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Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned
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About the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned: The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) is part of the Training and Education Command (TECOM) of the Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC), located at MCB Quantico, VA. The MCCLL mission is to collect, analyze, manage, and disseminate knowledge gained through operational experiences, exercises, and supporting activities in order to enable Marines to achieve higher levels of performance and to provide information and analysis on emerging issues and trends in support of operational commanders and the Commandant of the Marine Corps Title 10 responsibilities.

Visit the MCCLL Website at: www.mccll.usmc.mil

Customer service support for the MCCLL Website and questions about the newsletter should be directed to: harry.t.johnson@usmc.mil or michael.jones@usmc.mil Telephone: 703.432.1279 DSN: 378.1279

Director's Comments: All of the lessons in our system were provided by users based on their operational experiences and supporting activities. Marine units are encouraged to submit their after action reports and related documents to ensure that their "good ideas" reach decision makers and influence program decisions.

You are welcome to contact the Director with your comments: Col Monte E. Dunard, USMCR, Director MCCLL monte.dunard@usmc.mil Telephone: 703.432.1286 DSN: 378-1286

Getting Good Ideas to Decision Makers

The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) is one of many organizations that serve as conduits for information from the theater that can then be used to influence changes in Marine Corps training, equipment, organizations, and tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). As one of many contributors that inform the decision-making process, MCCLL has been a participant and provided much of the data used to support and justify a number of significant program decisions.

Some examples are:

1. Semi-Automatic Suppressed Sniper Rifle. In April and May 2004, a MCCLL collections team interviewed snipers and their unit commanders in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to obtain user input on the performance of semi-automatic versus bolt-action sniper rifles. In June 2005, MCCLL also interviewed snipers in Camp Fallujah, Iraq, for the same purpose. The objective was to compare the performance of rifle alternatives and determine whether the procurement of semi-automatic sniper rifles should be expedited in the future.

Based on these interviews, MCCLL recommended that the Marine Corps procure semi-automatic rifles to augment existing rifle inventories and that all sniper weapons be suppressed. These recommendations were disseminated and included in the MCCLL report, [Semi-Automatic Sniper Rifle](#).

The MCCLL findings were one of the inputs used in formulating the decision in March 2005 by the Capabilities Development Board (CDB) (formerly the DOTMLPF Working Group (DWG)) to recommend procurement of the Knight's Armament Mk-11 Mod 0 Semi-Automatic Suppressed Sniper Rifle. As a result, 180 rifles are currently being purchased by Marine Corps Systems Command, with fielding of the weapons to take place beginning in April/May 2006 to units scheduled to deploy during the period from June through September 2006. The school houses are also scheduled to receive these rifles in January 2006 in order to begin training. Concurrent planning for a semi-automatic sniper rifle as a program of record continues, but is not tied to the fielding of the 180 Mk-11 Mod 0's.

See [more of this article](#)

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Getting Good Ideas to Decision Makers (continued)

2. Acquisition Process. Early lessons from OIF identified the the need for several equipment modifications. MCCLL initiated a concerted effort to document the issues and capability gaps and ensure this information reached those with authority to implement the changes. Among these equipment modifications were:

- a. **Body Armor Improvements.** The incident of injuries to the deltoid and underarm areas led to the fielding of modifications to body armor that included coverage of these areas.
- b. **MTVR Centerline Seats.** Observations from theater indicated that the inboard facing troop seats in the rear of the Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement (MTVR) 7.5 ton truck were not suited to facing the enemy threat to the sides of the vehicle. This led to the inclusion of centerline seats in the MTVR armor modification kit. The requirement for reconfigurable rear seats is also included in a draft requirements document for the Combat Tactical Vehicle, the planned replacement for HMMWVs.
- c. **HMMWV Suspension.** A study of up-armored HMMWV weights in 2004 noted that the average was 940 lbs above maximum gross vehicle weight rating. This was briefed by MCCLL personnel at the annual Motor Transport conference in December 2004. Suspension component upgrades were included as part of the Marine Armor Kits (MAK) subsequently applied to HMMWVs in theater.
- d. **Urban Breacher Kit.** Lessons identified shortcomings in the current Urban Breaching Kit based, in particular, on interviews with combat engineers. Recommended additions to the kit were provided.

