HANDBOOK

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Commander's Guide
Employing a Human Terrain Team in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom

Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures

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Foreword

As the Army continues irregular warfare and counterinsurgency operations such as Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, the value of understanding the many aspects of what motivates and forms the value system of the local population has never been greater. Current operational environments are made up of diverse groups of people with differing languages, thoughts, and beliefs. Trying to understand these cultures in order to better support the development of cohesive and stable communities and governments was beyond the capabilities initially designed for Soldiers and units. To fill that knowledge void, the Army developed the Human Terrain System and human terrain teams (HTTs).

This handbook is a guide for commanders and their staffs on what capabilities HTTs bring to the unit. This handbook draws on the experiences of HTTs supporting unit operations. With it, commanders will be better able to make the HTT an integral part of their operations.

CALL wishes to thank the Human Terrain System and, in particular, CPT Nathan Finney for their assistance in developing this handbook.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> **"Understanding the effect of operations as seen through the lens of the [local] culture and psyche is the foremost planning consideration for every operation."**
>
> **–LTG Peter Chiarelli, Commanding General, Multi-National Corps–Iraq, 2006–2007**

The Human Terrain System (HTS) is a proof-of-concept program run by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The goal of HTS is to provide knowledge of the local population (the human terrain) to Army/military commanders to:

- Assist them in understanding the people within their area of operations (AO).

- Enable them to make better-informed decisions.

- Reduce the chance for negative effect responses such as improvised explosive device events directed at American troops.

There are currently 26 teams embedded at all echelons above brigade in both Iraq and Afghanistan, supporting both the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC).

Human terrain teams (HTTs) consist of five to nine personnel deployed by the HTS to support field commanders. HTTs fill the socio-cultural knowledge gap in the commander's operational environment and interpret events in his AO. The team, individuals with social science and operational backgrounds, deploys with military units to bring knowledge about the local population into a coherent analytic framework. The teams also assist in building relationships with the local community in order to provide advice and opportunities to commanders and staffs in the field.

HTTs are regionally focused, modular, staff augmentees that bring to the unit capabilities that exist outside organic unit structures. They deploy as trained and organized teams attached to USMC regimental combat teams, Army brigade combat teams, division-level headquarters, and higher-command echelons. Each team is recruited and trained for a specific region, and the team deploys and embeds with their supported unit. The HTT integrates into the unit staff, conducts unclassified open-source and field research, and provides focused and operationally-relevant human terrain information in support of the planning, preparation, execution, and assessment of operations.

A fundamental condition of irregular warfare operations is that the commander and staff can no longer limit their focus to the traditional mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, and time available (METT-T). The commander's assessment must consider the local population in the area of conflict

as a distinct and critical aspect of the situation. In both operational theaters today as well as in potential areas of concern, local knowledge and the ability to understand the population, referred to as the green layer,[1] are essential. Not having this information forces military decision makers and their nonmilitary partners from a variety of agencies to operate without the necessary context and understanding. The Army codified this tenet in Army doctrine with the publication of Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, June 2001, which modified METT-T by adding civil considerations:

> …the nature of full spectrum operations requires commanders to assess the impact of nonmilitary factors on operations. Because of this added complexity, civil considerations have been added to the familiar METT-T to form METT-TC. All commanders use METT-TC to start their visualization. Staff estimates may address individual elements of, and add to, the commander's visualization.

In an irregular warfare operation "commanders and planners require insight into cultures, perceptions, values, beliefs, interests, and decision-making processes of individuals and groups" and their "society, social structure, culture, language, power and authority, and interests" should be considered.[2]

According to the FM 6-0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*, August 2003, civil considerations are "the influence of manmade infrastructure, civilian institutions, and attitudes and activities of the civilian leaders, populations, and organizations within an area of operations on the conduct of military operations." The analysis of the human terrain not only considers how these civil aspects affect military operations but analyzes "the cultural, sociological, political, and economic factors of the local population"[3] and how military operations affect these factors. This holistic picture creates a clearer picture for the commander, which enhances his decision-making process.

