



The IPB Process for Operations Other Than War

by Captain Tamara L. Morris, MI

The "old Red threat" just ain't what it used to be, and we no longer can afford to have a "Sovietologist" mindset. In military operations, we must ask who the threat is and how we can use one of our most valuable tools, the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB), to defeat him.

The IPB was developed to analyze the enemy, weather and terrain of a particular area of operations (AO) and area of interest (AI). It determines options unavailable to the enemy and highlights courses of action (COAs) that would be the most likely, most dangerous and least likely for the enemy to adopt.

IPB is a process that stimulates thought on the application of doctrine to a particular, sometimes unique, situation facing a commander. It supports the commander's decision making during any operation. The principal difference between IPB for a conventional battlefield situation, such as one with the former Soviet Union, and operations other than war (OOTW), such as those recently conducted in Somalia or Haiti, is the focus and degree of detail required.

IPB takes on increased importance in a force projection army. The deployment of units into undeveloped theaters and their subsequent employment against ambiguous threats makes IPB planning and intelligence dissemination critical.

Following IPB methodology reveals the threat capabilities, vulnerabilities and methods of operations. The steps found in *FM 34-130 Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield* remain constant, regardless of the mission, unit, staff section or echelon. They include defining the mission and battlefield environment, describing the battlefield's effects, evaluating the threat and determining the enemy's COAs.

(1) Define the Mission. The IPB process always starts with the mission. The commander drives the intelligence cycle, and the IPB must be responsive to his needs and desires. The goal of the IPB is to integrate threat doctrine (if known and applicable) and threat operational patterns with weather and terrain data.

The IPB for OOTW includes information on political, economic and social situations with great emphasis on the demographics of the indigenous population. Some situations that are unique and intelligence-intensive are operations where there's a threat of terrorism and those involving ethnic diversity and a changing threat. Each of these situations is demanding and makes it more difficult to ensure the commander has all the intelligence he needs to make sound and timely decisions.

(2) Define the Battlefield Environment. The AO is defined by higher headquarters. The very nature of operations against an unconventional threat requires the intelligence officer expand his area of interest (AI). All military or paramilitary groups, third-country nationals or non-government organizations (NGOs) that may interact with US troops and all political groups, media and third-country nationals supporting terrorist groups must be included in the analysis.

The S2 often includes in his analysis terrain that's on the other side of an international border marking the boundary of his AO. This cross-border area is within his AI when the threat is receiving support from units or people in that area, which must be analyzed just as thoroughly as the friendly force's AO.

The terrain should be analyzed along with infrastructure. Critical areas that should be identified include energy sources, transportation systems, construction supplies (and sources) and communication capabilities. All man-made features

that could have an impact on operations should be examined, including military garrisons, airfields, ports, rail yards, bridges, tunnels, power and telecommunications facilities and petroleum, oil and lubricant (POL) complexes. Unique to unfamiliar threat AOs is the requirement to analyze water sources, perimeter fences, animal grazing sites, religious monuments or places of worship, local gas stations, telephone exchanges, hospitals and boat ramps, among other things.

Also critical are the rules of engagement (ROE) established for the forces operating in a theater of operations. These rules not only affect friendly options, but can influence threat COAs as well—if he learns of their nature.

In OOTW, the scale of maps will be different. The scale should show much more detail—1:25,000 or 1:12,500, if possible, rather than the 1:100,000 or 1:50,000 scales.

An in-depth analysis of the host nation and any factors that could affect friendly operations is required. These factors will vary, depending on the area of operation. They include analysis of host nation population (health, religious and political loyalties, tribe or clan loyalties, etc.); ethnic backgrounds, languages and holiday observances; monetary systems and currencies; and any black-market activities conducted in the AI.

(3) Describe the Battlefield's Effects. You must consider the impact of demographic and social data on the overall population and friendly operations. The motivations of terrorist or political groups and any issues or external influences increasing tensions in the region should be identified and addressed. What would have to happen to bring peace to the region? How do these factors effect the COAs of both friendly and enemy?

Analyzing terrain in OOTW gives the commander valuable information to make decisions on points of entry, infiltration and exfiltration routes and command and control measures for the operation. The AO, particularly urban areas, should be divided into zones of control, using clan, group, religions or other established terms of reference. For other terrain considerations impacting battlefield effects, see Figure 1.

A key requirement in OOTW is a demand for demographic analysis. Population becomes the key to terrain because the side that holds the respect of the people will be more likely to succeed. Accordingly, the S2 prepares a population status overlay identifying pockets of the popula-

tion that support relevant causes or are neutral. This overlay depicting the population's political sympathies helps determine enemy COAs.

The weather and environment may be potential threats. For example, the heat could be so intense that the friendly forces' ability to perform their mission is degraded or the prevalence of diseases could cause friendly troops to become ill. The indigenous threat personnel, who are conditioned to the heat or hardened by repeated exposure to the diseases, are less likely to be affected by them and have the advantage.

Using historical data, the intelligence officer can analyze topography, hydrography, climate and weather and the weather's effects or predicted effects on mobility, traffic or visibility. By evaluating and analyzing these factors, the commander will know what to expect in the way of degradation due to extreme climates, availability of suitable drinking water or the likelihood of troops being unable to perform their mission due to diseases.

(4) Evaluate the Threat. In evaluating threat capabilities, you analyze order of battle for considerations unique to the OOTW. These include differences in the types of threat, strategy, modus operandi and tactics as well as weapons, equipment, materiel and personnel.

The IPB should document if the environment is permissive, semi-permissive or hostile to US Forces. If the population supports US Forces, is that support contingent on some form of material com-



Figure 1: Terrain Features Impacting Battlefield Effects in an IPB for OOTW



pensation (food, water, shelter or weapons) as in Somalia, or is it based on some type of emotional and protective support, as in Haiti?

It's critical to identify the dissident groups that will publicly support, but clandestinely oppose, US Forces. Any terrorist groups present, thought to be present or that have access to the AO should be identified and watched carefully for indications of activities. Are the terrorists state

supported or directed? Where does their money, equipment and motivation come from? Can the US neutralize the terrorist threat by enforcing economic or other sanctions on an outside supporter of the terrorists?

Keeping track of local personalities (leaders, trainers and key group members) and developing psychological profiles on the decision makers may be necessary. They can be tracked on a matrix depicting key leaders' alliances, recent sightings and activities (see Figure 2).

The analyst must examine the organization and structure of the hostile and terror-

ist organizations, including their stated and underlying philosophies. A terrorist group's motivation is the key to the type of terrorism it will attempt. The hostile forces' morale, will to resist, strengths of alliances and logistical sustainment capabilities, and the impact of its operations on neutral parties all affect their ability to commit terrorist acts and the friendly force's ability to thwart such acts.

Analysts also should identify the enemy's tactics and modus operandi (ambush techniques, sniper attacks, locations of weapon caches and methods of resupply, etc.). Figure 3 is a doctrinal template

Legend:		● Confirmed	○ Possible	● Probable	Christian Reform Party [Good Guys]	Society for the Preservation of Order or SPO [Right Wingers]	Farmer's Alliance [Unknown Peasant Group]	People's Democratic Society [Peaceful Moderate]	Insurgent Company	New Liberation Movement [Political Front for N.M.E.]	N.M.E.	Name of Individual	Town
Remarks													
Warrant outstanding	Leader in the insurgent company. Possible platoon or company commander.								●	●	●	Johnston, S.D. alias "The Red"	Bardolph
	Possibly linked to death squad activities.	●	○									Garra, N.A.	
	Mayor, ineffective due to war-torn town.	●										Mulvihill, P.	
	Possible platoon leader.	○			●		●	○	○			Daniels, P.	
	Regional governor.	○	○		●	●						Jenkins, T.L.	
Warrant outstanding	Tactical genius, principal trainer of insurgent company.								●	●	○	Cormier, J.	Macomb
							○		○	○		Webb, C.	
									○	○		Seipel, B.	
Warrant	Leader in the insurgent company. Platoon leader or executive officer.						○		○	○	●	Trollinger, L.	Beardstown
	Possible head of intelligence.								○	●	●	Ahearn, E.	
	Probable platoon leader.								●	○		Timoney, J.	
									●	●		Thompson, J.	
Warrant	Probable heavy weapons platoon leader.							●	○	●	Bridgford, R.		
Warrant	Possible liaison between insurgent company and the N.M.E.						○	○	○		○	Halbleib, M.	Bushnell
	"Doctor of Death"—leads the SPO.	●	●		○	○						Mueller, H.	
									●	○	○	Martinez, E.	