3. Force Structure. In November 2003, EFCAT (now MCCLL) provided the Commandant of the Marine Corps with a report that summarized lessons learned concerning existing and future force structure requirements. This summary was based on information that had been collected after the initial experiences of OEF and OIF-I. In late March 2004, EFCAT personnel briefed the Force Structure Review Group (FSRG) and provided a synopsis of structure related lessons and observations. Several recommendations from the FSRG addressed capability gaps identified in the EFCAT brief and report. In December 2004, MCCLL responded to a query from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on many of these same initiatives, and provided a synopsis of lessons and observations related to the FSRG initiatives now being added to Marine Corps force structure:

- a. **Additional infantry battalions:** MCCLL noted that deployment tempo would be reduced by having more infantry battalions, as opposed to increasing the number of Marines assigned to existing units. The FSRG increased the number of infantry battalions from 24 to 26, with 1,770 additional billets.
- b. **Reconstitution of active duty air-naval gunfire liaison company (ANGLICO):** MCCLL relayed favorable reports on the reconstitution of ANGLICO units to enhance the Marine Corps joint-multinational enabling capability. The FSRG increased the number of active units from 2 to 3, with 95 additional billets.
- c. **Additional psychological operations (PSYOPS) capability:** MCCLL relayed favorable reports on the impact of PSYOPS detachments, along with a recommendation that PSYOPS detachments be manned to enable attachment at the battalion level in order to adequately support requirements. The FSRG increased the number of PSYOPS billets by 170.
- d. **Changes to civil affairs structure:** MCCLL relayed observations relating to the civil affairs structure, including the fact that the CA structure resides in the reserves, and CA planners were not available in the early stages of a contingency. The FSRG added 20 active duty civil affairs planner billets and additional reserve CA detachments.
- e. **Satellite Communications (SATCOM):** MCCLL reports and briefs noted the unprecedented distances over which Marine forces have had to operate in OEF and OIF and the need for additional beyond-line-of-sight and on-the-move communications, including the need for a more robust SATCOM capability. FSRG initiatives included additional structure in support of SATCOM capability.

4. Logistics Modernization (LOGMOD). In a number of initial observations reports during the past two years, MCCLL identified shortcomings in logistics communications capabilities and in automated information systems supporting logistics C2. These included MPF Offload (Classified, Aug 2003), [FSSG Organization and Transition to Expeditionary Operations](#) (Aug 2003), [FSSG and MLC Communications](#) (Oct 2003), [End-to-End Distribution](#) (Classified and unclassified versions, Aug 2004), [RFID for In Transit Visibility](#) (Nov 2004), and FSSG Communications in OIF II (Classified, Dec 2004). In October 2003, August 2004, and October 2005, MCCLL briefed the DC, I&L on these shortcomings in communications, lack of ITV and the need for better automated tools. These initiatives are now included in the Logistics Modernization Program.



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Getting Good Ideas to Decision Makers (continued)

5. "Military Advisor Support" Forum. The forums and discussion topics that MCCLL has established on its home page are another resource that has begun to pay dividends in terms of ensuring that good ideas reach Marine Corps decision makers. As an example, over 400 graduates of the Security Cooperation Education and Training Center (SCETC) were invited to participate in the [Military Advisor Support Forum](#) which MCCLL hosted beginning in November 2005. Over 100 postings have been made to the Forum by current and former Marine advisors concerning future training requirements, as well as equipment needs and suggested tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Based on the postings to this forum, MCCLL has produced a topical paper, [Summary of Forum Comments from Former and Current Marine Military Advisors](#), that is designed to provide decision makers with ideas for future improvements in advisor training. Specifically, this paper has been provided to the Marine Corps Training and Education Command (TECOM) as an input in the development of an enhanced training program for military advisors.

Users of our website are encouraged to review the complete list of [Forum discussion topics](#) and provide their comments on topics for which they have expertise and/or relevant experience. MCCLL intends to continue to invite specific communities of users to participate in particular forums in order to collect informed observations and suggestions for consideration by decision makers.

