

THE RHEOSTAT ADJUSTMENT MODEL

A COMMANDER'S TOOL FOR COMBATING SOLDIER COMPLACENCY

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The 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division developed a model to help the commanders in the Sledgehammer Brigade make adjustments within their units to prevent complacency during a 14-month deployment to Mada'in Qada, Iraq, and continue to focus on full spectrum counterinsurgency operations. The Rheostat Adjustment Model (RAM) identifies five major areas that each commander can make changes to keep their organizations sharp, ready to kill the enemy, and constantly growing. Specifically, the RAM forces commanders to make adjustments within their unit and to their approach to fighting, standards and discipline, leadership, training and maintenance, and caring. Figure 1 shows the RAM concept. By recognizing the existence of, and anticipating the risks associated with the complacency-prone, middle months of a deployment, commanders

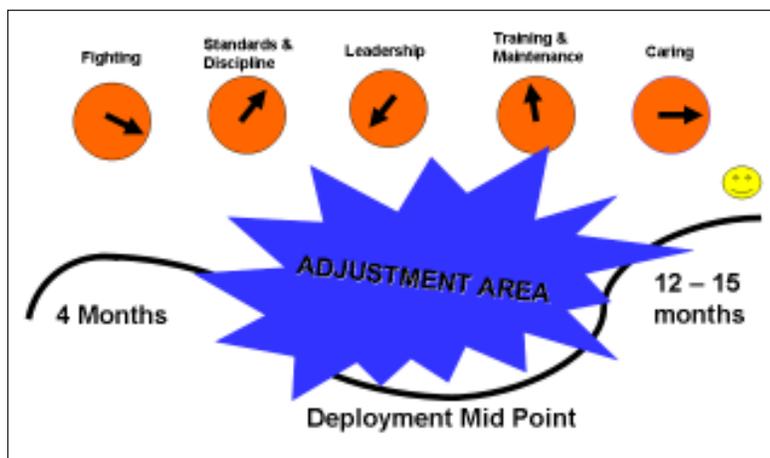


Figure 1 — The Rheostat Adjustment Model

can constantly adjust the controls on the rheostat and avoid the dip in mid-tour Soldier performance.

The Middle Months: Experiencing “the Rut”

Most units conducting combat operations in Iraq will experience three phases during their deployment. The first four months of the deployment comprise the familiarization phase where Soldiers in the unit begin to operate in and eventually understand their new area of operations. The final three months of the deployment are the closeout phase where the unit is focused on completing its tour of duty, and the Soldiers' attention may be on returning to their homes and families. The months between these two phases comprise the “rut” months and are characterized by established routines and, in many cases, a sense of complacency and lowered job performance. The Rheostat Adjustment Model is a tool that can prevent the rut.

The Soldier's inevitable excitement associated with the beginning and end of a combat tour is enough to keep his or her level of performance at a satisfactory mark. It is the middle months, however, where commanders need to be especially watchful as their subordinates grow more likely to make careless and costly mistakes on the battlefield. In previous deployments, the rut period extended for approximately four months — in between months 4 through 8. The 15-month deployment has almost doubled this phase, requiring commanders to be on guard against complacency from months 4 through 12.

Complacency can manifest itself in smaller offenses such as “finger-drilled” mission briefs or subpar post-operation reports. It can also rear its head in more serious and ugly matters such as affairs, rapes, or suicides. All these offenses hurt the credibility and morale of a fighting outfit. Keeping



Soldier complacency at bay directly affects combat power and, more importantly, affects the number of healthy Soldiers a unit will take home at the end of combat operations. Commanders must prevent, or at least stifle, the deadly drop in Soldier performance during the rut period of a deployment.

Mitigating Complacency: The Rheostat Controls

A rheostat is “a resistor for regulating a current by means of variable resistances.” An adjustment to a rheostat changes the flow of energy by regulating the current to maintain optimal performance. Similarly, good commanders must be able to adjust the flow of energy associated with the five main currents within the unit they command: the fighting spirit, standards and discipline, leadership, training and maintenance, and the sense of caring. By adjusting the rheostat that regulates these currents, commanders can retard the drop in complacency that is often associated with the rut months of a deployment.

