



75th RANGER REGIMENT

LESSONS LEARNED PROGRAM



Lessons Learned at Combat Training Centers for Special Operations Force (Ranger) and Conventional Force Interdependence

18 February 2015

1. (U//FOUO) **Subject.** Lessons learned at Combat Training Centers (CTCs) for Special Operations Force (Ranger) and Conventional Force (CF) interdependence.

2. (U//FOUO) **Purpose.** The purpose for this review is to provide awareness on lessons learned and recommendations for consideration to enhance SOF (Ranger) and CF interdependence and integration at future CTC Rotations.

3. (U//FOUO) **Background.** Ranger Companies trained at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk LA from 11 – 25 September 2014 and at the National Training Center (NTC), Fort Irwin, CA from 2 – 24 November 2014. Both CTC's provided the opportunity to maintain Special Operations Forces (Ranger) and Conventional Forces (CF) to synchronize effects in order to achieve a common purpose; and to continue expanding mission command capabilities in support of ARSOF 2022.

4. (U) **CTC Integration Lessons Learned.**

A. (U) **Movement and Maneuver**

(1) (U//FOUO) **Select CTC Observer Controllers to Observe Ranger Training Events to Familiarize them on Ranger Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) [JRTC/NTC].** Observer/Controllers (OCs) at the CTCs are not familiar with Ranger TTPs. **Recommendation:** consider integrating select CTC personnel to observe Ranger specific training events such as Task Force Training (TFT)/Rotary Wing Bi-Laterals (RW BILAT) to further familiarize CTC OCs to Ranger TTPs. This will enhance the OCs knowledge base to observe and control any Ranger element. Integrating Live Fire Branch planning and fires personnel could also prove

CSA, GEN Odierno's Charter

Continue to link our Army's Brigade Combat Teams and Special Operations Forces by migrating its best leaders, training, equipment, and warrior ethos to the operational force...

Continue to improve SOF/CF interdependence and integration.

ARSOF 2022

ARSOF will create an integrated training environment to improve USASOC's ability to provide trained and ready operational-level SOF to ground combatant commanders worldwide, while promoting increased SOF/CF interdependence.

advantageous to obtain further knowledge on how to push Ranger Forward Observers (FO) and Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) to even higher challenging levels.

(2) (U/FOUO) **Leader Training Program (LTP) [JRTC]**. The Ranger Staff attended events and developed relationships that enabled integration into the planning of both 2/10 Special Forces (SF) and 2/82 Brigade Combat Team (BCT). Though the LTP is structured for the Rotational Training Unit (RTU) and SOF Plans conducts a planning conference with the rotating SF BN. **Recommendation:** it would be beneficial to provide a third party look at the Ranger Staff planning processes. That would assist in ensuring Rangers are grounded in current doctrine, introduce them to unconventional warfare fundamentals and leader professional development (LPD), and ensure the proper adjacent unit coordination's are taking place. Rangers need to identify their staff planning training objectives and key coordination's they want to accomplish during the rotation and submit them to the Combat Training Centers (CTCs).

(3) (U/FOUO) **SOF Battlefield Effects in "Free Play" Scenario [JRTC]**. Understanding there are limitations and capabilities within a rotation, with the adoption of a 'free play' scenario for all units participating in the rotation, SOF can demonstrate their effects on the battlespace for CFs. Some SOF targeting methods could result in missions that directly influence the operating environment in the box. **Recommendation:** consider a free play scenario for all units participating in the rotation. Detailed target packets for initial high value target list would need to be provided to SOF (Ranger) prior to entering the box.

(4) (U/FOUO) **Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or high-yield Explosive (CBRNE) Scenario [JRTC]**. The Ranger CBRNE Decontamination and Reconnaissance Team (DRT) were afforded the opportunity to detect, sample, and package a blister agent in a chemically contaminated tunnel. Rangers and the CF unit coordinated operational decontamination sites and follow on chemical reconnaissance assets. **Recommendation:** consider further enhancement of the CBRNE scenario by incorporating chemical weapons labs and toxic industrial chemicals. This would create a necessary element of realism and serve as a forcing function to deepen SOF/CF partnership and the incorporation of chemical agent casualties would provide an excellent opportunity for SOF/CF medical personnel to exercise medical decontamination and casualty care.

