

Building a Lions' Den in Bosnia

by Lieutenant Colonel Randy Anderson and Major John Hadjjs

On 15 January 1996, TF 2-68 Armor (reflagged as 1-35 Armor) established its headquarters in Olovske-Luke, and began peace enforcement operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The task force chose a war damaged truck repair facility at a former Serbian outpost. The site chosen sat astride the Confrontation Line Zone of Separation (ZOS) agreed to by the former warring factions under the Dayton General Framework and Agreement for Peace (GFAP).

The truck facility and the surrounding area had been party to some of the war's fiercest fighting. Destroyed cars littered the parking lot; trash and filth a meter deep filled the maintenance bays; windows were blown out; and many buildings still had unexploded ordnance (UXO) and mines inside of them. This article's purpose is to share ideas and techniques on how the task force converted a war-ravaged faction outpost into a fully functional task force headquarters, complete with maintenance areas, a forward surgical hospital, and offices, housing, and recreational facilities for over 1,100 soldiers. We certainly don't have all the answers, but hope to provide armor leaders facing a similar situation in the future a leg-up.

Site Selection

Mission analysis led us to locate the lodgment area where we could send a clear message as to the Implementation Force's (IFOR) determination to separate the former warring factions and enforce the GFAP. Nested in that mission analysis was force protection. The task force commander measured every potential site in light of identified force protection concerns and the management of those risks. Against those constraints, we applied the considerations for an assembly area taught at the advanced course and in our doctrinal manuals. What was the vulnerability to mortar attack, car bomb, or sniper fire? Was there sufficient area for vehicle parking, hardstand for maintenance areas and supply storage, and room for a helicopter landing zone (LZ)? Were internal routes and suitable entrances and exits available, and how easy



Photo courtesy CPT Al Dean

A 2-68 Armor M1A1 on the perimeter of Lions' Den, a base set up on the Tuzla-Sarajevo road.

were they to secure? Finally, did the area support track movement and did it have adequate drainage?

Beyond what we've learned from our doctrine, we applied some tests specific to our mission and how we wanted to execute it. Was there a plentiful source of water? We knew that water would be critical to sustaining the force for an extended period of time. Could we find a lodgment site that was close to the main supply route (MSR)? Assigned the southernmost sector in Task Force Eagle and being almost two hours from the BSA in good weather required we look for opportunities to shorten our lines of communication (LOC). The task force commander placed a premium on choosing a site that would cause the least disruption to the local populace. Displacing persons from the often makeshift shelters they had lived in during four years of war would have shown not only a lack of humanity, but would also have alienated the very people we were trying to win over to a tenuous peace agreement. Finally, the lodgment area had to be close to the headquarters of the former warring factions and refugee centers to facilitate our constant contact with both.

The concept we applied mirrored the cold war paradigm of a regimental cav-

alry unit with a garrison kaserne and forward operating base camps from which it conducted surveillance along the old Inter-German Border. The task force commander's analogy was, "This is Bad Hersfield (the lodgment area) and that's the border (the ZOS)." What we wanted to capture was the economy of scale that the old border camps gave a unit, by concentrating the life support, maintenance and supply functions, and recreational facilities for the task force at one location, while the task force conducted its missions throughout sector.

Establishing a major camp with the bulk of support functions located there while the companies operated in the ZOS helped us maintain the flexibility to shift tactical postures commensurate with mission requirements and force protection concerns. During the early days of the deployment, the lodgment area's construction was subordinate to the GFAP D to D+45 requirements of separating warring factions, acquiring data on faction minefields, monitoring areas of transfer, and establishing the joint military commission process. The bulk of the task force was continually manning checkpoints in the ZOS to monitor GFAP compliance. Having ensured compliance with the GFAP D+45 require-

ments, the task force commander could reduce to two the continually-manned ZOS checkpoints.