COL Wayne W. Grigsby, Jr., the brigade commander of the 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID, distributed the Rheostat Adjustment Model to his staff and battalion commanders in July 2007, which was the beginning of the rut months for the brigade’s deployment in support of OIF V. He then asked the battalion commanders to develop a plan for their battalions that would explain how they planned to adjust the rheostat controls for their unit. After two weeks, the battalion commanders back-briefed the brigade commander on their ideas, so he could enforce and oversee their actions.

Mismanaged Currents Mean Poor Performance

When a M1A1 tank rolled over an Iraqi National Policeman, severing his leg in May 2007, there were many questions that came through the minds of the leadership.

“Where did we relax on standards and discipline?”

“What things could the leaders have done to possibly prevent this incident?”

“How recently had checkpoint negotiating TTPs (tactics, techniques and procedures) been rehearsed?”

“Would that have had an effect?”

Leaders and commanders are responsible for everything their units do or fail to do. All leaders think through these types of questions when things go wrong. What

commanders need, however, is a system that enables them to ask empowering questions *before* an incident occurs. Whereas the after action review (AAR) process allows for units to make corrections *after* mistakes have been made. The RAM is a preventative thought process aimed to keep the negative incident from ever happening.

Using the Commander’s Rheostat

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the commander’s rheostat. It shows the dip in Soldier performance that happens during the rut period, as well as the five major “knobs” that can be adjusted. Commanders must constantly look at the different areas and make adjustments to the rheostat as necessary.

The Fighting Knob

In combat, military units need to be aggressive, tenacious fighting organizations. Soldiers must take the fight to the insurgent and keep pressure on him and his networks at all times. Over the brigade’s 14 months in Iraq, 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID Soldiers killed or captured more than 660 insurgents, while suffering 200 casualties.

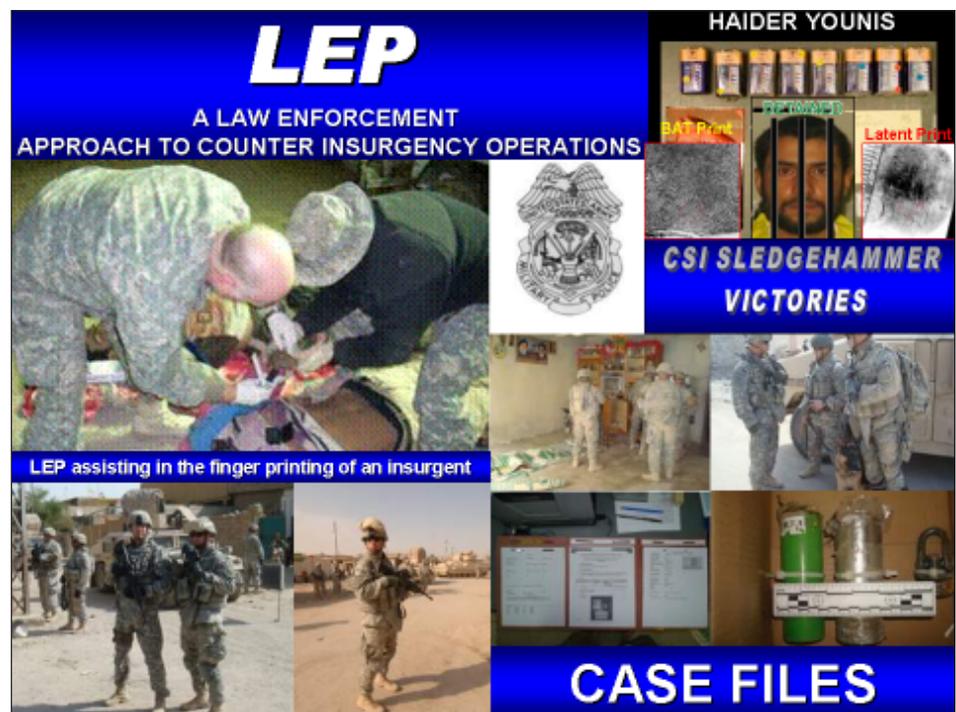
“When the enemy shows his head and decides to mass in locations, we must take all the firepower and technology that our Army and joint partners have to kill him and not allow him to fight another day,” said COL Grigsby.