(5) (U/FOUO) **Rangers Provide Additional Capabilities Brief to CTCs**. The 75th Ranger Regiment can provide additional capabilities brief to CTC's to further enhance understanding of Ranger skill sets, capacity and policies/SOPs to sustain a high operating tempo in a combat/training environment. The goal would be to maintain a balance between scenarios injects that allow a Ranger element to train their ability to conduct targeting, and still allow "free play" between the SOF and CF units that leads to additional operations.

(6) (U/FOUO) **Air Tasking Order (ATO) [JRTC]**. Having notional and real assets integrated into training scenarios, and not having a published ATO led to

confusion about what assets the Ranger element had available. **Recommendation:** consider establishing a daily asset allocation meeting and publishing an ATO would allow SOF Higher HQ to prioritize assets in accordance with their priorities and clarify who owns what asset to their subordinate units.

(7) (U/FOUO) **Live Fire Exercise (LFX) Timeline [JRTC]**. The Company LFX was an invaluable training event and learning experience where JRTC provided great flexibility to the range in order to accommodate the Ranger tactical plan and weapon employment. However, part of the Troop Leading Procedures (TLP) required the Ranger unit to be “validated” tactically by JRTC personnel; this caused time conflicts in the need for rehearsals to be completed prior to the platoon operations order. **Recommendation:** consider the feasibility of updating LFX timeline during the planning process to enhance training objectives.

(8) (U/FOUO) **Company Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise (CALFX) was Critical in Allowing Ranger Company to Build Upon their Last Two Training Cycles [NTC]**. The CALFX was an outstanding vehicle to allow Rangers to truly see the effects of weapon systems while simultaneously allowing leaders to gain an appreciation for synchronizing direct and indirect fires in support of a maneuver element. **Recommendation:** maintain a Company CALFX event for future Ranger rotations to NTC.

(9) (U/FOUO) **Rangers Coordinate with BCT Direct Support Rotary Wing (DSRW) Element Prior to CALFX [NTC]**. Identify the DSRW lift element during LTP or Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) at minimum, and conduct static load training and possibly Planning Exercise (PLANEX) and Concept of Operation (CONOP) processes before the Company CALFX to gain an understanding and appreciation of the capabilities and limitations both organizations will have.

(10) (U/FOUO) **Tactical Scenarios [NTC]**. The 72 hour force on force lane was physically challenging in the mountainous environment. **Recommendation:** consider adding enemy observation points and named areas of interests for clearance, to create further complex training challenges at all levels during the movements. Allow OPFOR to test Ranger security and during the conduct of re-supply.

B. (U) Mission Command

(1) (U/FOUO) **SOF/CF Interoperability [JRTC]**. The CF requested assistance from the Ranger element throughout the rotation via an informal SOF/CF adjacent unit relationship vs. utilizing the chain of command (CoC) that was established in the scenario. The adjacent unit coordination’s did allow for SOF/CF interoperability training objectives to be met but having at least one mission officially requested would have exercised multiple mission command functions and processes. **Recommendation:** continue the direct communication between the SOTF Ranger element and the CF to stress SOF/CF interoperability and execute at least one formal request from the Rotational Unit through the formal and established CoC for Ranger Support.

(2) (U/FOUO) **Need for a Formal Mission Statement for the Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) [NTC]**. With the given force structure the SOTF (Ranger) is not under Operational Control (OPCON) to the 52nd ID. The rotation Operations Order (OPORD) is issued from the 52nd ID, and the SOTF is not written into the overall scheme or given a task and purpose. **Recommendation:** consider creating a Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) level operations order that provides guidance to the SOTF so it is nested with the 52nd ID and rotational BCT.

C. (U/FOUO) **Fires. Consider the Integration of Ranger Fire Support Coordination Exercise (FSCX) within the JRTC FSCX [JRTC]**. Validate call for fires at the beginning of the FSCX to allow for more complex fire support training during the remaining block of time. **Recommendation:** consider the integration of Ranger FSCX targets.

5. (U/FOUO) This lesson's learned product was approved for dissemination by the 75th Ranger Regiment Operations Officer.
6. (U) Your comments, feedback and recommendations for the continued enhancement of SOF/CF interdependence and integration are welcomed.

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