Marine Corps Use of the Army's Battle Command Knowledge System

The U.S. Army has developed an online capability for sharing information on training, education, doctrine and leader development within the Army. This capability is now being offered to Marines at all levels. The U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth is host to this web-based network known as the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) (<https://bcks.army.mil>). The network provides the Army with a cadre of unit and functional area knowledge managers and the web-based capability necessary to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from those who have it to those who need it. BCKS is an organization designed to provide knowledge management of battle command, doctrine, training, education, and leader development issues. The US Army CAC G-8 is the proponent for BCKS which has three primary functional areas:

Unit Network: Unit Net is responsible for facilitating the horizontal and vertical flow of information for peer-to-peer, unit-to-unit, and commander-to-commander communications (<https://leadernetwork.bcks.army.mil>) through a combination of formal and informal web-enabled collaborative networks (NIPRNET and SIPRNET). Additionally, Unit Net initiates contact with deploying units in order to establish liaison, provide assistance with network development, management and training and to facilitate between deploying units and units in theater.

Leader Network: The Leader Network is a series of connected on-line Professional Forums that create an informal network for professional interactions across the Army. These forums consist of communities of peers who are linked through on-line collaboration systems and are dedicated to advancing their profession through knowledge sharing and shared learning. These types of forums tend to form horizontally across the Army, based on types of position (such as Company Commander, Platoon Leader, First Sergeant or MI Net). They tend to be informal, consisting primarily of peers, and use discussions (synchronous or asynchronous) as their primary method of collaboration. These sites provide personnel the ability to discuss topics of professional interest, request assistance or feedback from other personnel in their field, and to post effective TTPs, SOPs and lessons learned to assist others. You can log in with your Army Knowledge Online (AKO) username and password at <https://unitnetwork.bcks.army.mil>. You can request an account when you first enter a community. Once you are a member, you can select a community(s) and start participating in a discussion, search through the recently added documents, or add your experience for the benefit of others.

Warrior Knowledge Base: (<https://wkb.bcks.army.mil>) The Warrior Knowledge Base is the repository of BCKS. It provides knowledge products generated or used by the larger BCKS community. The objective of WKB is to achieve full interoperability across objects and services, enabling automatic push and pull of relevant knowledge to Soldiers and leaders as their needs emerge.

To utilize BCKS, Marines will need an AKO account which can be obtained by logging onto AKO at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/login/welcome.html> <https://www.us.army.mil>.



See the [remainder of this article, including instructions on establishing a BCKS account](#)

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Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT): Beginning in 2000, U.S. military deployments have involved numerous incursions into contested urban areas, including many operations that included low to mid intensity urban fighting. In subsequent years, weapons platforms and training have been tailored to address the challenges of urban warfare, such as the establishment by the Marine Corps of an urban training facility to support tank and infantry MOUT operations.

In preparing a topical paper on Marine Corps MOUT, the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned participated in a series of information exchanges with foreign military representatives regarding urban warfare and counter terrorism. Focus groups met to gather and exchange information regarding counter terrorism tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and the use of armor assets in an urban environment. The resulting topical paper (based on foreign military input to MCCLL) is available at: [Military Operations in Urban Terrain \(MOUT\)](#).



An M1A1 tank from Alpha Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, rolls through a neighborhood during MOUT operations in Fallujah.

Selected Observations from the MOUT report:

- **Armor Plate Modifications:**
 - Consideration should be given to armor plate modifications to the underbelly of tanks for MOUT operations
- **Urban Environment Challenges:**
 - Urban hides should allow for good observation and clear fields of fire
 - Camouflage for urban hides is essential
 - A variable power sniper scope should be tested and procured for MOUT
 - Testing should continue for integrated day/night thermal systems
 - An urban warfare hide kit should be tested and procured for MOUT
 - A semi-automatic sniper rifle should be tested and procured (Note: this rifle is now in procurement)
- **Equipment-Related Issues:**
 - Thermal optics and video systems are required for Special Operations forces and reconnaissance communities
 - Hand-held laser pointers are needed
 - Development and acquisition personnel working on the Sniper Systems Suite should consider additional equipment-related recommendations.
- **Non-Lethal Weapons (NLW)**
 - U.S. NLW efforts can be enhanced by considering other nations' NLW employment experience.
- **Ongoing Dialogue with Foreign Military Partners**
 - MCCLL should continue to sponsor participation by USMC representatives in the exchange of lessons relevant to the Global War on Terror (GWOT) with foreign military representatives

