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Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO)

**Lessons and Observations from the NEO of the
American Embassy, Beirut, Lebanon, conducted by
24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable),
15 July – 20 August, 2006**

6 February 2007

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Executive Summary

A MCCLL team conducted interviews in Bahrain and Kuwait from 17-25 October 2006 of key 24th MEU (SOC) personnel to include the Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, Operations Officer and personnel from the Forward Command Element (FCE) and the Evacuation Control Center (ECC). A supporting effort collected interviews from the Commander, Task Force (CTF)-59, his N-3, and N-4. Unit after action reviews (AARs) and briefs were also provided to the collection team. Intent was to document lessons and observations from the non-combatant evacuation (NEO) of the American Embassy, Beirut, Lebanon, conducted between 15 July and 20 August 2006.

Command Relationships

CTF-59 was directed to conduct the NEO, and established its headquarters at Royal Air Force (RAF) Akrotiri, Cyprus. Naval Forces, Central Command (NAVCENT) delegated operational control (OPCON) of units/forces and attachments, to include 24th MEU and Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON-4), to CTF-59. NAVCENT established a supported/supporting relationship between 24th MEU and Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON)-4. While CTF-59 was not a joint task force, a joint operating area (JOA) was established to delineate CTF-59 battle space from that of 6th Fleet.

Following are key lessons and observations from commanders and staffs of 24th MEU and CTF-59.

Command Element

- Military forces supporting NEO should seek to improve cooperation and synergy with other nations that are evacuating their own citizens.
- Maximize intelligence collectors ashore.
- Consider the transfer of evacuees to other ships at sea.
- Department of State (DOS) must negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) or equivalent diplomatic note with the host nation to facilitate Department of Defense (DoD) support.
- Obtain the local embassy security plan during the NEO planning phase.
- Coordination with the EUCOM Coalition Coordination Cell (CCC) enabled deconfliction between U.S. and allied forces operating in the vicinity of Lebanon.
- Daily CENTCOM video teleconferences facilitated the flow of information.

Forward Command Element

- The DOS was the lead federal agency, with DoD in support throughout the NEO.
- Early coordination and contracting of local busses avoided ceding scarce resources to other evacuating countries.
- Coordinate with other countries for evacuee boat spaces.
- Plan for alternate locations to evacuate American citizens (AMCITS).
- Be prepared for AMCITS with special needs.
- Two principal tasks for the battalion landing team (BLT) security force were to conduct security patrols in and around the embassy and provide helicopter landing zone (HLZ) support.

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- Planning must specify reporting procedures through one chain of command.

MEU Service Support Group (MSSG). MSSG must prepare to assume all functions of an ECC to include security.

Evacuation Control Center (ECC)

- Embassy Consular Section makes the final decision on who is evacuated. As the consular section in Beirut did not have enough personnel to process all AMCITS, the ECC was able to assume this primary function with Consular oversight.
- Principal evacuee complaint was lack of information and instructions. The use of bullhorns and Marines walking through the crowd to provide information had a calming effect.
- A chaplain at the ECC is vital.
- Be prepared for food/water shortages.
- Evacuation via landing craft utility (LCUs) was more efficient than using landing craft air cushioned (LCAC) due to beach availability and ease of loading at this particular site.
- Use an evacuee bracelet to facilitate processing.

Force Protection. The semi-permissive environment combined with the professional embassy security force, and cooperation of the Lebanese police, enabled the MEU to comply with the embassy's request to minimize the military's footprint in the area.

Pre-Deployment Training Program (PTP). MEU pre-deployment training provides a baseline from which to make adjustments based on host-nation constraints/restraints and the situation.

- Conduct three to four NEO exercises during workups, integrating ambassadors or DOS officials.
- Maximize training with tactical satellite (TacSat) communication assets.
- Integrate chaplain into applicable scenarios.

Conclusion. What started as a 5,000-evacuee requirement evolved into the safe evacuation of 15,000 American citizens. The ability to anticipate NEO requirements and commence planning combined with the rapid deployment of the FCE, set the conditions for successful completion of NEO objectives.

The remainder of this report discusses these and other topics in greater detail.

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Prologue

The observations, analyses and assessments summarized in this document are based on the candid comments and reports of our Marines and their leaders who supported the nation's efforts to evacuate American citizens from Lebanon during the hostilities between the state of Israel and the Hezbollah organization. Several of the comments made by these Marines were candid, direct and often forcefully to the point. We have done little to soften the intent or tone of their comments. The Marine Corps has an enviable reputation for innovation and adaptation, and maintains the highest standards of excellence in the art of warfare. It is with a conscious intent to maintain this reputation that the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned offers the observations and commentary within this report.

Comments and feedback are welcome and encouraged. It is recognized that what works in one area of operations (AO) may not be effective in another AO or conflict. Please take the information provided, build on it, and report back on its applicability.

This is one of many documents and briefings covering a wide variety of topics that have been put together by the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. These collations of lessons and observations are not sole source or authoritative, but are intended as a means of informing the decision-making process and effecting needed changes in our institution.



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Background

On 12 July 2006, *Hezbollah* conducted a rocket attack on the northern part of the state of Israel. The American Embassy/State Department (DOS) requested Department of Defense (DoD) support on 14 July, resulting in a U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) Execute Order (EXORD) issued on 15 July.¹ The EXORD led to the following 24th MEU FRAGO/mission statement:

“On order, 24 MEU (SOC) conducts evacuation of approximately 25 American citizens (AMCITS) from the U.S. Embassy (American Embassy – AMEMB) Beirut, Lebanon, to Cyprus in order to support Department of State (DOS) authorized departure. Be prepared to support follow-on evacuation operations of designated personnel.”²

At the time, 24th MEU was physically located in Jordan, participating in Exercise INFINITE MOONLIGHT. The FRAGO initiated the movement of the MEU’s forward command element (FCE), a security force (SECFOR) from Battalion Landing Team 1/8 (BLT 1/8), and a MEU Service Support Group 24 (MSSG 24) Evacuation Control Center (ECC) Detachment. These elements boarded three MEU CH-53 helicopters and two VMGR KC-130 aircraft at and flew from Jordan’s King Faisal Air Base to the British Royal Air Force (RAF) Akrotiri Air Base in Cyprus.

RAF Akrotiri was used as an intermediate support base (ISB) throughout the conduct of the Lebanon NEO. The MEU initiated the complete backload of personnel and equipment from Jordan to the Iwo Jima Expeditionary Strike Group’s amphibious shipping. The FCE, ECC and SECFOR were inserted into the U.S. Embassy Beirut on 16 July via helicopter, and began to coordinate the evacuation with the U.S. Embassy.

On 21 July, the Iwo Jima ESG arrived off the coast of Lebanon to execute the evacuation of American citizens and designated third-country nationals (TCNs).³ CTF 59 assumed operational control (OPCON) of the 24th MEU and the Iwo Jima Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG). Although a Joint Task Force (JTF) was not established, a Joint Operating Area (JOA) was set up to delineate CTF-59 battle space from that of U.S. European Command’s 6th Fleet. The JOA included Cyprus and Lebanon as well as the contiguous waters between them.⁴ See Figure 1.

