Adapting the Army:
Institutionalizing Counter-IED Training Efforts

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The success of U.S. forces during the early phases of combat in Afghanistan and Iraq provides testimony to the competence of American Soldiers, the superiority of their equipment, and the exceptional quality of their training. However, after the conclusion of conventional combat operations, our Soldiers faced a resilient and adaptive enemy bent on continuing the fight and hindering any transition to peace, democracy, and public order. To do this, our enemy had to change the conditions of the battle and nullify or defeat elements that gave us superiority. For instance, to defeat our long-range weapons and standoff capabilities, he hid among the populace and attacked us at close quarters. He avoided force-on-force combat by employing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) plus hit-and-run tactics against convoys and units to inflict casualties. He buried explosives to attack our vehicles from beneath and attempted to emplace explosively formed penetrators to defeat U.S. detection and neutralization systems.

Keeping Training Relevant

The enemy's success depended greatly on his ability to be flexible, adaptive, and able to operate on timelines inside our standard Cold War institutional processes. He could change tactics, techniques, and procedures or employ new devices periodically, continually forcing us to play catch-up and rendering our institutional training or materiel systems irrelevant against the current threat by the time they were fielded. Although counter-IED (C-IED) training occurred throughout the many training domains, much of the training lacked integration and standardization. This led to a move toward consistency in skill levels and interest in the collective tasks trained at unit home stations. As a consequence, much of the most relevant training and preparation for combat shifted from the generating force to the operational force, complicating deployment preparation and mission readiness.

Considering personnel turnover between rotations, this often presented units with a steep learning curve and forced a lot of predeployment training to concentrate on the fundamentals. Instead of focusing on collective unit training and mission readiness exercises, many units were burdened with learning individual C-IED tasks, irregular warfare counterinsurgency principles, threat analysis, and an understanding of what C-IED assets are available to tailor capabilities based on the threat and operational conditions. In addition, because of the pervasive misconception that our current operational dilemma was unique, theater-specific, and of a limited duration, there was little incentive to alter the status quo and rectify our training strategy. Figure 1, page 11, depicts how we are training C-IED efforts today.

Current U.S. training has been based on the following outdated misconceptions:

- *IEDs are a new threat.* However, IEDs are an enduring threat that have been used since the invention of explosives.
- *IEDs are specific to irregular warfare.* Instead, IEDs are used throughout the full spectrum of warfare.
- *IEDs are unique to current theaters of operation.* This is incorrect. IEDs are prevalent in every global region, to include foreign and domestic areas of operation.

Keeping Training Balanced

In response to the enduring nature of the threat, C-IED training must become more balanced between the institutional and operational domains. Standardization and required implementation of common C-IED training in initial military training and professional military education (PME) is the first step. The next step will be to determine what C-IED lessons should migrate from current operational training requirements to the institutional domain. The migration of critical training ensures a standardized basis of training and provides commanders with more time and flexibility while preparing their units for deployment. This shift in training would result in a more balanced C-IED strategy, as depicted in Figure 2, page 11.

To transform C-IED training in the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the TRADOC commander tasked the Maneuver Support Center of