Please refer to the complete report at [Military Operations in Urban Terrain \(MOUT\)](#) for additional issues, observations and recommendations.

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3rd Battalion, 25th Marines Focused Collection Effort: In late September 2005, The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned trained and deployed a collection team to interview and gather information from the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines upon its return from combat operations in Iraq. The collection team focused on determining ways in which pre-deployment training might be improved for a reserve battalion such as 3/25. The unit was selected specifically because it was the first reserve infantry battalion to return to CONUS since MCCLL initiated its focused collection program. A report documenting the results of the collection effort has now been prepared and is available at : [Pre-deployment Training Lessons and Observations: 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines.](#)



Marines from Company I, 3rd Bn, 25th Marines, discover a cache of ammunition, explosives, electronic equipment and propaganda under a hotel in Hit, Iraq.

Selected Recommendations and Observations from the 3/25 report:

• Pre-Deployment Training Program:

- Additional time needs to be provided between activation and deployment of reserve units in order to conduct battalion-level training. Last-minute personnel joins during and after training detract from its effectiveness.
- RCAX and SASO training should be conducted only after extensive unit training.
- The Enhanced Marksmanship Program (EMP) received high marks.
- Training on crew served weapons should be provided to all Marines and attached Sailors.
- Combat Lifesaver training was judged to be excellent.

• Enlisted Entry-Level Training and PME:

- SOI training was good. Vehicle familiarization training needs to be emphasized.
- Non-resident and reserve courses cannot be replacements for resident, active-duty PME/T courses.
- Incremental combat reporting should be taught.

• Officer Education and Training:

- The effects (and corresponding collateral damage risks) of every unit weapons system need to be understood by all officers.
- Broader training in the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCP)P

• Equipment:

- The maintenance cycle should be faster
- Additional GPS devices are required.
- Communications for urban patrols and internally within convoys require upgrade.
- Maintenance and parts for non-T/E items continues to be an issue.

Please refer to the complete report at [Pre-deployment Training Lessons and Observations: 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines](#) for additional issues, observations and recommendations.

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MCCLL Transcribed Interviews

Among the prime resources used in the development of topical papers by MCCLL (such as the previously mentioned pre-deployment training lessons of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines) have been the transcribed interviews produced by the MCCLL staff. The large number of interviews conducted with Marines who have participated in combat operations in Iraq or Afghanistan are of greatest value to researchers only after they have been transcribed as searchable documents. The majority of the MCCLL-sponsored interviews have been transcribed as MS Word documents, with over 900 interviews transcribed to date, and additional transcriptions added on a daily basis. MCCLL staff members, Jodi Bailey and Janet Paton, not only transcribe all interviews but also provide extensive linkages within the documents to key words as well as to "needs" statements that identify unsatisfied requirements.

Recent topical papers produced by the MCCLL analysts invariably make extensive use of the transcribed interviews. Virtually every [Recent Product](#) produced by MCCLL includes extracts from these interviews. For more information on the use of transcribed interviews in conducting research activities, please contact LtCol Donald Hawkins at: donald.hawkins@usmc.mil or LtCol Mark Silvia at: mark.a.silvia@usmc.mil.



Jodi Bailey and Janet Paton transcribe interviews that have been conducted with Marines to document their combat experiences in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Significant Trends:

Safety-related incidents continue to be a major area of concern in theater.

Recent in-country statistics have highlighted the importance of safety-consciousness during combat operations. In early December, II MEF disseminated a message highlighting some of the [most critical safety lessons learned during OIF 04-06](#). The II MEF message addresses safety concerns in the following areas: vehicle safety and convoy operations, weapons safety, health and related medical and weather injuries, hazardous materials, fire prevention, and electrical issues.