On 20 August 2006, 24th MEU and the Iwo Jima ESG were relieved by U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and re-deployed to the USCENTCOM area of responsibility. During the 33 days of NEO support, the 24th MEU processed 14,776 American citizens and 499 third-country nationals from the Beirut Embassy and nearby port facility.⁵

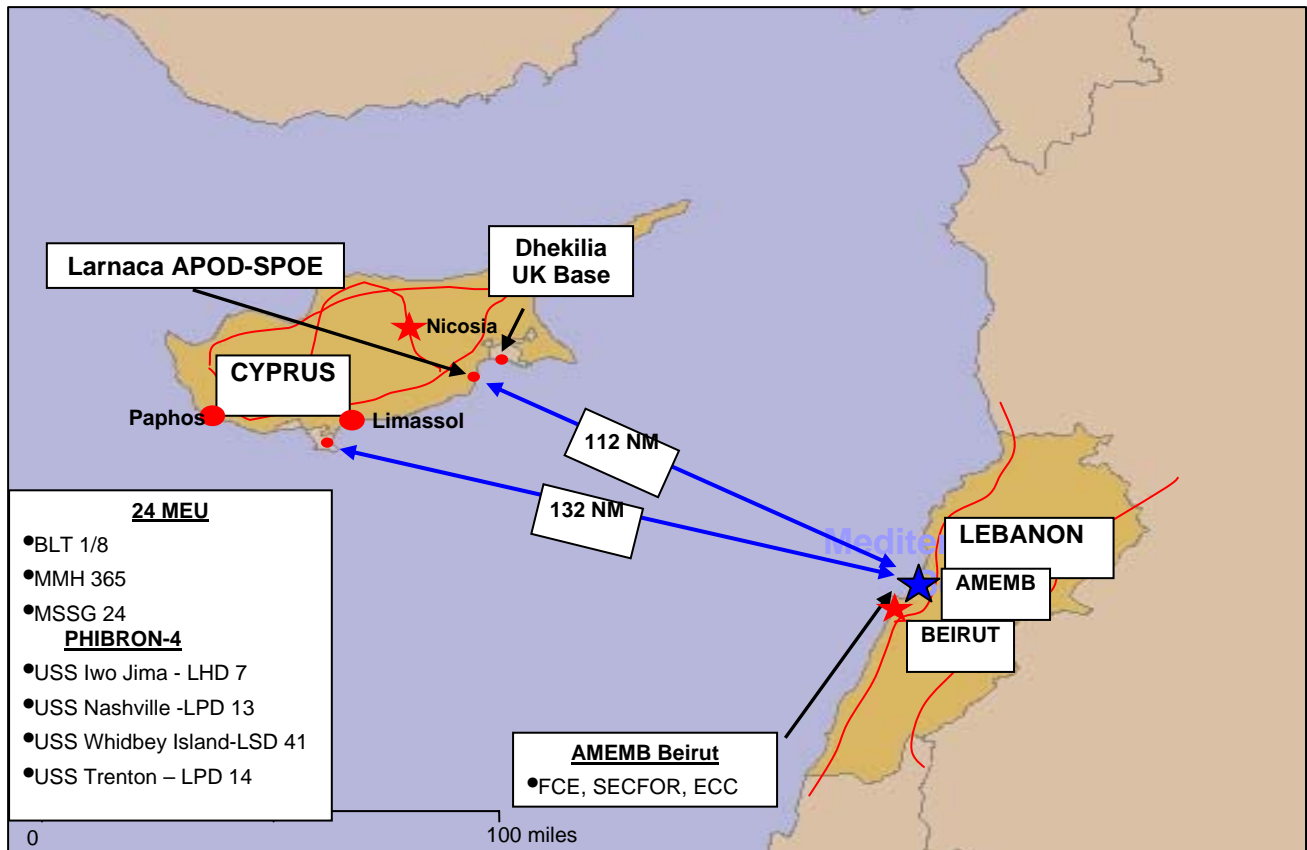


Figure 1. Joint Operations Area⁶

Task Organization and Command Relationships

“The key to the Lebanon operation was the enormous flexibility of the Navy-Marine Corps Team to execute this mission in a come-as-you-are and timely manner reminiscent of General Krulak’s three-block war.” BGen Carl Jensen, Commander, Task Force 59.⁷

The Lebanon NEO Execute Order (EXORD) was approved by the Secretary of Defense on 15 July 2006. The EXORD approved execution of CDRUSCENTCOM’s proposed course of action to evacuate AMCITS and designated third-country nationals to a designated safe haven; it also designated CDRUSCENTCOM as the supported commander and tasked the Joint Staff to establish a Joint Operating Area. CDRUSCENTCOM then designated Commander, Navy Component, U. S. Central Command, (CDRUSNAVCENT) as the supported component commander. The embedded NAVCENT ESG (CTF-59) staff, with Brigadier General Jensen as its Commander, was directed to conduct the NEO. CDRUSNAVCENT delegated OPCON of organic units/forces and attachments – to include 24th MEU and Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON-4) - to CTF-59⁸ (See Figure 2). Additionally⁹:

- The CTF-59 staff was not established as a joint task force (JTF).
- NAVCENT established a supported/supporting relationship between 24th MEU and PHIBRON-4.

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- CTF-59 was assigned TACON of assets chopped from 6th Fleet (*USS Gonzales and Barry*) as well as High Speed Vessel (HSV) *Swift* and civilian contract ships (*Orient Queen, Ramah, Vittoria M*).
- The USS Trenton was transferred TACON to PHIBRON-4 for the conduct of the NEO.

The CTF-59 command element (CE) did not embark; instead it established a headquarters at RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus. CTF-59 determined that command and control was not required afloat and that he could better exercise control ashore at the ISB in Cyprus, where he could directly observe operations and logistics support and easily coordinate high-level issues with the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia.¹⁰

CTF-59 saw its role as one of resolving high-level issues that impacted the NEO and allowing 24th MEU to conduct operations with minimal interference from higher headquarters and other government agencies.¹¹ During the planning process, the 24th MEU experienced some initial friction in reporting to CTF-59 instead of directly to NAVCENT. Essentially, CENTCOM orders went through two layers of command (NAVCENT and CTF-59) before being received by the MEU with no changes. Conversely, 24th MEU developed courses of action (COAs) and concepts of operations (CONOPS) that were processed to the combatant commander staff, with only minimal [administrative] changes by CTF-59 or NAVCENT. Thus, the extra layers of command did not appear to contribute to or detract from planning and execution of the NEO.¹²

Other units and detachments included air elements from the USAF 352d Special Operations Group and a U.S. Army Psychological Operations Detachment. CTF-59 transferred the 352d air assets TACON to 24th MEU for the conduct of the NEO and integration into a single air plan for the designated joint operations area (JOA).¹³