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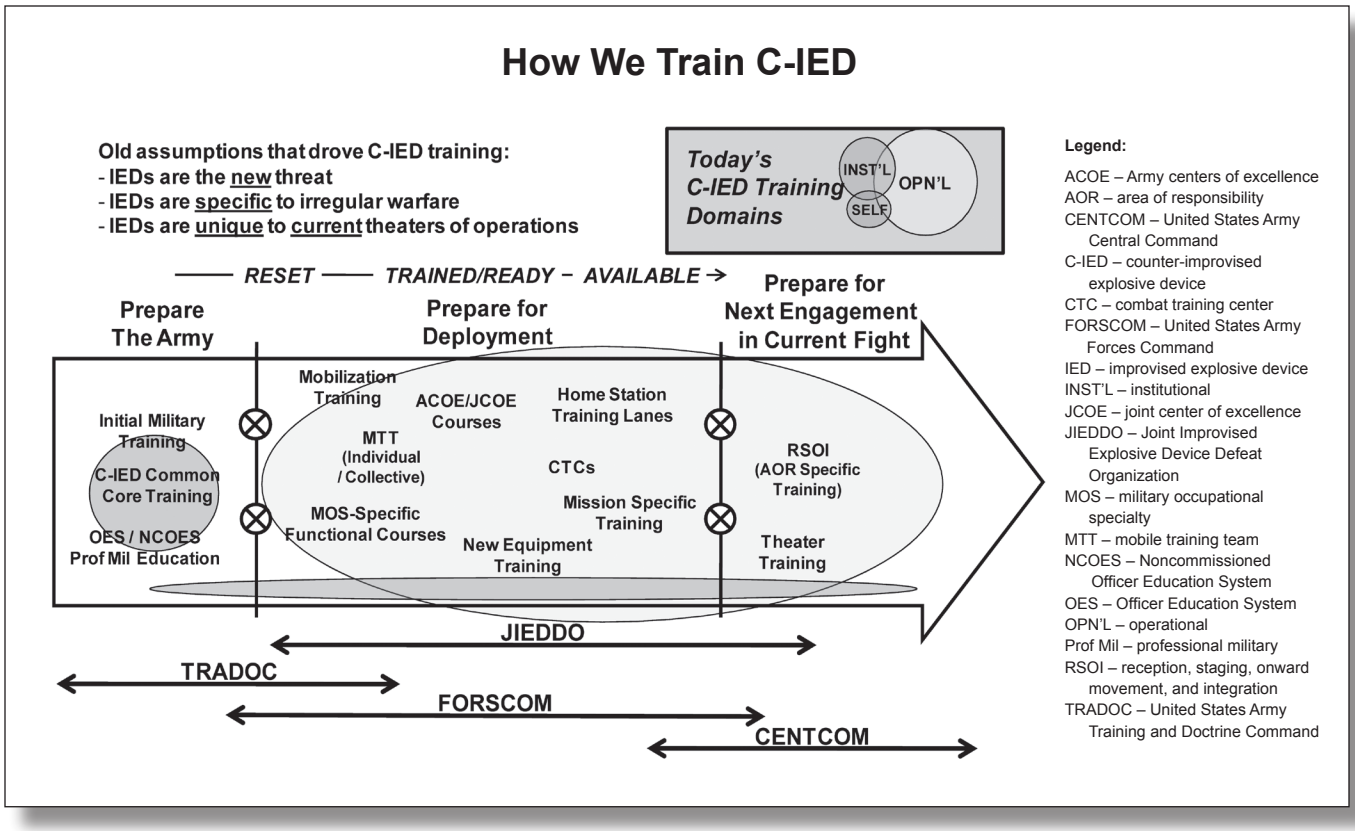