A significant number of MCCLL lessons also address safety issues. Selected lessons in the MCCLL Lesson Management System (LMS) that address safety-related topics are:

- [Driver training under conditions expected in theater](#)
- [Crew day/night cycles for countering fatigue](#)
- [Proper maintenance of crew served weapons](#)
- [Safety during pre-flighting at night](#)
- [Deconfliction with Army aircraft](#)
- [Proper procedures for limited visibility helicopter landings](#)
- [Low-level light NVG training](#)

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Feedback from Users

From MARFORK

The news letter contains useful information but is hard to read quickly. I recommend changing the format. The format of the articles should provide better background just in case we are just getting into the issue and should be organized more like a magazine as opposed to a web site with links going everywhere.

Finally, the newsletter wastes too much time with pictures that are irrelevant. Please only include diagrams and photos that are necessary to the message.

Semper Fi
JC

MCCLL Response: Thank you for your interest in the MCCLL newsletter and website. We are certainly open to making changes in the newsletter format in order to better serve the reader. We consider the format to be evolutionary as we obtain additional experience, as well as feedback from readers. The current format has been selected for the following reasons:

1. One of the main objectives of the newsletter is to familiarize users with the MCCLL website and the capabilities that it provides. We would like users to be able access the site on their own to perform their own research activities, and have included many links to our website to encourage user access.
2. Since the newsletter may be passed on to individuals who are not authorized users of the system (that have only .com addresses), we have had to establish controls so that FOUO documents are only accessible to users who have already logged into our system as authorized users (with .mil or .gov addresses).
3. Since the newsletter is being distributed via the NMCI, we must limit the size of the file. Many of our topical papers are relatively lengthy and cannot feasibly be imbedded in the newsletter due to size constraints. These size limitations preclude us from distributing the newsletter in a "magazine-type format".
4. By including links to complete articles and news items in other locations, readers can choose the topics that they are interested in and link only to them. We understand that at times this might be very frustrating, particularly if the network is slow.
5. The five photographs included in the December newsletter were designed to provide some visual variety and to break up the text. We agree that for the most part, they are not essential and do not add much in the way of substance. (Other readers have expressed the opposite opinion and appreciate the graphical variety.) We will continue to evaluate the use of photographs. (Note that all of the photographs have been included as low resolution files, so they do not add significantly to the size of the file).
6. Since the publication of the newsletter is done in-house with existing MCCLL staff, we must make extensive use of topical papers that have already been prepared for specific audiences. These papers sometimes do not contain extensive background information, since their intended audiences are already familiar with the subject. We will work to ensure that we include enough background information in the newsletter, so that readers will have sufficient information to understand the basic concepts presented in all of the papers.

Again, we appreciate your input, and will work to make the newsletter as user friendly as possible. Please let us know if you have any further questions or comments and thanks again for your interest in our products.

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Michael Sirak JDW Staff Reporter
Washington, DC

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US Navy engineers have designed a tiny, disposable air vehicle that could be employed in large numbers to create ad hoc communications and sensor networks in hostile territory.

Under the nascent project led by the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), thousands of Close-in Covert Autonomous Disposable Aircraft (CICADAs) would be dropped from manned platforms in programmable geometric patterns to saturate or "seed" an area with coverage.

The small, lightweight CICADAs, one of which fits easily into a person's hand, would create self-configurable networks as they descended in support of friendly troops entering the hostile areas.

These communications links and small sensors would continue to function after the air vehicles have reached the ground, according to the notional concept of operations.

The NRL declined an interview request, but JDW understands that one wing pod on a C-130-sized aircraft could dispense 10,800 CICADAs over a wide area without having to penetrate into hostile airspace.

According to an NRL fact sheet, the CICADA has a glide ratio of 3.5:1, meaning that it will travel 3.5 miles out from its release point for every mile of altitude that it descends.

