



INITIAL IMPRESSIONS REPORT



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101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION (AIR ASSAULT)

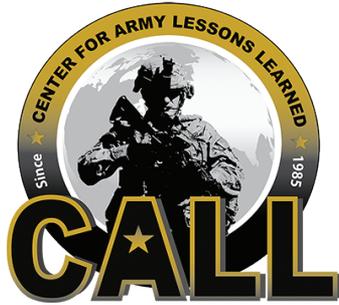


OPERATION UNITED ASSISTANCE



Lessons and Best Practices

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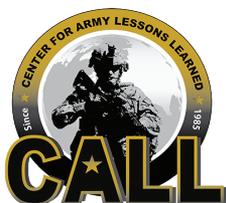
101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)

Operation United Assistance

Initial Impressions Report

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Foreword

“Today, I’m announcing a major increase in our response. At the request of the Liberian Government, we’re going to establish a military command center in Liberia to support civilian efforts across the region — similar to our response after the Haiti earthquake — and our forces are going to bring their expertise in command and control, in logistics, in engineering — and our Department of Defense is better at that, our Armed Services are better at that than any organization on Earth.”

— President Barack Obama, 16 SEP 2014

The United States deploys its military forces when there is a clear threat to the nation’s strategic interests. When President Obama sent approximately 3,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines to Liberia, his purpose was clear: The United States had a commitment to eradicating Ebola in Liberia, a global health emergency. In addition to providing support, the United States brought confidence to the people of Liberia and the international community. When U.S. forces arrived in Liberia, the world knew the United States was dedicated to solving this complex problem. However, it was also time for others to help in the fight against Ebola.

The mission of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) was to bring speed and flexibility in filling the capabilities essential to contain Ebola, and transition these capabilities to the Government of Liberia in order to eradicate Ebola with progressively less support from outside agencies. When the people of Liberia saw the screaming eagle patch of the 101st Airborne Division, they gained the confidence that the fight against Ebola could finally be won.

Within days of the President’s announcement, Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division were in Monrovia, Liberia, working with the Government of Liberia and the U.S. Embassy, and the staffs of United States Army Africa, the United States Agency for International

Development, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Public Health Service. On 25 OCT 2014, the 101st Airborne Division's colors were uncased and Joint Forces Command-United Assistance was established, the first joint forces command in West Africa. These actions demonstrated the Army's agility to support the United States Agency for International Development, known as USAID, as the lead federal agency in the U.S. response. At the time, the Ebola epidemic was still raging in Liberia with at least 80 suspected, probable, or confirmed Ebola cases per day. The 101st Airborne Division's mission was expected to last nine to 12 months and possibly require thousands of U.S. troops for almost two years. However, the day the 101st Airborne Division arrived was the day the U.S. Army brought its full weight to defeat this global health emergency.

To accomplish the mission, Joint Forces Command-United Assistance built and supported 17 Ebola treatment units across Liberia. More than 1,500 health-care workers were trained in Monrovia and in communities throughout the country to care for Ebola patients, educate and provide awareness, and help trace individuals who were possibly infected with Ebola. Joint Forces Command-United Assistance established logistical systems and moved building materials and medical supplies to areas most in need of assistance, regardless of the location. Four additional mobile testing labs were established in Liberia to identify, isolate, and treat Ebola victims in a matter of hours — not days. Most importantly, these capabilities were transitioned to the Liberian Government and the international community to ensure they could sustain without assistance.

The efforts of the U.S. military, along with those of its partners, have brought Liberia where it is today. As a result of the progress made, Liberia went from seeing 80 new cases a day to being declared Ebola-free by the World Health Organization on 09 MAY 2015. Liberians returned to everyday life. A curfew was lifted, and borders with Liberia's neighbors reopened. The state of emergency also was lifted. Elections were held. Schools and markets reopened. Liberia returned to normalcy.

For the first time in a decade, the U.S. military deployed overseas, set up its own infrastructure and life support, accomplished a complex mission in an expeditionary environment, and redeployed its entire force and equipment with no requirements for another unit to assume the same mission. Operation United Assistance demonstrated the U.S. Army's ability to rapidly respond to a global threat in an austere environment, work within an interagency team toward a common goal without caring who received the credit, and provided tailored capabilities to a mission unlike any seen before.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with such selfless professionals from across U.S. Government agencies, and I am proud of every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, and Marine whose hard work and dedication led to our mission's success.

Screaming Eagles! Air Assault!



Gary J. Volesky
Major General, US Army
Commanding

**101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)
Operation United Assistance Initial Impressions Report**

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Center For Army Lessons Learned

Director COL Paul P. Reese
CALL Lead Analyst Steven Goins
Contributing Analysts Mike Hartmayer
 Jim Schultz
 Jack Crafton
 Neil Buthorne
 J.D. Call
Combined Arms LTC Kellie Rourke
Doctrine Directorate LTC Carla LeChette-Danberry
Authors

The Center for Army Lessons Learned would like to thank the Commanders, senior leaders, and staffs of the 101st Airborne Division and the 101st Sustainment Brigade for their outstanding execution of the umbrella week collection and willingness to provide time and resources to ensure the lessons from Operation United Assistance are captured for use in the future operations.

The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the Department.

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Executive Summary

“Our mission was to support the lead federal agency, USAID, by providing our unique military capabilities to help contain the virus and reduce the spread of Ebola in Liberia, and to execute our tasks with speed and flexibility that would not only help build confidence among Liberians that the virus could be defeated, but also to help garner the support of the international community to also assist in the fight against this disease.”

— MG Gary J. Volesky, Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division

In 2014, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) transitioned to Joint Forces Command-United Assistance to lead a five-month deployment in Liberia in support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) mission to prevent the spread of Ebola virus disease in West Africa.

This initial impressions report provides a summary of insights, lessons, and best practices collected during interviews from the commander and staff of the 101st Airborne Division and the staff of the 101st Sustainment Brigade during the umbrella week collection, 04 to 08 MAY 2015, following their return from Operation United Assistance.

The following are key themes that emerged from these interviews:

- Knowing the chain of command and understanding the roles of all the military organizations.
- Strategic link: The commanding general’s key leader engagements with a strategic leader focus.
- Speaking with one voice and synchronizing communications.
- Nested lines of effort that focused on supporting the Government of Liberia.
- When exercising mission command, exploiting the expertise of the division can enable success in others and create products that enhance the unified action partners’ abilities.
- Shared understanding: Emphasizing information sharing, combined meetings, working groups, and the use of unclassified networks.
- During Soldier readiness processing, knowing the standards for specific geographic regions can ensure deployment readiness.

Chapter 1

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Joint Forces Command-United Assistance Overview

Introduction

On 16 SEP 2014, President Obama directed four objectives to fight Ebola virus disease (EVD) in Liberia:

- Control the outbreak.
- Address EVD's effect on local economies and communities.
- Coordinate a broader global response.
- Build a regional public health system in the region.

The Secretary of Defense designated the 101st Airborne Division to achieve these objectives. Based on these objectives, the purpose of the 101st Airborne Division's operation was to establish the Joint Forces Command-United Assistance (JFC-UA) and provide support to the U.S. Government's EVD response; increase the ability of the Government of Liberia (GoL) to educate and care for its citizens; and create conditions for the GoL and other stakeholders to assume responsibility for a sustainable EVD response. An uncertain and ambiguous environment led the initial planning effort to prepare for 10,000 cases of EVD.

JFC-UA was not the supported command. Instead, the 101st Airborne Division was supporting the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Disaster Assistance Response Team, which supported the GoL. The 101st Division operated in a collaborative atmosphere that built trust and confidence with the international community and unified action partners.

Mission

The mission of JFC-UA was to provide support to USAID in Liberia by assisting the U.S. Government's foreign humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts to prevent the spread of EVD, alleviate human suffering, promote internal and regional stability, and establish an on-order transition from the joint forces command to designated entities.

Purpose

The purpose of the operation was to support the U.S. Government's EVD response effort to increase the GoL's ability to educate and care for its citizens, and create conditions for the GoL and stakeholders to assume responsibility for a sustainable EVD response.

Key Tasks

The command identified five key tasks critical to accomplishing the EVD response effort:

- Enforce force health protection measures to prevent U.S. personnel in Liberia from becoming exposed to EVD and other infectious diseases.
- Train a sufficient number of health-care workers to operate Ebola treatment units (ETUs).
- Provide oversight of the construction and resupply of up to 19 ETUs. These ETUs provided health-care workers with the means to better perform their job duties.
- Conduct EVD blood sample testing at Army labs to reduce the time needed to obtain test results. Using these labs allowed the command to remain ahead of trends.
- Transition support activities to designated entities to prepare for redeployment, ultimately leading to mission accomplishment.

End State

Conditions were set to transition support activities to designated entities. As a result, U.S. Government agencies, the host nation, and international organizations were able to manage the Liberian EVD response.

Chapter 2

Command Staff Interviews

Summary of Interview with MG Gary J. Volesky, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Commanding General, 06 MAY 2015

Overview

- Chain of command: Understand the roles of all military organizations, from the geographic combatant command down.
- Strategic link: Commanding general's (CG's) key leader engagements (KLEs) with a strategic leader focus.
- Synchronize communications: Speak with one voice.
- Nested lines of effort: Focus on supporting the Government of Liberia (GoL).
- Mission command: Exploit the power of the division to enable success in others. Create products that enhance all unified action partners (UAPs).
- Shared understanding: Emphasize information sharing, combined meetings, working groups, and unclassified networks.
- Soldier readiness program (SRP): Knowing standards allows the geographic combatant command to ensure deployment readiness.

Observation

Planning for and exercising mission command in a unique and austere environment presented challenges for the division staff.

Discussion

When President Obama announced that the Department of Defense (DOD) would provide support to stop the spread of Ebola virus disease (EVD), it became the first time the DOD was tasked to fight a pandemic. Following the President's announcement, the 101st Airborne Division deployed to Liberia in support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the lead federal agency.

When the 101st Airborne Division was notified, it was currently preparing for a decisive action rotation. The division was dealing with basic staff processes, such as the military decisionmaking process (MDMP) and intelligence preparation of the battlefield. Few 101st Division staff members possessed experience in humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) missions. Although it had a high level of expertise in counterinsurgency

(COIN) operations, the 101st Division needed additional training in decisive action skill sets. Therefore, the division adopted a block-and-tackle approach to build on the fundamentals and use primary staff officers to teach company grades. Fortunately, the alert to prepare to deploy occurred before Mission Command Training Program (MCTP) academics were conducted. The program was flexible and adapted academics to meet the division's requirements by focusing on UAPs and HA/DR.