To adjust the **Fighting** knob of the

rheostat, the 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID used a variety of techniques: the Law Enforcement Professional (LEP) program, “blackening” of routes, the use of Sons of Iraq (SoI) during operations, terrain denial fires, kinetic strikes from Air Force bombers, military working dog teams, time sensitive target raids, and offset air assault operations. Three techniques that were particularly effective at adjusting the **Fighting** rheostat were the LEP program, “blackening” of routes, and the use of SoIs during operations.

The LEP program attached retired senior law enforcement agents to Army units to assist in the counterinsurgency fight under a contract from Military Professionals Resources Incorporated (MPRI). The law enforcement agents who had worked for agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Georgia Bureau of Investigations, Department of Homeland Security, and the Drug Enforcement Agency brought a new approach to the counterinsurgency fight through the eyes of a seasoned criminal investigator. The 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID LEPs assisted in the capture and conviction of several brigade high value targets by matching fingerprints taken at apprehension to fingerprints captured from residue from a rocket attack on Forward Operating Base (FOB) Hammer in July 2007. Also, The LEPs focused heavily on improving criminal case files by ensuring that all investigative reports were properly

Figure 2 — The Law Enforcement Professional (LEP) Program





Courtesy photos

Sons of Iraq members take part in Operation Bawi Sunrise November 15, 2007.

written and that the evidence was properly handled, which resulted in a higher conviction rate in the Iraqi court system. Additionally, the LEPs trained 3rd HBCT Soldiers in sensitive site exploitation and evidence handling procedures. Leading by example, several LEPs accompanied units on missions, so that the evidence was properly photographed, videotaped, documented, and collected on the objective. The LEP program increased the brigade's ability to send captured insurgents to the Central Criminal Court of Iraq with prosecutable cases that would keep them off the streets.

On April 28, 2007, an improvised explosive device (IED) attack on a patrol near the Tigris River killed three Soldiers and severely wounded a fourth. The brigade made an adjustment by "blackening" the route where the attack happened, which prevented any Coalition vehicle from traveling on that route without approval of the BCT commander. This technique allowed the brigade's two route clearance teams to focus on a smaller number of routes, which ensured a more thorough IED clearance and more frequent passes on these routes. With the adjustment, the brigade increased the number of combat patrols on the routes, which forced the insurgents to hastily emplace IEDs which also reduced their effectiveness. This technique was a major factor in the brigade's IED found/cleared rate increasing from 32 percent at the beginning of the tour to more than 51 percent currently.

The final **Fighting** knob adjustment that the 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID made was using Sons of Iraq (also known as Concerned Local Citizens) in conjunction with Iraqi National Police and brigade elements in combined operations. During combined operations, Sons of Iraq (SoI) would operate in support of route clearance teams and

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams to identify IEDs for disarming and disposal by 3rd HBCT. During Operation Tuwaitha Sunrise in September 2007, one industrious Son of Iraq disarmed four IEDs with a Leatherman as the attack progressed. After the operations, the SoIs set up and maintained checkpoints along the route which facilitated security in their neighborhoods. As the Sons of Iraq grew by 4,000 over a seven-month period, violence in the SoI's neighborhoods dropped exponentially. This technique leveraged each force's strength: the Sons of Iraq's knowledge of the area of operation, U.S. firepower, and the Iraqi Security Forces' knowledge of the enemy.

Fighting an insurgency requires a unit to be flexible and adaptive. By adjusting the **Fighting** knob on the rheostat, the unit changes its TTPs to not only fight complacency inside the unit, but to prevent the insurgents from adapting to its TTPs. Continually assessing the units' fighting techniques and using all available assets to bring the fight to the enemy will constantly keep the enemy on the run and prevent him from attacking Coalition forces.