The CICADA is "essentially a flying circuit board" that folds into the shape of the air vehicle, according to the fact sheet. The aircraft can be packed tightly: 18 of them fit into one 6-in (15.2 cm) cube, it states.

Another advantage of the tiny vehicles is that they have a "very low unit cost", according to the NRL.

See [Jane's Defence Weekly](#) for other articles of interest.

Related MCCLL Lessons: There have been numerous after action reports and lessons submitted by the operating forces that addressed the problems associated with inadequate communications connectivity and sensor availability in theater. The proposed CICADA networks are one means of addressing this issue. Among the recent lessons that have highlighted this area of concern are: [UAVs as radio relays](#), [Improvements to UAV platforms/sensors](#), [Pushing UAV intelligence to the company level](#), and [UAV employment in a target acquisition role](#).

[Life with Iraqi Forces and U.S. Marines at Battle Position Beirut](#)

By Bill Roggio, Combined Forces
November 29, 2005

HUSAYBAH, IRAQ: A new batch of Iraqi troops rotated into service at Battle Position Beirut as the last group was heading out on leave. The Iraqi soldiers are an extremely friendly bunch and very interested in getting to know you. Several of the soldiers spoke English, and served as translators for the groups who came by to say hello. All were extremely interested in the satellite connection and accessing the Internet from such a remote location. Looks of wonder appeared on their faces as they repeated "Internet? Internet!" To be fair, many of the Marines expressed amazement as well.

We exchanged stories and discussed our families. They noticed the picture of my daughter on the open Instant Messenger window, and asked for more. I shared photographs of my family, which brought forth smiles and hearty claps on the back. Many of the soldiers are married and have children, and expressed that they missed their families as well. This is a universal bond all soldiers share.

Their backgrounds varied. The men were from age 18 to 43, and came from all corners of the country. Mohammed is from Najaf, Ahmed is from Mosul, Hussein is from Hit. They came from Basra, Baghdad, Haditha, and small towns across Iraqi which I was unfamiliar. They are Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds.



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Marines Reassessing Standard 5.56 mm Rounds for Fighting Insurgents

From *Inside the Pentagon* dated 15 Dec 2005

The Marine Corps is kicking off a new effort to determine how the service's NATO-standard 5.56 mm ammunition rounds fare in the battle against insurgents in Iraq, a service official told *Inside the Pentagon* this week. Officials at the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned are developing a questionnaire for Marine infantrymen deployed in that country and those returning from there to investigate claims that the rounds fired from M16 or M4 rifles lack "stopping power" in engagements with insurgents, according to Marine Corps Combat Development Command official Col. Clarke Lethin.

Lethin is the director of the fires and maneuver integration division at MCCDC in Quantico, VA, where the center is also located. The 5.56 mm round, a standard round used by NATO forces and dubbed Green-Tip for its colored top, is widely used by Marine infantry units in Iraq. The round has a "grain" of 62, which is a weight designation, Lethin explained in a Dec. 12 interview.

The 5.56 mm ammunition is also available in a slightly heavier, 77-grain version, which could be better suited to stop opponents in close-range firefights, he added. That version of the round, however, has traditionally been used only by special operations and reconnaissance-type Marine Corps units, according to Lethin. Both the 62- and the 77-grain rounds can be fired from an M16 or M4 rifle. The NATO 62-grain round was designed "a long time ago" during the Cold War for warfare against well equipped Soviet soldiers, Lethin said. The bullet is configured to penetrate body armor and still have the "desired effects," Lethin said.

But many of the insurgents in Iraq are not wearing body armor, which according to some reports from the field, allows the NATO bullets to fly through them without necessarily stopping their approach, he said. Especially at close ranges, such as in urban terrain, the 62-grain round of the 5.56 mm munition sometimes lacks "stopping power," several reports say, unless they hit a bone, Lethin added. One of several reports critical of the NATO 5.56 mm rounds is a paper from the commanding officer of Company F (Fox), 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, dated May 17. *ITP* obtained a copy of the report earlier this month. The report is called an "After Action Review," a designation given to reports written after a deployment or mission.

