
on the calendar and allows leaders to plan training that builds upon that just conducted.

This plan gives junior leaders an opportunity to train their soldiers and allows senior leaders to evaluate the tasks that are trained. Retraining is conducted at the end so that tasks not performed to standard can be reworked. The plan itself can

be modified to fit the time constraints, but a five-day training cycle generally works best (Figure 2).

The battle drill training ladder can be an effective method of executing the drills that make up the bread and butter of the infantry. It provides a common-sense approach to battle drill training and also gives our soldiers the performance-

oriented training they need to survive on the battlefields of the future.

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The “B” Deployment Bag

MAJOR DOMINIC J. CARACCILO

Several U.S. military operations in recent years have had one thing in common: Their lead units were mustered for no-notice deployments that turned out to be much longer than expected. While most of these initial units were thoroughly prepared for the immediate mission, their preparedness for an extensive stay was somewhat questionable.

For instance, on 6 August 1990, the 325th Infantry, 82d Airborne Division, marshaled for a no-notice deployment as the lead element into Saudi Arabia for Operation DESERT SHIELD. In 14 hours, the first element of the task force was on its way and didn't return to Fort Bragg for eight months. Five of those months were spent waiting and preparing for combat, while the remaining months were spent on the war itself and the redeployment activities.

Units leaving for Saudi Arabia that were given notification and time to prepare for the deployment packed such items as training aids including MILES equipment, Dragon trainers, and M16 range-firing necessities; maintenance tents; and personal items such as physical training (PT) gear, additional toiletries, cots, small battery-powered radios, and reading material.

During a two-week mission cycle in

the 82d, it is SOP (standing operating procedure) for paratroopers in each unit to maintain ALICE packs and A-Bags containing the things they will need in case of a combat deployment. An ALICE pack contains the essentials—three days of rations, water, and ammunition. The A-Bags are packed, inspected, placed in a standard unit location, and deployed with the soldiers. A-Bags are packed with

The B-Bag would include items the commander considered essential to training and morale for an extended period.

items needed to sustain the soldier for a few weeks after the initial action; they are not intended to support the soldiers for an indefinite period.

A typical A-Bag contains additional battle dress uniforms, T-shirts, underwear, socks, wet-weather gear, sleeping bags, NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) gear, shelter halves, tent pegs, additional MREs (meals, ready to eat) to round out the basic load, and other items deemed essential to the mission and the days to follow. By SOP, these bags are

loaded as ballast on trucks, HMMWVs (high-mobility, multipurpose wheeled vehicles) and pallets and are deployed with the soldiers.

But soldiers who are deployed for an unexpected longer period also need physical training gear, sweat suits, running shoes, swimming suits, extra toiletries, entertainment equipment, and other personal items.

Once the 325th Infantry arrived in Saudi Arabia and the long wait for combat began, leaders had to take the necessary actions to sustain the soldiers. The following are among the steps taken to ensure that the soldiers could train and maintain morale:

- Each soldier was given advanced pay (\$23.00) to buy running shoes for PT, and an urgent request for running shorts was made for the entire task force.
- Equipment for training was collected at home base, loaded in express containers (CONEXs) and sent to theater by boat. This was an ongoing activity for the first five months.
- Many items were ordered for training, including E-type silhouettes, VS-17 panels, blank adapters, and a large assortment of batteries.
- The family group at Fort Bragg col-

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lected personal items for the soldiers and sent them by courier or mail.

• The local oil company in Saudi Arabia provided books, televisions, and even VCRs for each battalion to help sustain the morale.

While many of these activities were helpful to the commander in accomplishing the mission, there were still some difficulties. Problems arose in trying to get equipment sent from home base. Items

The idea behind this B-Bag is to keep it packed during mission cycles, inspect its contents, and manifest it as part of the follow-on contingent.

were misplaced, resulting in accountability problems. Often, the wrong items were sent and, if they happened to be part of a system, they were incomplete, with no trail of custody for missing subsystems. Another difficulty was that some soldiers had nobody back home to send them the essentials.

A way to solve many of these problems is to implement a "B" deployment bag policy—a contingency plan for a possible long-term deployment. The B-Bag would include items the commander considered essential to training and morale for an extended period.

Many items that might be included in the B-Bag are additional uniforms (possibly a few sets of battle dress uniforms and a set or two of the appropriate camouflage fatigues), underwear, field jackets, wet and cold weather gear, personal items—pens and stationery, stamped envelopes, PT gear, cigarettes, chewing tobacco—and other Class VI items the commander may authorize.

The idea behind this B-Bag is to keep it packed during mission cycles, inspect its contents, and manifest it as part of the follow-on contingent. The unit commanders might also want to pack (or simply locate) essential training items to be shipped upon request as part of unit B-Bags. By preparing the unit and its soldiers in this manner, the chain of command would be able to focus on warfighting issues even if it should be deployed for an unknown period of time.

Another recurring problem units have after deployment is the soldiers' inability to pay their bills. One way to resolve this, and a part of the B-Bag policy, would be to maintain a roster for each soldier containing his landlord's address, his credit card account numbers, and possibly the addresses of the major institutions he may owe. The first sergeant could keep this information in the company safe on pre-addressed stamped envelopes with blank personal checks the soldiers could use in case of deployment. (There

might be some specific legal ramifications to be explored before implementing such a policy.)

Maintaining additional equipment on mission cycle would not be an easy task, and it wouldn't be popular in the unit. But the difficulties of maintaining it would be minimal compared to those that could arise once a soldier deployed and found himself unprepared to keep up with the world back home. Moreover, a com-

Unit commanders might also want to pack (or simply locate) essential training items to be shipped upon request as part of unit B-Bags.

mander could better prepare his unit for the task at hand if he designated the items that would be needed for training in case of an extended deployment.

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