The Standards and Discipline Knob

Discipline is the cornerstone for everything an American Soldier does. It is what makes Soldiers do the right thing at 0200 when leaders are not around, and allows fighting teams to enter and clear a room in the middle of the night in a foreign country. Standards and discipline save lives in combat. Disciplined Soldiers continue to fight when the odds are against them. The 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID command adjusted the **Standards and Discipline** knob through several techniques: the enforcement of proper pre-combat

Figure 3 — Example Pre-Combat Checklist

GO/NG	PCC Item	Notes
	UNIT REQUIRED PCC/PCIs for VEHICLE OPERATORs for CLP _____	
	This PCI checklist is an ADDITIONAL PCI to the individual soldier PCI and is required for DRIVERS ONLY	
	SOLDIER'S NAME _____	
	UNIT _____	
	BUMPER# _____	
	Conduct long distance FM communications check	* As applicable
	Conduct a hand held <u>commo</u> check (every vehicle must have hand held <u>commo</u>)	
	Send and receive a BFT message through the S-3	* As applicable
	Keys to Bill (in the dispatch folder)	
	Keys to RADIO mounts (in the dispatch folder)	To pull the radio if needed
	Keys to storage areas (in the dispatch folder)	To get NVGs and other equipment out quickly.
	License (must be applicable license for the vehicle).	
	5988-E filled out, supervisor signature and FMC	
	Vehicle dispatched	
	Water can filled	
	Fire extinguisher, charged	
	Dispatch folder complete (dispatch, 5988-E, accident forms etc).	
	Towing clevises (two on the front)	
	Windshield clean	
	* Tow Bar operational	* only if tasked
	ASIP Radio FMC with the correct fills	* only if tasked
	Fuel topped off	
	Seat belt extender present and functional	
	ANCD	* only if tasked

inspections (PCI) and pre-combat checks (PCC), conducting health and welfare inspections of Soldier living areas, rewarding high standards, conducting regular urinalysis tests, holding leaders accountable to enforce standards, enforcing the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and sharing courts-martial lessons learned. Three effective techniques used by 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID were the enforcement of proper PCIs and PCCs, conducting health and welfare inspections, and holding leaders accountable to enforce standards.

During the rut of a deployment, complacency becomes a major issue commanders must overcome. A technique used by the brigade to combat complacency was to ensure units conducted deliberate and thorough PCIs and PCCs prior to going out on mission. PCIs and PCCs are conducted at the lowest level and spot checked by senior leaders. The patrol leader inspected all Soldiers to ensure they are in the proper uniform and all the vehicles to ensure proper load plans. The patrol leader then gave a thorough patrol brief and rehearses selected battle drills. The Soldiers then back briefed the patrol leader on their specific roles for the battle drill. This brief must be conducted properly whether it is the patrol's first time out of the wire or its 200th patrol. A technique used by one battalion mandated that all patrols and convoys that were leaving the wire complete a checklist. The patrol leader had to turn in a checklist before departing that stated all the PCIs and PCCs that were conducted. Once this checklist was verified by the battalion operations officer, the patrol was cleared to depart for the mission. Proper PCIs and PCCs at the lowest level are an adjustment to the **Standards and Discipline** knob that will prevent complacency and ensure Soldiers are prepared for combat.

Another technique used by 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID was to conduct health and welfare inspections. These inspections can range from a squad leader spot checking on his Soldiers to a company commander conducting a full inspection of the unit. These inspections ensure Soldiers' living conditions are clean and free of clutter and that they are not concealing contraband. Dirty living conditions are not only unhealthy, but they can be a sign of underlying issues the Soldier may be dealing with. The 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID conducted a brigade-wide health and welfare inspection

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in January 2008. Approximately a week after the inspection, the brigade utilized narcotic search dogs to conduct an unannounced second inspection. These inspections enforced standards and increased discipline for the Soldiers. Soldiers who are disciplined and follow standards while they are off duty are going to do the same in combat.

The final adjustment that was made by the brigade was to hold leaders accountable. The chain of command demanded adherence to standards by leaders at an equal or great level than their Soldiers. Those leaders who did not adhere to the standards or did not enforce the standards in their units were reprimanded and in severe cases, replaced. The brigade did not tolerate indiscipline or ignorance of the standards. During a combat deployment, Soldiers' lives are at stake and a lack of discipline can cause unnecessary casualties. For this reason, the brigade leadership aggressively enforced standards by holding leaders at all levels accountable for their own actions as well as their subordinates.

