Level



Tactical/TTP Level



- **Tactical-level**

- Proponent for COIN Leaders Handbook
- Partner with U.S. Army Infantry School in writing FMI 3-24.2 (Tactics in COIN)

Research/ Professional Publication

As with any other profession dealing with a specific common challenge, the military needs the best and brightest minds to research, analyze, debate, and publish their conclusions to expand the COIN professional body of knowledge upon which doctrine is written, training developed, and operational planning is based. Moreover, such knowledge together with the source material from which it was drawn must be appropriately preserved, distributed, and archived to ensure knowledge of COIN “best practices” is preserved for the future after the institutional memory has faded. It is only through archiving objective research that we can come to reliably anticipate the requirements for effectively preparing for and adequately resourcing future contingencies.

Research

To the above end, the Director of COIN serves as a member of the Combined Arms Center Executive Editorial Board that develops the Commanding General’s priority research list. In addition, the COIN Center participates in activities conducting research including:

- SAIC DOTMLPF study
- Doctrine, Organization, Training, DOTMLPF Gap Analysis
- Theater visits
- Collection and dissemination of unit deployment preparation lessons learned

Writing for Professional Publication

Additionally, the COIN Center sponsors and mentors researchers doing monograph and master’s thesis work on COIN issues, COIN capability assessments, and best practices from operational theaters to identify gaps across the DOTMLPF. These include:

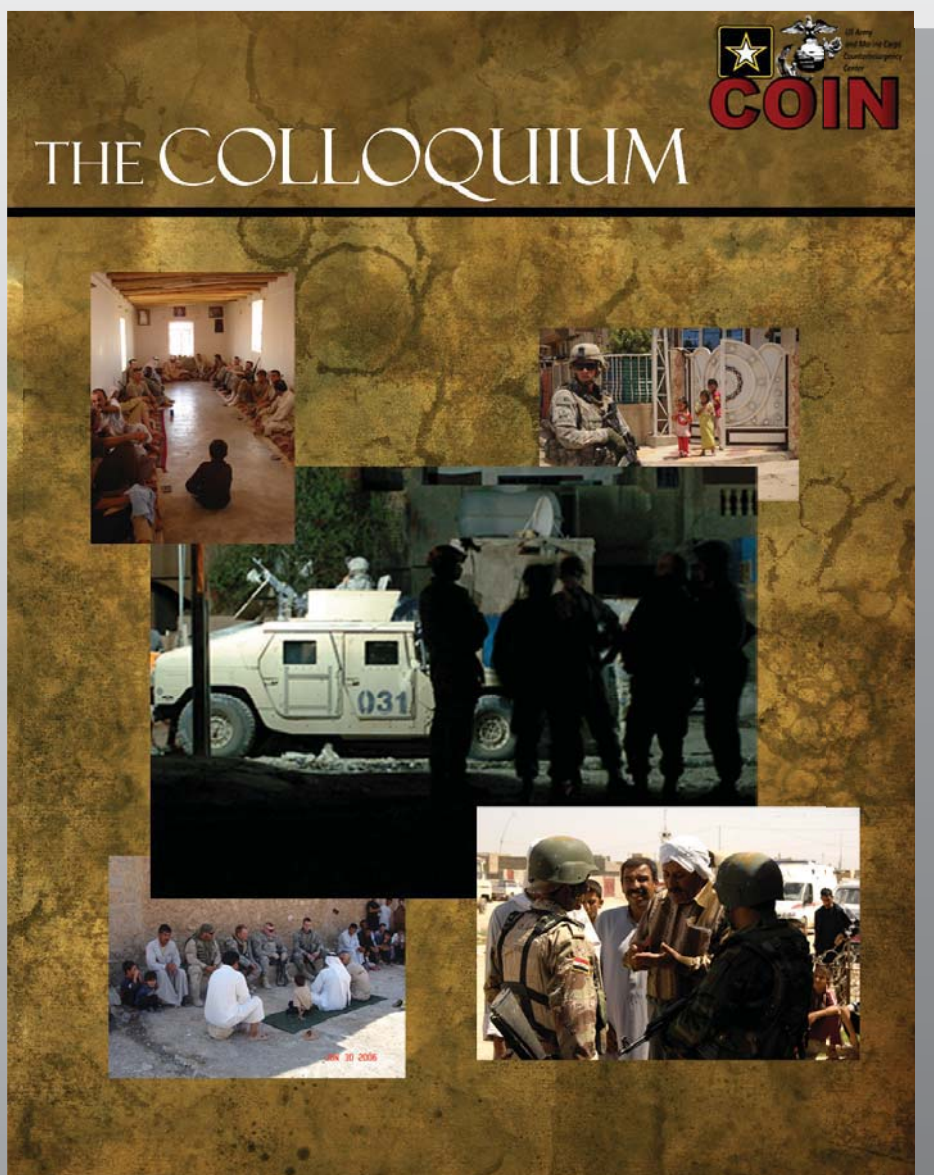
- Sponsorship/Mentorship of COIN-related Monographs
 - o SAMS
 - o MMAS
 - o War College KSIL topics
- Partnership with and/or assistance to members of:
 - o Academia
 - o Think Tanks
 - o Media projects