We considered ease in supporting our mission the most important criteria in site selection. The immediate mission was to separate the warring factions and clear the ZOS of all faction units and heavy weapons. The task force's initial entry force (TF commander, S3, battalion forward command post, and the scout platoon) discovered a Serbian out-

"...We took great care to hire as many of the local populace as possible for jobs that would support the camp's construction and operation. You can create leverage for force protection with jobs..."

post astride a major north/south roadway in the middle of the CFL. It would be an ideal place to position an armored task force, sending a physical and symbolic message that IFOR intended to forcefully carry out its mandate. The Serb outpost had enabled them to disrupt the major north/south road between Tuzla and Sarajevo. Occupying the outpost only opened the road to commercial and civilian traffic and sent a powerful message to the factions. Borrowing from the old REFORGER theme of making full use of the infrastructure in built-up areas, the former truck stop offered additional advantages. It had maintenance bays and ample hardstand. The surrounding abandoned homes offered a unique fixer-upper opportunity to the enterprising ISG. An abandoned home makes a great company "house" complete with orderly, supply, and arms rooms and an area to conduct training meetings. A small river ran by and, with help of a Reverse Osmosis Water Pump Unit (ROWPU), could provide a ready supply of potable water. Finally, the site was large enough to accommodate the inevitable expansion caused by the introduction of additional units and services.

The task force commander's vision for the lodgment area was that it should look like Camp Doha in Kuwait. He had deployed the battalion to Intrinsic Action and recognized up-front the need to have an adequate place to set up living, maintenance, and recreation areas. In retro-

spect, hardstand, and the superior drainage became two of the site's most valuable attributes. Both enabled the Silver Lions to win the war against the Bosnian mud. Getting out of the mud was a tremendous victory for readiness and quality of life. Maintenance is easier and better on a vehicle not covered in mud. Soldiers feel more positive about themselves and their equipment once they are no longer mired in slop.

Force Protection

Force protection is more than gate and perimeter security. It is all measures a unit takes to preserve its combat power. It encompasses defense of the perimeter, operations security (OPSEC), field sanitation and vector control, containment of environmental hazards, and risk assessment to do everything as safely as the mission will allow.