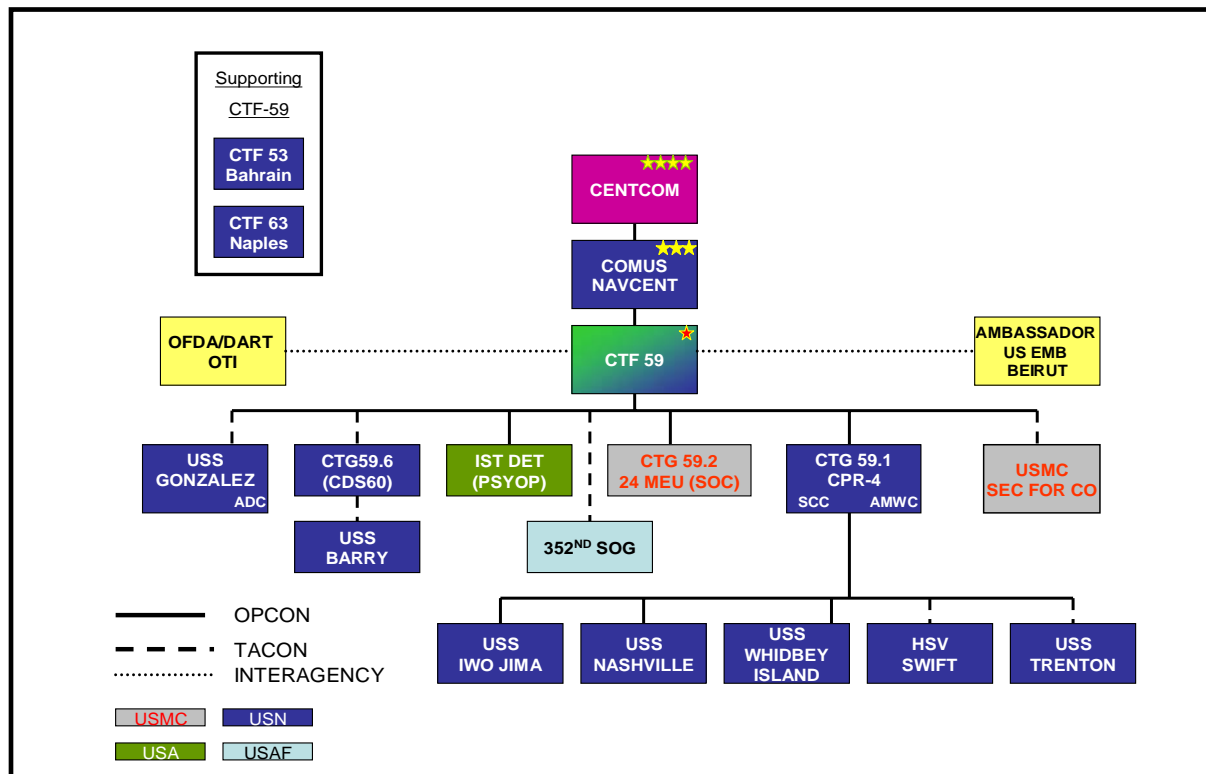


Figure 2. Task Force Organization¹⁴

Interagency Process

Interviewees stated that overall, there appeared to be a lack of interoperability between the Department of State (DOS) and the Department of Defense (DoD). Throughout the process, DOS made numerous requests for support from DoD. For example, DOS requested U.S. Naval vessels to provide escort for international tankers delivering fuel. In another instance, DOS asked for additional military helicopter support for the embassy – not necessarily to assist with the evacuation, but to provide post-evacuation support made necessary by the closing of the Beirut airport. These requirements prompted the DOS to prepare a memorandum – a talking document – that had to be staffed by DoD through the Joint Staff and back. The approval process for the DOS requests was restricted and slow. It appeared that the DOS was not very proactive in supporting the embassy’s efforts to overcome its challenges. DOS organized a Task Force Lebanon -- located in Washington, D.C. – to facilitate coordination with DoD, but it reportedly didn’t achieve positive results.¹⁵

Another issue was the overflow of evacuees at the intermediate staging base (ISB) in Cyprus. The 24th MEU raised concerns early on in the operation with regard to the potential overflow of evacuees at the ISB, as did the U.S. Embassy in Cyprus, but the topic was not addressed until it became a crisis. The issue was ultimately resolved through airlift provided by U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) and the opening of Incirlik, Turkey as an additional ISB. One interviewee recommended early identification and preparation of an additional ISB to provide overflow capacity.¹⁶

An evacuation this size required close coordination and planning between DoD and DOS in order to identify and validate requirements early in the process and allow the time necessary to allocate DoD resources.¹⁷

Additionally, U.S. embassy personnel and DOS representatives were not familiar with the capabilities that a MEU could employ in support of a NEO. An impromptu education process was required before the capabilities of the MEU were understood by the embassy staff. Pre-deployment briefs, or FCE visits to potential crisis-area embassies would increase interoperability between DOS and the MEU staff.¹⁸

Interagency coordination at the ground level was effective. With the Ambassador focused on the diplomatic effort, the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) and the FCE OIC established an excellent working relationship that set conditions for success. The DCM supervised the embassy personnel assisting in the evacuation, while the FCE OIC focused on the military effort. Daily coordination meetings facilitated information flow, while an embassy LNO from the MEU staff allowed the FCE OIC to conduct reconnaissance in the area. A space was provided at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) office with DIA computer system capability that facilitated interface with the DOS system. A direct telephone link was established with the DCM for 24-hour connectivity.¹⁹

Host Nation Support

Host-nation (HN) support was a critical element in the success of the NEO. Critical decisions were made based on HN recommendations - for example, the site selection of the Evacuation Control Center (ECC). Situated along the coast, the site facilitated LCU/LCAC operations and also contained a landing zone (LZ) capable of handling two CH-46 helicopters. Additionally, the FCE coordinated with the Lebanese armed forces to provide a mechanized company for security during the on-load of evacuees, permitting the reduction of the MEU’s footprint and preserving

the MEU's combat power for the possibility of a more dynamic evacuation in southern Lebanon. Informing the Lebanese government of the introduction of U.S. forces was accomplished through the Ambassador.²⁰

The U.S. Embassy employed a well-trained and robust security force that included proficient Surveillance Detection Teams (SDT). They operated with a minimal footprint, yet had superior knowledge of the local area, its residents and potential threats. Some members had a 20-year history of working for the embassy and thus were reliable sources. The FCE OIC maintained continuous liaison with the SDT OIC, resulting in an accurate intelligence assessment of the area around the embassy compound. Additionally, SDT personnel assisted with the evacuation process.²¹

Liaison Officers (LNO)

The Lebanon NEO was a multi-national rescue operation. The 24th MEU was involved in the rescue of Canadians, Australians, Dutch and Greeks. The few third-country liaison officers that were assigned aboard USN ships proved invaluable in coordinating evacuations, but there was always uncertainty in knowing how many nations were trying to participate. Coordination with all of these nations proved difficult without LNOs. The efforts of the different organizations were not synchronized effectively. A NIPR or internet-based exchange, combined with an overall coordination cell, would have alleviated at least some of the overall confusion.²²

The 24th MEU attempted several times to establish a liaison with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), headquartered on Lebanon's southern coast, adjacent to Israel. A MEU LNO positioned at UNIFIL could have potentially collected information on the locations of AMCITS and TCNs in the southern region and facilitated possible follow-on humanitarian relief missions. UNIFIL rejected the proposal on the grounds that it would inhibit their monitoring mission. Procedures for establishing LNOs must be coordinated through the U.S. Mission to the UN in order to facilitate assignment of LNOs to UN force headquarters.²³

Command Element

Planning

"We didn't deploy the FCE until we got the execute order to conduct the NEO, but we prepared for that eventuality. That whole rapid response planning process (R2P2) only works if you lean into it and anticipate events." LtCol Michael Saleh, Operations Officer, 24th MEU.²⁴

The initial operational planning team (OPT) was established while the MEU was training in Jordan. As events unfolded in Lebanon, the Commander and staff anticipated the operational commitment of the MEU – in a NEO or humanitarian assistance role – well before a USCENTCOM warning order was issued. A plan was developed for back-loading quickly out of Jordan. Since the priority was to get a ship into the JOA, the USS Nashville sailed two days early. Embarked aboard the Nashville was the MSSG, designated as the primary NEO force for the MEU. The FCE flew into the U.S. Embassy in Beirut via Cyprus. By the time the MEU left Jordan, a plan was in place, lead elements were en route, and a concept for the evacuation of AMCITS out of the embassy had been developed.²⁵

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Initial USCENTCOM guidance was clear and concise. During the initial planning stages, the MEU planners coordinated directly with CENTCOM/NAVCENT. They provided the draft planning orders to the MEU to review and commence their own planning. By the time the actual order was released, with minor changes, the MEU had already formulated its execution plans.²⁶ Given that part of the JOA and the state of Israel were located in the European Command AOR, close coordination with the EUCOM Coalition Coordination Cell was also a requirement.²⁷

Initially, the MEU planned for the evacuation of designated personnel from the U.S. Embassy, Beirut. Multiple branch plans were also established, based on CENTCOM's planning guidance, for some of the more remote areas. Standby quick-reaction forces were designated to deploy beyond the embassy to other parts of Lebanon, particularly the south, where the heavy fighting was occurring. Their mission would be to muster, evacuate, and then extract AMCITS to U.S. shipping.²⁸

Forward Command Element (FCE)

“A written Memorandum of Understanding [exists] between the Department of State and the Department of Defense for evacuations when it becomes a military operation. When the Department of State asks for military assistance, it becomes a military operation. That’s when we get it. But you still have to – and this is another lesson learned – you can’t outright say, ‘Okay this is a military operation.’ I did not go in there and tell the Ambassador, ‘Have a nice day. I’m taking over.’ You can’t do that because there were some political issues involved and country [politics]. For example, when I first got on the deck, the Ambassador was very happy to see us. And there were [only] about nine of us, so he was happy. When I talked to him about bringing in an ECC – Evacuation Control Center - of about 39 and a platoon of 40 to assist [with security], he wasn’t happy. I told him, ‘You cannot handle the throughput you’re talking about with your embassy alone,’ and his embassy staff said the same thing.”