With a properly adjusted **Standards and Discipline** knob, a unit can rely on Soldiers to do the right thing no matter when or where. The adjustments made by the 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID ensured their Soldiers adhered to the standards and that the standards were enforced by leaders at all levels. Maintaining proper standards and discipline for all Soldiers will assure that they will not falter in their performance in combat.

The Leadership Knob

The 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID is a leadership factory that continues to build leaders for combat teams and for the Army as a whole. Quality management, based on Army Values, Warrior Ethos, and selfless service to our nation, forms the essence of leadership in the Army. There are two aspects in the Rheostat Adjustment Model's **Leadership** knob. One aspect involves a leader making changes to his personal leadership methods and habits, and the other involves assessing

and modifying leadership provided by the subordinate leaders in his command.

The **Leadership** knob adjustments made during the 3rd HBCT's Iraq deployment included conducting regular command climate surveys, executing company changes of command in theater, writing professional papers, sharing lessons learned, and conducting officer professional development and NCO professional development programs. Three of the more effective techniques at adjusting the **Leadership** rheostat were using command climate surveys, conducting company changes of command in theater, and the writing of professional papers.

The 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID emphasized regular command climate surveys to provide leaders at all levels a snap shot of their unit. The surveys were given to each Soldier in the company, battalion, or brigade and asked the Soldier to rate his leader's attributes and attitudes. The survey also asks the Soldiers to name three things the leaders do well and three things the leaders need to improve. One company commander took the surveys to another level by holding monthly sensing sessions with his Soldiers. During these sessions, Soldiers were able to air any and all issues with the company commander. The commander used these sessions to fine tune his leadership methods and to address issues in the unit in a timely manner. It was an opportunity to curb any rumors that may be spreading, as well as a forum where the commander received candid feedback from his Soldiers. With the results of the surveys, leaders were able to make specific adjustments in their units to not only better themselves as leaders, but to better their unit as a whole.

The 3rd HBCT made another adjustment to the **Leadership** knob by executing 15 company changes of command, out of 31 total companies during the brigade's 14 months in theater. Putting new leaders at the company level changed leadership styles, brought a new perspective to the unit, and provided a new look at the counterinsurgency fight. The change of command mandated that the companies conduct a 100-percent property inventory, which helped to fix property discrepancies that inevitably occur during a quick deployment to Iraq and multiple months of combat. The new company commanders also brought new sets of skills including signal intelligence (SIGINT) based targeting

experience, local leader engagement skills, perspective from their time as staff officers at brigade and division, and greater knowledge of the brigade's enablers. The new skills and experience enhanced the brigade's ability to conduct counterinsurgency operations immeasurably. The change also prevented commanders from burning out from the stresses of command in combat and brought frontline experience to the battalion and brigade staffs. Changing company command in theater ultimately improved the unit's ability to perform in combat by bringing new skills to the front line, and modifying the unit's TTPs preventing the onset of predictability and complacency.

To educate senior leaders, share TTPs, and relate experiences with the rest of the Army, the 3rd HBCT commander required officers to write professional papers. Three of the brigade's papers were published in military periodicals. *A Counter Improvised Explosive Device Review at 270+Days: The Next Step Beyond 5 & 25*, by CPT Rick Barnes, commander of E Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, shared hard-won counter-IED TTPs and was published on the Center for Army Lessons Learned classified Web site as well as Joint Forces Command's Knowledge and Information Fusion Exchange (KnIFE) Web site. *TEAM ENABLER: Getting Civil Affairs, Tactical Psychological Operations, and Human Intelligence Collection into the fight during the execution of Full Spectrum Operations*, by CPT David Smith and 1LT Jeffrey Ritter, discussed the use of enablers in combat operations and was published by *Infantry Magazine*. *Human Terrain Mapping "A Critical First Step in Winning the Counterinsurgency Fight,"* by the leadership of 1-15IN, discussed the importance of population

demographics in fighting and insurgency and was also published by *Infantry Magazine*. Writing the professional papers not only allowed leaders to share their knowledge with the Army, but it also served as a personal development for the leaders.