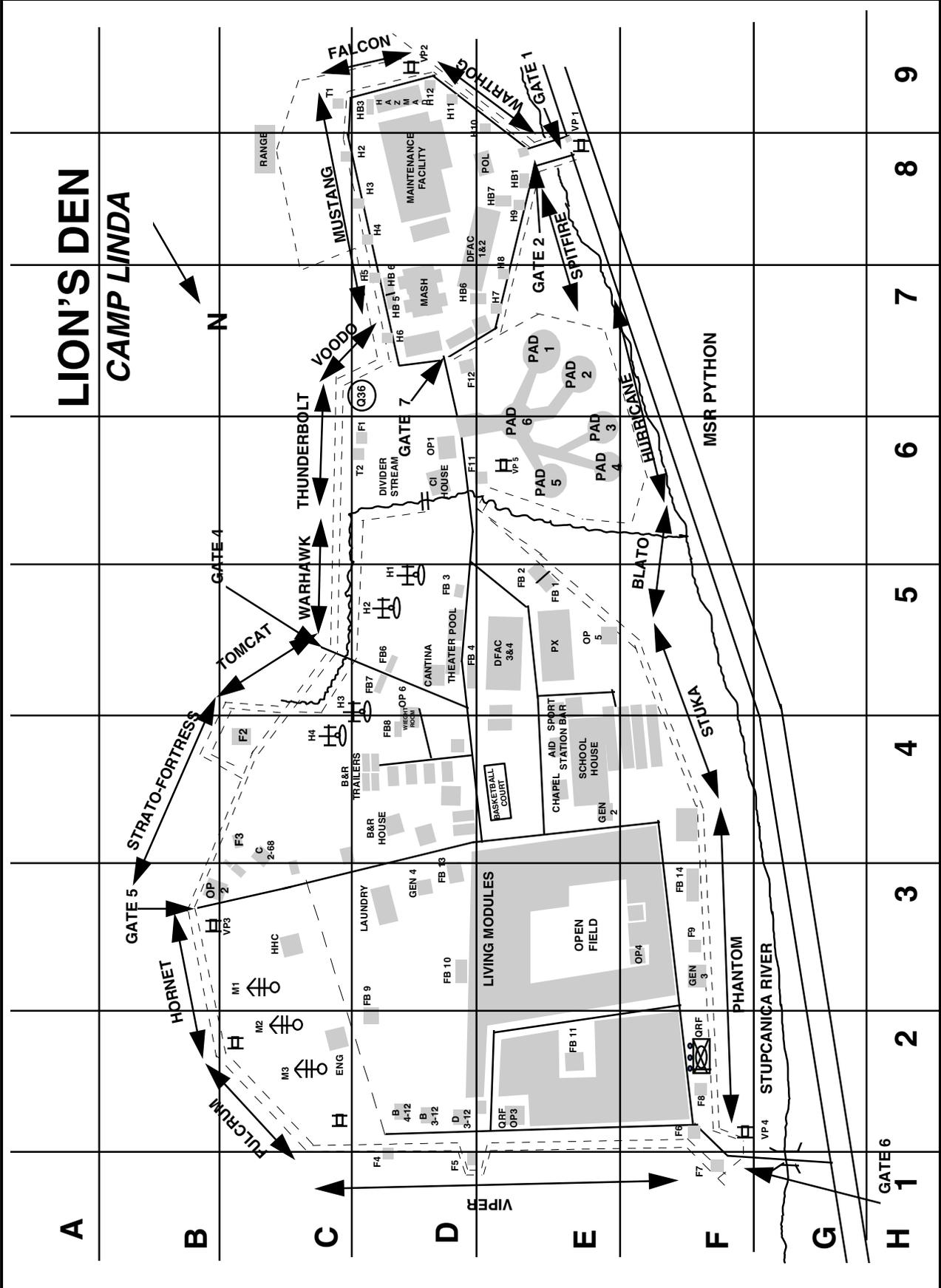
Force protection includes considering how combat multipliers from slice units supporting your task force can assist, and incorporation of local civilian governmental agencies and police forces. As it turned out, the brigade positioned two of its Q37 radar units in our sector (one at our base camp, and one at a checkpoint that we operated). The radar sets were tremendous assets in alerting us to the location of any hostile artillery or mortar attack. We also had a counter intelligence team that lived at our base camp. As an additional duty, we tasked them to do regular inspections and assessments of our own force protection posture.

From the first day, we established a professional working relationship with the local mayor, police chief, and the plant manager of the town's largest prewar factory. By dealing with the local elected officials and centers of influence, we communicated our intent to recognize the legitimacy of the political institutions and their authority over the former warring factions' military units. We took great care to hire as many of the local populace as possible for jobs that would support the camp's construction and operation. You can create leverage for force protection with jobs, because the local populace become stakeholders in the success and security of your operation.

Staying involved in the community enhances force protection. The task force commander's guidance was clear. Being evenhanded in our enforcement of the GFAP with the former warring factions

did not mean we could not be good neighbors. We made a conscious effort to schedule our logistical convoys so they did not disrupt civilian traffic, and the command group held regular office calls with local authorities and businessmen. One particularly effective technique was the CSM-led Sunday morning coffee patrols. Weekly, the CSM led a dismounted patrol through neighborhoods that bordered the base camp. He often distributed clothing and school supplies donated by family members from the task force. Soon he was the best known soldier in our base camp, and his patrol was a visible symbol of the discipline, professionalism, and caring attitude of the American soldier. Many times he received valuable information about faction activity that impacted on our camp's force protection as he shared coffee with a neighbor.