Colonel Daniel Kelly, 24th MEU Executive Officer and Forward Command Element Officer-in-Charge.²⁹

The FCE's main effort was to coordinate with the U.S. Embassy in a supporting role and to maintain optimum communications connectivity. The first step was for the FCE OIC to meet the Ambassador to discuss the supporting/supported roles, to outline the MEU's capabilities, and to review the concept of operations for the evacuation.

To support the communications effort, the FCE was equipped with a “Scotty Mobile” video teleconference (VTC) capability; a Palladium, which allowed interface with a regular phone line for Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET) connectivity; International Mobile Satellite Communications (INMARSAT) with a dial-in capability; and single-channel assets for TACSAT VHF/UHF and HF.

An important capability was the use of MiRC (Microsoft internet relay chat) – essentially a secure chat room. DOS and DIA do not use this system, so approval had to be obtained through CTF 59 for use of their assets. This capability permitted the FCE OIC to track all the MEU/CTF-59 chat rooms and facilitate information flow quickly and accurately while concurrently providing DIA and DOS the ability to maintain visibility as well. Interviewees

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suggested that DOS should consider authorizing the installation of that system on their computers immediately, so that when FCEs are inserted, time is not wasted obtaining approval.³⁰

Organization of the FCE was based on an analysis of capabilities available at the embassy. FCE personnel included a three-man communications team consisting of one data specialist and two radio operators, a medical corpsman, a human intelligence exploitation team (HET) and a public affairs office (PAO) representative. A CENTCOM Survey and Assessment Team (CSAT) provided recommendations on evacuation site selection.³¹

A ground security force (GSF) of approximately 40 personnel was provided by Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1/8. The principal tasks for the GSF were to conduct security patrols in and around the embassy compound, to clear fields of fire around the embassy, and to provide helicopter landing zone (HLZ) support.³²

For political reasons, the Ambassador wanted a low military signature in the area. The FCE OIC stressed to the Ambassador that it was important to maintain a different look every day. It was likely that *Hezbollah* had been observing the activities at the Embassy for the last six years and had a good picture of its vulnerabilities. Changing the profile of the compound with lights, obstacles, etc., would force *Hezbollah* to revise their potential plans. Compromises and concessions were made, but not to the extent that the Security Force had requested.³³ As a result, the embassy principally relied upon the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) for external security. The GSF coordinated with the LAF for the surveillance of “dead spaces” through direct observation and/or intrusion-detection devices such as cameras or sensors.³⁴

FCE task organization, rapid deployment, and subsequent close coordination with the embassy staff will set the conditions for success in future NEO executions. Additional lessons and observations include the following:³⁵

- Identify available host nation support first, then fill deficiencies with military and embassy personnel.
- Coordinate evacuating areas (ECC/port) and mobility (busses) immediately, since other countries are also evacuating their own citizens.
- Communicate to evacuees to wear comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Maintain visibility of other countries’ evacuation plans, since space could be available on their shipping; conversely, provide support to other countries.
- Embassy can process about 200 people a day when surging. This includes the ability to search, manifest, etc.
- A number of AMCITS will get out of the country by other means.
- Be prepared for AMCITS with special needs:
 - Identify early and look at flying out vice putting on ship
 - Be prepared to move people on stretchers and wheel chairs
 - Be prepared for many families
 - Be prepared for children traveling alone

Intelligence

Intelligence reporting during the operation consisted mainly of geo-political reporting, with human intelligence (HUMINT) reporting on strategic information. There was minimal reporting on the tactical situation developing between the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and *Hezbollah*. Status of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and points of entry could not be determined within time and access restrictions. Media open sources (CNN, FOX) often provided some limited information on the tactical situation.³⁶ National and service level agencies provided responsive assistance in filling intelligence gaps.³⁷

The U.S. Embassy wanted military personnel to maintain a low profile, which resulted in limited access and collection capabilities for the HETs. Although movement of HET personnel was severely restricted during the operation, the Embassy Defense Attache Office (DAO) continually shared information of intelligence value that was forwarded to the MEU for planning. HET teams must maximize their interface with the DAO. The issue of how to adjust to limited access must be addressed during pre-deployment training.³⁸

The MEU intelligence collection capabilities are significant. Both the MEU and embassy staffs must be educated and familiar with these intelligence resources. Combined with national and service level agencies, the MEU can quickly fill any gaps in intelligence requirements in support of crisis operations.³⁹

Some of the AMCITs being processed at the embassy were coming from southern Lebanon and had information on the ground situation in that region. HETs could have been used to exploit this information source, but there was discussion about who could talk to the AMCITs, and it was decided that the embassy personnel would conduct interviews with AMCITs. HETs had the capability to build a picture to facilitate the MEU Commander's decision making concerning possible follow-on missions, but were not used to exploit this capability.⁴⁰

Communications

The main communications effort was to establish solid connectivity between the FCE and other CTF 59 elements. The communications package described earlier enabled the FCE to establish connectivity as soon as they arrived at the Embassy. Additionally, the FCE was able to interface with the embassy's communication network, resulting in a more robust capability to communicate with the MEU command element, still in transit through the Suez Canal.⁴¹ The basic MEU communications plan is depicted in Figure 3.

However, a gap in the FCE capability is in the method of execution, which now depends on a maritime satellite (MARSAT) terminal that dials back into II MEF SIPRNET servers and relies on Outlook Web Access (OWA) and web browsing through II MEF. This is a long way to go to talk back to a ship that is a few miles off the coast. A better option would be a shipboard capability, whether it is a MARSAT asset that provides over-the-horizon dial-in capability or an INMARSAT permanently mounted on the ship that MEUs could then dial into. Such a capability would avoid the need to reach back to Camp Lejeune and then back to the area of operations to be able to talk. It would be a more efficient system and one that the MEU could control.⁴²