Lessons/Best Practices

It was important for the division to have an academic program that focused on funding, especially for overseas humanitarian disaster and civic aid (OHDACA). This knowledge gap led the 101st Division assistant chief of staff, financial management (G-8) to create a money-as-a-weapon-system booklet that explained funding types and their associated issues and problems. (**NOTE:** For information about this booklet, contact the Center for Army Lessons Learned.) The CG's early guidance regarding funding prevented several problems from occurring. The situation in Liberia was treated as if there were an organization present similar to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

To better prepare, the division needed current information on the situation in Liberia. Finding current data was problematic. Formal academics on the subject helped, but only to a degree. Additional research was required to gain a better understanding of the situation. (The last available detailed information was from Marine Corps operations in 2008.) With little knowledge on the situation, the 101st Division decided to oversupply in terms of personnel and equipment during the planning phase. As more information became available and situational understanding improved, personnel and equipment were scaled back until the command was right-sized.

The division learned that accurate assessments were absolutely critical. Initial intelligence drove considerations for developing an intermediate staging base course of action — supposedly due to a lack of space for aircraft at the Monrovia airport. After further assessments, it became apparent that the airport did have adequate space.

With 54 countries to overwatch and no enablers, United States Army Africa (USARAF), the Army Service component command (ASCC), had the task of setting the theater and all that the mission entailed. The difficulty of the mission was compounded by Africa's size — nearly three times larger than the continental United States (CONUS). USARAF's key contribution was facilitating situational and key personnel awareness with Liberian politicians and military leadership, as well as the U.S. Embassy.

Assessments were also crucial in organizing the 101st Airborne Division's deployment out of Fort Campbell, KY, and other posts. The 101st Division had not deployed, in its current organizational memory, with all of its staff and gear. To complicate the situation, its communications gear arrived two weeks late. There were several unknowns in the early planning stages. The initial plan at Fort Campbell was to take nearly all the division's gear and equipment. Mitigating some equipment decisions was the leveraging of joint enablers. The geographic combatant command coordinated with the Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE) to mitigate communications equipment issues, giving the command team an immediate communications capability.

Observation

Considerations must be made for executing mission command in an austere environment while supporting a federal agency.

Discussion

The command group's focus was to use the abilities of the division in support of the GoL and USAID. The command's initial focus was to allow the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) leaders and planners to exploit the unique skill sets of the 101st Division. For example, the division's skills in predictive analysis and planning proved useful.

The command made a conscious decision to make EVD, and not the division's status or operations, the common operational picture. The division took control of the United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) All Partners Access Network (APAN), accessible online at <https://www.apan.org/>. This unclassified website provided information on exercises and HA/DR, and was used for conferences and work group activities. APAN's primary purpose was to share information and increase situational awareness. APAN's real-time collaboration tools and communities decreased response time for governments, militaries, and international and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) participating in HA/DR efforts.

Lessons/Best Practices

The role of the command group and CG took on a strategic-leader focus. Engagements with strategic leaders (for example, GoL and regional leaders) were critical to building trust, rapport, and teamwork. As an information technology tool, APAN provided situational awareness to UAPs.

Observation

Detailed planning and coordination were key when working with another federal agency.

Discussion

The purpose of the operation was to support the U.S. Government's EVD response effort, increase the GoL's ability to educate and care for its citizens, and create conditions for the GoL and stakeholders to responsibly sustain the EVD response.

The 101st Division, as Joint Forces Command-United Assistance (JFC-UA), was not the supported command. The 101st Division supported USAID DART, which supported the GoL. In this first-of-its-kind command structure, the 101st Division operated in a collaborative atmosphere that built trust and confidence among the international community and UAPs.

Lessons/Best Practices

The command identified five key tasks critical to the response effort. The first task was enforcing force health protection measures to prevent exposing U.S. personnel to EVD and other infectious diseases. The second task was training a sufficient number of health-care workers to operate Ebola treatment units (ETUs). This task became the line of effort that helped solve other issues for the U.S. government. The third task was providing oversight of construction and resupply of up to 19 ETUs, providing the trained health-care workers with the means to accomplish their jobs. The fourth task was to conduct EVD blood sample testing at Army labs to reduce the amount of time needed to obtain test results. These Army labs allowed the command to remain ahead of trends. The fifth task was to transition support activities to designated entities and prepare the division for redeployment. This final task helped the division accomplish the mission. In the end, the CG wanted to transition all support activities to designated entities and set conditions for U.S. Government agencies, the host nation, and international organizations to manage the Liberian EVD response.

Observation

The 101st Division communicated well with UAPs and regional partners.

Discussion

When deployed for an operation, DOD forces can run the risk of becoming overpowering in a permissive environment. The 101st Division's CG emphasized that the command was in a supporting role and was not concerned about credit.

Lessons/Best Practices

Educating the force was critical. Academics throughout the division stressed the importance of conveying the message that DART, under USAID, was the lead of operations for the EVD response that took place

in the sovereign and well-functioning GoL. Academics also helped open lines of communication among joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational organizations, NGOs, and the DOD prior to the 101st Division's arrival to the joint operations area. Working together, both DART and JFC-UA coordinated operations in Liberia through the U.S. Ambassador in Monrovia.

The "center of gravity" where collective and collaborative decisions were made was at the National Ebola Command Center (NECC), a three-story building converted into an operations center. The NECC was the equivalent of a national-level, civil-military operations center or a humanitarian operations center. The NECC served as the clearinghouse for UAPs to work collaboratively.

Importantly, the host nation possessed leadership and capability. The United States leveraged these capabilities to the extent possible when the host nation was in charge, which allowed UAPs and the international community to work more efficiently together. Meetings led by the Liberian Ministry of Health at the NECC were well conducted. Liberia was a high-functioning state able to acquire numerous partners and focus efforts for the common good. Strong Liberian leadership was perhaps the driving factor in the success of the mission.

Observation

The role of the ASCC in economy-of-force regions increased the difficulty of setting the theater.

Discussion

The theater army enables the combatant commander to employ land power anywhere in the area of responsibility (AOR) and across the range of military operations. The ASCC commands all forces in the region until the combatant commander attaches selected Army forces to a joint forces command (JFC). When a JFC is established, the theater army divides its responsibilities between the Army component in the joint operations area (the ARFOR) and the Army forces operating in other parts of the AOR.

In simplest terms, the ASCC was tasked to accomplish four major tasks:

- Provide support to ongoing operations.
- Fulfill Title 10 U.S. Code responsibilities.
- Deploy a contingency command post (CP) (previously a joint task force [JTF]-capable headquarters [currently under review at the time of this publication]).
- Accomplish theater security cooperation missions.

The theater army is organized, manned, and equipped to serve as the Army Service component command for the geographic combatant command it supports. It has limited capabilities performing two additional roles: JTF headquarters for a limited contingency operation and joint force land component command for a limited contingency operation.

Lessons/Best Practices

USARAF and the 101st Division worked well together. Support to the division was well received. USARAF leveraged its strengths of maintaining relationships with strategic leaders and the U.S. Ambassador, and the ability to use liaison officers (LNOs) in key positions.

The importance of LNOs cannot be overstated in an austere environment and in theater. The ASCC works directly for the geographic combatant command and must be kept informed when acting as a JFC. The ASCC should still have ARFOR responsibilities and can assist in several ways, especially with its AOR expertise. The 101st Division made extensive use of LNOs, ensuring that experienced and knowledgeable personnel were used to fill the positions.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Assistant Division Commander-Support, 5 May 2015

Overview

- The division as a JTF: The JFC headquarters was the right size for the mission.
- Situational understanding: Educate the force, families, and public, with maximum effort up front.
- Talent management: Build cohesive teams with the right people in the right place. LNOs were identified for these missions.
- Face of the operation: Always place the supported agency and government personnel at the front in media and KLEs.
- ASCC augmentation: Situational understanding, largely gained through elements from the JFC headquarters, was established early to augment the ASCC.
- Forward presence at the early entry command post (EECP): Critical staff functions should forward early, such as contracting, logistics (G-4), Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), Port Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, engineers, Class A agent (G-8), and signal (G-6).

Observation

Division headquarters for this deployment was the right size for a JTF/JFC for expeditionary and small-scale operations.

Discussion

The division tactical command post (TAC), of approximately 150 to 170 personnel, was appropriate for the core of the JFC during this operation. However, one issue was that the personnel identified for the deployment by USARAF did not always meet the needs of the command. Talent management (for example, proper military occupational specialty, rank, or experience) was a factor in selecting personnel for deployment, along with SRP qualification for the area.

Lesson

Upon notification to deploy, the command element should review the joint manning document (JMD) to assess if it is appropriate for the operation (less tactical elements and more public affairs, human resources, contracting, medical, legal, and civil affairs elements).

Observation

The early entry team must be on the ground quickly to assess the current situation and to link up with UAPs, the host nation, and U.S. forces.

Discussion

The EECP should be tailored to the specific needs of command. Critical staff functions should deploy within 72 hours after notification, especially in an austere AOR. It is essential that requirements are identified, such as logistics, transportation, communications, land management, and security.

Lesson/Insight

Forward planners for Operation United Assistance (OUA) and similar operations should include staff from contracting, G-4, DLA, port operations from the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, engineers, G-8, G-6, and UAP LNOs.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Chief of Staff, COL Valery C. Keaveny, 05 MAY 2015

Insights Overview

- Home station training: Training needs to focus on austere environments, TAC and main CP setup, and staff exercises (for example Eagle Talon).

- Staff agility: The division moved from a COIN operation to decisive action to HA/DR.
- HA/DR operations presented unique problems and circumstances (for example, labs, public interaction, and OHDACA).
- Theater enablers: JCSE was an essential enabler in establishing operations and LNOs at the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM).
- LNO integration: LNOs served as force multipliers and quality personnel who could be at the right place at the right time.
- Threat: Clear identification of the threat (EVD) was essential to focus the staff.
- Planning: A larger planning requirement existed for OUA than standard Army operations due to joint and fast-paced operations (for example, labs, ETUs, and the types of transitions).
- Staying within parameters of mission: The division's mission included turning responsibility over to UAPs and teaching them to be self-sufficient and how to build partner capacity.
- Becoming a joint force: Understanding joint processes and capabilities.

Observation

In preparation for an upcoming MCTP warfighter exercise (WFX), the division chief of staff developed a staff training path to establish functioning CPs.

Discussion

Physical setup of the division main CP and division TACs ensured they were completed and equipped. It also gave the staff an opportunity to confirm if the physical layout was adequate for staff activities. The division chief used brown-bag lunches and normal staff preparation activities for the WFX. As the WFX approached, the staff prepared and issued the WFX operation order. During this time frame, the division was notified it would deploy as a JFC in support of OUA. From the chief's perspective, it was fortuitous to have trained the team in preparation for the WFX. By going through this preparation, the staff understood established infrastructure and the MDMP. Although the staff prepared for operations in an austere environment, Liberia was less austere than expected.