THE COLLOQUIUM

To provide an additional avenue for authors to publish their research, the COIN Center also maintains an on-line electronic journal named the COIN COLLOQUIUM . This on-line journal is linked to a discussion board which enables readers of the articles published to make comments or provide additional contributions to expand the knowledge pertaining to the subject of each topic addressed in articles.

Subscribers to the COIN Research page are offered the opportunity to suggest topics for research, provide research work to the COIN Center for consideration of publication, and publish articles on the COIN website.

Additionally, the COIN Center directly assists a limited number of scholars with projects of special interest.



<http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/BLOG/blogs/colloquium/default.aspx>

Advise

Acts as a COIN consultant to training centers, and to leader development and training programs.

- Quarterly assistance visits to Combat Training Centers (CTC)
 - o National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California
 - o Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana
 - o Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), Fort Irwin, California
- Leader Workshops – 2 and 5 day courses
- Provide land force representative to Consortium for Complex Operations (CCO)
- Provide support to school-houses and training/curriculum developers



COL David Maxwell, former Commander of the Philippines Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSTOF) provides a detailed lessons-learned briefing to students during the U.S. Army/U.S. Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Leader Workshop, 12 Aug 2008. Maxwell is currently the G-3 of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, NC. The workshop was held at the Battle Command Training Center (BCTC) from 11-14 August with more than 90 students attending.

A WARRIOR'S MISSION....