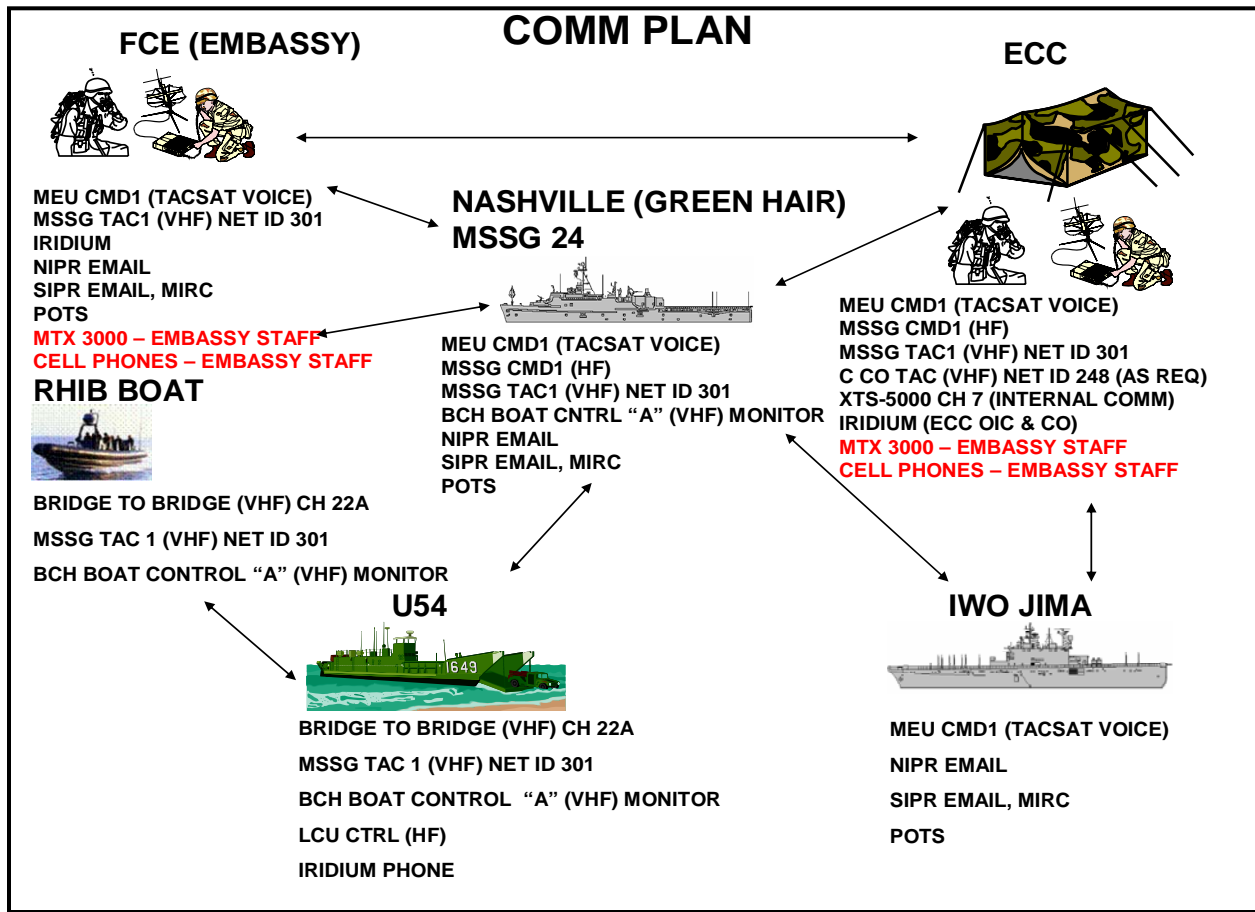


Figure 3. Communications Plan⁴³

The Enhanced Position Location Reporting System (EPLRS) was effectively used in the ship-to-shore movement. An EPLRS station ashore tied into the EPLRS network on the ship and then into the SIPRNET. This provided personnel ashore a chat capability and limited web browsing, and was viewed as much more efficient way to communicate. Use of this system also permitted discussion concerning numbers of evacuees, departure times, medical issues, and any other information that needs to be transmitted back to the ship quickly, efficiently, clearly and securely.⁴⁴

A daily video teleconference (VTC) was hosted by USCENTCOM for all major commands and agencies involved in the Lebanon NEO. The VTC was beneficial in facilitating information flow and coordination. However, it was conducted using the Video Information Exchange System (VIXS). Connectivity had to be established through other hubs and was thus not fully reliable. The capability to enable direct connection to the VTC hub hosting the VTC must be established. Additionally, a non-secure Defense Switched Network (DSN) bridge was provided for planning and coordination, but lack of security precluded detailed operational planning. Implementing a secure DSN capability will facilitate planning and coordination.⁴⁵

Air Operations

As noted in the command relationships section, the USAF 352 SOG air assets were TACON to 24th MEU and were integrated into the Air Plan by the MEU Air Officer. Although rules of engagement (ROE) were restrictive, fixed-wing AV-8B Harrier and rotary-wing AH-1W Cobra aircraft were built into the air/fire support plans. The aircraft would support quick-reaction forces (QRF) that might be inserted to conduct evacuations in remote areas where combat engagements were occurring between the Israeli Defense Forces and Hezbollah.⁴⁶

Use of air assets in support of the NEO is discussed throughout this document. Most important was the role of helicopters in the evacuation of AMCITS and their integration into the overall plan with surface landing craft and cruise ships. One area of concern was the excessive use of helicopters for VIP transportation, as requested by the embassy staff, which prevented maximizing the efficiency of evacuation operations.⁴⁷

Logistics

Logistics planning was an integral part of all OPT scenarios, providing viable options to be executed as part of a logistics operations supporting plan. Initially, the lack of clarity or understanding in staff relationships affected planning to an extent. The 24th MEU's message on "Concept for Logistics for NEO in Lebanon" did not receive a response from higher headquarters. Thus, the logistics planners did not have a clear picture of the MEU's role in intermediate supply support. As the NEO developed, the only requirement turned out to be rations and the provision of food and water ashore. However, had one of the other planned-for scenarios developed, a requirement for ammunition and repair parts support as well as rations would have been necessary. How that pipeline of support would have worked was never made clear by higher headquarters. This concept needs to be addressed and defined early in the operation.⁴⁸

During the operation, the main effort for logistics was support of the FCE to accomplish its evacuation mission. Communications was key to success. The requirement to transmit large amounts of data over the radio was facilitated by organic MEU S-4 INMARSAT assets. The logistics representative with the FCE could transfer important information regarding the supply situation on the ground, including details that could not have been efficient to transmit with voice only. Because the embassy was not materially prepared for the evacuation, a MEU supporting such an operation must be prepared to fill the shortfalls. Items such as generators, floodlights, food and water to support evacuees and ammunition -- to include thermite grenades for the destruction of classified materials and small-arms ammunition for physical security -- might have to be provided by the MEU. This is particularly true when there is no Marine Security Guard Detachment assigned to the embassy.⁴⁹

Logistics Requirements

Logistics requirements in the embassy area included the following:⁵⁰

- Eight laptop computers - six for manifests and two for back up
 - Two copiers
 - Two printers
 - Unclassified thumb drives to down-load manifests

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- A supply of 3.5 inch diskettes to copy manifests
- Color cards for each bus
 - Six buses – six different colored cards to hand to manifested evacuees to ensure boarding on the correct bus
 - Alternate cards with the specific bus number
- Line and barbed wire to establish lanes
 - Barbed wire for entry control point (ECP) area
 - Line, with stanchions, to channelize people along the designated route through the evacuation process

The KC-130J aircraft detachments were a key component of the overall logistical effort, but particularly in airlift support and the delivery of repair parts. Additionally, VMGR-252 provided a KC-130 planner to the MEU command element as a liaison to its Cyprus detachment. This planner provided the necessary awareness of KC-130 availability and capability to support the concept for logistics.⁵¹

Staff Judge Advocate

Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) support is particularly important during a NEO. Issues with the State Department, host nations, third-country nationals, and rules of engagement can complicate what could appear to be a simple operation. As a result, communication between command judge advocates is essential to prevent legal issues from escalating into international incidents. Prior to and during the Lebanon NEO, early and frequent communication between the 24th MEU SJA, Iwo Jima ESG JAG, CTF-59 SJA, and NAVCENT SJA staff was critical and beneficial. Issues, ideas, and concerns were discussed via email multiple times throughout each day. This was particularly important with the Lebanon NEO, since the entire operation developed and matured very quickly. In particular, the MEU SJA and ESG JAG were used as a sounding board since they were closest to the forces actually conducting the NEO. Additionally, advance notice of pending FRAGOs or relevant messages were forwarded, providing all judge advocates a chance to spot issues early and either address the issue or properly plan and coordinate with operations officers and commanders.⁵²