Security at a lodgment area begins with secure gates. Our intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) yielded three principal threats: unruly crowds, car bomb attack, and drive-by shootings. We chose to meet any potential threat with overwhelming combat power. To enhance our security and to ease crowd control and personal searches, our camp's main entrance had both an inner and outer gate. We positioned an M1 tank at the outer gate of the main entrance. Additionally, two dismounted soldiers manned a guard shack. The sergeant of the guard and two more soldiers manning a .50 caliber machine gun positioned themselves at the main entrance's inner gate. When local national employees or visitors reported to the outer gate the guards conducted a visual and physical search and reported to the SOG by hand-held PRC127 radio. The main command post monitored gate guards and roving patrols by eavesdropping on the PRC127 frequency. An M2 Bradley and soldiers in a second guard shack secured the alternate entrance off the main supply route (MSR). Armored vehicles provide more than firepower; they send a clear signal of offensive capability and are an excellent first layer of protection because of their survivability. Big and imposing, they make superior roadblocks. Just starting one draws the attention of a crowd or passersby. Another measure we took against drive-by shootings was speed bumps. Fashioned out of angle iron they proved very effective. The Bosnians had no experience with speed bumps. They didn't even have a word in Serbo-Croat to describe them, although the locals quickly took to call-



**LION'S DEN
CAMP LINDA**

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GATE 6

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9

VIPER

PHANTOM

STUPCANICA RIVER

STUKA

BLATO

HURRICANE

GATE 2

GATE 1

WARRIOR

FALCON

MUSTANG

THUNDERBOLT

WARHAWK

STRATO-FORTRESS

HORNET

FULCRUM

MSR PYTHON

LIVING MODULES

OPEN FIELD

CHapel

SCHOOL

HOUSE

GEN 2

CHapel AID, SPORT BAR

PX

DFAC 3&4

THEATER POOL

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CANTINA

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ing them “silent police.” Word traveled fast to slow down, especially after a general officer ripped his BMW’s muffler off by driving over the bumps at an excessive speed.

Our standard operating procedure (SOP) was to man the main entrance gate with five guards in addition to the tank crew and an interpreter. Interpreters are a must, as is a good training program for your guards. Guard duty in peace enforcement operations is graduate level stuff. While your soldiers may have ex-

“...Force protection is a concern for every leader, but by having one leader overall in charge, the task force commander had a “go-to” guy for immediate feedback on how well we were doing and what we needed to improve. ...”

perience checking gate security in your motor pools, every day is an adventure at the gate in Bosnia. Locals will bring armed mines to the front gate as gifts. Drunks demanded compensation for their damaged cars after they slammed into a speed bump. People came with all kinds of medical needs, from the most routine to the gravely serious. United Nations personnel or foreign diplomats will rant and rave about your search procedures.

A few pieces of equipment make the job simpler: mirrors to inspect under vehicles, badges for all non-U.S. military to display while they are at the camp, metal detectors for individual searches, hand-held radios with brevity codes, and tire puncture spikes made out of metal tent pegs.

Two special concerns for your gate guards will be how to adequately and professionally search women, and the correct procedure for evaluating civilians desiring medical attention. When at all possible, use female soldiers for same-gender searches. Otherwise, caution your male soldiers to use the metal detectors so they can conduct a thorough and professional search without engendering fear of sexual harassment. Next, ensure that triage of civilians desiring medical care takes place at the gate, not in the compound. Finally, establish a guest

parking area outside the camp. All movement in Bosnia required a minimum of four vehicles. You quickly overwhelm your guards’ ability to adequately search by allowing every vehicle to enter the camp, and it is an unnecessary security risk.

Our perimeter measured 2,350 meters around, and consisted of a row of triple-strand concertina, tangle foot, and a second row of triple-strand concertina. We used more than 30 of the 40-foot containers used to ship unit equipment to build a perimeter wall on one side of the camp.