Knowledge of the human terrain allows commanders and their staffs to make better decisions. While the military has always had staff members responsible for the blue and red layers, HTTs provide a commander and his staff the ability to visualize and understand the green layer. By identifying local dynamics, grievances, and motivation; assessing governmental effectiveness; and making recommendations on how to address them, HTTs provide the unit nonlethal options, assist the unit in preventing friction with members of the local population, and track the second- and third-order effects that are likely to occur based on planned unit operations. This new capacity allows the commander to fully account for all the elements (blue, red, and green layers) in his operational environment.

This handbook is designed as a guide for commanders and their staffs to understand and utilize HTTs, integrate them into their planning, and employ them to fill the socio-cultural knowledge gaps in support of all battlefield functions.
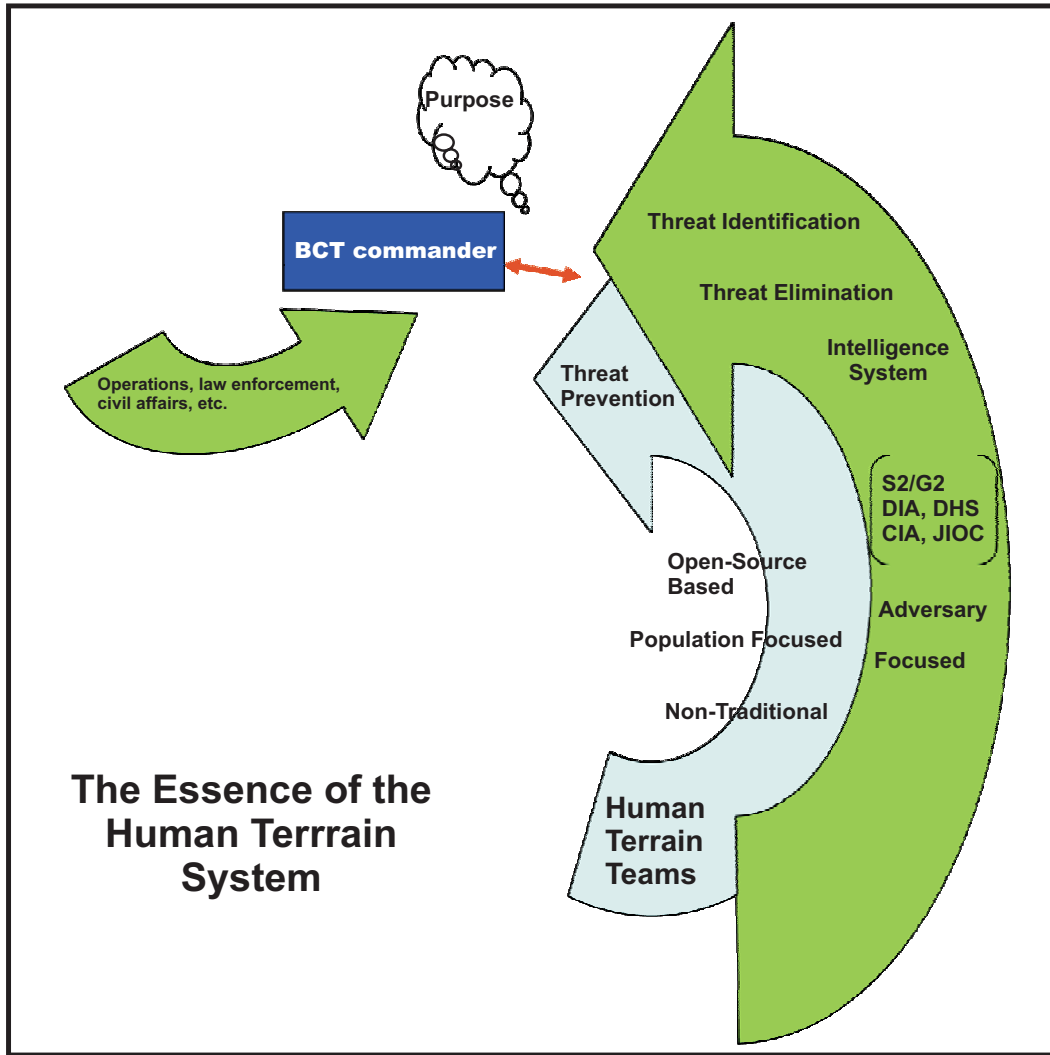
Figure 1-1. Social science support to military operations

Endnotes

1. The military or diplomatic forces are the blue layer, and the negative actors (insurgents, terrorists, organized criminals, etc.) are the red layer.

2. FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, December 2006.

3. Human Terrain System Terms of Reference, 29 January 2008.

Chapter 2

Mission and Organization

> **"Conduct operationally-relevant social science research and provide commanders and staffs with an embedded knowledge capability to establish a coherent, analytic socio-cultural framework for operational planning, preparation, execution, and assessment."**
>
> **–The Human Terrain Systems Mission Statement**

There are three key points to highlight in the Human Terrain System (HTS) mission statement. The first is social science research. Social science research is not simply "atmospherics," rumor, or personal opinions. Social science research involves empirical and verifiable analysis of the population to provide an accurate picture to the command of the local environment. Each HTT has an embedded social scientist skilled at developing and executing field research. The HTT takes the unit's plans or orders and develops a research plan that accounts for the commander's critical information requirements (CCIR) as well as perceived gaps in the unit's socio-cultural knowledge. This research plan identifies the knowledge requirements the team can address through specific missions among the population. The team uses both qualitative and quantitative methodologies based on the information required by the command.

The second key point is ensuring that gathered data is relevant to the military's mission. Although there may be a huge amount of data about the local population available to the U.S. military, only a small part of that data will have any operational relevance in a given situation. For example, while it might be interesting to know that Iraqi Sunnis have a tradition during weddings of putting henna on the hands of the newlyweds, this has no operational relevance. On the other hand, understanding the tradition of celebratory gunfire may have huge operational relevance to the military. One of the key functions of the team is to take the data from its social science research, couch it in terms familiar to a military audience, and ensure it is operationally relevant to the unit's operations and problem-set.

Finally, HTTs create an analytic socio-cultural framework for operational planning, preparation, execution, and assessment. The team must not only conduct relevant research and make it usable for the unit, it must also ensure the research is incorporated into the military decisionmaking process (MDMP). Human terrain information is of no use to the unit unless it is integrated into the continuous planning processes conducted by the commander and staff and used to update the various staff estimates. Units must tie the team into all planning processes, including relevant working groups and assessment boards, that can utilize human terrain information for socio-cultural understanding.

The HTS is intended to bring broadly defined, socio-culturally relevant, open-source information to brigade and regimental commanders and their staffs to enhance the nonlethal planning portions of the MDMP. HTS is also intended to present second-, third-, and fourth-order positive and negative effects analysis to

commanders and their staffs so that a full understanding of the outcome of each decision can be accounted for in the MDMP

Human Terrain Team Organization

The HTT consists of five to nine military and civilian personnel. Each team includes a team leader, at least one social scientist, a research manager, and a human terrain analyst with specific local knowledge and local language capacity. Each team is also deployed with at least one female to facilitate access to the often inaccessible female element of the population. All team members also have at least a Secret-level security clearance in order to take part in all aspects of the planning process.
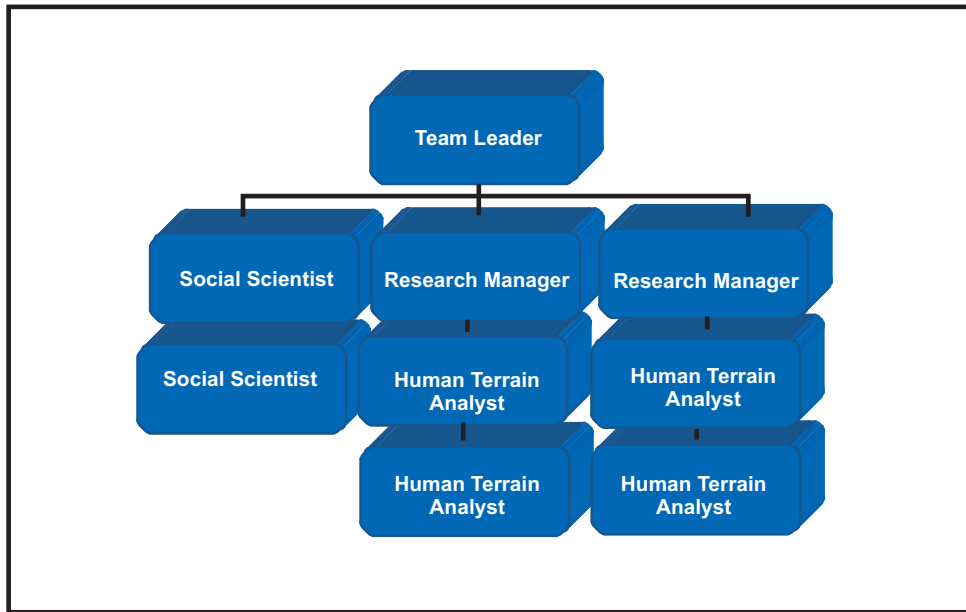
Figure 2-1. HTT composition