This communication extended to judge advocates outside the chain of command as well. The Center for Law and Military Operations (CLAMO) and the International and Operational Law Department at The Judge Advocate Generals Legal Center and School (TJAGLCS) in Charlottesville, VA, were valuable sources of information. Lessons and observations from previous NEOs, information on United Nations (UN) documents, and information on the Lebanese legal system were provided to the 24th MEU SJA. The Operational Law Department of the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps was also a valuable informational resource. All of these contacts were maintained throughout the NEO and were a reliable source of legal information as legal issues were analyzed and resolved.⁵³

At the time of the NEO, there was no Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the United States and Lebanon. As a result, the status of all the Marines who went ashore or were scheduled to go ashore in Lebanon was uncertain. The volatile security environment in Lebanon could have easily led to complicated and uncertain situations for Marines on the ground. Although tasked to negotiate a SOFA or diplomatic note, DOS was slow to react to the requirement. Legal

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protection for U.S. personnel should be a priority. When requesting DoD support, DOS must immediately negotiate a SOFA or diplomatic note with the host nation, particularly if conducting evacuations in remote sites away from the embassy.⁵⁴

The Standing Rules Of Engagement (SROE) for a NEO (outlined in CJCSI 3121.01B⁵⁵) must be briefed and clearly understood by all personnel involved in the operation. A NEO ROE card, reproduced prior to deployment, can be distributed as soon as a warning order for a NEO is received from higher headquarters.⁵⁶

USCENTCOM was slow to process requests for supplemental ROEs to cover topics such as collective self-defense and the use of riot control agents. It took six days after MEU personnel began evacuating AMCITS to get the authorization for collective self-defense. SROE requests should be submitted as soon as the warning order is received.⁵⁷

Additional important legal issues that SJAs should become familiar with prior to execution of a NEO include the following:⁵⁸

- DOS/DoD responsibilities for costs in support of a NEO.
- Acquisition and Cross Service Agreement (ACSA) and logistical support to host nation.
- Liability claims by evacuees against the U.S. government.

MEU Service Support Group (MSSG)

“Perhaps 100 Marines and sailors from MSSG-24 were directly involved with operations on the ground with the ECCs. Nearly every single Marine and sailor embarked on the Nashville was involved in supporting the NEO in some way.”
Colonel Joel Berry, Commanding Officer, MSSG-24.⁵⁹

The MSSG’s primary responsibility during a NEO was to organize and prepare Evacuation Control Center (ECC) teams. Planning must consider all functions to include security and evacuee logistical support.⁶⁰ Although the MSSG was spread across three ships, every effort was made to maintain the integrity of the two MSSG ECC teams, labeled "Gold" and "Scarlet" on two U.S. Navy ships. Thus, minimal cross-decking was required to deploy ECC “Gold” with the FCE; they conducted the evacuee processing for a few days until a handover to ECC “Scarlet” was conducted. As a result of integrated pre-deployment training between ECCs, the transition was quick and smooth. ECC task organization consisted of 36 personnel, sufficient to complete the mission considering that the LAF provided security while the embassy staff assisted with processing and embarkation. Administration personnel, with laptop computers to enter evacuee information, were the key element in processing and maintaining the evacuation flow.⁶¹

Extensive coordination between the MEU and embassy staffs is a requirement prior to commencing evacuee processing. Once the initial process, timelines and procedures are established, the evacuation process can be streamlined and expedited. During the Lebanon NEO, the embassy personnel on the ground were much more numerous than anticipated, resulting in both positive and negative impact. On one hand, the excess personnel assisted at some of the stations, searching and screening and helping with administration, allowing Marines to spread out to where additional support was required. On the other hand, during the planning process the

additional staff was less helpful in making different decisions and changes to the concept of operations.⁶²

An important aspect of the organization on the ground was the presence of chaplains assigned to the MEU. They played a vital role at the ECC. Long lines, uncertainty and separation from loved ones frustrated many AMCITS. Serving as roving counselors to assess human stress factors, providing information and engaging in conversation, chaplains had a calming effect on the large crowds and were key to reassuring the evacuees. The chaplains' presence was also a benefit to the Marines ashore. Disaster and NEO missions can result in high levels of fatigue and stress. Providing Marines with the opportunity for spiritual counseling enhanced their capabilities for extended periods. Chaplains played a vital role at the ECC and must be integrated into PTP NEO scenarios and supplemented with host-nation language key phrases training.⁶³

Aboard the Navy ships, the MSSG and all elements of the MEU combined with the PHIBRON personnel to prepare a reception plan for the evacuees. Camouflage netting, tents, cots, ISO sleeping mats, sleeping bags, coolers, and other supplies were made available to comfort the evacuees during their transit to Cyprus. Mess decks were opened to create a comfortable environment. Of particular importance was awareness of cultural differences or issues that required special attention such as menu restrictions, proper greetings, hygiene, and religious norms. The ship's crew and embarked Marines should be educated on potential cultural differences that could surface during operations.⁶⁴

Evacuation Control Center (ECC)

The immediate task for the ECC was to coordinate the site layout, procedures, chain of command, and responsibilities with all of the different organizations to include the Lebanese police, the embassy personnel, and the Department of State diplomatic security people in order to maintain control of the actual ECC site.⁶⁵ The site was located at a Lebanese police station and training facility approximately two miles from the embassy and was organized as described in Figure 4.

The tasks conducted at the security and screening area were a shared effort between the Embassy Security Force (ESF) and FCE Marines. The ESF, experienced in searching evacuees and baggage, inspected luggage using equipment to detect potential explosives. Marines from the security force also assisted in embarkation and administrative processing of evacuees. The evacuee flow between search/screen and administrative processing stations must be planned and coordinated. At times, evacuees were searched and sent to the processing station before being called forward, resulting in overcrowding in a location with limited shade and toilet facilities. A guide to lead groups from one area to another could further assist in controlling the flow of evacuees.⁶⁶

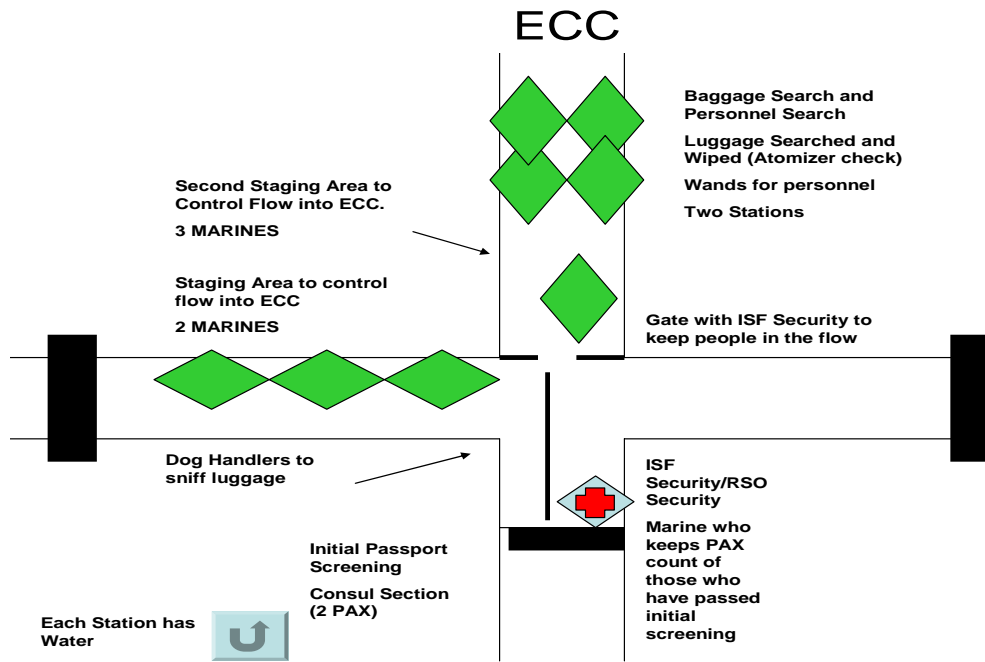


Figure 4⁶⁷

Doctrinally, per *Joint Publication 3-07.5*, and in accordance with the EXORD, DOS has the lead in a NEO with DoD in support.⁶⁸ Accordingly, the embassy consular section makes the final decisions on who is evacuated from the ECC. However, with the excess of DOS personnel in the area, it wasn't always clear who was making decisions. The confusion was described by 1stLt Bayse, OIC of ECC Gold:

*"I think the biggest negative for me was lack of communication directly with the embassy. We had communication with personnel in the area, but there were times when conflicts between the agencies led to needing somebody from the embassy to answer our questions."*⁶⁹

The PTP standard for processing evacuees is 100 per hour. During peak times, 150-250 evacuees were processed. By using laptop computers to prepare / print manifests and combining processing steps, the ECC was able to meet the increased demands. For example, the geometry of the ECC site was such that the embarkation and administration stations were so close together that they were combined. Administrators printed a landing craft or bus team manifest, and the evacuee would either walk straight to the LCU or board a bus to a chartered cruise ship. The laptops were not on a network, but the ECC had single-channel radios to talk to the ships.⁷⁰

Changes to the entry control point (ECP) and ECC layouts were coordinated with the embassy and local Lebanese police. Initially, single evacuees were pushing to the front of the line as parents were attending to their children. As a result, two lanes were created for single people and families, respectively, to control the flow of evacuees into the ECP. Marines stationed at each end of the lanes prioritized processing by increasing flow from the family lane.⁷¹ Priorities were established as follows:⁷²

Evacuation Categories and Equipment

Categories

- I. American Citizens
- II. Alien Members of U.S. Families
- III. Alien Employees of U.S. Government/Business
- IV. Other Designated Aliens

Priorities within Categories

- Pregnant Women
- Unaccompanied Children Under 18
- Aged and Infirm
- Adults with children
- Adults 18 or older

Overall, landing craft utility (LCU) proved superior to landing craft air cushioned (LCACs) when evacuating by surface. Although the LCAC is faster, off-loading personnel is slow, and the LCU can load significantly more personnel. The end result was that the LCU could get to the ship and back with twice as many evacuees in the same amount of time. There was a psychological benefit as well, because the line moved quicker when loading LCUs.⁷³ Additional planning factors:⁷⁴

LCAC: 150 PAX/40 Knots **LCU:** 350 PAX/10-12 Knots

CH-46: 20 PAX **CH-53:** 30 PAX

Medical Support

As part of the mission analysis, the FCE OIC determined that with a physician on staff at the embassy, there was no need to include a medical officer with the FCE,⁷⁵ since a corpsman was organic to the FCE. The majority of the medical cases were minor, but the ECC did require the medical supplies and personnel on site to treat those minor medical emergencies such as heat injuries, fainting and headaches. In the future, arrangements must be made to have female doctors or corpsmen available to assist with female evacuees with a privacy area, should this care be required.⁷⁶

Serious emergencies should be evacuated to a higher level of treatment aboard USN shipping. Communication between all medical forces from the beach to the ships must be maintained in order to facilitate the flow of patients and information across the JOA. In this operation, patient handoff from ECC to the ship's medical section did not always occur seamlessly. In particular, patient prioritization and medical condition were not always clearly communicated from shore to ship, resulting in acute patients arriving unannounced, ships unready to treat specific incoming ailments, missing medications, etc. As a result and to facilitate proper care for serious emergencies, the PHIBRON and MEU surgeons should be included in all key battle rhythm meetings during NEO operations.⁷⁷

Force Protection

The permissive environment, combined with the professional embassy security force and the cooperation of the Lebanese police, enabled the MEU Commander to comply with the embassy's intent to reduce the military's footprint in the area. Conditions did not warrant the wearing of helmets and body armor – there was no incoming shell fire in the area. Moreover, Marines wearing helmets and body armor and carrying weapons could have increased the anxiety of the evacuees, already distressed by the long waits. In fact, when asked if the embassy's request factored in his decision to reduce the military signature, the MEU Commander responded:

“No, that was just something that I came up with. There was no real threat to the embassy and I think commanders need to look at that and judge the need for flexibility there. You mitigate your risk by having your gear staged fairly close by when the chances of incoming [shelling] at the [compound] are very remote. I think it did pay us back with the dividends of keeping the people calm and reassured. You know, a little smile went a long way.”⁷⁸

Further, the ECC site was controlled by the Lebanese police with armored cars, vehicles, and well over 250 personnel. The robust security presence reduced tensions, but that area of Beirut, in central Lebanon, was generally safe compared with southern Lebanon, where the actual fighting was occurring. Where the south was a very uncertain environment for evacuation, Beirut was a permissive environment. The FCE received minimal threat reporting because none of the sectarian or terrorist groups wanted the negative publicity associated with trying to stop an evacuation, particularly when the other coalition countries were evacuating as well.⁷⁹

As discussed earlier, the FCE and security force were very restricted in their movements, especially around the embassy. Patrols and efforts to clear fields of fire were restricted. The Ambassador thought of the Marines back in Beirut (1983), and he envisioned Marines coming off the helicopters loaded for combat and ready to engage anything that moved. Thus, the FCE OIC had to engage the Ambassador to inform the government of Lebanon that American forces were inbound. Following coordination of the ECC site and security roles and responsibilities with the Lebanese Armed Forces and police, the embassy received approval for the introduction of U.S. forces at that location and at the embassy, as well as for a minimal footprint at a fourth facility to provide some security and screening. These were the three areas in which the government of Lebanon permitted U.S. forces to operate. Beyond that, the Lebanese Armed Forces were in control.

At the ECP location, crowd control became a major concern. Emplacement of channelizing barriers and efforts by Marines to inform the evacuees of processing procedures served to keep the crowd calm. The strengths of the embassy personnel aside, it is important to note the calming effect that Marines in uniform, speaking with authority, have on the crowd. The role of the chaplain, as previously noted, was crucial to crowd control.⁸⁰

Finally, the geography of the embassy location offered limited – and thus predictable – helicopter ingress/egress routes into a small landing zone [(1) CH-53 or (2) CH-46]. Located in an urban environment and built on a steep slope with power lines on the north side, the embassy compound permitted approach and departure routes only on its west side. As a result, staggered landing teams remained unpredictable.⁸¹

Pre-deployment Training

Although the NEO pre-deployment training package for the MEUs provides the necessary skills and knowledge to plan and execute NEO operations, the training should be emphasized as much as humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) operations. Training exercises should focus on Department of State interoperability and learning how to process people. ECC personnel must be thoroughly familiar with how DOS conducts this process in order to facilitate integration. During workups, a trip to the State Department or a visit by a DOS instructor to teach their process could prove beneficial.⁸²

In training ECC teams, an “Integrated Training Concept” ensures that personnel are comfortable operating with other ECCs in different capacities. It is difficult to train ECCs individually with all the personnel present.⁸³

The current PTP training scenario does not accurately reflect the access and collection prospects for HET Teams. During training, walk-in sources are abundant and interaction with DAO/COS is nearly non-existent. However, in Lebanon, the majority of HET collection was focused on evacuee points of entry/departure and corresponding debriefing of AMCITS. Movement in the local area and access to the population was severely restricted.⁸⁴

Commander’s Comments, 24th MEU (SOC)⁸⁵

“These things come up so quickly and so fast that you don’t have time to practice. Now after two times as a MEU Commander going through the TTPs, the workup in the NEO planning that you get is absolutely crucial. Don’t blow it off. Use it and do it as many times as you can - just don’t do it once. You need to do at least three or four exercises to get proficient at it, and you can work your drills through it. Then, when you get to theater, let the guys, who trained to do it, do it.