Probing by locals intent on stealing was our biggest concern, so it was imperative to have a well-lighted perimeter. Tank and Bradley company MTOEs don’t support the kind of lighting you require, so you have to be imaginative. Tent lights make an acceptable alternative. Additionally, we procured Air Force generator light sets used to illuminate runways to provide light to parts of our perimeter and to our maintenance area. Finally, we received lights on poles as part of a task force plan. Funding limited how many lights we could buy, but like any defensive position we continued to improve our position by scrounging. We found some lights that were not being used at another camp and employed them.

Base camp gate and perimeter lighting are your biggest deterrent to probing and theft in stability operations, and they represent a paradigm shift from years of “own the night with thermal sights,” and light discipline measures drummed into us from our conventional operations thinking. We also added security lighting within the camp to provide a measure of safety for female soldiers to move at night with less concern for rape or assault.

Fire prevention is a critical part of force protection. Our first step was to put our ammunition holding area (AHA) away from our lodgment area near one of our manned checkpoints in the ZOS. This was done to avoid a Doha-like incident and to minimize risk. As per SOP, we left fuelers unlocked so that we could move them quickly in the event of a fire. Our Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) filled Hesco Bastions around their oxygen and gas storage areas to act as a firewall. The added security from the Hesco wall also would have enabled the MASH to treat wounded during an

attack on the camp, if required. Finally, we made sure to get plenty of the large, wheeled 150-pound fire extinguishers and then rehearsed the movement time from their locations to likely fire sites. Task Force Eagle provided us with a HMMWV vehicle-mounted firefighting pump that gave us our own fire truck.

Our technique for unity of command in force protection was to put that effort under our command sergeant major. Force protection is a concern for every leader, but by having one leader overall in charge, the task force commander had a “go-to” guy for immediate feedback on how well we were doing and what we needed to improve. Once procedures and measures are in place, force protection becomes largely a discipline issue. The CSM is in charge of enforcing discipline, so he is a natural CINC Force Protection.

Quality of Life

Quality of life is a force multiplier. Soldiers are essentially on duty 24 hours a day during a deployment. Provide them an outlet for physical, mental, and spiritual fitness. Recreation is critical to maintaining soldier well-being and preserving combat power.

We made the decision early on to consolidate our morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) assets to better serve the needs of the community at large. The containers we received to live in came with designated recreation rooms for each company-sized element. We consolidated them to make the MWR facilities for the lodgment area. We built a movie theater with elevated seating for 175 soldiers, complete with refreshment stand. We showed movies four times a day, beginning at noon, to accommodate the work schedules of soldiers on guard or on night shifts at command posts. Putting all the foosball, pool tables, and ping-pong tables in one building gave us a fully functioning pool hall. Normal operating hours were 1200-2300 daily. Soldier power to run the facilities came from a special duty roster run by the CSM. After an assessment concluded that the living container floors would not support weightlifting equipment, we converted an abandoned house into a weight room. After flooring, lighting, and windows and doors were repaired, it was as good as any gym in Baumholder. We separated aerobic activities (rowing machines, LifeCycles, and step classes)

by putting them into their own tent or container. One building became the AFN house, and another the sports lounge, so we never had arguments over whether to watch "Friends" or football.

Combining two recreation rooms created one of the largest post exchanges in the Task Force Eagle sector. LA Linda sat astride a major Allied Ready Reaction Corps (ARRC) MSR and only an hour north of Sarajevo. The PX drew shoppers not only from the tenants at Linda, but also from the multinational IFOR units to our south. On any given day, you could hear more than three languages being spoken. Guest shoppers had all been subjected to our extensive gate security procedures and therefore received a subtle message about how seriously we took force protection. A large PX means a greater sales volume. Greater sales enable the facility to diversify its selection, benefiting soldiers assigned to the base camp.

Community Life

Building a lodgment area means creating a community, and you need the people to do the job. Our solution was to create a garrison staff with the XO as the Garrison Commander and representatives from the dental clinic, hospital, unit representatives, the LOGPAC camp manager, camp education counselor, and the MWR specialist. We created one position, camp mayor. The mayor's job was to work for the XO as the action officer to coordinate all camp events, coordinate with Brown and Root (the government's construction contractor), and oversee the management of camp operations and facility use. The garrison staff attended the task force command and staff meetings and briefed issues that affected life at the base camp.