USARAF established its operations in a hotel. USARAF identified the Barkley Training Center, home of the Army of Liberia, as the location for the 101st Division's headquarters. Facilities at the center included a grass field and parking lot with some infrastructure, including a compound wall and buildings requiring minor repairs.

The JCSE created the required communications architecture. The joint operations center consisted of communications, intelligence, operations, and logistics elements. Because the staff was familiar with the communications systems, it was able to start work immediately. The previous work developing and then training on CP processes, such as battle rhythm, terms of reference, staff duties and responsibilities, MDMP, and the targeting process, was beneficial for a staff proficient with CP operations.

As a JFC, the division was given a JMD, even though a vast majority of the staff was from the 101st Division. Most unique was the number of LNOs — between 22 and 24 — sent from the division to other headquarters. LNOs were sent to USAFRICOM, USARAF, the U.S. Embassy, and NECC. Temporary LNOs were sent to work with the United Nations in Liberia. The division also received 12 LNOs from other organizations.

In hindsight, the chief noted areas that were challenging for the staff. For the G-1, the challenge was understanding sister-service administrative procedures and processes for awards and evaluations. Once in country, intelligence (G-2) and the chief recognized EVD as the threat. With this understanding, analysts' efforts were refocused. Analysts were allocated to the NECC, where they created products and assessments used by the GoL and U.S. Government. Because of the enormous planning effort, the chief bolstered both future operations (G-35) and plans (G-5). These sections planned a large number of concepts of operations, force flow, and requests for forces. Additionally, these sections regularly dealt with XVIII Airborne Corps, United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), Joint Staff, USAFRICOM, USARAF, and the GoL. The G-4 also interacted with similar external organizations on a regular basis. For the G-4, force flow was one of the more challenging requirements. For the G-8, managing OHDACA funds initially proved challenging. Fortunately, the G-8 had the foresight to go to USAFRICOM and USARAF to learn about these funds prior to deployment. LNOs remained in USARAF to maintain close coordination.

Insight/Lesson

The nature of joint operations requires flexible staffs that can quickly adapt to emerging requirements and work with mission partners in a collaborative manner.

Observation

Training, quickly tailored by MCTP to expose the staff to the many different agencies involved in OUA, was beneficial.

Discussion

MCTP gathered personnel from other agencies, as well as retired generals who had experience as joint force commanders conducting HA/DR operations in support of a lead federal agency. The training provided the staff with insight on UAPs and the United Nations cluster system for coordinating operations. The training exposed the staff to the complexities of operational contracting and led to the establishment of an operational contracting cell. Significantly, the staff developed a clear understanding that USAID was the lead federal agency and the 101st Division, as the JFC, was in a supporting role. USAID worked with the U.S. Ambassador and senior defense official/defense attaché, but nested its plan with the GoL. This understanding helped organize support relationships: GoL was supported by USAID, which, in turn, was supported by the 101st Division as the JFC. Further, the training helped clarify USAID and GoL lines of effort and campaign objectives. The 101st Division's battle rhythm was adjusted to nest with supported organizations and vice versa. The operations synchronization meeting was a key event in the 101st Division's battle rhythm. The operations synchronization meeting was used to synchronize capabilities, assets, and personnel.

Insight/Lesson

When feasible, staff should be educated on roles of mission partners and stakeholders prior to deployment.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Command Sergeant Major Gregory F. Nowak, 06 MAY 2015

CSM Nowak was interviewed May 2015, during the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) umbrella week. CSM Nowak arrived at Fort Campbell in October 2014, after the division started preparations for deployment and the advanced party had already deployed. He visited locations where U.S. personnel worked or held a permanent base. One of CSM Nowak's concerns before the deployment was the number of non-deployable personnel due to criteria for deployment to West Africa. The second concern was Soldier standards (for example, Soldiers working guard duty for extended hours). CSM Nowak ensured duty rosters were established to keep Soldiers from having to fill extended duty hours during the operation.

Insights Overview

- Ensure SRP, based on the regional command, is aligned.
- Practice leader engagement and Soldier discipline.

Observation

SRP for geographic combatant command: Soldiers initially scheduled for deployment were found to be non-deployable to West Africa. (See *Force Health Protection Requirements and Medical Guidance for Entry to the United States Africa Command*, Theater Version 1. USAFRICOM Special Staff, Date Time Group: 112243ZSEP2014.)

Discussion

The guidance from USAFRICOM differed from that of United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) and required the division to reassess personnel for deployment to Liberia. Soldiers deployable to Afghanistan or Iraq were not necessarily deployable to Liberia.

Geographic combatant command requirements must be understood and considered while the JMD is approved. Some of the non-deployable Soldiers were critical at staff and subordinate levels. However, with proper training, junior personnel worked as senior staff members or leaders at the unit level.

Insight/Lesson

In an HA/DR environment, division-level units tasked as a JTF/JFC must have current deployment criteria to adapt personnel without significant effects on the unit's ability to complete the mission.

Observation

Practicing leader engagement and Soldier discipline were key to solving several issues and concerns.

Discussion

CSM Nowak addressed several issues when he arrived in country, specifically Soldier health, quality of life, Soldier training, and day-to-day operations. CSM Nowak visited locations where division and U.S. personnel were assigned to assess their current status. Because some key noncommissioned officers (NCOs) were non-deployable, CSM Nowak provided assistance to units with inexperienced NCOs and Soldiers using support and training from other elements in the command (for example, units' senior leader support staff/sections with mess operations).

Insight

The geographic combatant command SRP should be reviewed for the areas where the division might deploy. Soldiers should be reviewed for deployability.

Chapter 3

General/Joint Staff and Special Staff Interviews

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-1, 04 MAY 2015

When the 101st Airborne Division received notification of its deployment to Liberia, the division assistant chief of staff, personnel (G-1), was not deployable. Therefore, another officer assumed responsibility as G-1/J-1. The G-1/J-1 and staff established priorities for personnel accountability, human resources, personnel replacements, and mail service. The focus was receiving input on the joint manning document (JMD) between 15 JAN and 15 FEB 2015. Input was made to the JMD for mail service and personnel accountability teams (PATs), along with early arrival of a mortuary affairs team. However, the lines of effort established by United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and United States Army Africa (USARAF) were different from those established by the 101st Division during force structure planning. The PATs and mail and mortuary teams did not arrive until mid-October 2014.

Initial personnel accountability was completed manually using a spreadsheet until a PAT arrived and the Transfer Protocol System became available. Similar to the PATs, the postal detachment did not arrive until 14 NOV 2014. A qualified chief warrant officer trained personnel and had the Army post office ZIP code activated. There were 2,700 personnel in country at this time. In accordance with standard operating procedures, all U.S. contract and third-country-national personnel were accounted for during this operation.

Overview

- Initial capabilities: PATs, mortuary affairs, and mail personnel were essential.
- Accountability was the biggest challenge for the G-1.
- Joint operations: Becoming familiar with systems and processes that were not routine to the Army was a new challenge.
- Planning: The G-1's involvement in planning was essential (planning for mail service was a priority).
- JMD: Using the correct shell (a notional JMD framework) for JMD development was critical.
- Range of duties: The G-1 had to work and think two up and one down.

Observation

PATs, mortuary affairs, and mail personnel were essential during initial deployment.

Discussion

During JMD development, the PATs, postal teams, and mortuary affairs were listed for early deployment. However, the USARAF and USAFRICOM lines of effort differed from those of the 101st Division. PATs were essential in monitoring accountability of the arriving personnel. The postal team established ZIP codes for mail delivery. Mortuary affairs handled Ebola virus disease (EVD) casualties and non-EVD casualties. Because these elements had delayed deployments, the G-1/J-1 was required to organize in another way to accomplish tasks.

Insights/Lessons

Using the correct shell for the JMD is critical; the JMD shell used for planning the division deployment was not the one used by a joint task force (JTF). The division recognized the importance of the requirement for personnel accountability, especially in a disease-infected environment. The division also recognized the need for Soldiers and unified action partners (UAPs) to receive and send mail. However, the G-1 needed a greater presence during the manning process.

Observation

Accountability was the biggest challenge for the G-1.

Discussion

During initial deployment, personnel accountability was accomplished through the use of spreadsheets that required cross-checks of information from assigned and attached units and organizations. There were 2,700 personnel in country. It was not until the PAT arrived and began using the Transfer Protocol System that accountability of all personnel in country under the joint forces command (JFC) occurred, to include contractors.

Insight/Lesson

The JFC headquarters staff had to think similar to USAFRICOM but perform similar to a brigade staff. Transition planning needed to include PATs in advanced echelon teams and early entry command posts.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-2/J-2, 04 MAY 2015

Although USARAF, USAFRICOM, and other organizations received strategic and operational-level planning information from the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, the U.S. Department of State, the GoL, and nongovernmental and international organizations, tactical-level information was difficult to obtain regarding the austere environment. The J-2 staff identified these tactical information shortfalls and challenges and refocused efforts from a traditional threat and force protection mission to one of Ebola epidemiology analysis.

Overview

- **Operational environment:** The mission required a true political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time (PMESII-PT) operational variable assessment.
- **Agility and flexibility:** The mission required adjustment from a traditional threat and force protection role to one of analytical support for EVD epidemiology.
- **Reachback:** The G-2 deployed a small intelligence capability forward and utilized a larger reachback capability for production of intelligence summaries and slow-turn products.
- **Liaison officers (LNOs):** Intelligence personnel were used in nontraditional roles as LNOs to the National Ebola Command Center (NECC) and Ministry of Health (MoH) to facilitate centralized reporting and common understanding of data.
- **Information distribution:** The use of the All Partner Access Network (APAN) allowed information sharing among UAPs.
- **Unclassified Distributed Command Ground System-Army (DCGS-A):** The G-2 worked with the Intelligence Center of Excellence to tailor DCGS-A to mission requirements that were tied into the G-6 network, allowing transitional analytical tools at an unclassified level to facilitate information sharing.

Observation

The mission required a true PMESII-PT operational variable assessment.

Discussion

Seventy-two hours after the president announced the Department of Defense (DOD) would support the fight against EVD in West Africa, the 101st Airborne Division was notified of a possible mission to serve as a

JTF in support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the lead federal agency in Liberia. The 101st Division quickly addressed the task of assessing the operational environment in Liberia. Assisted by USARAF, USAFRICOM, and other military and U.S. governmental organizations, the 101st Division completed its operational environment assessments and conducted its intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) assessment. However, when the division arrived in country, it found outdated country data that could possibly affect the division's in-country operations. This shortfall was quickly identified and addressed, and the division coordinated with various organizations to obtain subject matter expertise and current information. The information was used to fill intelligence gaps and update data.