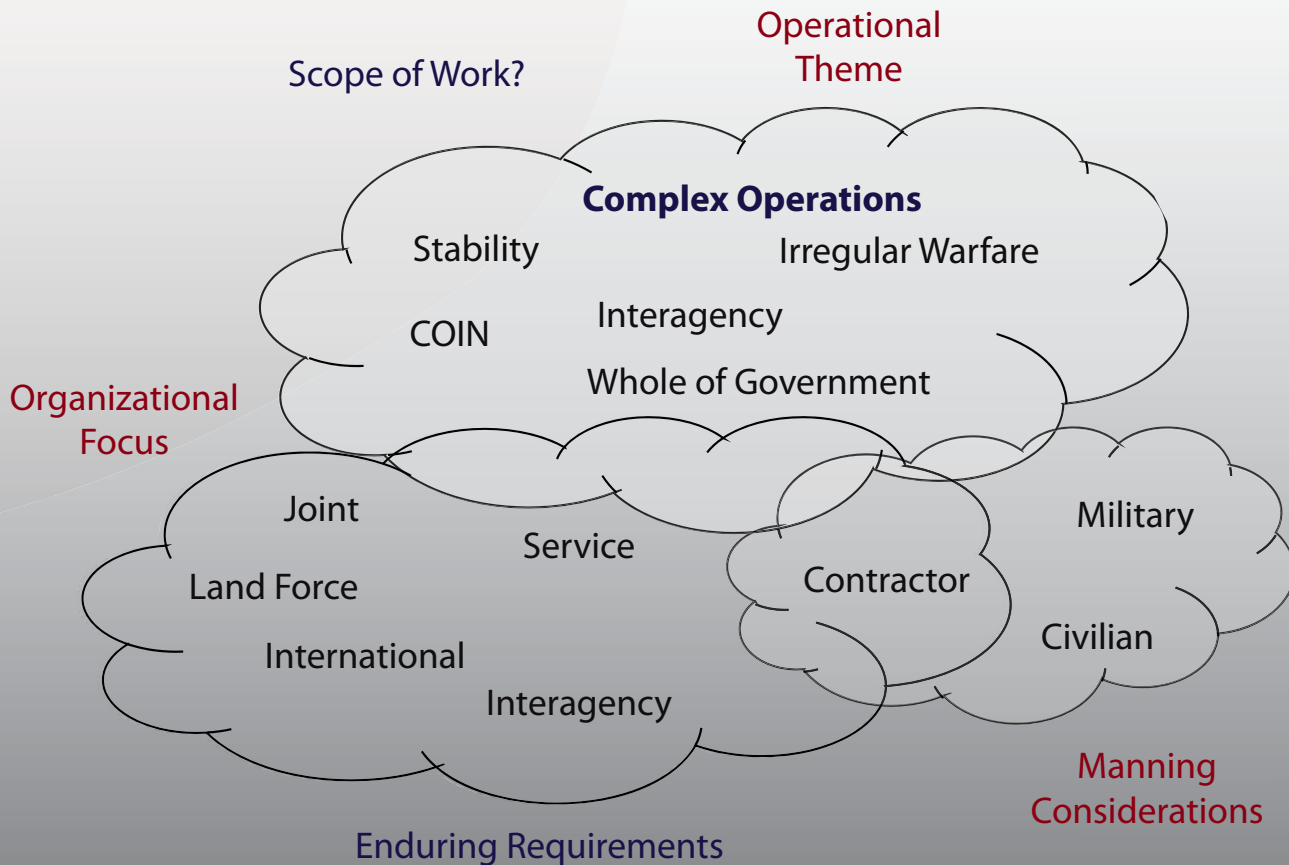
U.S. Army Spc. Chris Avila (right) and other soldiers engage Taliban forces during a halt to repair a disabled vehicle near the village of Allah Say, Afghanistan, on Aug. 20, 2007. Avila is assigned to Foxtrot Company, 2nd Battalion, 82nd Aviation Brigade.

DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Michael L. Casteel, U.S. Army. (Released)

"In modern warfare, we are not actually grappling with an army organized along traditional lines, but with a few armed elements acting clandestinely within a population manipulated by a special organization....In seeking a solution, it is essential to realize that in modern warfare we are not up against just a few armed bands spread across the territory, but rather against an armed clandestine organization whose essential role is to impose its will upon the population. Victory will be obtained only through the complete destruction of that organization. This is the master concept that must guide us in our study of modern warfare." Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare A French View of Counterinsurgency, (Praeger Security International: Connecticut, 2006) 7.

"If the enemy comes out to fight he will be met with a disciplined lethal ferocity he has never before endured. If he plays the sly game of intimidating, beheading and torturing the innocent people of Iraq when he thinks we're not looking, he will be met with a cunning, a sophistication and a relentlessness that will lead to his utter defeat. This is my promise to you as your commander and from all of us to our honored dead." LTC Rod Coffey, Commander, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, The "Wolf-pack" Diyala Province, Iraq, 22 Jan 2008

FUTURE FOCUS



Clearly, the global security environment is changing. Much of this change points to a future shaped by mounting stress and volatility from failing or radicalized states in the developing world fueled by great misery and popular dissatisfaction due to the competition for resources produced by explosive birthrates and shrinking resources. Solutions to the problems that grow out of such conditions will demand greater international cooperation as well as more efficient and synchronized cooperation among U.S. agencies at large to stop the emergence of insurgencies before they take root. The COIN Center is at the heart of examining and analyzing such a future, and helping the Nation and its allies to prepare for successful steps for dealing with it.