Feedback is essential to providing the best services possible. The feedback mechanism we used was the town hall meeting. The task force XO and CSM hosted these biweekly events. The panel included representation from Brown and Root, Food Service, AT&T, MWR, and AAFES. Soldiers (specialists and below) represented each of the tenet units on post. Town hall meetings were a forum for both complaints and suggestions. Given an opportunity, soldiers can generate some great ideas. Multi-roll toilet paper dispensers for the latrines solved the problem of ensuring that sufficient paper was on hand without being strewn

around the latrine. U.S.-only lines at the PX during designated hours were the result of a suggestion at a town hall meeting to deal with the problem of making a purchase during the busy lunch hour and weekends when the camp was generally visited by international officers. All acceptable suggestions were recorded in the meeting minutes, and responses and action taken published in the camp newspaper.

Stressing the nature of community is most important. Your goal is not to build a base camp, but a post. Base camps are stopover points for future operations. Posts are start points for tactical operations, but they are also where people live, work, eat, and recreate. Town hall meetings go a long way toward transforming a base camp into a post. Reveille and retreat have an equal effect. Nothing is more readily identifiable as part of life on an Army post than reveille and retreat. We erected a flag pole and conducted reveille and retreat daily. Soldiers pausing from their duties at the camp to render honors at the end of a busy day in Bosnia helped the feeling of community take hold.

LOGCAP

Working with a LOGCAP, (in our case Brown & Root) appears to be a reality for units involved in deployments in the near future. These folks want to be members of the team, and you should treat them as such. Many of the camp managers or expatriate employees have some military experience, so you often start with a common lexicon. What isn't so well understood to the average commander is what the LOGPAC provider can do contractually, and how his compensation package works.

The evaluation system for Brown and Root operations in Bosnia was based on quarterly formal evaluations. Evaluation employed a numerical grading system covering the full range of services and missions for which the contractor was responsible. It is imperative that the officers making the evaluation (BN XOs, and BN CDRs) understand the incentive system, and that the brigade clearly define the "senior rater profile" so all evaluators can be consistent and fair.

We considered our camp manager our DPW (Directorate of Public Works). He briefed at our command and staffs and attended all town hall meetings. Doing this helped make him a member of the

team. Establishing that rapport works to everyone's benefit. The contractor feels comfortable raising issues that need the military leadership's attention, and enables him to anticipate your requirements. Our camp manager even assisted in our deception plans to support our operations in sector, by scheduling his shifts and routine deliveries in such a way as to mask our tactical intent. Brown and Root is a stakeholder in the camp, but you make money when they become a combat multiplier in helping you conduct your mission. Your base camp manager can create leverage in force protection by providing infrastructure improvements to enhance security. He also is a great source of intelligence as to the tenor of the local population's attitude because he is a major employer. Work with the camp manager to win the loyalty of his local national work force. It is not only a neighborly thing to do, but is also a force protection measure. Something as routine in our Army as presenting task force certificates along with photos to the local national work force not only builds goodwill, but makes the local work force part of your team.

Dealing with the Host Nation

The single most important key to success with interacting with the host nation is your civil affairs team. They must be self-starters and have your full support. Think combined arms when you employ them by attaching psychological operations (PSOYPS) and CI teams, your chaplain, and sometimes scouts. Attaching other teams enhances force protection and makes every encounter with the host nation an opportunity to tell your story and gather intelligence. Start establishing your relationship with the local community from the first day. Seek out the mayor, police chief, and other local officials.

In Bosnia the factions are responsible to maintain the provisions of the GFAP. IFOR was just the force to implement the treaty and monitor compliance. By dealing with the local officials, you send a subtle message to the faction militaries that you expect them to acquiesce to civilian control, just like your force does.