Insights/Lessons

The prospect for future U.S. Army deployments in support of humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR), noncombatant evacuation operations, civic assistance, and other military operations other than war was a reality and required organizations to act on short notice. In order to prepare for such contingencies, an accurate and timely PMESII-PT operational variable assessment; diplomatic, information, military, economic, and country studies; and related assessments must be readily available for use by military planners for conducting accurate IPB assessments. Various U.S. governmental organizations have conducted country-specific studies and assessments and have published extensive reports. Unfortunately, this valuable information does not reside in one central repository for immediate access and use by deploying military units. When responding to HA/DR situations, units may lack time and expertise in finding and researching these resources.

Observation

The importance of agility and flexibility was evident. This mission required adjusting from a traditional threat/force protection role to one of analytical support to understanding epidemiology.

Discussion

During their first two weeks in Liberia, J-2 staff members were primarily focused on conducting traditional security/force protection operations. However, once staff members obtained up-to-date situational awareness of the operational environment, they were able to quickly refocus their efforts toward Ebola analysis. This shift in mission focus was accomplished by strategically embedding LNOs within the Liberian MoH and NECC, with the mission of collecting and disseminating Ebola information to partner nations and nongovernmental and international organizations involved in the EVD response effort. These strategically placed LNOs were able to

acquire current data and, therefore, could track the spread of EVD. This information could then be shared with the J-2 staff for use in the creation of situational update briefings for the U.S. Ambassador, country team, and members of the GoL.

Insight/Lesson

The LNOs assigned to the MoH and NECC were not specifically trained to work with epidemiological information. However, they were able to adapt skills obtained in a combat environment while conducting traditional analysis, and apply them to assist Liberians in understanding trends analysis and data integrity, compilation, and dissemination.

Observation

The 101st Division deployed with a small intelligence capability forward and utilized a larger reachback capability for production of intelligence summaries and slow-turn products.

Discussion

Initially, the JMD authorized the division G-2 section to deploy with 237 personnel. This number was subsequently reduced to fewer than 50 personnel. In addition to its J-2 staff, the 101st Division brought one-half of its Air Force staff weather officer contingent, a human intelligence (HUMINT) team from 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and a Naval Criminal Investigative Service team for counterintelligence (CI) operations. The division's deployed J-2 section was designed to give shallow depth in geospatial intelligence (GEOINT), HUMINT, CI, systems control, and plans while providing slightly more depth in all-source fusion. The unit left behind a robust 64-person reachback cell, led by the division analysis and control element chief, who provided an analytical and production capability that it lacked forward. The reachback cell was responsible for comprehensive GEOINT and long-term analytical projects; base intelligence summaries; signals intelligence (SIGINT) support, if required; and the bulk of collection management responsibilities.

Insight/Lesson

Based on its refocused mission, the J-2 staff refined its information and production requirements and reduced the size of its reachback capability to fewer than 15 personnel. Included in this team were the CI and HUMINT staff officer (G-2X) with on-call SIGINT capabilities, a condensed GEOINT structure, and a reduced all-source capability. Despite these reductions, the team was able to maintain its collection management capability.

Observation

J-2 intelligence personnel were used in nontraditional roles as LNOs at the Liberian MoH and NECC to facilitate centralized reporting and common understanding of the Ebola data.

Discussion

The J-2 placed LNOs with backgrounds in data management and analysis at the MoH. Among these LNOs was a SIGINT warrant officer with an analytical background in data basing sectarian violence trends in Iraq. This officer was well-versed in managing large amounts of data from Iraq and Afghanistan. Another LNO, who served as an all-source intelligence analyst, was experienced in targeting and improvised explosive device trends in Afghanistan. These LNOs were required to understand how Ebola-related information was compiled, reported, and disseminated on a daily basis.

Both LNOs recognized that data management was a major challenge at the MoH, as employees struggled to improve and develop procedural systems. Although Ebola case definitions existed, interpretations varied and inconsistencies led to duplicate and inaccurate reporting of Ebola-related data. The decentralization of Ebola case information presented to the county health teams produced multiple reporting formats and inconsistent practices, creating information gaps that prevented clear representation of Ebola data. Based on this knowledge, the embedded J-2 analysts advised the MoH staff to follow criteria for case definitions. They also centralized the reporting of confirmed cases based on lab results. The efforts of personnel involved resulted in an improvement in the accuracy of reports and an increase in communication among Ebola treatment units (ETUs), labs, and county health teams. Furthermore, data at the MoH became the central repository for Ebola reports, increasing the accuracy of the daily situation report.

The LNOs' ability to advise MoH data managers was critical in the adaptation of intelligence principles to improve Ebola case situation reports. Critical thinking and thorough fusion analysis of the data allowed the MoH to identify trends, patterns, and problem areas requiring action. Additionally, the J-2 staff's experience in presenting intelligence information enabled it to assist and improve the MoH's methods in displaying data as a graphical representation across space and time. The J-2 staff also ensured the proper dissemination of data and facilitated sharing of information with governmental and nongovernmental partners and health volunteers to increase situational awareness and focus continued efforts toward improved effectiveness.

The J-2 staff placed an all-source intelligence technician at the NECC. Due to the flexibility and agility the technician's military occupational specialty, he was able to technically manage the integration of a GEOINT analytical capability in the NECC to liaise with the Liberian geographic information system team that supported the Ebola response effort.

The MoH created the NECC to be the focal point of Ebola response with personnel who could rapidly respond to and isolate EVD outbreaks. Although more than 120 multinational organizations worked within the NECC, the lack of managerial oversight and prioritization was apparent. The J-2's NECC embedded analyst worked with international organizational leaders from Europe, Asia, and Africa to disseminate guidance on international crisis priorities. These priorities were then integrated into a model that nested with the Liberian President's overall strategy on isolating and defeating EVD.

Insights/Lessons

The division J-2 section demonstrated organizational flexibility and agility, and employed personnel who were able to excel in an austere environment. The 101st Division J-2 section and its partners from the DOD's military intelligence community rapidly reacted to a crisis situation and provided timely, accurate, and relevant products to the joint force commander, who effectively supported USAID.

Observation

Information distribution was accomplished by the use of APAN, which allowed information sharing with UAPs.

Discussion

APAN is an unclassified information sharing portal used by the DOD; it provides a variety of collaborative tools that assist organizations in information sharing with UAPs, nongovernmental organizations, and private international organizations. The 101st Division used APAN extensively to keep participating organizations informed of the common operational picture (COP). This information included daily intelligence summaries; information on lab locations, ETUs, community care centers, and helicopter landing zones; weather updates; Ebola update briefings; security updates; medical assessments; news updates; and Ebola trends data. The use of APAN also allowed the 101st Division to leave behind a sustainable COP that could transition to a nonmilitary entity for further development and use.

Insights/Lessons

APAN was an effective tool for sharing information and should be fully utilized by DOD organizations conducting HA/DR-related operations. The DOD must continually improve and build interest using APAN for sharing unclassified information and knowledge management.

Observation

The G-2 worked with the Intelligence Center of Excellence to tailor DCGS-A to mission requirements that tied into the G-6 network and facilitated information sharing by using transitional analytical tools at an unclassified level.

Discussion

Prior to deployment, the commanding general (CG) directed to conduct all communications in an unclassified environment to share information with partner nations, nongovernmental organizations, and private international organizations. First, the G-2 needed systems that worked on the “dirty” Internet, unencumbered by the restrictions of a nonsecure Internet protocol router network (NIPRNET). This was a critical requirement considering that the G-2’s partners would not be other DOD entities, but U.S. Government agencies outside the Department of State, such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Public Health Service, nongovernmental organizations, and partner nations that did not work within a NIPRNET construct. Second, geospatial tools needed to be Google Earth-based. All of the G-2’s existing systems were ArcGIS-based. Although ArcGIS is compatible with Google Earth, it still needed to work on the same platform as that of the partners. (Most individuals were using Google Earth, often on personal computers and tablets.) The requirement to work in a completely unclassified environment was a lesson learned from Haiti and used as a base planning assumption, which proved to be completely correct. Because of this preplanning, GEOINT operations and the COP functioned seamlessly in theater. Finally, the G-2 understood that any system needed to be simple and expeditionary because of the immature theater had no existing information technology infrastructure. The G-2 did not have the time to create a complicated system architecture. Additionally, this architecture needed to be constructed without a field support representative.

Because a standardized unclassified HA/DR COP toolkit did not exist on the DOD inventory, the G-2 recognized that either a system needed to be built to support its requirements or an existing system would need to be modified to meet the needs, specifically DCGS-A. To accomplish this task, the G-2 contacted the DCGS-A program manager. In concert with the United States Army Training Doctrine Command Capabilities Manager-Sensor Processing

(known as TCM–SP) and the United States Army Intelligence and Security Command, they were able to develop, build, and ship a “fly-away” kit of unclassified DCGS-A servers and laptops that gave the JFC a robust capability in Liberia, as well as a reachback node at Fort Campbell.

The most useful data the J-2 section was able to share with its partners included the locations and status of labs, ETUs, community care centers, and helicopter landing zones. This information was continually posted on the COP using APAN, a system built for collaboration in a HA/DR environment. Using APAN also allowed the J-2 section to leave behind a sustainable COP that could be transitioned to a nonmilitary entity for further development or use. Posting data on a website in near-real time was useful to partner organizations that did not have a COP or the knowledge on how to build a system. These tools provided J-2 personnel with a foundation on which to focus their efforts.

Insights/Lessons

Operation United Assistance (OUA) highlighted the need for a suite of rapidly deployable, off-the-shelf unclassified command and control tools for a headquarters that are easily sharable with nonmilitary and nongovernmental organizations engaged in HA/DR-related operations.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-3/J-3, 05 MAY 2015

Overview:

- Controlling information: The largest operational challenge was managing multiple sources and data.
- Early entry command post: Important for accountability, planning, and contracting critical early entry capabilities.
- Direct reporting to the geographic combat command: Understanding the military chain of command.
- Integrating processes: Learn partner elements’ forms of planning and operations and include UAPs in meetings and operations for shared understanding.
- Understanding the operational environment: Continuous effort, facilitated by operations synchronization, is required.

Observation

Staffs can be overwhelmed by the surge of information at the beginning of an operation.

Discussion

Upon receipt of the warning order directing the 101st Airborne Division to backfill USARAF as the joint force command for OUA, the G-3 and staff began receiving planning guidance and information from a multitude of headquarters to include Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA); United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM); XVIII Airborne Corps; USARAF; and USAFRICOM. Each of these headquarters performed different roles and duties for deploying and employing Army forces that ranged from Title 10 and force provider responsibilities (HQDA and FORSCOM), to readiness and deployment (XVIII Airborne Corps), to transfer of authority and setting the theater (USARAF), to command (USAFRICOM).