The adjustments to the **Leadership** knob that 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID made focused on senior leaders as well as junior leaders. The brigade created an environment where leadership improvement was regularly addressed throughout the deployment. Leaders assessed their own leadership abilities and gave candid feedback to their subordinates. Sharing their lessons learned with others created a knowledge sharing forum where leaders at all levels could gather information to address issues. These techniques worked well in a counterinsurgency fight to allow units to stay one step in front of the every adapting enemy.

The Training and Maintenance Knob

Training is the glue which holds a military unit together. Tough, realistic, battle-focused training, conducted to standard, is what allows us to accomplish our wartime missions in any combat environment. Success in combat is directly related to individual Soldier and small unit proficiency. As such, technical and tactical competence in individual, leader, and collective tasks are essential. Commanders must focus on Soldiers, squads, and platoons performing fundamental tasks to standard. In order to perform these fundamental tasks, 3rd HBCT worked diligently to maintain its Soldiers' proficiency and its equipment.

The challenge in theater is to continue to train while fighting. The brigade made adjustments to the **Training and Maintenance** knob by issuing quarterly training guidance (QTG), conducting quarterly training briefs (QTB), conducting physical fitness training on a daily basis, conducting marksmanship training, performing react-to-contact drills, conducting medical training and drills, executing preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) of equipment, and training on new equipment.

One particularly effective adjustment to the **Training and Maintenance** knob was 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID's publication of QTG and the execution of QTBs. The QTG required each unit to focus on two to three training events each quarter. Each battalion conducted a standard QTB to the brigade commander where they covered the training that they conducted over the last quarter and the training that they planned to execute during the next quarter. One unintended result of the QTB was that it forced the battalions to look 90 days out both training wise and tactically every quarter. The notes and lessons learned from each QTB were shared with all the battalions in the brigade. During the tour, 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID was fortunate to live next to the Bessmaya/Butler Range Complex which allowed units to fire and qualify on all weapons systems from individual weapons to the M1A1 main battle tank. Units incorporated range time during their regular rest and refit periods. By the end of the deployment, each of the brigade's combat outposts and patrol bases had built a small arms range to maintain their weapons proficiency.

During their 14-month deployment, 3rd HBCT units and Soldiers conducted rigorous physical training (PT) on a daily basis. The brigade conducted numerous Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) sponsored events including 5K and



Courtesy photos

The 3rd HBCT executed 15 company changes of command during the brigade's 14 months in Iraq.

10K runs, weight-lifting competitions, and football tournaments. The brigade emphasized the use of diagnostic Army Physical Fitness Tests (AFPT) throughout the duration of the deployment in order for leadership to evaluate their PT plans and to give Soldiers a snap shot of their physical fitness status. In order to build camaraderie with their Iraqi Army neighbors, the 3rd HBCT hosted several soccer games between brigade Soldiers and Iraqi Army Soldiers. The games encouraged bonding between the Coalition partners as well as provided a break to the rigors of combat for both units. All of these events gave Soldiers an additional motivation to conduct PT beyond the standard morning PT with their unit.

Another **Training and Maintenance** knob adjustment that the 3rd HBCT did was to conduct individual and collective medical skills training. The brigade conducted a monthly Combat Lifesaver (CLS) class to train individual Soldiers in advanced lifesaving techniques. By the middle of the deployment, over 30 percent of the brigade was CLS certified. For collective training, the brigade's medical clinic conducted mass casualty (MASCAL) drills on FOB Hammer, which required the participation of all the units on the FOB. This drill enabled all of the units to rehearse mass casualty procedures at all levels. On July 11, 2007, 14 107mm rockets impacted FOB Hammer, killing one Soldier and wounding 15 more. Improved First Aid Kit (IFAK), CLS, and MASCAL training paid off as units and C Company, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion's Troop Medical Clinic worked quickly and efficiently to treat the injured. Regular medical training is crucial for all Soldiers to maintain their ability to save lives.

The final adjustment made was the execution of thorough preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) on all equipment. The harsh environment of a combat deployment can quickly and severely damage equipment that is left unchecked. PMCS is a step-by-step procedure used to ensure every piece of equipment is functioning and serviceable. It ensures that any faults are identified immediately and the problem is fixed in a timely manner. PMCS is conducted on



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every piece of equipment including weapons, radios and vehicles. A thorough PMCS is often overlooked in the middle of a deployment. Leaders need to ensure that Soldiers are conducting PMCS daily. The 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID employed a technique that required all vehicles to go through a fuel and maintenance check immediately upon return from missions. The vehicles first stopped at the fuel point and topped off all fluids. Their next stop was the motorpool where the unit's mechanics conducted a Quality Assurance Quality Control (QAQC) check of each vehicle. This technique ensured that each vehicle was inspected by a trained mechanic to identify any potential faults that were corrected immediately or the vehicle could not go on mission until the fault was repaired. Proper PMCS will ensure that the unit's equipment will function properly and not break down in the heat of combat.

Making adjustments to the **Training and Maintenance** knob is probably the most difficult for leaders on a combat deployment. In the rut of the deployment, leaders tend to overlook training and maintenance and focus solely on combat operations. Leaders

must make adjustments to ensure their Soldiers stay physically fit and trained in all their essential skills, for both improved job performance and stress relief.

The Caring Knob

Caring for Soldiers and their families sustains a military unit. Soldiers who know that their leaders sincerely care about them and care about their families will always give their best effort towards accomplishing the mission. A fully committed chain of command, complemented by a functioning Family Readiness Group, ensures Soldiers and families are cared for, regardless of the situations that occur during a deployment.

Adjustments to the **Caring** knob need to not only focus on Soldiers, but their families as well. To adjust the *Caring* knob, the 3rd HBCT used several techniques: establishing a Care Team, recognizing Soldiers with awards, making improvements in the quality of life, and using the Freedom Pass Program and Qatar Pass Program. Three techniques that proved most effective for the brigade were the Care Team, recognizing Soldiers with awards, and making improvements to their quality of life.

The 3rd HBCT commander instituted the Care Team at the brigade level and within each battalion. The 3rd HBCT used the Care Team to identify problems, support the families of fallen Soldiers, and maintain weekly contact with and provide support to Soldiers wounded in action. During each contact, the team addressed specific needs of the wounded and fallen Soldiers in the brigade, while focusing on spiritual, physical, emotional, and professional aspects. This team concept is not new; the brigade previously used the Care Team during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. The OIF V version of the Care Team consists of the brigade chaplain, brigade surgeon, brigade mental health officer, brigade staff judge advocate, brigade adjutant, and brigade safety officer. The 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment went one step further and built a Care Book with a page for each wounded Soldier. A page was dedicated to each Soldier with

biographical data, phone numbers, address, medical treatment status, as well as a synopsis of every time the unit contacted the Soldier and any needs that the Soldier or his family had. Adjusting the **Caring** knob by instituting the Care Team is one way the 3rd HBCT cared for the needs of wounded warriors and fallen Soldiers' families.

Another adjustment to the **Caring** knob was an aggressive award policy. At each level — battalion, brigade, and division — commanders worked diligently to process awards quickly and efficiently. In fact, the 3rd Infantry Division was able to turn around awards in under 72 hours. Due to this emphasis on awards, the brigade was able to recognize two Silver Star recipients; 25 Bronze Star with Valor recipients; 75 Army Commendation Medal with Valor recipients; 99 Purple Heart awardees; and more than 1,100 Combat Action Badge, Combat Infantryman Badge, and Combat Field Medical Badge recipients. Awarding Soldiers for their performance in a timely manner not only allows the entire unit to see that the command rewards excellence and heroism, but when the news reaches back home, families recognize the command's commitment to their Soldiers.