The positioning of the Civil Military Information Center (CIMIC) is critical. We

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Lion's Den (Continued from Page 29)

placed it where it was the first building after entering the front gate, and kept it manned throughout the day and through an on-call system at night. It was not uncommon to get seven calls from the command post a day to have a civil affairs representative meet someone at the gate. From OSCE to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to the local police, to persons making property claims, to a woman wanting to deliver a baby the following month at the MASH, civil affairs saw it all.

Teardown

If you build it, you will tear it down. In Bosnia, Task Force Eagle transferred nine of its base camps to the covering force and closed the remainder. Lodgment Area Linda was designated for closure. Key to closing a camp is the same thorough mission analysis and planning you used in building it.

Training and planning are the foundation to a successful base closure. Brigade published an extensive fragmentary order for redeployment and camp closure. From the specified and implied tasks in their order, we published our own matrix-type order and developed training objectives. Even though your task force engineer will have the lead, the tear-down order must get a good look by your entire staff. The engineer is your technical expert. He'll develop the PERT chart and determine the critical path to completing the mission on time and within budget. Task Force Eagle conducted formal training for all base camp mayors on base camp operations, property accountability, and base closure. The training our mayor received at this course was invaluable.

We established a small command and control headquarters led by the task force executive officer, and a captain and SGM from the battalion S3 shop. Nightly, we conducted a meeting that served as a patrol planning session and an after-action review for the day's activities. We also used the meeting to plan tasks to be completed over the next 72 hours. That way we could continually update our execution matrix, allocate resources, and identify requirements at least three days prior (a technique much appreciated by higher headquarters and the combat service support community). Brown and Root attended the nightly meetings, which ensured that we synchronized our activities.

Our training objectives gave us goals to attain. First, we wanted to be safe and not damage any equipment. People are your most sensitive items and tear-down operations are inherently dangerous. We demanded that NCOs conduct risk assessment prior to conducting each mission. They then actively sought ways to reduce the risk, and we knew to cease work when it became unsafe. We wanted to meet or exceed every time line and schedule, and do so while maintaining stewardship of our property and protecting the environment. Finally, we wanted to continue to protect the force. We practiced medical treatment and evacuation, worked to reduce fire and accident hazards, created a new perimeter as we collapsed the old one, and increased our roving patrol and stationary observation posts.

Recovery of as much government property for reuse as possible must be the goal of every Army leader. This requires a mind-set change. We have not been profligate in the past, but when on deployment we never considered recovering Class IV and Class II equipment for re-use. Our goal was to recover greater than 90% of the force protection material we had employed. We nearly made that goal. At final count we had recovered some 200 pallets of concertina, 150 pallets of pickets, 10,000 sand bags, and several short tons of lumber for use throughout the Task Force Eagle sector or at the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) at Hohenfels.

Continually refining our execution matrix, anticipating requirements, and motivating our soldiers enabled us to meet our scheduled closure date on budget

and on time. Closing a base camp isn't a METL (Mission Essential Task List) task, but it is important duty requiring leadership involvement, staff planning, and risk management.

Conclusion

Operating from base camps appears to be standard operating procedure, at least in the near future, for armor units conducting conventional and peace enforcement/stability operations. Building, operating, and closing a base camp are not skills taught in any formal Army school, but every Armor officer has been taught these skills in the basic and advanced courses, and in our doctrinal manuals. Bottom line: As with any mission, even a non-standard one like building and operating a lodgment area, you should employ the foundations of doctrine for planning, preparing, and executing your non-standard tasks. We hope we have provided you some tactics, techniques, and procedures to flush out your kit bag as you take on the mission.

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Final Part Of Three-Part Article Will Appear Next Issue

Because of space considerations, we've had to reschedule the final installment of the three-part article on a proposed Future Combat System, by Dr. Asher H. Sharoni and Lawrence D. Bacon. The article will appear in the next issue.

- Ed.