The 101st Division staff was initially consumed with trying to determine the most relevant information for planning. The G-3 filtered and channeled information to focus staff priorities and efforts. The G-3 enhanced information exchange and understanding by pushing LNOs from the staff to USARAF in Vicenza, Italy, and USAFRICOM in Stuttgart, Germany, within 10 days of receiving the warning order. These LNOs included aviation, operations, logistics, and engineer representation. The execute order issued by USAFRICOM significantly enhanced planning within the division by providing clear guidance and tasks.

Insight/Lesson

The influx of information from multiple headquarters must be controlled and managed to prevent staff from being inundated and slowed by irrelevant information. To facilitate this task, LNOs must be assigned to key headquarters to facilitate planning and information exchange.

Observation

Transitioning the division command posts to operate as a JFC was facilitated by earlier guidance from the Chief of Staff of the Army with regard to forward command posts. Plus, the division was preparing for a Mission Command Training Program (MCTP) warfighter exercise (WFX).

Discussion

The division had recently deployed a division tactical command post (TAC) to the Joint Readiness Training Center. The guidance and training helped the division determine how it wanted the division TAC manned, equipped, and organized. Plus, training gave the division a solid understanding of

its capabilities. As the division began organizing for its Liberia mission, the division TAC was increased in size from 50 to approximately 170 personnel. The number of joint personnel was minimal: only 10 personnel from other services. The scheduled training with MCTP was reduced from five to two days, and was changed to address the division's upcoming mission rather than the original decisive action training scenario. A key aspect of the training addressed information sharing with mission partners, the need to write for release of information, and using open networks to communicate and coordinate missions among shareholders. The division communications was augmented with the Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE) communications package.

Insight/Lesson

Seek opportunities to set up and operate the division command posts.

Observation

Embedding personnel early in the USARAF staff facilitated planning.

Discussion

Within 10 days of receiving the warning order, the 101st Division sent 11 embedded personnel to USARAF. After two weeks in Italy, several went to Liberia, including an aviator, an operations officer, an engineer, a logistics officer, and the operations sergeant major. This team was sent forward to coordinate with the Office of Security Cooperation within the U.S. Embassy. Tasks included identifying and securing permission for the location of the JFC headquarters and subordinate units. Because potential sites were owned by different organizations, government and commercial, the coordination and land-use agreement requirements differed. Additionally, because it was the rainy season in Liberia, some areas were unusable due to flooding. During this time frame, USARAF continued to lead coordination with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), organizing the mission tasking matrix for health care equipment, establishing the Monrovia Medical Unit, and coordinating the location and size of the ETUs. The transition with USARAF was structured. The transfer of authority with USARAF occurred on 25 OCT 2015 with no more than 20 division personnel on the ground.

Once the transition was complete, the JFC reported directly to USAFRICOM. USARAF monitored force-flow meetings. As the 101st Division moved to redeploy, USARAF was tied back for Title 10 funding requirements, to include health monitoring requirements for returning Army Soldiers.

Insight/Lesson

When feasible, embed planners with the outgoing headquarters to facilitate planning and transition.

Observation

The staff spent the first weeks on the ground getting established and developing a clearer understanding of the operational environment.

Discussion

The commander set conditions early, ensuring the staff understood the JFC was in support of USAID, the lead federal agency in the HA/DR operation. The staff was cautioned against mission creep, both externally and internally. Several factors, such as the commander's guidance, helped the staff throughout the operation to maintain focus on the end state and develop a clear understanding of the JFC mission. Additionally, USAFRICOM's actions clearly nested the JFC's operations with the GoL and USAID's objectives. USAFRICOM described how the DOD's unique capabilities would contribute to the operation and provided a framework for how the 101st Division would approach the operation. When the JFC staff members interacted with the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), they clearly understood that USAID was the lead agency. Further, staff members were proactive by taking steps to determine what they were doing well and what they should change to improve integration and synchronization with mission partners. The large number of mission partners required effort in determining each of their roles and how they could contribute to the overall response effort.

Insight/Lesson

Take steps to ensure staff members clearly understand the nature of the mission and their relationship with the supported headquarters.

Observation

The division aggressively worked to ensure shared understanding of EVD infection and death rates.

Discussion

Liberia established the National Ebola Command Center (NECC). The center was administered by the Liberian MoH. The 101st Division used operations and civil affairs team members as LNOs within the NECC to attend meetings. Division leaders recognized early that the multitude of mission partners and shareholders had a different understanding of the operational environment, primarily the infection and death rates from EVD. Because tracking infection and death rates was central to a successful

response to EVD, the division focused its effort on how to develop common understanding across mission partners and shareholders of data. The division decided to use its intelligence analysts to assist the MoH with validating incoming reports, eliminating double and inaccurate reporting, and to add necessary rigor to enhance shared understanding and agreement. The division developed a chart to graphically show infection and death rate trends. Understanding infection rates and locations at the county level helped the division staff and MoH with ETU building, positioning, and prioritizing.

Insight/Lesson

It is important to gain shared understanding with mission partners and shareholders through rigorous analysis and data interpretation.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-5/J-5, 04 MAY 2015

Overview

The 101st Division planned and integrated global force management (GFM) into the Joint Forces Command-United Assistance (JFC-UA) planning effort. This action aided in transitions that facilitated force flow into and out of theater.

Identifying and planning for transitions must start early, preferably before deployment. The 101st Division's success was due to this early planning effort.

- A level of joint education is required to function as a JFC. Company grades are suddenly dealing with GCC staffs. Officers without joint professional military education require some academics to bring them to a level of understanding.
- Be prepared to educate the GCC and other joint actors on Army capabilities and unit types.
- Relationships in a unified action environment are critical; it takes commitment and dedication to the task to make them work. Forgoing email when possible, the 101st Division made a point to call or video conference frequently to build rapport. Email has the potential to be overwhelming and overlooked. Talking through issues enabled the 101st Division to accomplish more in a shorter amount of time.

Observation

The 101st Division plans team learned to anticipate change and merge different lines of effort and methods of operations.

Discussion

GFM in the 101st was fully integrated into major JFC planning efforts, such as JFC right-sizing; expanding EVD response; redeployment; intermediate staging base closure; and multiple branch planning efforts, including a zero option and reduced presence.

JFC-UA's initial authorized force structure consisted of more than 6,360 personnel and 130 elements that included both deployed and prepare-to-deploy forces from two countries and 16 installations. Actual boots on the ground (BOG) for the JFC reached 2,650 personnel in early December 2014. The JFC force reduced from an authorized strength of 6,360 to under 40 Soldiers in five months.

JFC-UA then right-sized the force structure and prepared for a follow-on force of 1,147 personnel led by the Reserve Component spread out over 12 states. BOG decreased to 2,103 personnel by the end of January 2015.

JFC-UA completed its mission and developed a plan for approximately 40 Soldiers to transition functions to a non-DOD organization as the JFC stood down. Projected BOG for 01 APR 2015 was approximately 60 Soldiers.

Lesson/Best Practice

Leverage and integrate the G-5 GFM planner into all aspects of planning. The GFM planner may be one of few individuals on a division staff who can understand the requests for forces and GFM processes.

Observation

The 101st Division used scenario planning to identify branches and sequels.

Discussion

Scenario planning is a strategic method that planners use to create flexible and adaptable long-term plans. Scenario planning can involve systems thinking and recognizing factors that potentially combine in complex ways to create unforeseen futures. Scenario planning allows inclusion of factors that are difficult to measure, such as insights about the future, cultural or value shifts, changing laws and regulations, and inventions.

The central idea behind scenario planning is to allow policy and decision makers to have greater flexibility and freedom in adapting units and organizations. As the scenarios are war-gamed, particular groups of facts

become more important. These insights enable intelligence planners to refine information collection and dissemination to better serve the commander or policymaker's actual information requirements.

Scenario planning allows policymakers to make mistakes and learn from them without risking career-limiting failures in real-life situations. Further, policymakers can make these mistakes in a safe, unthreatening, game-like environment, while responding to a variety of concretely presented situations based on facts. Scenario planning provides the opportunity to "rehearse the future," which does not present itself in day-to-day operations where every action and decision counts.

Lesson/Best Practice

Scenario planning is particularly useful in HA/DR environments. The 101st Division used scenario planning to seek and identify the drivers of change, which facilitated in predicting outcomes.

Observation

Initially, the 101st Division had difficulties understanding data from the numerous agencies. These agencies also had difficulty understanding data.

Discussion

With the multiple data sets available, defining the problem was an impossible task. Leveraging the 101st Division's G-2 was essential. Although not all problems required lengthy analysis, many of the various agencies had different data sets. Where the data were similar, the organizations had different interpretations. Because of these different interpretations, it was important to universally accept conclusions.

For well-structured problems, leaders may make quick decisions based on their experiences. However, for problems involving a multitude of factors, leaders need a systematic problem-solving process. Initially, the biggest hurdle for the 101st Division was "normalizing the data" or getting the data to function as tools of understanding rather than cause confusion and disagreement.

Lesson/Best Practice

Getting early consensus on the baseline data is critical. The 101st Division did not try to force UAPs use Army data or planning processes. The focus was on normalizing data among the UAPs because understanding data was the initial problem. The G-2 was charged with managing and normalizing data, resulting in consensus.

Observation

The division staff lacked unified action experience in a permissive environment.

Discussion

In the division and G-5 staff, unified action experience was lacking. MG Volesky, who was normally the “senior tactician,” became the key interlocutor with UAPs and an enabler for the staff. The DLA, understanding the 101st Division’s capacity, assisted with planning and anticipating requirements for the division.

LNOs were critical to the 101st Division’s efforts. If the division needed to talk consistently to a UAP, there was an LNO to facilitate the communication. By being “on the ground” at higher headquarters, LNOs quickly compensated for any lack of knowledge in theater. Placement of the LNOs at USAFRICOM and USARAF was useful and highly successful.

Insight

The 101st Division planned to educate the staff. Educating the staff was a start to identifying and filling knowledge gaps. Techniques to educating the staff included formal academics, training teams from the division staff, primaries giving “block-and-tackle” sessions to subordinates, smart books, classes focusing on special topics, LNOs, and leveraging senior leader experiences.

Observation

Assessing and understanding to what level the theater has been set are critical to initial planning efforts. Developing this assessment and understanding, and transmitting this knowledge to the JFC, may be the most important task the Army Service component command (ASCC) can perform in terms of setting the theater.

Discussion

During planning, the 101st Division considered flexibility and adaptability. Flexibility was defined as having the ability to change within the current structure. Adaptability was defined as having the ability to react to change. Both these attributes worked well for the G-5 staff.

Setting the theater involved a range of actions necessary to employ land power before and during a crisis. These actions included development of bases; theater opening; reception, staging, onward movement, and integration; Army support to other services; DOD combatant command support agent requirements; and other sustainment-related support in the area of responsibility. The theater army, in conjunction with its associated

theater sustainment command (TSC), is supposed to prepare support and sustainment estimates that outline the responsibilities and requirements for maintaining access and setting the theater where U.S. military presence is forward stationed or deployed. The theater army usually performs these responsibilities through the TSC. Some of these responsibilities are done in Phase 0, Shape, and others in the Phase 1, Deter. In Liberia, USARAF did not have enablers. Although the TSC was able to do a number of activities, its major activities were not performed.

USARAF provided mission command and situational awareness by providing a flexible Army headquarters to meet the various joint command and control requirements.

Lesson/Best Practice

The importance of assessments cannot be overstated. Providing a robust assessment of the theater is the most important task the ASCC can perform for its JFC.

By definition, austere theaters are hard to establish. The DLA's proactive mind-set, presence, and expertise were mitigation factors. Developing a close relationship with the DLA early is highly recommended. LNO planning teams sent to USARAF were critical to the 101st Division's success, as well as the LNOs stationed at the U.S. Embassy and with other UAPs.

The 101st Division's requests for information were critical to the success of its planning efforts. The division started with 3,500 Soldiers programmed, which quickly dropped to 1,250, based on replies to requests for information.

Incorporating the division transportation officer into all aspects of planning was critical to success. The division transportation officer was a critical source of information. The interface with the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command paid huge dividends as the operation progressed.

When building relationships with UAPs, the three most important aspects were team building, gaining consensus, and communicating. If these are done well, other problems can be resolved.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-6, 04 MAY 2015

Overview

- Talent management: Prior HA/DR experience allowed the staff to anticipate communications requirement challenges in an austere environment and plan accordingly.
- Local assets: Utilize local assets when available. The ability to utilize local Internet communications systems enhanced NIPRNET usage for deployed forces, while saving the U.S. Government money and limiting use of local cellphones.
- Appropriate assets: Ensure the JTF/JFC have access to required resources. The absence of Blue Force Tracker (BFT) coverage for West Africa was identified. Once identified as necessary, BFT coverage was obtained for deployed forces.
- Joint communications: Utilize ASCC and JCSE for communications. USARAF provided TAC and tactical operations center (TOC) communications packages to facilitate operations.
- GCC support: Direct issues and concerns to GCC for assistance in finding solutions, such as when NIPRNET was needed in the joint operations area (JOA).
- The 50th Signal Battalion: The battalion was trained and willing to provide support.

Observation

USAFRICOM provided extended NIPRNET and satellite coverage from USAFRICOM headquarters.

Discussion

The 101st Division went to Liberia without NIPRNET access where information sharing among U.S. and foreign military, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations, was required throughout the operational environment. USAFRICOM extended its NIPRNET coverage to the JOA and moved satellite coverage to establish communications among agencies.

Insight/Lesson

The divisions, JTF, and JFC must look at communications systems and support provided by the GCC. The 101st Airborne Division established all communications as unclassified. The NIPRNET was used to communicate digitally throughout the operational environment. This support was requested from and provided by the USAFRICOM J-6.

Observation

The early-entry division TAC required additional communications.

Discussion

In preparation for deployment, the 101st Airborne Division TAC and TOC had to be augmented with additional communications assets with the capability to communicate in a joint environment. As part of the support package, USARAF provided the JCSE TAC and TOC communications packages to facilitate operations.

Insights/Lessons

Deploying units designated as a JTF/JFC should request joint communications system equipment and have the JCSE in place upon arrival to the JOA.

Observation

The division needed to adapt to austere communications environments.

Discussion

Although there were limited land lines for communications in country, Liberia had an extensive cellular network that provided communications in all areas of the country. Because communications were unclassified, the 101st Division JFC found that by purchasing cellphones and tablets, it could conduct mission command without major satellite communications. The division requested and was approved to receive more than 400 cellphones during the operation.

Lesson

Although Liberia lacked a land-line infrastructure, it was not lacking in communications systems. With current technology, the use of mobile communications was more cost effective with limited budgets. Private businesses can provide this service at a reduced cost. During the country study, units must ensure they have the latest information on all business types that may affect operations by providing services or capabilities that are not normally available.

Observation

Satellite coverage for BFT was not available.

Discussion

Upon arrival, the aviation element of the JFC found that there was no satellite coverage for BFT. Satellite coverage had to be moved to cover the JOA for air operations. USAFRICOM ensured these systems were moved so that air operations of U.S. forces were not delayed.

Lesson

Communications systems required for aviation assets must be verified, and, if not available, assets should be moved or alternative systems should be put into place.

Observation

There was a need to use local, or “dirty,” nonsecure Internet service for digital communications.

Discussion

Because overall communication was on NIPRNET and the USAFRICOM NIPRNET was used to capacity, the JFC J-6 requested and was approved to use internet service in Liberia as the primary means of unclassified digital communications, which resulted in the use of Web-based systems, common access cards (CACs), Deployed Theater Accountability System (DTAS), enterprise services, email, Intelink, and SharePoint. Because USAFRICOM extended its NIPRNET to the JOA, email was not affected.

Lesson

Coordination with the host nation and the GCC and use of local networks can reduce dependence on satellite systems that provide limited use, or can become overtaxed in a short amount of time. Priority protocols must be established to keep communications functioning.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-9/J-9, 05 MAY 2015

Overview

- The 101st Airborne Division predeployment training provided leaders and Soldiers with the required skills and awareness to fight Ebola while operating in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) environment.
- Understanding the operational environment facilitates development of collaborative solutions and employment of synchronized capabilities to conduct complementary operations. Civil affairs planning teams and LNOs were key contributors.
- The establishment of a civil-military operations center (CMOC) is critical to enabling effective and continuous JIIM coordination along complementary lines of effort and management of resources. The NECC, Liberia’s national humanitarian operations center, operated in this capacity.

- Building cohesive teams provided the 101st Division with the capability to collaborate effectively with the NECC, USAID, DART, United Nations Mission in Liberia, Armed Forces of Liberia, and others to enable synchronization of operations along complementary lines of effort.
- Previous deployments of the 101st Division's leaders and Soldiers to Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and other locations provided a foundation for conducting operations for OUA.
- Early deployment of civil affairs into theater provided a communication link with the commander that facilitated situational updates and validated assessments of the operational environment to enhance understanding, planning, and future operations.
- The G-9/J-9 developed an extensive contact list for GoL leaders at the county and local levels that provided the 101st Division's key leaders and staff almost instantaneous contact with Liberian officials to synchronize collaborative operations.

Observation

The 101st Division planned and conducted a comprehensive predeployment training program for leaders and Soldiers that prepared them for operations in Liberia.

Discussion

The leaders and Soldiers from the 101st Division and supporting units from 16 stateside locations required more than the standard predeployment training. Ebola information briefings and protection measures were included in the training. The 101st Division G-9/J-9 developed and provided interagency, intergovernmental, and Liberia cultural information briefings to leaders and Soldiers. The G-9/J-9 provided briefing products for presentations to the units external to Fort Campbell. The G-9/J-9 also developed a leader book, *The 101st Airborne Division Liberian Response Support Force: Operation Unified Assistance-Liberia*, based on information derived from the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center. The book provided in-depth descriptions of the Liberian operational environment, intergovernmental organizations, maps, key Liberian and international figures' biographies, military and civilian leaders' biographies, and other information designed to enhance understanding of the operational environment. (**NOTE:** For information about this book, contact the Center for Army Lessons Learned.) Additionally, the 101st Division G-9/J-9 developed a Liberian operational environment test to measure the learning of the division and supporting organizations' leaders and Soldiers. Based on the results of this learning, additional training focused on those areas requiring improvement.

Insight/Best Practice

Although standard individual and collective predeployment training is critically important, it is equally important to provide leaders and Soldiers with Liberian cultural, civil, economic, military, and governmental awareness, as well as an understanding of the operating environment, which includes JIIM agencies and organizations.

Observation

The 101st Airborne Division's leaders and staff conducted JIIM training to prepare Soldiers for conducting operations in the Liberian operational environment. The training focused on the numerous and disparate U.S. Government, nongovernmental, intergovernmental, and multinational agencies and organizations, as well as agencies and organizations in the private sector, supporting the Ebola response effort.

Discussion

In spring 2014, the 101st Division focused on preparations for its December 2014 WFX conducted by the MCTP. The division used its Eagle Talon II training series to train and prepare the division staff for the WFX. Brigades simultaneously focused on leader and Soldier individual and collective training. The XVIII Airborne Corps contacted the 101st Division to include JIIM partner (also known as UAP) dimensions into the WFX. (See Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, for more information on UAPs.) Including JIIM staff training into Eagle Talon II provided Soldiers with an insight into working with UAPs and Phase 4, Stabilize, and Phase 5, Enable Civil Authority, of a campaign or operation. Additionally, XVIII Airborne Corps informed the division of the benefit of conceptually planning for a HA/DR mission deploying to Africa. Subsequently, the 101st Division G-9/J-9 led a staffing effort involving all staff leaders in the summer of 2014 to conceptually support a HA/DR mission in Africa. This staffing effort was termed the Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team, also known as the HAST concept. (See Joint Publication 3-29, *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance*, and Army Techniques Publication 3-57.20, *Multi-Service Techniques for Civil Affairs Support to Foreign Humanitarian Assistance*.) Conceptual planning for the Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team concept provided a framework for a non-warfighting contingency mission and “inadvertently” helped prepare the staff for operations to combat Ebola in Liberia.

The 101st Division staffing effort also included an educational approach whereby learning focused on EVD, the culture and leadership of Liberia, and the operational environment. The instruction also emphasized outreach to USAID, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and organizations such as the

United Nations Mission for the Ebola Emergency Response and the World Health Organization (WHO). In order to further educate the 101st Division command and staff, an interagency academics seminar was developed by MCTP and the G-9/J-9. The two-day seminar was conducted at Fort Campbell and involved USAID, OFDA, CDC, Department of State Disaster Assistance Response Team, political advisers, previous U.S. ambassadors, the United Nations, the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, and representatives from the interagency community. The interagency seminar greatly enhanced the division command and staff's knowledge and understanding of interagency relationships. The respective academics helped them prepare for a different mission and mind-set — transitioning from a WFX force-on-force scenario to a HA/DR mission.

Insight/Best Practice

Past operations in the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) JOA demonstrated the importance of training for the complexity of the modern battlefield and achieving closely coordinated actions in the JIIM operational environment. OUA served as another example of a complex environment. Army combat training centers (MCTP specific to JTF-capable divisions and corps) offer a unique environment to develop integrated capabilities by replicating a deployed area's combat and human environmental characteristics that best support the development of military and JIIM training objectives.