Figure 1

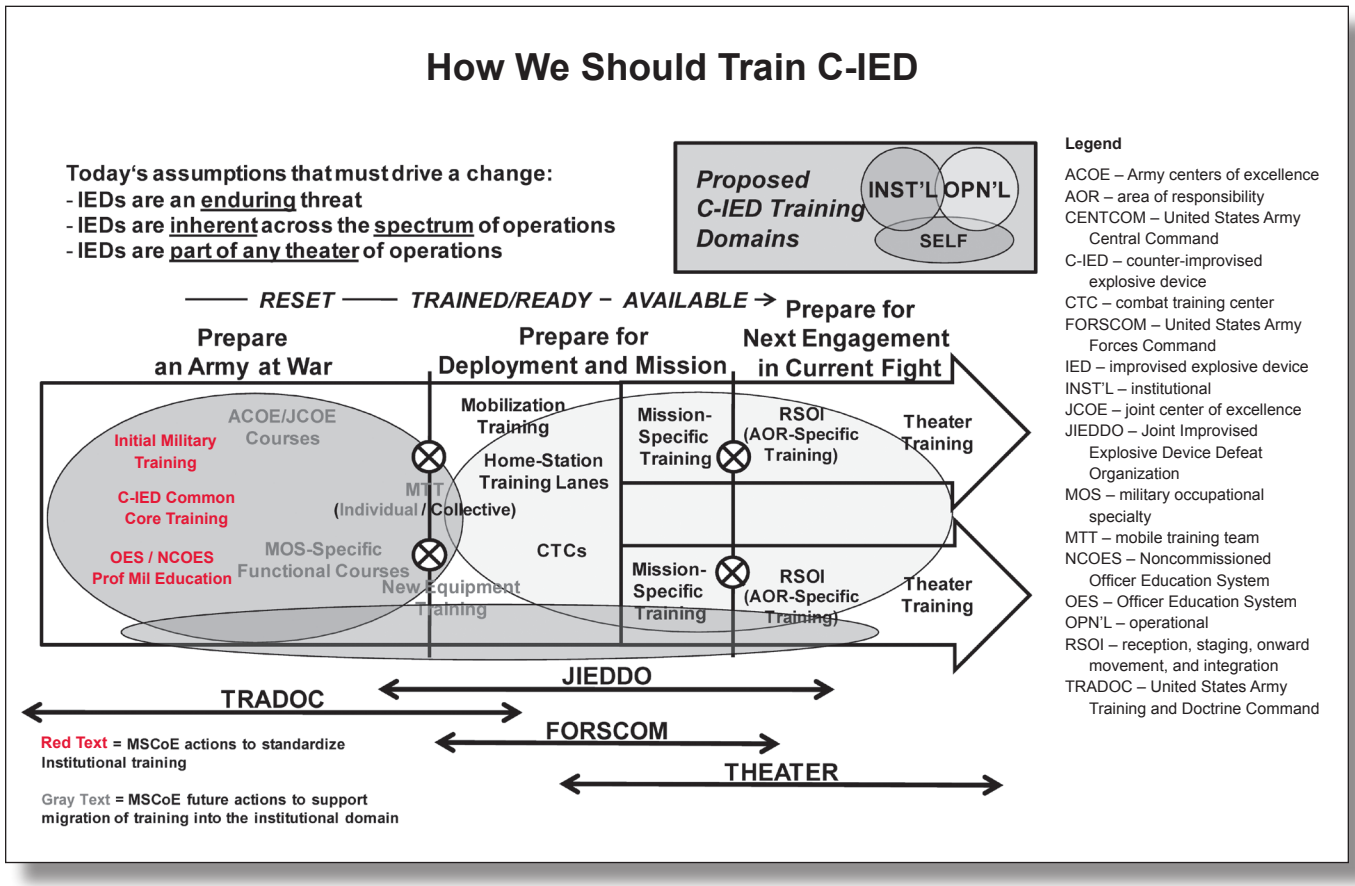

Figure 2

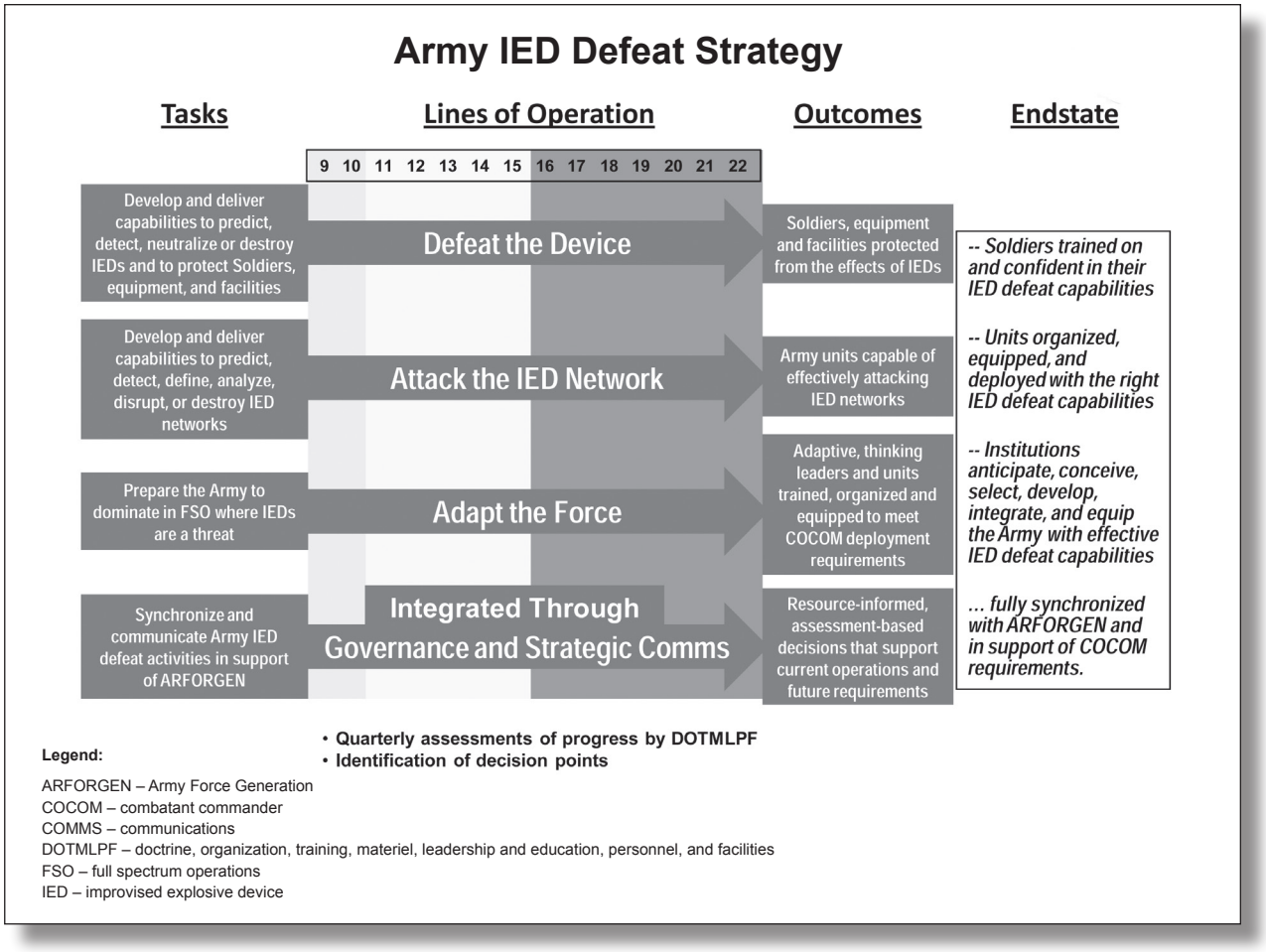

Figure 3

Excellence at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri—in collaboration with other proponent leaders and centers of excellence—to develop an integrated, standardized program for C-IED training and education. To treat the IED as an enduring threat and prepare units to use pooled capabilities of their combined arms resources requires the Army to embed C-IED training across its educational system. This training must align C-IED tasks with specific training and educational outcomes that complement and reinforce subsequent skill levels, resulting in an integrated hierarchy of knowledge. Because the use of the IED against U.S. and coalition forces is ever-adapting, continual validation of the C-IED training is an important process of the training integration. The validation process must ensure that the training remains current and relevant to the operating force.

