



SHIFTING GEARS

Marines Aim to Provide Humanitarian Aid

▲ **BAGHDAD, Iraq** – Marines with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division, out of Camp Pendleton, Calif., move into better position to engage the enemy during a firefight April 8.

Photo by Sgt. Kevin R. Reed

◀ **HASHAM, Iraq** – Marines from Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 24, 24th MEU (Special Operations Capable), and Hasham residents move a goal post into place on a soccer field built by the Marines April 16. During the project, the Marines made a soccer field for the children as well as tables and benches for their school.

Photo by Sgt. Zachary A. Bathon



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SHIFTING GEARS



By Kristen Hays, HEADQUARTERS
MARINE CORPS, Washington

Marine, Army leaders gather 'lessons learned'

The task of gathering and processing "lessons learned" from Operation Iraqi Freedom is going well and will undoubtedly save lives in future crises, said Marine and Army leaders June 3. Maj. Gen. Gordon C. Nash, commander of the Joint Warfighting Center and director of the Joint Training J7, U.S. Joint Forces Command, and Army Brig. Gen. Robert W. Cone, director of the Operation Iraqi Freedom Joint Lessons Learned Collection Team addressed the media and answered questions at the Pentagon Press Room via satellite from Norfolk, Va.

In the press conference, the generals covered the process of gathering lessons learned, finding that the method for identifying and changing mistakes is important "because we've set the stage for future crises," said Maj. Gen. Nash.

The Marines and Army approached the lessons learned process together because, "Iraqi Freedom was a war that was fought by joint forces under great joint leadership. (We) looked at lessons learned from the joint operational level."

Collection of data began March 6 before the conflict officially began in Iraq. A team of 35 officers was embedded at "all levels and locations" of Central Command with unhindered and unimpeded access to subordinate headquarters in Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Team members, compiled from the Joint Staff and Joint Forces Command, focused on the process of getting to the region, the flow of forces, and the process of getting forces to specific conflicts.

In addition to the CentCom group, 18 civilian analysts in Northern Virginia from Joint Forces Command and the Institute for Defense Analyses supported and communicated with the Lessons Learned Team through online communication tools to "discuss emerging insights, share feedback and provide cross-component collaboration."

The Virginia group collected these lessons of war by looking at relevant issues, problems or requests from CentCom leaders. The overseas group collected 400 focused interviews from key leaders and staff officers at different stages to assess their opinions and identify key points and underlying issues of the conflict.

Gens. Nash and Cone plan to focus on the issues of importance in relation to the warfighter, retired OIF commander Army Gen. Tom Franks' goals, and how operations can be improved for a future joint force commander.

The team plans to finish later this summer with a report including specific problems, why they are important, why they occurred, and how they could be changed for greater efficiency and excellence in the future.

Ultimately, the process has turned "what we normally call lessons noted or lessons observed... into lessons learned to save the lives of our young men and women in combat," Maj. Gen. Nash said. **A**

In late 2002, growing concern that Saddam Hussein was hiding weapons of mass destruction prompted a gradual buildup of American troops and other coalition forces in the Middle East. Marine ground, support and aviation units from Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Camp Lejeune, N.C.; various Marine Corps air stations, and reserve Marines from

throughout the United States began staging in the Kuwaiti desert at camps like Ripper, Matilda Commando and Coyote.

By mid-March, more than 300,000 Marines, Sailors, soldiers and airmen were deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In a March 17 address to the nation, President Bush gave Hussein a 48-hour

deadline to vacate Iraq. America would no longer tolerate the possibility that Hussein might use weapons of mass destruction against Americans.

The deadline passed without a response from Hussein and in the early morning hours of March 20 a missile attack was launched on selected targets in Baghdad, Iraq. Operation Iraqi

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A BAGHDAD, Iraq - Charlie Company, 1st Tank Battalion, departs the assembly area at the Olympic stadium in Baghdad, April 10.

Photo by Sgt. Paul L. Anstine II

CASUALTIES: As of June 4

253 Wounded in action	2 Died as result of WIA
54 Killed in action	21 non-hostile deaths

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> **IRAQ** - Seaman Sandy D. Chapa, from Albuquerque, N.M., a corpsman attached to Headquarters Battery, 11th Marines, provides medical assistance to an Iraqi child April 10.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Andreas A. Plaza

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Freedom had begun. The operation's goals were to liberate the Iraqi people, eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and end Saddam Hussein's regime.

By the end of March, Marines had passed through or staged assets near the Iraqi cities of Basra, Az Zubayr, Al Shur, Alghraft, Ad Diwanyah and Umm Qasr. They had engaged in combat with Iraqi soldiers and provided humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people. April found Marines conducting combat missions in Baghdad and Tikrit.