I would tell you that one of the things that we probably could have done was... a transfer at sea instead of at Cyprus. If we had a cruise ship that we could have used for an ISB vice Cyprus, then how would we have done that? I think that is something that would have been difficult, but it’s something you might want to look at in the future because we can keep that over the horizon. It could have been (a) short (trip) – go to it, dump them off, and come straight back. In this instance we had Cyprus, but if we didn’t have Cyprus, what would we have done? We could keep 1,200 or so in there and kind of keep the amphibious ships available [as needed].

Logistically, we argue a lot in the Marine Corps between an LCU and an LCAC with the PTM (Personnel Transport Module). It would have taken me five times longer if I had only a PTM. People don’t understand the time and space it takes to move people – masses of people. Where I could take 350 or 380, I could only take about 80 in a PTM on the LCAC. Those aren’t air-conditioned. I mean, people could have passed out on that damned thing. That would have been a serious concern of mine. Although it moves quicker, overall LCU [numbers] made a big difference.

Something we didn’t do well, and we should have looked at this closer, we should have done a better job interviewing and getting more HET guys ashore because as the people were coming in from southern Lebanon, they had stories to tell. They could

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build a picture for me so that I could better understand what was going on. Are there any checkpoints? Are there any road blocks? What did you see? I need to kind of get a better debriefing. We didn't do that as well as we could have because they were transported straight to a ship to get them all off, and we needed to debrief some of these people. Not for the intelligence as much as for the information [for a follow-on mission], if you go in there and have a picture built. We need to dig into that right away. We didn't do that as well as I would have wanted to do. I should have pushed harder for that."

The Way Ahead

MCCLL will forward this report to appropriate advocates and proponents, in the interests of improving how Marine forces are organized, trained, equipped and provided to combatant commanders. Additionally, this report will be posted on the MCCLL website – www.mccll.usmc.mil, making it available to the operating forces.

Endnotes

¹ USCENTCOM EXORD.

² 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Beirut NEO After Action Report , 2 September 2006. Cited hereafter as MEU AAR.

³ MEU AAR.

⁴ NAVCENT NEO Lessons Learned AAR, 21 November 2006.

⁵ MEU AAR.

⁶ MEU AAR.

⁷ Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT Liaison Officer, interview with BGen Carl Jensen, Commander CTF-59 and selected members of his staff: Captain Smith, USN, N-3, LtCol DiEugenio, USMC, Expeditionary Operations. Cited hereafter as Barrera, CTF 59 interview.

⁸ USCENTCOM EXORD.

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¹⁰ Barrera, CTF 59 interview.

¹¹ Barrera, CTF 59 interview.

¹² Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with LtCol Michael Saleh, Operations Officer, 24th MEU, 23 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Saleh interview.

¹³ Barrera, Saleh interview.

¹⁴ NAVCENT NEO Lessons Learned AAR, 21 November, 2006.

¹⁵ Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Col Ronald Johnson, Commanding Officer 24th MEU, 23 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Johnson interview. Also, Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Col Daniel P. Kelly, Executive Officer 24th MEU, 21 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Kelly interview.

¹⁶ Barrera, Kelly interview.

¹⁷ MEU AAR.

¹⁸ MEU AAR.

¹⁹ Barrera, Kelly interview.

- ²⁰ Barrera, Kelly interview.
- ²¹ Barrera, Kelly interview. Also, Barrera interview with 2ndLt Matthew Johnson, Security Force Platoon Commander, BLT 1/8, 22 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Johnson SecFor interview.
- ²² Barrera, Johnson interview.
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- ²⁴ Barrera, Saleh interview.
- ²⁵ Barrera, Saleh interview.
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- ²⁷ Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Maj Earl W. Daniels, Air Officer, 24th MEU, 22 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Daniels interview.
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- ³¹ Barrera, Kelly and Chorzelewski interviews.
- ³² Barrera, Kelly interview. Also Barrera, Johnson SecFor interview. Also, Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Capt Pablo Cabrera, Security Force OIC, BLT 1/8, 22 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Cabrera interview).
- ³³ Barrera, Kelly interview.
- ³⁴ MEU AAR.
- ³⁵ 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ³⁶ MEU AAR.
- ³⁷ Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Maj Thomas J. Dunn and Capt Peter Matthew, S-2/S-2A, Officers, 24th MEU, 22 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Dunn interview).
- ³⁸ MEU AAR; Barrera, Dunn interview.
- ³⁹ MEU AAR; Barrera, Dunn interview.
- ⁴⁰ Barrera, Johnson interview.
- ⁴¹ Hill, Aaron, 22d MEU S-4A with Maj Bret Bolding, S-6 Officer, 24th MEU, 20 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Hill, Bolding interview.
- ⁴² Hill, Bolding interview.
- ⁴³ 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ⁴⁴ 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ⁴⁵ MEU AAR.
- ⁴⁶ Barrera, Saleh interview.
- ⁴⁷ Barrera, Daniels interview.
- ⁴⁸ Hill, Aaron, 22d MEU S-4A interview with Maj Clifton B. Carpenter, S-4 Officer, 24th MEU, 22 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Hill, Carpenter interview.
- ⁴⁹ MEU AAR; Hill, Carpenter interview. Also, Hill, Bolding interview and Barrera, Cabrera interview.
- ⁵⁰ 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ⁵¹ MEU AAR. Also, Barrera, Daniels and CTF 59 interviews.

- ⁵² 24th MEU Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) AAR. Also, Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Maj Devin C. Young, SJA 24th MEU, 22 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Young interview.
- ⁵³ 24th MEU SJA AAR. Also Barrera, Young interview.
- ⁵⁴ MEU AAR.
- ⁵⁵ (U) *Standing Rules of Engagement/Standing Rules for Use of Force by U.S. Forces*, CJCSI 3120.1B, (Joint Staff, Washington, DC), SECRET, 13June 2005.
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- ⁵⁹ Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Col Joel H. Berry, Commanding Officer, MSSG-24, 20 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Barrera, Berry interview.
- ⁶⁰ Barrera, Berry interview.
- ⁶¹ Barrera, Berry interview.
- ⁶² MEU AAR; Barrera, Berry interview.
- ⁶³ MEU AAR; Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Commander (USN) Gary W. Carr, Chaplain, 24th MEU, 22 October 2006. Also, Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with Lieutenant Richard L Roe, USN, MSSG-24 Chaplain, 22 October 2006.
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- ⁶⁵ MEU AAR. Also, Hill, Aaron, 22 MEU S-4A interview with 1stLt Jeffrey D. Bayse, MSSG/ECC OIC, 21 October 2006. Cited hereafter as Hill, Bayse interview.
- ⁶⁶ MEU AAR. Also, Barrera, Jorge, MCCLL MARCENT LNO interview with MSgt Todd L. Martin, MSSG/ECC Team Member, 21 October 2006.
- ⁶⁷ 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ⁶⁸ *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, Joint Publication 3-07.5, 30 September 1997,
- ⁶⁹ Hill, Bayse interview.
- ⁷⁰ Barrera, Berry interview.
- ⁷¹ Hill, Bayse interview.
- ⁷² 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ⁷³ Barrera, Johnson interview. Also, Hill, Bayse interview.
- ⁷⁴ PHIBRON AAR; 24th MEU FCE AAR (Draft), July 2006.
- ⁷⁵ Barrera, Kelly interview.
- ⁷⁶ MEU AAR.
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- ⁷⁸ Barrera, Johnson interview.
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- ⁸¹ MEU AAR.

⁸² Barrera, Johnson interview.

⁸³ Barrera, Berry interview.

⁸⁴ Barrera, Dunn interview.

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