The Fox Company, whose experiences are detailed in the 24-page paper, is a Marine Reserve unit based in Milwaukee, WI. It deployed to Iraq from September 2004 to April 2005. The unit's area of responsibility was near Yusufiyah, southwest of Baghdad, the report states. The company was responsible for over 200 square kilometers of land, much of which was considered "hostile territory" and the home of "hostile tribes," according to the paper.

While the report makes no mention of how many Marines were in the unit, Marine Corps Companies outfits such as Fox Company typically consist of 120 to 150 soldiers, according to Lt. Col. Donald Hawkins, who is the head of the integration and technology branch at the lessons learned center. "During engagements of less than 100 meters, enemy shot multiple times in the torso with 5.56 seemed to continue to function for a long period of time," the Fox Company report reads. "Head shots seemed to be the only way to kill someone quickly" with a 5.56 mm round, it continues.

As a result, the paper recommends the Marines "evaluate ways to enhance stopping power with 5.56 or investigate using another round."



See more of this article from *Inside the Pentagon*: [Reports allege insufficient stopping power at close range](#)

Related MCCLL Lessons: MCCLL is supporting the Marine Corps evaluation of the stopping power of the 5.56 mm round by conducting a survey of in-country Marines. In addition, the MCCLL Lessons Management System (LMS) already contains a number of lessons that address this issue. Representative lessons are: [Effectiveness of the 5.56 mm round](#), [M16A2 Service Rifle issues](#), and [Stopping power of the 5.56 mm round](#).

Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned

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USMC Buying Another 50 Unit Operation Centers

Defense Industry Daily, 7 December 2005

General Dynamics Decision Systems in Scottsdale, AZ won \$72.5 million for Modification P00067 under previously awarded contract M67854-02-C-2052 for the Unit Operations Center (UOC) program. This modification includes recurring engineering change costs for 10 UOCs, plus an exercised option for another 50 UOCs.

What's a UOC, exactly?

The UOC is an integrated, mobile, command and control center consisting of shelter, power, cabling, processing systems, and trailers. UOCs are portable, modular command and control centers designed to support Marines wherever they are deployed. These systems are supporting Marine forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and are also supporting Marines' pre-deployment training and testing in the United States.

Based on this award's amount, and the timeline shown by all DefenseLINK announcements under this contract, it would appear that the UOC program is hitting its stride. This contract was priced on a competitive solicitation, and the engineering change is within contract scope. There were four offerors. Work will be performed in Scottsdale, AZ and is expected to be complete by June 2007. The Marine Corps Systems Command in Quantico, VA issued the contract.

Related MCCLL Lessons: The need for an integrated, mobile command and control center has been identified in a number of lessons submitted by the operating forces. Examples are: [Collaborative planning capability needed for the UOC](#), [Needed upgrades to the TACC shelter](#), and [Required changes to the infantry battalion TOE](#).

U.S. Marines' IED Lane Shifts Training

By Gidget Fuentes, Twentynine Palm
Defense News

At a glance, the gravelly dirt road looks like any other stretch of desert road, littered with the occasional rocks, trash, tumbleweed and a broken-down car.

But with a closer eye and guided words from combat-seasoned engineers, truths of the road reveal themselves.

A 155mm round is encased in a concrete curb. A piece of dried brush covers tripwired artillery rounds tucked inside a buried tire. Discarded U.S. ammunition cans are stuffed with explosives connected to a cell phone.

An empty MRE - Meals Ready to Eat - box, also loaded with explosives, is connected to wires buried under a pressure plate in the road.

Combat engineers placed the mock makeshift bombs, or improvised explosive devices (IEDs), to show fellow Marines how to identify danger.

They call it IED Lane. The simple stretch of road near the new "Iraqi village" training ranges at the U.S. Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center here is a critical part of training before deploying to a combat zone.

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See [more of this article](#)

MCCLL Dissemination of IED Lessons: In support of the Joint IED Defeat Task Force, MCCLL recently arranged for wide distribution throughout the Marine Corps of the document, "Counter IED Tactics, Techniques and Procedures". A limited number of individual copies are also available and can be requested from: cecilia.montoya-gilb.ctr@usmc.mil.