Taking care of the families back home and keeping them informed are key tasks for unit commanders, especially during combat deployments. CPT Colin Donlin, commander of C/2-69AR, 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID, created several tools to keep his FRG informed and assist all the families back home. He created a flow chart that described the flow of command information from the forward unit through the rear detachment to the families. For the dissemination of command information, he mandated that his rear detachment Soldiers contact the families direct, in lieu of using key callers. This technique ensured all families were contacted with the command information and helped reduce the spread of rumors. For example, the redeployment information for the company was passed directly to the families from the rear detachment. With the unit making the notification, it maximized the amount of time for the families and ensured all the families were notified. Secondly, he created a mission essential task list (METL) for his rear detachment. The METL was given to the FRG so that the priorities of the rear detachment were clearly communicated to the families. Additionally, he developed tiers of assistance that plainly described the roles the rear detachment had in supporting families in need of assistance. Not only did these tools help the families stay informed, it allowed the rear detachment to function smoothly due to clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Improving the quality of life for Soldiers was an adjustment that 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID continued to make throughout the deployment. When the brigade arrived in Iraq, it had to establish its own FOB, COP, and patrol bases. The living conditions were very austere for the first several months, but improved at an exponential rate. A dining facility was built on FOB Hammer and mobile kitchen trailers (MKT) were established on six COPs to ensure Soldiers received at least two hot meals a day. The brigade ensured that gym equipment, SPAWAR internet café and phone access were available at all COPs and patrol bases. The brigade created a "Soldier Center" on FOB Hammer that included an Army Air Force Exchange Service's Post Exchange, gym, coffee shop, local gift shop, barber shop, Subway shop, and a Post Office. Mail was delivered to the Soldiers at least three times a week. All of these additions created a place for Soldiers to relax and unwind from the rigors of combat and maintain contact with friends and

family back home.

Adjustments to the **Caring** knob ensured that 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID Soldiers and their families received outstanding support. During the rut of the deployment, it was essential to ensure that Soldiers' morale remained high to maximize combat power. Maintaining regular contact with wounded Soldiers and the families of the Soldiers killed in action ensured that the brigade supported the entire Sledgehammer Team. With proper caring, not coddling, Soldiers will perform beyond expectations in combat. For Soldiers and their families to know that their leaders care, eases the stresses of the deployment for everyone.

Summary

Adjustments to the rheostat knobs during the rut of a deployment save Soldiers lives. Each knob deals with a specific unit and leader focus during the deployment. Adjustments to the **Fighting** knob prevent a unit's TTPs from becoming predictable and Soldiers from becoming complacent in their war fighting tasks. Changes to the **Standards and Discipline** knob ensure that Soldiers continually do the right thing no matter when or where. By fine-tuning the **Leadership** knob, commanders modify their leadership styles in order to get the best performance from their Soldiers. Adjustments to the **Training and Maintenance** knob strengthen the back bone of a unit by ensuring that combat skills remain sharp and all equipment remains functional. Finally, changes to the **Caring** knob strengthen the Soldiers' spirit which allows them to fully focus on the mission. In conclusion, the Rheostat Adjustment Model is a tool that allows commanders to gain the maximum performance out of their units during a 12-15 month deployment. Using this tool gives commanders the ability to prevent the onset of complacency and decrease the drop in performance during long deployments.

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Other previous assignments include serving as commander of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment; aide de camp to the commander, XVIII Airborne Corps and director of Plans for the XVIII Airborne Corps.

COL Grigsby has earned a Masters Degree in Military Arts and Science from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and a Masters Degree in National Security Strategy from Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

MAJ David G. Fivecoat is an infantry officer who has served in the 82nd Airborne Division, 2nd Infantry Division, 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division, and 3rd Infantry Division. He has participated in contingency operations in Kosovo and Bosnia, as well as three combat tours in Iraq. He is currently the brigade S-3 for the 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID.

CPT Steven M. Hemmann is a native of St. Louis, Missouri. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in May 2003 and went on to pursue a master's degree through the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. He currently serves as the company executive officer for Company B, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment and is planning to attend the Maneuver Captains' Career Course following the 3rd HBCT's current deployment.

CPT Matthew S. Carman is a native of Allentown, PA. He entered the Army in May 1999 as a distinguished military graduate from the Virginia Military Institute. He has been assigned to Military Police units at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; Seoul, South Korea; Fort Drum, New York; and currently serves as the brigade provost marshal and brigade battle captain for the 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID.