HTT leaders are active duty, Reserve/National Guard, or retired military officers with command or staff experience at the brigade combat team (BCT)/regimental combat team level or higher. Team leaders are responsible for focusing and supervising the team's efforts, integrating the HTT into the brigade staff, and ensuring that collected information is used in the MDMP. The team leader also serves as the team's primary liaison to the brigade command staff. It is the team leader's responsibility to make sure that the HTT integrates its activities with the brigade's missions and units' movements.

Team leader mission essential task list (METL):

- Act as the commander's human terrain advisor.

- Direct all aspects of HTT activities.

- Serve as the primary interface between the HTT and the unit commander.

- Ensure the integration of human terrain into the planning processes.

- Provide human terrain estimates to the commander during initial mission analysis.

- Brief staff on pertinent socio-cultural effects in the area of operations (AO).

- Evaluate the human terrain against friendly and enemy courses of action (COAs).

- Assist the BCT staff in developing COAs.

- Represent the HTT during planning meetings.

- Analyze orders to determine the commander's intent in reference to the human terrain.

- Approve and disseminate cultural products.

- Monitor team requests for research (RFR) sent back to the reach-back agency.

The social scientist designs the research and analysis protocols based on the commander's concept of operation and oversees the research and analysis process in coordination with the team leader and research managers. The social scientist also reviews, adjusts, and signs off on the final form of all deliverables to the brigade. The social scientist advises the commander and staff in all human terrain matters and serves as a primary interface for the presentation of these deliverables to the brigade commander and the brigade command staff. The social scientist is an academically-qualified cultural anthropologist or sociologist or an international relations, political science, or economics Ph.D. or M.A. with extensive experience.

Social scientist METL:

- Advise the HTT and staff on the socio-cultural components of the operational environment.

- Conduct and manage ethnographic research, methodology, and analysis.

- Participate in planning processes.

- Coordinate the cultural preparation of the operational environment (CPOE) and cultural data collection activities.

- Analyze socio-cultural data.

- Assist in the development of the information operations (IO) annex.

- Identify socio-cultural data and knowledge gaps.

- Identify specified and implied socio-cultural data requirements.

- Analyze the AO against socio-cultural data.

- Brief staff on pertinent socio-cultural effects in the AO.

- Assess other characteristics of the operational environment (leaders, population, demographics, social, ethnic, and religion).

- Assess how the population views the coalition as well as the adversary.

- Assess the local population's interests and issues and the impact planned activities might have on operations.

- Identify areas of contention within society.

- Provide analysis of collected human terrain information from the local populace perspective.

- Organize and manage focus groups of the local populace.

The research manager conducts all knowledge management functions for the team, including tracking, tagging, and archiving all information gathered by the team and distributing it to the supported unit. The research manager converts the social scientist's tasking instructions into functional research assignments. These assignments include RFRs to the reach-back cell as well as assignments for information collection, including but not limited to rapid area assessments, unstructured interviews, process and/or participant observations, key leader engagements, and right seat rides. The research manager also integrates the human terrain collection plan with the unit activities, participates in debriefings, and interacts with other key organizations and agencies operating in the AO. Research managers also interface with the unit and attend unit meetings, boards, working groups, and other battle rhythm events. Research managers generally have a military background and management skills.

Research manager METL:

- