



Ministry of Defence

Army Policy and Secretariat
Army Headquarters
IDL 24 Blenheim Building
Marlborough Lines
Andover
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ
United Kingdom

E-mail: armysec-group@mod.gov.uk
Website: www.army.mod.uk

Ref:ArmySec/FOI2024/01350

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

20 February 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 23 January 2024 in which you requested the following information:

"Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am writing to request the title page and chapter 4, "Command of Operations", of "Operations in Iraq - An Analysis from the Land Perspective", Army Code 71816 dated February 2005. I exclude paragraph 435 and the section "CIS" of chapter 4 from my request."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that the information in scope of your request is held and is attached.

As per your request, paragraphs 435 and 437 to 439 have been redacted.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, if you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Equipment and Operations Team
Army Policy and Secretariat

The protective marking of this publication has been downgraded as of 1 Jul 11 as part of a wider review of doctrine. This change is reflected throughout this electronic version. No other change was made on this date.

Army Code 71816



OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

AN ANALYSIS FROM THE LAND PERSPECTIVE

Prepared under the direction of
the Chief of the General Staff

CHAPTER FOUR - COMMAND OF OPERATIONS

401. Despite the undoubted dedication and professionalism of commanders and staffs, tactical command attracted criticism from several sources, from the Land Component to unit levels. Problems appear to have arisen from three overlapping areas. First, from the mechanism by which the campaign plan was translated into tactical missions and orders. As will be seen, this had a major impact throughout the chain of command. Second, the continuing and largely unconstrained growth of HQs, which caused problems related to the length and timeliness of orders. Third, HQs seem to have focused on contingency planning to the detriment of the coordination of their subordinates. This last area is clearly linked to the other two. For example, given no clear planning guidance from the campaign level, HQs understandably undertook considerable contingency planning, much of which turned out to be nugatory.
402. Problems lie exclusively in the area of headquarters structures and processes, not individuals. Few consequences of poor command were observed, which was probably a result of both the high quality of commanders and the poor quality of the adversary. A more capable enemy would probably have punished these shortcomings severely. This section concentrates initially on HQ structures and process.

TRANSLATING CAMPAIGN PLANS INTO MISSIONS AND ORDERS

403. During the 1990s NATO nations developed methodologies for campaign planning. Those methodologies identify tactical actions along defined lines of operations which, if successfully completed, would lead to the campaign end-state and hence the strategic objectives of the campaign. However, in retrospect it appears that the issue of how to translate the campaign plan into orders and missions for land formations has not been fully resolved.
404. For Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the CFLCC addressed this issue by issuing 1 MEF with a relatively short mission for the campaign as a whole, but then imposing 11 'key tasks' on CG 1 MEF. HQ 1 MEF translated this into a 'base order' which included over 2½ pages of missions for 1st Armoured Division. Subsequently HQ 1st Armoured Division produced a 'base plan' in which the given mission, concept of operations and missions for subordinates ran to almost 13 pages. It is very difficult to read the order rapidly to gain any real sense of what was intended. In retrospect, this would be similar to inviting (say) 11th Armoured Division to write a single order which would have it land in Normandy, fight the breakout battles, advance through Belgium, cross the Rhine and link up with the Red Army somewhere in Germany in 1944-5. Several commentators remarked on the value of the US practice known as the 'rock drill', which is effectively a map or model rehearsal of a plan with key staff and subordinates. On reflection it appears that such measures were necessary during Operation TELIC to enable participants to make sense of over-complex orders. There is also a danger that such complex orders promote mental inflexibility.

CFLCC'S INTENT, TOGETHER WITH THE MISSION AND KEY TASKS ASSIGNED TO 1 MEF

CFLCC Intent:

When directed, CFLCC attacks to defeat Iraqi forces and control the zone of action; secure and exploit designated sites; and, removes the current Iraqi regime. On order, CFLCC conducts post-hostilities stability and support operations; transitions to CJTF-4.

1 MEF Mission:

O/O, 1 MEF attacks in zone to defeat enemy forces and secures key oil infrastructure and LOCs IOT support V Corps' rapid movement north and regime removal. O/O, prepares for future operations and redeployment as directed.

CFLCC's Key Tasks to CG 1 MEF

- Secure Al Faw Peninsula IOT enable CFMCC to clear the SLOC to Umm Qasr
- On order, as the supporting effort, attack in zone to defeat enemy forces (51st MRD) to allow CFLCC follow-on force and sustainment flow for decisive operations north of the Euphrates
- Secure key oil infrastructure within zone IOT prevent its destruction and mitigate environmental disaster.
- Seize Umm Qasr to enable humanitarian assistance operations
- Secure JALIBAH airfield IOT support the establishment of Logistics Support Area (LSA) VIPER
- Secure MSR Tampa in zone to allow CFLCC follow-on force and sustainment flow for decisive operations north of the Euphrates
- Conduct Forward Passage of Lines (FPOL) through V Corps IOT continue decisive operations north in zone.
- Defeat the Baghdad RGFC Division vicinity Al Kut IOT prevent interdiction of the CFLCC Main Effort and threaten the regime from the southeast
- Defeat the Al Nida RGFC Division to support decisive operations vic Baghdad
- BPT seize Basrah International Airport to support CMO in the ITO
- BPT continue the supporting attack in zone to isolate Baghdad by attacking from the east and southeast to destroy remaining non-compliant forces

**EXTRACT FROM 1ST ARMoured DIVISION'S BASE PLAN: MISSION STATEMENT
FOR 3 COMMANDO BRIGADE**

c. Missions and Tasks.

(1) 3 Cdo Bde.

(a) Ph I Setting Theatre Conditions. Preparatory activity.

(b) Ph II Shaping Operations.

i. Conduct FPOL with 35 KU Bde in order to posn forces for Ph IIIA1 and IIIA2 .

ii. BPT seize key oil infrastructure on the AL FAW peninsula in order to prevent or mitigate its destruction and resulting environmental disaster.

iii. BPT clear and screen AL FAW Peninsula in order to enable CFMCC to clear SLOC to UMM QASR.

iv. BPT facilitate rearward passage of UNIKOM force to facilitate 1 MEF offensive operations.

v. BPT seize the port of UMM QASR in order to enable humanitarian assistance operations.

vi. BPT to execute TRAP within 6hrs of notification (Task allocated to 15 MEU by 1 MEF).

**(c) Ph III Stage A1 Seizure of AL FAW and UMM QASR Port.
Attack:**

i. Seize key oil infrastructure on the AL FAW peninsula in order to prevent or mitigate its destruction and resulting environmental disaster.

ii. Clear and screen AL FAW Peninsula in order to enable CFMCC to clear SLOC to UMM QASR.

iii. BPT facilitate rearward passage of UNIKOM force to facilitate 1 MEF offensive operations.

- iv. Seize and secure the port of UMM QASR in order to enable humanitarian assistance operations.
- v. Secure the KHAWR AZ ZUBAYR Naval base.
- vi. Secure key oil infrastructure on the AL FAW peninsula.
- vii. Clear and screen the Al FAW Peninsula in order to enable CFMCC to clear SLOC to UMM QASR.
- viii. BPT to execute TRAP within 6hrs of notification (Task allocated to 15 MEU by 1 MEF).

(d) **Ph III Stage A2 Relief in Place with 1st MarDiv.**

Sustain above tasks and:

- iii. Establish liaison structure with local key personalities within AO.
- iv. Provide Coy sized Div reserve within 6hrs of notification.

405. It is clear that a better way of translating campaign plans into land tactical activities should be found. The following might be a basis for that process:

- a. The Land Component planning staff do not produce a campaign plan. They contribute to the (joint) campaign plan, and report land force progress against it, in conjunction with Joint Force operations staff.
- b. The Land Component Commander writes a campaign directive for the whole campaign which describes, in largely narrative form, the anticipated course of events. It might expand on the JFC's intent as applicable to the land component.
- c. His plans staff write an order for the first major operations or phases of the campaign, which extracts tasks from the campaign plan and translates them into missions for major subordinates. They issue that as the initiating operation order. They also issue a warning order for the next anticipated operation or phase, and contingency plans for a few major or critical contingencies. In the case of Operation TELIC, that might have included the seizure of Basrah and Phase 4 operations.
- d. As the campaign progresses, the land component staff issue warning and executive orders in a timely manner so as:

- (1) To give subordinates timely and sufficient direction for subsequent events, and
 - (2) To prevent subordinate HQs from being inundated with excessive planning.
- e. Neither the land component staff nor subordinate formations attempt to plan in detail beyond the next major operation or phase, given that much planning will be based on assumptions that prove to be false. Further detail is provided at paragraph 417 below.
406. A subordinate should be not required to execute a mission, or plan a subsequent one, which contains more than one or two tasks and a unifying purpose. It should be seen as the duty of a HQ to clarify and simplify the direction it receives. For entirely understandable reasons this did not take place during Operation TELIC.

HQ STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

407. Shortcomings in HQ structure and processes were most apparent at formation level. This may in part be because they are larger and more dependent on explicit process, or simply because evidence from subunit level, which would indicate shortcomings at unit level, is generally not recorded. Overall, the evidence suggests that HQs have probably become too large¹; contain too many overlapping functions; have officers of inappropriately high ranks; plan too much; and tend to be very busy. However, their work rate is not matched by their productivity; and they issue orders that are too big and which arrive too late.
408. **Size of Headquarters.** Deployed HQs have become unwieldy. The HQ of 7th Armoured Brigade had a War Establishment of 42 officers but actually contained 96. It comprised two broadly similar CPs of over 60 vehicles each. The HQ nominal roll records 383 all ranks, excluding the signal squadron echelon.² However, the HQs of 4th and 7th Armoured Brigades in Operation GRANBY recorded between 288 and 306 personnel. This growth of 25% in 12 years is not accounted for by changed functions. Detailed analysis of staff posts across several HQs (described below) exposes apparent unnecessary duplication and unwarranted growth. This growth in size was significant: one unit recorded that its brigade HQ 'gives the impression that it cannot cope ... despite the large number of staff officers to hand.' In another instance 'From the experiences to date, any plans that do finally emanate from ... [brigade HQ] to ... [this unit] will be half-baked, uncoordinated and invariably running within an unrealistic timescale.' That comment was made 7 days after G-Day. A brigade HQ noted that 'We are significantly ahead in our planning process in that the div was in bad order due to an overabundance of staff officers.' A staff officer in another brigade HQ remarked that orders from Division were 'invariably' quite thick but too late. The trend for formation HQs to grow has been observed in several recent operations. Recent operational analysis indicates that in a typical formation HQ, 40% of the staff do nothing useful, and a further 20% produce considerable nugatory output. Formation HQs at or near their current War Establishment appear

¹ As discussed at Paragraphs 410-11 below.

² Nominal roll attached to HQ 7th Armd Bde Commander's Diary.

to be quite manageable. However, significant problems arise when they grow in what appears to be either unplanned or misguided manner for operations.

409. **Growth in Staff Numbers.** As staff numbers grow, more work can be done in total but the effort required to coordinate their activities rapidly exceeds any benefit which increased numbers brings.³ Studies going back to the 1970s consistently indicate that when staff numbers are reduced, the effectiveness of an HQ improves.⁴ Thus further increases to the size of present HQs is probably not a useful solution, and indeed some rationalization seems to be required. A detailed comparison of staff numbers in brigade HQs in the 1990s and HQ 7th Armoured Brigade in Operation TELIC is given at Table 4.1. It should be noted that neither during Operations GRANBY nor TELIC was 7th Armoured Brigade acting in an independent role. In both cases it was employed as part of a division.

Ser	Function	Bde HQ, 1990-1	HQ 7th Armd Bde, Op TELIC
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1.	Total staff offrs	About 45, including watchkeepers and LOs. (1)	96 (WE of 42)
2.	G2 staff offrs	1 SO3	4
3.	G3 staff offrs	1 or 2 SO3s. (2)	6: 2 SO2 Plans, 2 SO3 Plans, 2 SO3 Ops.
4.	Engr staff offrs	Up to 3 (including any from attached engr sqn or regt)	7
5.	Air, Avn and AD staff offrs	3: 1 Avn (if bde had organic helo); 1 AD; 1 BALO.	6; ie 2 of each.
6.	NBC staff	1 SSgt	2 capt, plus 2 offrs attached from Jt NBC Regt (3)

Table 4.1: Comparison of Brigade HQ Size, 1990-1 and Operation TELIC

Notes:

(1) Armd Bde. Independent expeditionary bdes (1 Inf, 5 Abn, 19 Inf and 24 Airmob) had up to a dozen more, almost entirely for 3rd line logistics.

(2) Armd bdes had 1, which was insufficient for 24hr ops. Independent bdes had up to 3.

(3) Notwithstanding the issue of BRACIS to automate NBC hazard prediction, warning and monitoring.

³ A consequence of Brook's Law. Frederick P. Brooks, Jr. *The Mythical Man-Month: Essays on Software Engineering*. 20th Anniversary Edition, Addison-Wesley, 1995.

⁴ For example, QinetiQ/KI/CONSULT/CR03014/1.0 dated June 2003.

410. **Discipline.** In 1974, HQ 20th Armoured Brigade reviewed its CP structure explicitly to provide a 'lean, hard, flexible and survivable Brigade HQ'.⁵ The result totalled 105 all ranks and 30 vehicles of all kinds. It did not contain many of the functions required of a brigade HQ during Operation TELIC. Artillery, engineer, G5 and media staff were not included in that total, nor were attachments (such as those from the Joint NBC Regiment or the Phoenix Battery). However, adding those officers, and soldiers pro rata, would bring the total for HQ 7th Armoured Brigade to 166 all ranks⁶ and 48 vehicles. It seems reasonable to assume that since the end of the Cold War the absence of an imposed discipline which strictly limits the size of HQs has resulted in unnecessary growth.
411. **Augmentation.** Some of the augmentation for Operation TELIC is entirely understandable, such as officers from a Phoenix STA Battery and the Joint NBC Regiment. Numbers of CIMIC and Media officers were also present. However, much of the increase is a result of haphazard augmentation, both in peace and war. 7th Armoured Brigade claimed to have built an entirely duplicate CP, which might be thought to explain the increase in numbers. Some level of redundancy is clearly required. However, HQ 4th Armoured Brigade also claimed to have had an entirely duplicate CP during Operation GRANBY, yet its staff was only the same size as 7th Brigade at the time. In fact, during Operation TELIC 35 members of HQ 7th Armoured Brigade were not duplicated, so the attempt was unsuccessful despite the numbers of personnel added. In addition, it was necessary to combine both CPs once the HQ went static for long periods. Overall it appears that much of the apparent complexity of modern war stems in practice from the self-imposed complexity of modern HQs. It is most telling that the commanders of both brigades saw a requirement for a personal staff officer (an MA or ADC), rather than relying on his COS. This seems to be the first time this has happened in recent British military experience. It should be noted that none of the growth of staff numbers is a consequence of digitization.
412. **Staff Functions.** An expansion of staff functions has been a major contributor to the growth of HQs. In general, wherever a new function has been added a new post has been created. There is no evidence of multi-skilling or job integration, which would allow a number of staff functions to be carried out by a lesser number of staff. For example:
- a. G1/G4 staff and watchkeepers are present to coordinate the activities of personnel, medical and logistic units. In the case of 7th Armoured Brigade, 2 ES watchkeepers and 2 medical LOs were added, for a total of 4 additional posts. It would have been possible to have created the same effect with fewer people if appropriate pre-employment training had been provided.
 - b. Information Operations is essentially the coordination of functions such as deception, media operations, EW and physical destruction in accordance with the commander's plan. Coordination of functions is a G3 task. In modern conflict, operations will tend to move between combat and non-combat functions; the G3 staff should plan and coordinate that process.

⁵ HQ 20 Armd Bde 20/G/001 dated 13 May 74. TDRC Serial 03225.

⁶ Including about 40-45 officers.

There is a clear need for Information Operations skills in formation HQs, but that does not necessarily mean that extra posts should be created. It might instead mean revision to the pre-employment training of G3 staff. [Information Operations are considered further in Chapter 3.]

- c. Similarly it is difficult to see a requirement for a deep operations staff. There is an obvious requirement to coordinate fire; be it in deep, close or rear operations; and this falls naturally to the artillery staff. However, it is not easy to see why the branch which coordinates artillery fire in deep, close and rear operations should also be exclusively responsible for divisional deep operations. The integration of effects is in the first instance a G3 responsibility.
- d. At formation level, the G5 branch is responsible for civil-military functions, one of which is Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)⁷. CIMIC requires small, expert groups and will tend to be officer-intensive. There is without doubt a requirement for CIMIC groups in a modern land force in most circumstances. However, they should be seen as CIMIC units rather than staff. This would significantly reduce the apparent need for CIMIC staff in HQs.

The net effect of this expansion of functions is a requirement for time and effort to coordinate their efforts. This appears to have contributed to slow HQ tempo, producing orders which were too large and too late. One COS remarked on the emergence of 'an HQ within an HQ' in his command post, over which he had limited control.

- 413. **Functional LOs.** The British Army has not differentiated clearly between functional LOs and other elements of the staff. Functional LOs are present to provide technical advice, and to pass reports, returns and requests; typically at fixed times. One person can normally fulfil those functions. Conversely, if an HQ is to function continuously, the main 'G' staff branches have to be manned on a 24-hour basis. Thus, in the case of 7th Armoured Brigade above, there is a clear need for 2 SO3 G3s. It is not clear that there should be 2 BALOs, since air tasking is largely driven by the 72-hour ATO process. It is probably true that the air cell at a brigade HQ needs 24-hour manning, and has to coordinate air, aviation, AD and battlespace management issues. However, a detailed task analysis would probably indicate that that requirement could be met by 2 or 3 people, not the 6 which were at first sight required. This reinforces the need to consider multi-skilling and job integration, suggested at Paragraph 411.
- 414. **Staff Ranks.** The normal working rank in a divisional HQ in the British Army has normally been major and captain, and at brigade, captain. There has been a gradual trend since the late 1980s to place lieutenant colonels in staff positions at divisional and even brigade HQs, and several majors into brigade HQs. This effect was exacerbated during Operation TELIC⁸ and has several detrimental effects. The most serious is the tendency to over-plan, since these higher-ranking staff tend to

⁷ ADP *Command*, p. 5-6 Table 5.1. In contrast, in Berlin until 1992 the G5 Branch was exclusively concerned with Military Government. Note that the NATO term for civil military affairs is G9.

⁸ Both 7th Armoured and 16 Air Assault Brigade HQs contained in effect at least one supernumerary SO1; HQ 1st (UK) Armoured Division about 5.

be planners rather than being involved in current operations. It reduces the role of SO2s and SO3s; the latter reportedly at times almost to insignificance. The real effect in Operation TELIC was protracted staff work, much of which proved to be unnecessary. In retrospect, the quantity of planning appears excessive. Lieutenant colonels do not perform the same functions as captains and majors, but do tend to require them as subordinates, increasing overall numbers.

415. **Excessive Planning.** There were several instances of HQs planning too much. The result was typically orders which arrived too late. Such planning tended to focus on the production of what were effectively contingency plans that were never executed. For example, HQ 1st Armoured Division produced a total of 4 Operation Orders, three of them before 21 March. Of those, the second and third covered contingencies which were not in the 1 MEF plan and which were never executed. A large amount of nugatory effort was produced in planning for a contingency to seize and operate from an airfield at Qalat Siqar, well outside the Divisional area. One brigade HQ produced at least five contingency plans in a 48-hour period prior to 21 March. They used four unestablished plans officers working in shifts around the clock. None of those contingencies was executed. In part this was due to the way that the campaign plan had been translated into missions and orders.⁹ Alternatively it may have resulted from recent teaching at JSCSC, which has tended to concentrate on the operational (joint or campaign) level and not pointed out the differences at the tactical (formation) level. A major consequence of excessive planning is the workload it imposes on subordinate HQs and being smaller, they are even less able to cope.
416. **Effects.** Several staff officers referred to the disruptive effect of attending Course of Action briefs as part of this process. One brigade HQ pointed out on 4 March that Divisional orders contained insufficient detail for the operation they were about to undertake. The Divisional HQ had already provided a major contingency plan on 28 February, would produce another one on 11 March and update that on 15 March. None of those plans were implemented. Planning is only beneficial if it is well directed. As discussed above, the process for directing that planning throughout the land component should be improved.
417. **Contingency Planning.** In current doctrine, divisional and brigade HQs should plan for the next operation, considered as perhaps 6-30 hours ahead for a brigade and 12-48 hours ahead for a division in combat.¹⁰ It is sensible, where possible, to plan for not just the intended next operation (the sequel) but also some alternatives (branches). Some eventualities could take place at any time; contingent orders should be considered to cover them. As discussed in Chapter 2, in the case of Operation TELIC the sequel (Phase 4 operations) and the most probable contingency (the seizure of Basrah) were not properly considered, whilst other possibilities were considered at great length. One advantage of contingency planning is that it provides both mental rehearsal and a sharing of intent. MAPEXs have many of the same benefits. However, given that the real circumstances are never likely to be predicted accurately in advance, the subsequent generation of extensive plans will tend to be nugatory. A short fragmentary order giving only the

⁹ See paragraphs 403-6 above.

¹⁰ Staff Officers' Handbook, page 3-28-1. In the Second World War a division's horizon was essentially 'the next day', which implies 12-36 hours hence.

outline of the contingency, possible missions and key coordinating detail might be sufficient.

418. **Excessive Activity.** The overall impression from Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and TELIC is of HQs that were large and usually very busy, but which produced relatively little output. A colonel observing one British brigade HQ noted that its staff was being 'fixed' by continuous calls for internal updates: 'they cannot work effectively with constant updates'.¹¹ In another the COS was frequently overloaded by people asking him unnecessary questions; people 'would not take no for an answer' unless it was personally from the COS. That may be because his SO3s' authority had been undermined by the presence of SO2s. Despite its augmented size HQ 7th Armoured Brigade provided only 8 fragmentary orders in the 18 days between 21 March and 6 April. In the same period the Divisional HQ sent 27 fragmentary orders, but of those 9 contained only miscellaneous coordinating detail. At its busiest the Divisional command net was carrying only an average of 5 messages per hour over a 12-hour period, with a maximum of 19 (roughly one every three minutes). Peacetime exercises suggest that rates of up to 50 messages per hour can be accommodated. At the same time there were several calls from subordinates for greater flow of information - meaning situation reports. The evidence strongly suggests that during Operation TELIC deployed HQs contained too many people, busied themselves with too much nugatory planning and did not run well internally. Particular weaknesses of G4 staff processes are discussed in Chapter 5.
419. **Length of Orders.** In several cases the results of this process - the orders - were excessively long. At the beginning of a campaign or major operation relatively long orders are required. They often contain detailed information which is required as a one-off process. PW handling instructions were an example in this case. However, at least one divisional and one brigade operation order doubled in size between their first and second editions. A detailed examination of its contents suggests that the increase was not justified. On one 25-page operation order, the Mission first appeared on Page 10. It was almost impossible to gain the sense of the order from reading it. Many fragmentary orders ran to 4 pages, simply because of the inclusion of numerous 'No Change' items. Several would otherwise have been less than 10 lines long. A battalion 2IC reported that his unit HQ had produced an operation order one inch thick prior to G-Day, but that about an hour after the beginning of operation only one page was still relevant. Not only do long orders take time to produce, they take time to read and be acted upon. During the Cold War, brigade orders rarely exceeded 10 pages plus annexes, not least due to physical problems of reproduction. British HQs appear to have lost the art of brevity, and in places were telling subordinates how to do their business.
420. **Timeliness.** Much of this criticism would not affect operational effectiveness directly - it would simply keep excessive numbers of staff officers busy. However, the critical impact was that, on important occasions, the relevant orders were released too late. For example, 5 fragmentary orders regarding initial operations were released by the Divisional HQ on 21 March, the day after operations started. Operations to enter Basrah are another example. A fragmentary order warning of the possibility of

¹¹ During Operation GRANBY, HQ 1st Armoured Division was at risk of being swamped by having to respond to too many plans and orders from HQ VII (US) Corps. The GOC directed the priority of planning so as to respond only to essential issues.

entering Basrah was released by HQ 1st Armoured Division on 2 April. On 5 April the battlegroups of 7th Armoured Brigade received warning of an orders group, to be held on 7 April, concerning operations to occupy Basrah not before 8 April. Basrah fell on the morning of 6 April; 7th Armoured Brigade rushed out an operation order dated 0600hrs that day which acknowledged that some of the events in the order may already have taken place.¹² The Divisional HQ rushed out a fragmentary order, which said very little of substance, dated 0815hrs. Thus neither the Division nor the Brigade had a contingency plan, in the shape of an order, to cover a contingency which had been discussed in February. However, both HQs clearly thought that one was required. Either the order was unnecessary, or it was too late. In those circumstances, it seems that short contingency plans written on perhaps 2nd or 3rd April would have been sufficient. Similarly, the Divisional HQ released its orders for Phase 4 - peace support operations - on 21 April, 15 days after Basrah fell. In the interim battlegroups were largely left to their own devices, and there was a lack of clarity of responsibility between, for example, the CO of 1 BW (in Basrah), the commander and the staff of 7th Armoured Brigade, and the Divisional CRA, who had been appointed to oversee military governance. Such criticisms are not unique to the British Army: a staff officer of the HQ of 1st Marine Division commented that 'The planning cycle was way behind the execution being conducted by the forward commanders. Div HQ was still producing lengthy OPLANS and FRAGOs that were too late for the commanders, as they had already stepped off.'

421. **Overview of Command and Staff Processes.** It is clear that tactical operations, such as the capture of Basrah, were executed by British forces highly effectively and with confidence. This is a measure of the quality of the commanders involved, operating within mission command and fully within their superior commander's intent. There is no criticism of command; it is the staff systems and procedures that appear to require attention.
422. **Record of Verbal Orders.** Normally, no record is made of verbal orders given face to face or over SCRA. Thus, for example, verbal orders were given for the seizure of Basrah by the units of 7th Armoured Brigade, but they are not recorded in commanders' diaries. The obvious effectiveness of such verbal orders further undermines the apparent need for the production of long written orders.
423. **Tactical Decision-Making.** During 2002 a novel approach to tactical decision-making known as the '7 Questions' was introduced into Army doctrine as the 'Combat Estimate'.¹³ Some satisfaction was noted with it for everyday tactical issues, but it was apparent that it had some limitations in planning complex and unfamiliar problems. There is considerable evidence of tactical planning and decision-making taking place during Operation TELIC, but little which refers directly to the processes used. There continues to be a requirement for a decision-making methodology that can deal with both quick decisions and more complex issues. This requires further research.

¹² They had.

¹³ See Army Field Manual Volume 1 Part 8, 'Command and Staff Procedures', Part 1 to Chapter 8.

424. **Battle Procedure.** It was commented on several occasions that orders were produced in parallel because warning orders and orders were consistently produced too late. In retrospect this appears as justifying poor battle procedure. Warning and operations orders from HQ 1 MEF appear to have been consistently late, which had an effect right down to subunit level. However, whilst some blame can be placed with higher HQs, intermediates do not seem to have taken control of the process at their own level for the benefit of their subordinates. In addition, those orders that were produced often contained inappropriate levels of detail. Old lessons concerning the need for timely and efficient passage of orders need to be reinforced.
425. **Summary.** Operation TELIC provides plentiful evidence that HQs have become too large; they possibly contain too many branches; their staffs show a tendency to be over-ranked; and they tend to concentrate on planning, to the detriment of issuing timely orders and keeping subordinates informed. This appears to be at least in part because Staff College and Combined Arms Staff Trainers concentrate on planning, rather than the conduct of operations. On reflection, the Army should consider:
- a. Reducing the size of deployed HQs;
 - b. Providing firm guidance and education to ensure that unconstrained re-growth does not occur;
 - c. Streamlining HQ processes, with less nugatory planning and more effective passage of information, both internally and externally; and
 - d. Changing the focus of training to concentrate on execution (in particular, decision-making under stress of time and information constraints, and passage of information) and less on planning.^{14,15}

All of these may benefit from an approach that includes task re-design and job integration, which will clearly have training implications.

TACTICAL MISSIONS AND ORDERS

426. Operation TELIC provided clear and well-documented evidence that current command and staff training is leading to missions, and orders generally, that are excessively long, confusing and hard to understand. Quite separately, they are inconsistent with the spirit and principles of Mission Command. For example, in one order the stated mission ran over 20 lines. In two battlegroup orders (from different battlegroups) the 8 subordinate subunits were given an average of 8 or 9 tasks each. Instances of 12 or 13 tasks in a mission statement were noted. Such lists of tasks often had no stated purpose, which would make prioritizing between them well nigh impossible. The concept of operations was often verbose and lacked clarity. The statement of commander's intent often simply reiterated the mission (which reduces to 'I intend to achieve my mission'). Alternatively they were excessively complex: one intent statement ran over 7 lines and was then followed by further intent

¹⁴ When interviewed in the 1970s, FM the Lord Carver stated that command post trainers (such as CASTs) were originally built largely to exercise commanders and their staff in making decisions under time pressure.

¹⁵ Similarly, attempts to introduce 'sudden death' decision in battle exercises at ACSC and HCSC have been frustrated.

statements for each of 3 phases. Plans were often phased, when substantive activity only took place in one phase: arriving at the line of departure and reorganization are not substantive activity. These comments apply equally to both British and US practice. In at least one case the order contained a 'desired end state', which simply repeated the mission. In several other cases mission statements contained multiple contingent tasks (as in 'be prepared to ...'), which were either implied tasks that need not be stated, or coordinating detail.

MISSION STATEMENTS

One example from Operation TELIC illustrates these difficulties. A battlegroup was tasked with securing part of Basrah. The mission statement gave 8 tasks to a particular subunit, with the anodyne purpose 'in order to expel the Regime and set the conditions for transition to peace support operations.' The City had been subdivided into very small areas as a control measure. Examination of the mission showed that the first two tasks were adjacent terrain features; the third was to cross a feature which lay between them, the next two were similar implied tasks, the sixth was a coordination measure and the last two were contingencies. By re-drawing the boundaries to include the terrain of the first two tasks, the tasks in the subordinate's mission could have been reduced to 'Seize Objective A' and then 'conduct peace support operations in Area B'. The attached sketch illustrates this process. There were several similar examples.

Illustration:

In Figure 4.1, the subunit's objective is subdivided into areas CAT and DOG. Route SPADE runs between CAT and DOG. The tasks given in the mission statement produced during Op TELIC would read:

- 'a. Seize Obj CAT;
 - b. Cross Route SPADE within boundaries;
 - c. Seize Obj DOG;
- in order to ...'

However, by simply re-drawing the boundary of the objective to include CAT and DOG (say, Objective LION), the task becomes simply:

'Seize Obj LION, in order to ...'

Crossing SPADE within boundaries becomes an implied task.

427. During Operation TELIC concepts of operations tended to be excessively lengthy; appear self-important; and contain statements of the obvious (reducing to 'I intend to achieve my mission'). At times they attempted to be inspirational in a manner which would work well face-to-face, but was lost when receiving the written order cold. A concept of operations and subordinates' mission statements together should be highly succinct.¹⁶ There is a clear requirement to clarify guidance for the content of orders, particularly missions and concepts of operations.¹⁷

¹⁶ As a guide, it should rarely exceed two pages, and normally be considerably less than that.

¹⁷ This was acknowledged in 2002 in the drafting of ADP *Land Operations*, the publication of which has been delayed in order to incorporate the experiences of Operation TELIC.

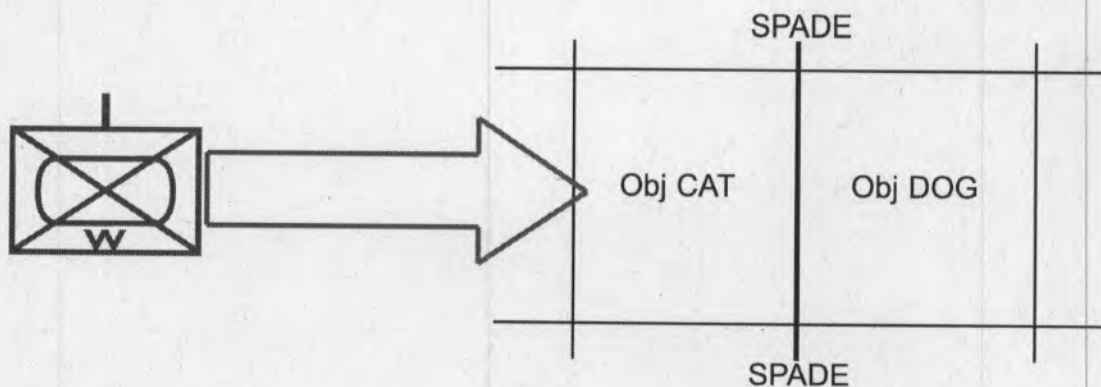


Figure 4.1: Redrawing Boundaries to Simplify Mission Statements

MISSION COMMAND

428. Commander's reports from Operation TELIC stress the importance of the philosophy of Mission Command, but on occasion state that there are times when detailed orders are required. However, the evidence is otherwise. No examples of a need for close control were given. Nor were any found subsequently. There is a need for careful and detailed planning on some occasions, particularly where subordinates must cooperate closely in time and space. At times significant constraints have to be placed on a subordinate's freedom of action. However, neither of those are contrary to the spirit of giving clear direction to a subordinate, and then allowing him to execute it as he sees best. The fact that, for example, in doing so he may not cross a given line does not affect the philosophy of Mission Command. In practice, there is considerable evidence that execution was generally decentralized during Operation TELIC. What appears to have happened is that missions were not phrased clearly and simply, which overshadowed the real flexibility that in practice appears to have been afforded. We must continue to stress the philosophy and principles of Mission Command, and reward their application.

TASK ORGANIZATION

429. Combined arms operations have required reorganization according to task since the Second World War and in some circumstances even earlier. The GOC's first directive for Operation TELIC states 'I must be able to TASKORG BGs from one Bde to another. Recce Squadrons must be ready for regrouping. CS and CSS must be regroupable and responsive to other regroupings'.¹⁸ 1 DWR was regrouped across brigade boundaries 4 times. 7th Armoured Brigade reorganized as battlegroups prior to embarkation in Germany. However, the required flexibility was not always observed. For example, the Port Task Group in Emden reported the loading of tanks to parent Regiments, not Battlegroups. HQ Land Command planned movement on unit establishments, not battlegroup strengths, and this was not communicated to HQ 7th Armoured Brigade nor its units. On 11 April a company was to be regrouped away from a battlegroup who resisted it, on the basis that personnel administration and echelon stores systems were 'so entwined' that 'any handover would be long, painful, and ultimately damaging to the service being provided to the company at present'. Clearly that battlegroup had lost the required flexibility.

¹⁸ 1 Div POR, Annex A2 para 23a.


430. Battlegrouping was practised daily on exercise in 1st British Corps formations until to the 1990s. Logistic procedures largely worked, once practised. To be fair, personnel administration was less advanced than now and was less of an issue. It appears that key personnel (subunit 2ICs and QMSs, echelon commanders and brigade G1/G4 staff) largely learnt the required procedures on the job. Consequently, most were quite good with practice. It appears that the procedures for regrouping should be explicitly taught, and practised on exercise. Realistically, this can only occur on formation-level FTXs.
431. 15 MEU was attached to 3 Commando Brigade for the Faw Peninsula operation and then re-tasked out of the division to TF Tarawa. Thus there was a British Army division subordinated to a USMC HQ; that division contained a Royal Marine brigade, which in turn commanded a USMC unit, which was regrouped. This situation was not anticipated in planning guidance nor doctrine for a combat operation. It appears to have worked, due to common NATO and ABCA procedures. It is to be anticipated that this will recur.

INTELLIGENCE

432. Intelligence, as a function, appears to have shown little change over the last sixty years. Tactical intelligence was generally poor, and structures and processes remained unresponsive except to the HQ which owns them. This is probably for largely human reasons, and may not change in principle with the addition of more technology. Several reports from Operation TELIC state that non-organic sensors provided little benefit; that Requests for Information (RFIs) passed up the chain of command were rarely met; and that it was difficult to ask the right questions of the right people other than in one's own HQ. A further complaint was that of superior headquarters initially not accepting responsibility for tasking assets under their control. It appears that HQs almost invariably give subordinates' RFIs less importance than their own, and that therefore passing RFIs upwards achieves relatively little. The same applies to non-organic sensors. Increased communications connectivity may make it easier to contact whoever tasks those sensors, and to pass the information if held. However, unless a sensor is tasked, the necessary information will not be gathered, so tasking and ownership issues remain problematic. It is possible that improved collection capability will mean that more information is gathered, and that in future lower-priority tasks can be met. It is also possible that the 'owning' HQ will simply gather more information against its own tasks.
433. Although enemy unit locations could be displayed with confidence on computer screens, the enemy's intent was rarely predicted accurately and much of the best intelligence came from our own forces in contact. The US Army observed that, while operational commanders and staffs believed intelligence provided clarity, commanders at corps level and below described every battle as a movement to contact due to near total lack of information on the enemy. British formation commanders noted that armoured forces had the important ability to 'go and see'.¹⁹

¹⁹ 1 Div POR paragraph 22k.

434. British forces were largely unable to exploit national intelligence at the tactical level during Operation TELIC. The organizational and technical means to do so - the Operational Intelligence Support Group - had already been identified, but required resourcing. It was suggested that Intelligence Corps staff were determined to prove the requirement. Conversely, it could be said that the professional intelligence community was prevented from putting effort into resolving a known shortcoming. The preceding two paragraphs indicate that, given the nature of land operations, more intellectual and material effort should be put into improving the process of developing intelligence from troops in contact.




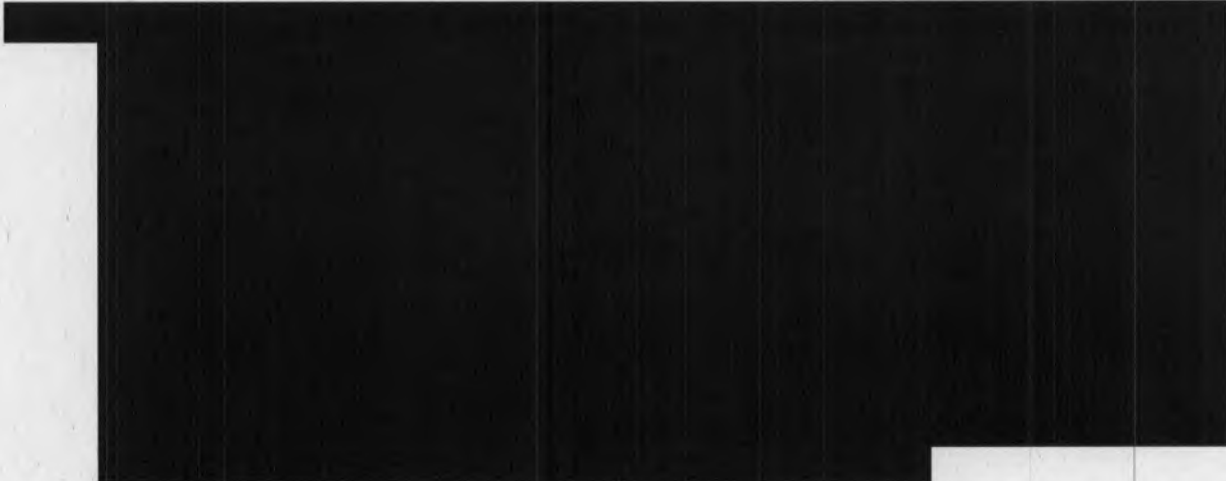
436. Technical sources of information, such as imagery, also have limitations. Imagery did not reveal two Iraqi infantry company positions on the main objective of 3 Commando Brigade's attack on the Faw Peninsula.²¹ Multiple, overlapping sensors continue to be required; no one system dominated the collection process. It seems to have come as a surprise to some that most tactical intelligence came from the forward troops once in contact. This should be expected; the surprise seems to stem from excessive faith in technical collection means. The main deduction is to stress the need for rapid and continuous combat reporting once in combat. As a guide, forward subunits should give short situation reports every 5 minutes in combat, and all superior HQs once every fifteen minutes if any of their subordinates are in contact. Such passage of information upwards, downwards, sideways and within a command post enables the rapid decision-making required in contemporary operations. It appears to have been done poorly within formation HQs.²²



²¹ 3 Cdo Bde POR paragraph 33.

²² One suspects that, given the practice of working around bird tables, rather than within command vehicles, the secure staff intercom has gone out of use.





HEADQUARTERS ESTABLISHMENTS

440. The size, and growth in the size, of formation HQs was discussed above. Following Operation TELIC a number of proposals for increases to HQ establishments were made. The following proposals for enhancements have been noted:

Divisional HQ:	Brigade HQ: (1)	BGs:
(a)	(b)	(c)
- SO1 and SO3 Media Ops	- SO3 Information Ops	- BG Amb Offr (capt)
- Medical Ops Branch	- SO2 Medical	- Unit Press Officer (2)
- SO2 or SO3 ES Avn	- G5 cell (under armour)	- Armd Sqn battle capts
- SO1 Avn	- SO2 and 2nd SO3 Media	- SO3 Arty Ops (3)
- SO1 Air	- SO3 NBC	- A senior MO (4)
- SO1 G5	- Comd's MA or ADC	
- SO1 DSG	- additional geo pte	
Total: 7-10 posts	Total: 8 posts	Total: about 6 new posts

Table 4.2: Suggested Enhancements to HQ Establishments

Notes:

- (1) For armoured brigades. 11 posts have been noted for 3 Commando Brigade.
- (2) Permanently established.
- (3) Vice the SSgt currently present.
- (4) It being considered that RMOs are generally insufficiently experienced to both command medical assets and advise COs.

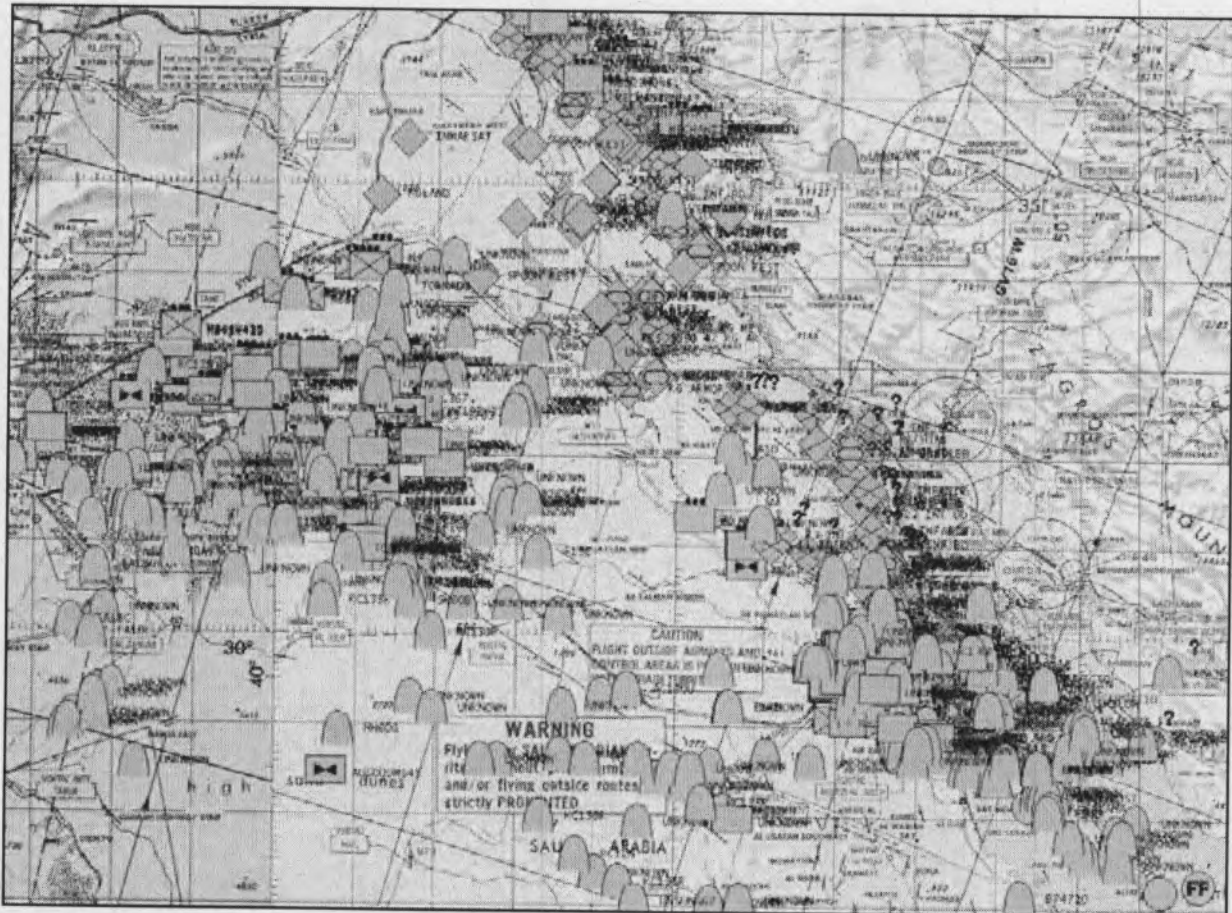


Figure 4.2: Blue Force Tracker Screen Shot

Taken at about 1815hrs on 20 March 2003. The blue dome-shaped icons represent aircraft in flight.

441. British Army HQs are 4 times larger than they were in 1945.²⁴ Although some increase has clearly been necessary, it is hard to explain increases of that magnitude. Analysis of archives suggests that incremental increases have occurred in largely unconstrained fashion almost continuously in the intervening period.²⁵ As noted above, detailed analysis of task and functions does not adequately explain that growth. Whatever the merits of specific proposals, it is clear that misguided augmentation of HQs has in the long run been detrimental to their function, and should be strongly resisted.

²⁴ Establishment Table II/110/3 effective 30 Nov 43; together with II/104/3 effective 8 Dec 43, III/181/2 effective 10 Dec 43, II/261/2 effective 24 Feb 43, II/290/1 effective 7 Dec 43 and II/215/1 dated 20 Feb 45.

²⁵ HB (A) letters HB(A) 6/3 dated 1 Dec 98 and 21 Apr 99.

442. The tendency to increase the rank held in a particular appointment should be particularly avoided. There is a need to trust the quality and training of our junior officers and NCOs, to enable them to gain the experience from the operations whilst still young. Any other trend is in the long run self-defeating.

DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS

443. In part due to the increased size of divisions, the number of supporting arms subunits has grown, and with that the HQ has also grown.²⁶ For example, in the Second World War there were effectively four engineer, four logistic and three maintenance companies in a typical British division. Within the divisional area today there would be nine logistic support, eight maintenance and up to 20 engineer subunits. As a result there are several units of those arm and services,²⁷ and the head of arm and service at divisional HQ is a colonel; in 1944-5 he would have been a lieutenant colonel. For comparison:

Ser	Appt (1)	Br Div 2002-3	Br Div 1944-5	Third US Army 1944-5
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	COS	Col	Lt Col	Maj Gen
2.	DCOS	Col	Lt Col	None: Col level G1 and G4
3.	Comd Arty	Brig	Brig	Col
4.	Comd Engr	Col	Lt Col	Col
5.	Comd Maint	Col	Lt Col	Col
6.	Comd Log Sp	Col	Lt Col	Col

Table 4.3: Comparison of Ranks

Note:

(1) Shows nearest equivalent for British Second World War divisions.

Current divisional HQ organization is in some aspects nearer to that of a Second World War army than that of a division. This is not unique to the British Army; in 2004 in a US division the G1-4 Branches are led by lieutenant colonels, whereas they were led by majors in 1945. In the Second World War a head of arm or service (for example, the Commanders RE or REME) was in practice the CO of a battalion-sized unit of about 3-4 companies. Because the nominal organization of divisions has become considerably bigger, there are now several such units (typically discriminated between 'close' and 'general support'), with a colonel's staff to coordinate them. That would be entirely justified if such a division at full scale were ever deployed. However, only 2 Army brigades were deployed for both Operations GRANBY and TELIC, and the existing staff structure was adapted to fit.²⁸ On reflection:

²⁶ During the Second World War a division was typically 11-16,000 men strong, without the 'divisional slice' of Corps and Army troops. A similar division today is 20-25,000 men strong.

²⁷ 2 logistic regiments, 4 maintenance battalions.

²⁸ The attachment of a third brigade (3 Commando Brigade) in the case of Operation TELIC cannot be taken to justify retaining those rank levels, since the internal rank structure of 3 Commando Brigade is appreciably greater than that of an Army Brigade. Both cannot be justified simultaneously.

- a. If the Army expects that it will not generally send more than 2 brigades on a large-scale operation, there might be scope for rationalizing the command chain and reducing rank representation.
 - b. It cannot be said that a unit commander cannot also function as the arm or service advisor to a divisional commander. That practice was the norm during the Second World War, because the mission of the unit was identified as that of supporting the division, as a divisional HQ and Signal Regiment still does today.
 - c. Similarly, the apparent complexity of modern war should not be used to justify increased rank representation. As previously discussed, that apparent complexity is at least in part a consequence of the real complexity of HQs. Any such an argument is self-fulfilling.
444. The responsibility of G1 and G4 staffs appears to have shifted, and the results have been detrimental. Until the early 1980s the DCOS of a formation was called the Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General. Together with his staff he actively controlled all personnel and logistic assets in the formation.²⁹ They now largely see themselves as being responsible for planning and coordination from the formation HQ. This leaves a gap in the control of the formation logistic units, and a consequent wish to appoint further officers to that function. For example, Table 4.2 reflects a wish for an SO1 to run the Divisional Support Group, and HQ 2 CS Regiment RLC became in effect the HQ of the Brigade Support Group for 7th Armoured Brigade. During the Second World War those jobs were done by the divisional Commander, RASC and the OC of the relevant RASC Company. This suggests that there may be grounds for concern, and we should bear these in mind when considering the staffing of future Army structures
445. During Operation TELIC, HQ Artillery 1st Armoured Division had relatively few resources. 3 RHA was initially under OPCOM of the Offensive Support Group (OSG), but in practice supported 7th Armoured Brigade for much of the operation.³⁰ The only other unit in the OSG was 12 Regt RA (HVM), which was subsequently re-rolled for rear security operations. Nevertheless the Deep Operations Cell in Divisional HQ was augmented by 4 lieutenant colonels. Whilst it is dangerous to draw too many conclusions from a single operation, the appointment of a brigadier as CRA with a large and potentially increasing staff should not necessarily be taken as a model for the future.

CONCEPTS AND DOCTRINE

446. The terms 'Effects-Based Operations' (EBO) and 'Networked-Enabled Capability' (NEC) were not found in extant doctrine in March and April 2003. They were at most statements of policy, concepts or aspirations. Thus the use of the term 'effects-based' in connection with Operation TELIC is misleading. To ascribe useful meaning to those terms in this context is premature. It does not reflect the way in which the

²⁹ For example, Maj Gen (ret'd) Keith Spacie, formerly DAA and QMG of 16th Parachute Brigade, personal communication.

³⁰ Current British Army doctrine such as ADP *Command* or AFM *Formation Tactics* does not indicate a requirement for an Offensive Support Group.

commanders and staff have been trained, and so any use of such terms should be taken with caution. It is also unfortunate to see such terms paraded with the flimsiest of justification. For example, smart munitions are of themselves not network-enabled. To see statistics concerning the increased use of PGMs as evidence for the efficacy of NEC during Operation TELIC is inappropriate. Public reports of Operation TELIC have at times indulged in the over-enthusiastic use of such terms without proper justification. The risk is that such usage is subsequently used to support policy or doctrine, without a proper basis in observed fact. EBO and NEC are emerging concepts, which require doctrinal codification after further study.

OBSERVATIONS

447. Brigades and Battlegroups operated for 15 days after the fall of Basrah without an operation order for Phase 4. They worked well, which is to their credit. It suggests that the Army's low-level doctrine, and their experience, allowed them to work purposefully. However, it indicates that much of current HQ processes, and the orders thus produced, are unnecessary. Subordinates can work adequately without much of them. Multiple, lengthy, unnecessary contingency plans are not required; short, timely ones are. Without short and timely orders, locally sensible and purposeful orders tend to be uncoordinated, and little overall progress is made. In this case, lengthy but late orders created a pause between success in combat and any real progress in peace support operations. As noted at the beginning of this Chapter, the significant problems that were noted all resulted from shortcomings in staff structures and processes, not in command. There are several implications for the training of commanders and staff.