Observation

The 101st Division effectively employed civil affairs planning teams and LNOs as a line of communication to facilitate understanding of the operational environment among the division and UAPs in the development of collaborative solutions and employment of synchronized capabilities to conduct complementary operations.

Discussion

USARAF and USAFRICOM developed the FORSCOM requirement for a civil affairs company regionally aligned to the African continent, as well as a civil affairs planning team to assist in augmenting the G-9/J-9 staff. USAFRICOM-oriented, rapidly deployable, and having significant African experience with foreign language qualifications (Arabic and French), the 82nd Civil Affairs Battalion sent a civil affairs company to Liberia, under operational control to JFC-UA. Upon arrival, the company and JFC-UA staff worked with the DART to determine the most efficient means of employment and utilization. There were clear Ebola threats in the populace that restricted interpersonal engagement. However, civil affairs assets provided initial and continual connectivity with the numerous aid

organizations and their respective commanders with whom they were task-organized. For example, while the Army Ebola lab teams (1st Area Medical Lab Unit) were establishing a footprint, they helped identify opportunities in acquiring space, accommodations, and movement. These teams generally provided civil liaison duties among the local leadership. Further, with the additional LNO touch-points desired, civil affairs planning teams were sent to liaise with the United Nations Mission for the Ebola Emergency Response, United Nations Mission in Liberia, and NECC.

An additional complement brought to the JFC was the civil information management (CIM) cell capability. The CIM cell helped establish file management on APAN. The civil affairs planning team processed civil information derived from open-source data, the Liberian MoH, international government organizations, and nongovernmental organizations, and posted it in a logical format on APAN. This information was then available to all interested communities, resulting in a better shared understanding of the Ebola response effort. In addition to data collection on APAN, the CIM cell also used the Civil Information Management Data Processing System (CIMDPS) as an additional repository for all gathered Liberian civic data. CIMDPS is a program of record, managed by the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, NC. Similar to APAN, CIMDPS is a user-friendly military data repository. In response to the civil affairs assets, MG Volesky stated, “Our civil affairs liaisons, having recent experience in Africa, provided the strategic connectivity that I was looking for, as well as providing the staff with valuable situational awareness.”

Insight/Best Practice

Civil affairs planning teams and LNOs are a critical part of maintaining situational awareness and provide the connectivity necessary for the staff to achieve better understanding of the operational environment and to better inform commanders in their decision making.

Observation

The 101st Airborne Division G-9/J-9 did not establish a CMOC.

Discussion

The 101st Division did not establish a CMOC; however, an operations center was established by the Liberian Government through a unifying process termed as the incident management system, a clearinghouse for meetings and decisions made at the NECC. The NECC is essentially analogous to a national-level CMOC or a humanitarian operations center. Therefore, in having shared equities, JIIM and nongovernmental organizations and the economic sector worked together and became a stronger and distinct force. The center of gravity where collective and collaborative decisions were made was at the NECC. If the Liberian

Government did not have competent leaders, a unified and logical approach would have been significantly more difficult. Had the 101st Division established a CMOC, it would have been counterproductive and could have confused the international community.

Insight/Best Practice

In certain instances, establishment of a CMOC may not be required. This is especially true if the host nation has competent leaders and can establish a functional, cohesive CMOC-like organization where collective and collaborative decisions can be made.

Observation

Cohesive, knowledgeable, and experienced LNO teams allowed the 101st Division to collaborate effectively with the NECC, USAID, DART, United Nations Mission in Liberia, Armed Forces of Liberia, and other entities to enable synchronization of operations along complementary lines of effort.

Discussion

The 101st Division's principle of communication came first, then coordination, followed by collaboration, and finally synchronization of effort. The division employed experienced and knowledgeable LNOs to enhance collaboration with the NECC, USAID, DART, United Nations Mission in Liberia, Armed Forces of Liberia, and other agencies and organizations in theater. In addition to the six civil affairs teams employed throughout Liberia, the civil affairs planning teams directly assisted the G-9/J-9 cell with essential staff actions. The DART had experienced civil-military LNOs, and the JFC had experienced and competent psychological operations LNOs who had previous exposure to interagency and U.S. Embassy operations. It is important to ensure the LNOs exchanged can articulate operations through effective communication and express the command message.

Insight/Best Practice

The use of LNOs is a critical and integral part of the communication and collaboration links between commands, especially with the JIIM community supporting OUA. Having mature, experienced, and knowledgeable LNOs was critical. Not only can an LNO assist in staffing requirements, but an LNO can provide a strategic voice and speak on the unit's behalf. Mature and knowledgeable liaisons have two effects. First, they provide insight to the gaining unit through command messaging with a strategic voice. Second, the information they receive can be used by the parent organization to maintain situational awareness and obtain a sensing of the pulse of plans, operations, initiatives, and decisions of the other JIIM organizations and agencies in theater.

Observation

Previous deployments and experience of the G-9/J-9 staff and the supporting civil affairs units into Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and other locations provided a foundation for planning and conducting operations in OUA.

Discussion

Relationships and trust among the G-9/J-9 staff, leaders, and Soldiers assigned to the civil affairs company from the 82nd Civil Affairs Battalion and civil affairs planning teams from the 85th Civil Affairs Brigade were established during previous deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, and other locations. The relationships and trust, coupled with lessons and best practices from previous deployments, provided a foundation that facilitated liaison, communication, collaboration, and cooperation with the different UAPs supporting OUA. The civil affairs teams and LNOs provided strategic connectivity and situational awareness to the 101st Airborne Division leaders and staff. Although the positive actions of the civil affairs teams and LNOs significantly enhanced the 101st Division's situational awareness, understanding, planning, and operations, the cooperation and collaboration of the international community cannot be overlooked. Working many operational and combat missions abroad, the 101st Division and civil affairs community had never seen cooperation and collaboration to the degree experienced in Liberia. There is often a degree of dissention and varying agendas among the various actors from the many organizations participating in an operation. However, this dissention was not observed in Liberia. The JIIM agencies and organizations involved came to assist Liberia with the goal of stopping the spread of Ebola. The functional and competent GoL effectively took the lead in harnessing the resources, funding, and personnel and implemented a strategic health care plan.

Insights/Best Practices

Although the experiences, lessons, and best practices gained from previous deployments provided a foundation for effectively operating in a JIIM operational environment, interpersonal skills, open-mindedness, and "working friendly" were key factors to achieving success. Other important take-aways the 101st Division G-9/J-9 and supporting civil affairs teams and LNOs used to facilitate communication, collaboration, and cooperation in theater were having an objective viewpoint and working effectively with the many UAPs having dissimilar backgrounds.

Observation

Early deployment of civil affairs assets could have helped set the theater.

Discussion

Early deployment of civil affairs assets could have provided assessments to the 101st Airborne Division's leaders and staff for gaining situational awareness and understanding the operational environment, which could have resulted in streamlined communication and collaboration with Liberian and U.S. organizations and the international community.

Insight/Best Practice

Commanders should consider deploying some civil affairs assets early in the deployment sequence. Deploying civil affairs assets early with the advance (torch) party can provide commanders and staffs with situational awareness; communication links with UAPs and host-nation civil, governmental, and military agencies and organizations; visibility of the operational environment; running estimates of current operations; lodgment locations and facilities; and other critical information requirements.

Observation

The 101st Airborne Division G-9/J-9 developed a comprehensive contact list for the GoL, civil leaders and officials, and supporting international officials and agencies.

Discussion

Considering the necessity for timely communication with Liberian government leaders, and officials and the numerous international officials and agencies supporting OUA, the G-9/J-9 developed an extensive contact list down to the county and local levels. If the 101st Division leaders and staff needed to operate in any given subsection of Liberia, the G-9/J-9 had the names and contact information for multiple Liberian and international government leaders, officials, staff, and agencies operating in that area. This contact list was key to conducting timely communication needed to expedite collaboration and coordination in the conduct of operations in Liberia.

Insight/Best Practice

The ability to conduct timely communication with key Liberian and international agencies and their representatives was essential to facilitating collaboration, coordination, and synchronization of operations along common lines of effort. In order to facilitate communication efforts with Liberian officials and the supporting international community, the G-9/J-9 developed a comprehensive contact list that had a critical impact on the 101st Division's ability to facilitate timely coordination and conduct of operations.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Knowledge Management Officer, 04 MAY 2015

Overview

- Public facing portal: Establishment of a portal that can be accessed by UAPs and subordinate units is essential and should occur prior to deployment to facilitate planning.
- APAN: The information sharing portal established by AFRICOM was essential to data sharing. All personnel should have training on how to operate the APAN website.
- APAN provided an unclassified interactive common operating picture where multiple organizations could focus their unity of efforts. No other collaborative site could provide this service.
- The JFC, intergovernmental and nongovernmental agencies, and host nations used APAN as a centralized site to facilitate information and knowledge sharing related to the Ebola response.
- Knowledge management representatives: All sections had knowledge management representative's to post and maintain section data for sharing of information.
- Quality control: Data posted to sites with agency and public access needed to be checked for accuracy.
- After-action review: After-action reviews are a best practice for the Army. They should have established requirements and procedures.

Observation

The JFC and UAPs require a public facing portal for sharing information.

Discussion

APAN needs to be the primary knowledge-sharing website for HA/DR missions. Combatant commands maintain the APAN website and site template for disaster response within the area of responsibility. Maintaining the site allows combatant command staff to become familiar with APAN prior to receipt of mission and results in site owners who are trained and proficient at using the site. Training on APAN should be integrated into training exercises, such as command post exercises and warfighter exercises. As a result, combatant command site owners and staff will be able to refine their APAN standard operating procedures prior to the high operating tempo of a disaster response mission.

The Intelink network provided a SharePoint platform enabled by a common access card (CAC) to collaborate and disseminate information across the JFC joint operations area. Personnel with a DOD CAC can view the JFC-UA portal. This SharePoint platform allowed reachback capabilities to the continental United States to the 101st Division's rear staff for information sharing and collaboration.

Lesson

Operations that occur in an unclassified environment requiring information sharing with UAPs, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations benefit from Web-based systems that allow for easy access to information that is otherwise restricted to DOD.

Summary of Interview with 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Public Affairs Officer, 04 MAY 2015

- Local Messaging: Particular threats associated with the mission warranted efforts to inform the public at all deployment locations. Other forms of messaging included town halls and media (media attended some training).
- Communication synchronization: Have one message spoken from multiple points. USAID was the lead agency and was always portrayed as such. Communicate through synchronization meetings and message plans.
- Coordination to ensure coverage: Work with UAPs to ensure important information and key events were covered.
- 27th Public Affairs Detachment provided media assistance to all subordinate units requiring support.
- Central repository: Having a repository facilitates information sharing. The Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System website was used for photo and video distribution.