Figure 2: Key Leaders Activities Matrix (FM 34-130)

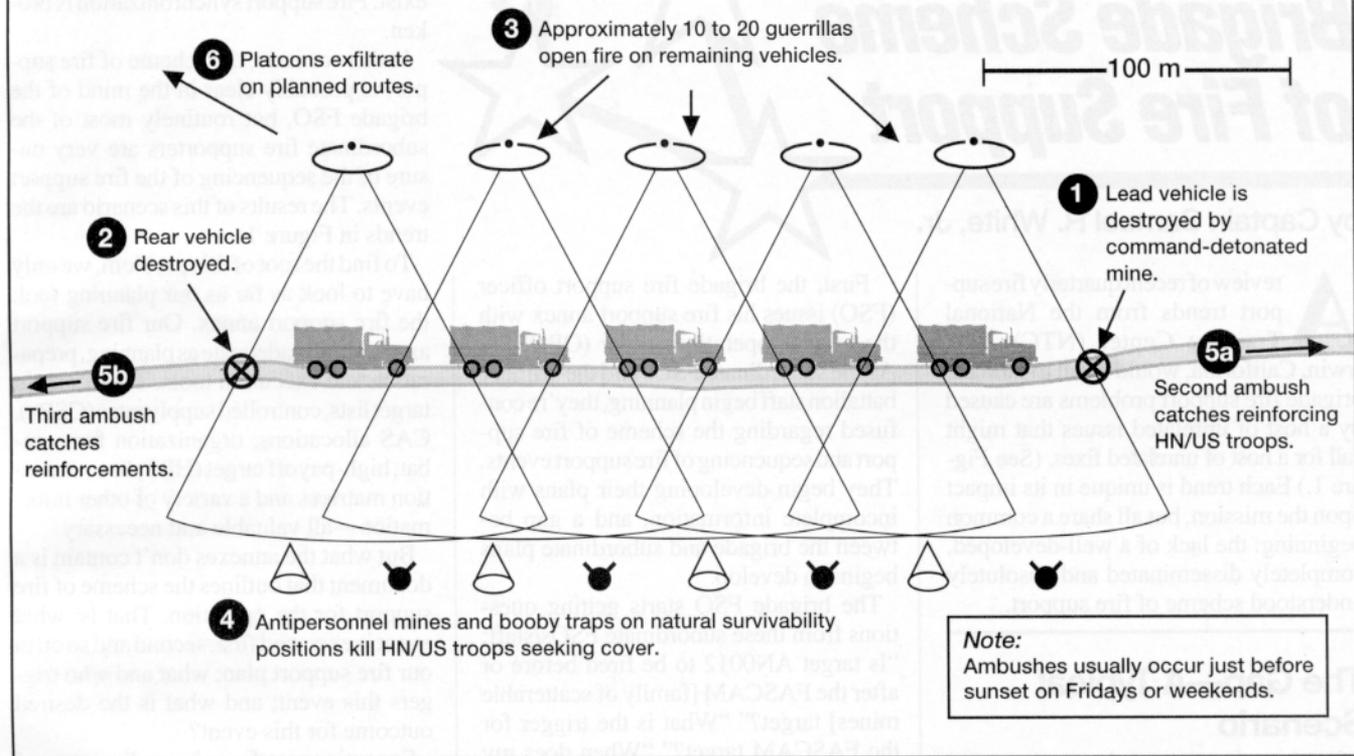


Figure 3: Doctrinal Template for the Enemy's Preferred Ambush Tactics (FM 34-130)

depicting the enemy's preferred tactics for conducting an ambush, a likely act of terrorism in operations other than war our forces could face.

(5) Determine Threat COAs. This step in the process is the culmination of the analysis of the battlefield, ROE or legal mandates in effect and hostile forces involved. By integrating the IPB products depicting population status and other considerations, the S2 can develop a situation template. The template depicts likely targets for the enemy and the most likely areas for ambushes.

Threat COAs are determined using the following five steps. First, the S2 develops doctrinal and situational templates, where appropriate, on terrorist and hostile group activities. Next, he develops COA models depicting the response of these groups to US entry and presence. In the third step, he analyzes the reactions of the local populace to friendly COAs. He then analyzes the reactions of the host nation government and military to friendly COAs in the fourth step. And, finally, he war games terrorist and hostile force actions.

The S2 develops the situation templates showing all COAs available to the enemy. These will be war gamed against the friendly COAs developed by the S3.

The S2 depicts named areas of interest (NAIs) on an event template. The NAIs are placed where the enemy would move to if he followed a COA. Intelligence collection assets focus on the NAIs to confirm or deny the enemy has adopted a particular COA.

The battle staff uses the initial set of IPB products to complete the decision-making process. As planning for an operation continues, the S2 refines and updates his IPB products, based on new intelligence that confirms or denies his initial evaluations. The staff reevaluates its plans as needed, based on new intelligence information.

Given the nature of the potential threat to US forces in OOTW, it will be difficult to obtain much of this information without an interagency approach to the IPB. Early liaison with local police, militia, NGOs, etc., will facilitate acquiring the type of information needed to complete the IPB.

Commanders require a contemporary, innovative version of IPB in situations where the threat is ambiguous or unique to US forces. The application of IPB to an OOTW can be difficult, but careful application of the IPB methodology with some modification to suit the environment will

provide information the commander needs to make timely, sound decisions.



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