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Book Review

A Sense of Duty: My Father, My American Journey by Quang X. Pham

Reviewed by Gordon Dillow, The Orange County Register

Book Reminds Us of The Price They Paid

This month will mark the 30th anniversary of a shameful chapter in our nation's history. Thirty years ago we abandoned a longtime ally, the Republic of (South) Vietnam. And with it, along with millions of others, we abandoned Quang X. Pham's dad.

Quang is an old friend of mine, a 40-year-old Mission Viejo businessman who came to the U.S. as a boy refugee from Vietnam and later served as a U.S. Marine helicopter pilot in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. His father, Pham Van Hoa, now deceased, was a U.S.-trained South Vietnamese Air Force pilot who spent 12 years in a communist "re-education" camp because he refused to leave his country when the North Vietnamese army swept through South Vietnam in April 1975 - this while America, after investing 58,000 of its own sons' lives, stood by and washed its hands of the entire bloody and tragic affair. And even though he became an American who loved his country and served it courageously in uniform, for many years that abandonment rankled Quang's heart. It rankled mine, too.

Quang has written a new book about his father, and about his own experiences as a refugee who became an American Marine. It's called "A Sense of Duty: My Father, My American Journey," published by Ballantine Books, and I highly recommend it for anyone who wants to understand what the Vietnam War meant to some of the people who suffered the most because of it - that is, the people of South Vietnam. It's powerful, and moving, and in it Quang tries to dispel a myth about Vietnam that still persists.

The myth is that guys like his dad didn't fight for their country. "I just want to see South Vietnamese (military men) like my father acknowledged," Quang told me. "Not made into heroes or anything, but just acknowledged for what they did. I wanted to set the record straight." Certainly the casualty numbers tell a story that's far different from the myth. The South Vietnamese armed forces lost a total of about 250,000 men killed in the war - a number that, as a percentage of national population, was about 50 times greater than American deaths.

And the numbers of the maimed were even greater. Ten years ago, as a reporter for the Register, I went back to Vietnam to cover the 20th anniversary of the end of the war, and everywhere I went I would meet aging former ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) soldiers who were missing arms or legs or eyes, many of them reduced to beggary because the communist government offered no pensions or even menial jobs for former ARVNs. When they found out I'd been an American soldier in the war they would often break out yellowed, crumbling, long-hidden South Vietnamese military ID cards and tell me, "I was with you, I was with you."

And they were. Now, I know some of my fellow American Vietnam veterans will disagree with me on this subject. They'll call me up and tell me bitter tales about "Marvin the ARVN," about South Vietnamese M-16s that were in perfect condition because "they'd never been fired, and were only dropped once," about South Vietnamese corruption and incompetence and cowardice. Certainly there was no shortage of such things, particularly in the ARVN's politicized upper ranks.

But don't tell me - or Quang X. Pham - that 250,000 guys died with no brave men among them. Don't try to tell guys who got their arms or legs blown off that they didn't fight hard enough. Don't think that a lot of guys like Quang's father didn't have a sense of duty and honor, even as they lost their war, and their country, and languished in brutal communist prison camps for years and years and years.

In the coming weeks you'll probably see and hear a lot of retrospectives about the Vietnam War, some of them truthful, many of them media myths perpetuated by people who were never even there - the same sort of myths that even now are being created about the Iraq war and the Americans who've been fighting it. More on that in a future column. But if you think that the Vietnam War was strictly an American war, if you think that the people of South Vietnam weren't worth fighting for, or with, then I have a suggestion. Talk to a guy like Quang X. Pham. And ask him about his dad.

A Sense of Duty can be purchased at the [Marine Corps Association Bookstore](#). Books on the Commandant's Professional Reading List can also be obtained [from the Bookstore](#).

The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) articles contained in this newsletter represent the considered judgment of experienced analysts assigned to the MCCLL. The purpose of the newsletter is to apprise members of the Marine Corps (as well as members of other Services and Department of Defense (DoD) commands and agencies) of recent items of interest contained in the Marine Corps Lessons Management System (LMS).