Lines of Operation

After a holistic analysis of the C-IED threat, the Army has identified three primary lines of operation (LOOs)—Defeat the Device, Attack the IED Network, and Adapt the Force—that are pivotal to defeating enemy IEDs. These three LOOs are integrated through an administrative LOO called "Governance and Strategic Comms," which provides synchronization, resourcing, and strategic oversight of all C-IED efforts across the Army. Even though each LOO contains its own unique tasks and training necessary to achieve its specific strategic objective, they also share numerous common tasks that are threaded throughout each. Figure 3 depicts these LOOs and the outcome each produces.

Identify Critical Common Tasks

As the first step toward achieving these goals, the TRADOC Integrated Capabilities Development Team (ICDT) convened a training summit at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in November 2009 to identify what C-IED training is needed at each echelon of skills within the Army—from Soldiers entering initial training through senior leaders attending advanced PME. This effort was collaborative, involving expertise from across the Army and the broader Department of Defense C-IED community of practice, with the goal of implementing changes in the spring of 2010. Key to the overall analysis was the identification of critical common tasks that Soldiers must successfully perform to survive and function in a C-IED environment. The analysis entailed a review of current operational needs; Soldier interviews; and study of mobile training team (MTT) tasks, doctrine-related tasks such as the Army universal task list, and educational tasks such as the Automated Systems Approach to Training (ASAT). This analysis provided a basis for Soldier outcomes and defined the skills and knowledge a Soldier must possess to survive and function in a C-IED environment.

Identify Enduring Common Skills

The second step in the analytical process was the identification of enduring common skills that cross Army proponencies. Using all current deconstructed C-IED training and requirements, the summit members acted as a critical task selection board to determine—

- Common-to-all C-IED tasks that will transition into the institutional training domain and be reinforced with the operational training domain.
- Branch-specific tasks critical to combatant commanders to be developed in the formal Army training development process by their respective schools and centers.
- Tasks that cross centers of excellence and formally assign development of those tasks to the C-IED proponent.
- Common-to-some C-IED tasks that would cross specific communities.

Develop a Training Support Package

The third step in the analytical process was the task analysis and development of a training support package to sustain the identified common C-IED critical tasks. This C-IED training package will identify the method and time of instruction and the resources required for the proponent to conduct the training.

Migrate Training to Institutional Domain

The fourth step in the analytic process entailed the migration of current C-IED operational training into the institutional training domain. Within the operational training domain, new equipment training, MTTs, and many functional courses were established to meet the needs of Soldiers moving into theater.

Key to any training strategy is the ability to provide resources for the effort and a timeline that will allow adjustments to the curriculum to ensure that it is relevant to the threat and operational requirements. Much of the C-IED training conducted by numerous schools and home-station organizations has been funded by various joint and Army agencies. However, a large portion of C-IED training within the operational training domain is neither funded nor recognized by the Army resourcing process and primarily uses a variety of contingency fundings. The ICDT, in conjunction with the United States Army Combined Arms Center Collective Training Directorate (CAC-CTD) has started the resource legitimization process using the Combined Arms Training Strategy (CATS). CAC-CTD incorporated the three C-IED-associated tasks from the Shared Collective Task List (SCTL) into the protection functional CATS. The Maneuver Support Center of Excellence linked C-IED training enablers with the SCTLs using the ASAT database. As the CAC ASAT consolidated database for record is uploaded, units across the force will be able to identify C-IED training resources in association with their full spectrum operations mission-essential task list using the Digital Training Management System.

Conclusion

The changes forthcoming in the Army's C-IED training strategy will provide a template and foundation for transforming our institutional training domains to become more flexible and responsive to the operational force and better support the Army Force Generation. It will—

- Tie in requirements with skill sets.
- Ensure integration within educational hierarchies.
- Establish decision points to evaluate and update training.
- Promote better standardization and synchronization across proponencies.
- Link resources to execution.

As a result, these mechanisms will ensure that the institutional domain is better postured to support an Army at war, in any theater around the globe, and be able to respond to any changes in enemy tactics or weapon systems.

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