Observation

Due to the nature of the mission, it was essential to keep the public informed.

Discussion

It was essential that Families of the 101st Airborne Division were kept informed of the mission, and the role and risk associated with EVD. The CG and staff held town hall meetings for Soldiers' Families. Also, local

governments and the population needed to be informed that there was no danger to the United States upon the redeployment of the division personnel. The public affairs office (PAO), with guidance from the CG, invited news agencies to attend personal protective equipment training given to deploying Soldiers, and were kept informed about the locations of U.S. Army troops in Africa, reassuring the public that Soldiers would not be in areas where they would become an EVD casualty.

Lesson

Open dialog with the community, military Families, and the media raised confidence in the military's ability to train for a HA/HR mission, while protecting its Soldiers, families, and the community from any possibility of infecting others with EVD.

Observation

Synchronized communication was essential to the mission.

Discussion

The PAO took efforts to emphasize the DOD's supporting role to USAID by performing the following actions:

- Mentioning USAID and UAPs while circulating or conducting meetings.
- Knowing and emphasizing USAID's objectives and following these same objectives.
- Including USAID in all meetings.
- Including USAID in all press engagements.
- Speaking with one voice.

Insight/Lesson

In an HA/HR event where the military was not the lead agency working with UAPs, there was a level of information sharing and stability provided that would not have occurred if the military focused strictly on its own objectives. Opening opportunities for USAID, WHO, CDC, and other organizations to speak and address their operations fostered cooperation.

Observation

HA/DR (medical emergency) operations, similar to CI operations, require host-nation participation.

Discussion

The local population was more trusting of local personnel who were trained. Local personnel interacted with the population by doing the following activities:

- Using mobile training teams to train local treatment personnel.
- Using local personnel to deliver information about treatment locations and signs of illness.
- The information operations campaign was Army assisted, UAP-based, and delivered by locals.

Insight/Lesson

The division PAO provided the means and opportunity to put a face on the host nation. Through actions of the PAO, U.S. forces were shown to be in support of USAID and not the lead agency in Liberia.

Chapter 4

Sustainment

Overview

- Expeditionary training with a focus on expeditionary transportation skills: Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES); Transportation Coordinator's Automated Information for Movement System (TC-AIMS); and unit movement lists (UMLs), all of which have eroded during years of conflict.
- Sustainment Planning: Without a theater sustainment command (TSC) or expeditionary sustainment command (ESC), there were limited United States Army Africa (USARAF) sustainment operations.
- Lack of an intermediate technical headquarters: Without a TSC, the 101st Sustainment Brigade worked directly with strategic elements, such as the Army Materiel Command (AMC), Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), and Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC).
- The 101st Division took advantage of World Food Program (WFP) forward logistics bases (FLBs) to pre-stage personal protective equipment (PPE) and nonmedical supplies prior to completion of Ebola treatment units (ETUs).
- Using host-nation transportation assets for distribution within the area of operations was highly successful.
- Contracting: Operational contract support was a success, with all necessary contracts executed. Excellent support was received from the 414th Contracting Brigade and 922nd Contingency Contracting Battalion.
- Medical support: Predeployment and in-country public health training (to include mortuary affairs) was a critical capability.
- In-country training: Some training was required in country due to continental United States (CONUS) restrictions. Planning for and executing training immediately in country was critical.
- Plan for the worst conditions: Planning should account for third-world water and fuel being below standard.

Observation

Certain expeditionary skills needed to be emphasized for enhanced deployability.

Discussion

In the past, war units have deployed with only portions of their modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) property and have fallen in on theater-provided equipment. This type of deployment significantly reduces transportation and load-planning tasks normally performed by brigade mobility warrant officers and unit movement officers. The division G-4 transportation officer was challenged with translating TC-AIMS data and UMLs into JOPES data that could be used by strategic planners at the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). Unit-level data was not always entered according to standard or was not accurate. As a result, the unit had to replan numerous times.

Insight

Unit-level deployment exercises should emphasize the accuracy of TC-AIMS and UML data.

Observation

The lack of an organic TSC or ESC limited USARAF sustainment planning and affected the division's mission.

Discussion

USARAF did not have an organic TSC or ESC aligned with the region. The 21st Theater Sustainment Command, a United States Army Europe (USAREUR) element, had a secondary mission of supporting USARAF. The lack of a headquarters put the responsibility of planning operations, such as Operation United Assistance (OUA), on the small staff of the G-4. Lacking a 200-person sustainment headquarters greatly reduced the ability of USARAF to plan and coordinate with sustainment enterprise partners such as TRANSCOM, DLA, AMC, and others before, during, and after deployment of forces. The division relieved the USARAF staff, and the G-4 and sustainment brigade staffs were required to operate without the support of a higher headquarters.

Lesson

USARAF, or any other Army Service component command supporting geographic combatant commands, required the support of a TSC or ESC to plan and conduct expeditionary operations.

Observation

Due to the lack of a TSC or ESC, the 101st Sustainment Brigade had to coordinate directly with strategic elements for support in OUA.

Discussion

The 101st Sustainment Brigade provided area support to all forces in the OUA area of operations. With no TSC or ESC in theater, the sustainment brigade staff had to coordinate directly with strategic partners, such as TRANSCOM, SDDC, AMC, and DLA, to ensure that supplies and materiel were available to support OUA. In many cases, junior warrant officers and noncommissioned officers worked directly with strategic agencies to mitigate shortages or issues with the quality of supplies coming into theater. A greater strain was placed on the unit, affecting the efficient and economical flow of supplies into theater.

Insight/Lesson Learned

The sustainment brigades are not organized or manned to perform the role of a TSC or ESC in deployed operations. Future operations require proper doctrinal deployment of sustainment organizations.

Observation

Operation contract support (OCS) was successful in providing necessary support to OUA.

Discussion

The overall assessment of leaders and staff was that OCS was successful in providing necessary support to OUA. The division and sustainment brigade coordinated for mobile training teams from Fort Lee, VA, to provide contracting officer representative training to personnel at Fort Campbell, KY, prior to deployment. This training, as well as planning done between the G-4 and sustainment brigade OCS teams, was key to preparing for the operation. The 414th Contracting Brigade in Italy coordinated with the teams, and prepared them and 922nd Contingency Contracting Battalion at Fort Campbell for deployment. In theater, the division, under the leadership of the assistant division commander of support, established a joint requirements review board process that thoroughly reviewed and prioritized requirements for contracted support.

Best practice

The initiative of the division and sustainment brigade in preparing OCS and contracting officer representative personnel for deployment was key to an overall successful contracting process in OUA. Excellent support from the 414th Contracting Brigade and 922nd Contingency Contracting Battalion also was noteworthy.

Observation

There are advantages to using nongovernmental organization (NGO) forward logistics bases.

Discussion

The division took advantage of WFP FLBs to pre-stage PPE and nonmedical supplies forward prior to completion of the ETUs. Using the WFP FLBs proved advantageous because of the poor highway infrastructure in Liberia (some sites required two weeks of travel over dirt roads) and the lack of in-transit visibility of shipments. By coordinating use of these WFP FLBs, the division avoided establishing and manning its own forward supply and distribution points, and reduced the uncertainty of whether stocks would be at an ETU in time for the facility to open.

Best Practice

During humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) missions, it is beneficial to tie in with the WFP log cluster and look for efficiencies in existing NGO support systems. Many NGOs, such as the WFP, have existing facilities and supply systems in impoverished countries prior to an HA/DR event that Department of Defense units can leverage.

Observation

Using host-nation assets for transportation was more beneficial than using military assets.

Discussion

The Joint Forces Command (JFC) elected to establish contracts for host-nation transportation assets for several reasons. First, drivers were familiar with routes. (On multi-day transits, ETUs in the farthest southwest portion of the country took up to 13 days to reach.) These drivers could provide their own lodging, fuel, food, and security. Use of military assets would require cleared areas to remain overnight, fuel points, and additional security forces, and could increase the risk to forces due to vector-borne disease and unpredictable driving habits. Next, the size and type of host-nation assets were better suited for the road network than larger, tactical trucks organic to the JFC's sustainment brigade. Bridges and mud roads were challenging for larger vehicles to navigate. More than once, the JFC was obligated to repair "maneuver damage" to roads caused by tactical vehicle traffic. Lastly, given the unfamiliarity of service members to the hard-to-predict driving habits of the Liberians, employing host-nation carriers eliminated the chance that a military convoy would be involved in an accident with a civilian automobile.

Best Practice

After the alert for an HA/DR mission, determine availability and dependability of host-nation assets during intelligence preparation of the battlefield to minimize requirements for transportation assets, drivers, life support, and security needed to perform long-haul convoy missions.

Observation

Predeployment medical and mortuary affairs training had several benefits.

Discussion

The overall response of interviewees was that the predeployment medical training provided to all personnel was excellent. The training on use of and removal of PPE ensured that Soldiers had confidence in the equipment and their ability to use it in theater. Once in theater, the sustainment brigade established relationships with other agencies and enhanced the training of mortuary affairs specialists by having U.S. Public Health Service personnel provide training on handling contaminated remains and establishing mortuary affairs stations, which minimized the potential for transmission of Ebola.

Best practice

The division and sustainment brigade provided outstanding predeployment and in-theater training in medical and mortuary affairs.

Observation

CONUS restrictions limited the effectiveness of training for some low-density military occupational specialties.

Discussion

CONUS restrictions and the limitations of some installations prevented effective predeployment training for water and fuel handling specialists in the sustainment brigade. The reverse osmosis water purification units could not be used at Fort Campbell due to lack of sufficient lakes or other bodies of water. Certain chemicals used in treating water and fuel could not be used in CONUS. These restrictions resulted in the need for training upon arrival in theater, which was quickly and efficiently conducted by sustainment brigade leaders. Although there was no significant impact on the mission, future operations may require the need to offer predeployment training to Soldiers.

Lesson

Training requirements that cannot be conducted at home station prior to deployment need to be identified. Training that is important to expeditionary operations must be available to Soldiers prior to deployment.

Observation

Understanding the operating environment is critical to sustainment operations in underdeveloped countries.

Discussion

The sustainment brigade expected problems with water and fuel quality in West Africa. Upon arrival in country, the sustainment brigade experienced difficulty in finding water sources that were acceptable, even with the use of reverse osmosis water purification unit systems.

The fuel sources also were problematic (quality of some fuel was substandard), even with the strong support of the DLA. Fuel handlers had to do extensive testing and treatment of fuel to ensure it met standards for use in military vehicles and aircraft.

Lesson

When planning for water and fuel operations in underdeveloped nations, expect and prepare for the worst standards. Properly trained water and fuel specialists with testing and treatment capabilities can sustain the force in these environments.

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10 Meade Avenue, Building 50
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