Improve Education

Adjusting to the COIN challenge has not been easy for either the U.S. military or the U.S. government. In many ways, the modern COIN threat is a product of globalization where greater ease of transportation, more porous national borders, fundraising, recruitment efforts, public diplomacy, and propaganda by insurgents over the Internet have made insurgencies transnational in ways that are entirely new. Dealing effectively with COIN requires a significant change in mindset. Among the priority objectives of the COIN Center is to assist the Army and Marine Corps to incorporate and assimilate the body of knowledge outlined in FM 3-24 (Counterinsurgency). Additionally, the COIN Center is playing a key role in driving the next evolution of FM 3-24 as experience generates greater understanding of insurgency in the 21st Century. The COIN Center is also a key sponsor of an entirely new addition to the military Field Manual library – FM 3-24.2 (Tactical Counterinsurgency). Publication of this FM will provide COIN guidance tailored to battalions and below.

Upon request, the COIN Center provides seminars and workshops to assist training centers and unit leadership in the development of their COIN-indoctrination programs. The focus of such programs is to help shift the mindset of leaders, trainers, staffs, and Soldiers from conventional approaches to understanding and planning for conflict to ways that will enable participants to think and fight unconventionally in a COIN environment. The COIN center also provides educational expertise to Command & General Staff College, School of Advanced Military Studies, and Primary Care Clinic as they integrate COIN instruction into their curricula.

Investment in leader development and education is among the most important actions in preparing for future conflict. COIN requires deep and detailed context- and culture-specific understanding of local and regional conditions. Success requires leaders who can effectively understand their environment and the impact of their actions on that environment. Consequently, COIN leaders must learn to be both critical thinkers and innovative problem solvers that focus on “how” to think when confronting new and unfamiliar challenges rather than relying on rote memorization of “what” to think.

Additionally, for the U.S. to realistically deal with the most likely security threats of the future, COIN instruction must be integrated into Army and Marine leadership training at every level. Those who lead in COIN conflicts must be trained to be “Balanced Warriors,” capable of leading in multiple environments without necessarily striving to be multi-skilled in every dimension. Producing leaders who have been taught to be culturally attuned, as well as skillful and adaptable organizers, trainers, and leaders is the goal. Consequently, training, leader development, and education must increasingly focus on how to think about the environment in which a leader’s unit is to operate in and determine what must be done to most effectively influence the actors who inhabit that environment. Moreover, such COIN training must in some way be standardized in order to align methods and approaches across institutions to ensure progressive and sequential training as units prepare to deploy.



John Jeans, of the Inma Agribusiness Program, and Navy Cmdr. Kevin Anderson inspect a lettuce field in Ramadi, Iraq, as part of the effort to revive agribusiness in Anbar Province.

Photo courtesy of Inma Agribusiness Program



“One of the most important lessons of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is that military success is not sufficient to win: economic development, institution-building and the rule of law, promoting internal reconciliation, good governance, providing basic services to the people, training and equipping indigenous military and police forces, strategic communications, and more – these, along with security, are essential ingredients for long-term success.” Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, 26 Nov 07, Landon Lecture, Kansas State University.

AN ENDURING MISSION....



A Marine with the 3rd Mobile Assault Platoon, Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, overlooks the open desert south of the town of Ubaydi, Iraq, Sept. 21, 2005, in western Al Anbar Province. Marines and Iraqi Soldiers conducted a five-day counterinsurgency operation in Ubaydi, a former insurgent stronghold about 15 miles from the Syrian border. After spending seven months of routing out insurgents and stabilizing the Al Qa'im region, located along the Euphrates River in northwestern Al Anbar Province near the Syrian border, the Camp Lejeune, N.C.-based Marines say they're leaving the region in better shape than when they arrived last year. During the past seven months, the Marines have brought stability back to the people of western Iraq by training Iraqi Army Soldiers and ridding the region of anti-Iraqi forces, thanks to an aggressive counterinsurgency campaign, which included Operation Steel Curtain in November 2005 - a major offensive to disrupt insurgent activity along the Syrian border which saw hundreds of insurgents killed or captured. "We're able to progress now with getting consistent (electrical) power, free and clean running water for all the villages up there, as well as starting to rebuild the hospitals and the schoolhouses that have suffered over the last three years," said Col. Stephen W. Davis, who commanded all Marine forces in western Al Anbar Province for the past year, during a Pentagon press briefing last month.

(Official U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Jerad W. Alexander)



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