When Operation Iraqi Freedom came to an end May 1, stabilization of the war-torn country became the focus of effort for Marines and other coalition forces. The shift to security patrols, humanitarian assistance missions, facility assessments and sensitive site security has not eliminated the threat to Marines from pockets of resistance still loyal to the Ba'ath party and the Hussein regime.

Today, Marines and other U.S. and coalition forces face the daunting task of removing weapons from the streets, delivering much needed food, water and medical attention to people long-starved of these basics under the brutal rule of Saddam Hussein. **M**



BY THE NUMBERS

1,200 - Number of measles vaccinations administered by coalition forces to children in Kirkuk as of June 4.

100 - Beanie babies handed out to Iraqi school children and dental patients as of June 4.

39 - Number of nations offering stabilization forces as of May 27.

440 - Tons of trash and debris removed from northern and central Iraqi schoolyards and soccer fields as of June 4.

247 - Trucks in a World Food Program convoy entering Iraq from Turkey to deliver 5,800 tons of food June 4.

188 - Teachers and headmasters screened and processed in Ad Diwanyah to determine Ba'ath Party affiliation.

2,800 - Number of Iraqi police working every day in Baghdad.

3,400 - Coalition military police in the city.

3000 B.C. - The year the Vase of Warka, one of the most notable artifacts stolen from the National Museum of Iraq, was created.



1st Sgt. Berry

BERRY'S LESSON LEARNED

1st Sgt. Paul Berry, who has almost 17 year in the Corps, is with Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 2/2, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable). After months of build up in the surrounding deserts, the majority of the 24th MEU (SOC) was in Iraq by March 29 and stayed until about April 25. They conducted missions in southern Iraq all the way north to Al Kut.

- **Know first aid.** Make it a top training event. Get medical supplies and put them in each vehicle. We used an (ammunition) can with pressure dressings and IVs. Teach your Marines how to give IVs.
- **NVGs (night vision goggles) work.** Use them. All night devices worked great. Batteries can be an issue. Plan!
- **Always plan fire support.** We held a major road intersection in the middle of nowhere. We used mortars as security and out of the blue we needed mortar fire. Plan for it. Lay guns in all four directions for 360-coverage. Plan on-call targets. Plan for and use (illumination).
- Training in combat? You bet. Talk through it. Walk through it. Use sticks and rocks. **Get the (corporal) up there to brief what is going on. He knows more than most.** Immediate action drills for everything.
- **EOD (Explosive Ordinance Disposal) is your friend.** Don't blow enemy weapons on your own unless you have to. Mark it and get a grid and call EOD.
- **Never baby your Marines.** Expect the world from them. Never back off. They want to show you they can do the job. When you think you need a (staff sergeant) to do the job grab a (corporal or sergeant) and he will do it better and faster.
- **LAVs rule the desert.** Use them if you have them.
- Pistols suck. **Bring and use every weapon.** Shotguns are great at close ranges.
- **No one has too much rank to dig.** Dig holes, dig many of them. Use (demolition) if you have to. Dig down at all cost. Can't dig down? Use as many sandbags as you can to build up.
- **Use snipers.** They saved us many times. Give them a mission and let them go.
- **Vehicles attract bullets.**
- We had no problem with Marines using lights at night because they did not use them at all. They will **learn to do everything in total darkness.**
- Talk to any units in the area. Ask questions. You will learn so much from them. **Talk to the Army.** They do good things also.
- Buy a short wave radio and get the news. Write it down under a poncho at 0200. **Get the baseball scores out to the Marines** and you are a hero.
- It's OK to **allow the Marines to take their blouse off if it is hot.** Their skins get tough really fast. If it's really hot they can go around without blousing their boots. Don't worry (sergeant major), they won't do it garrison.
- **Every Marine is a driver and should have a license.**
- **Only hits count. Know how to estimate range day and night.**
- **NCOs run the fight** no matter how much you get on the radio. Sit back and listen to them. You might just learn something from them.

IRAQI WEAPONS TURN-IN PROGRAM:

A two-week amnesty period was established June 1 by coalition forces to help remove the number of weapons on the streets of Iraq. According to a U.S. Central Command press release, as of June 10 Iraqi citizens turned in: 44 pistols; 69 semi-automatic rifles or shotguns; 240 automatic rifles; 25 machineguns; 78 anti-tank weapons; 122 grenades and other explosive devices.

The amnesty period ended June 15 and those caught with weapons 7.62 mm or greater now will be fined or jailed. The weapons control program is designed to reduce the numbers of weapons on the street and give selected persons authority to carry weapons, dependent upon their jobs and background checks.

This information was excerpted from an e-mail sent by Berry to his former battalion commander. The first sergeant's observations are not policy. The complete e-mails can be viewed at: <http://www.usmc.mil/marineink/marink2000.nsf/a059c7575ef346829556b50904d68/c34c4818cc4e46e478525624004d37>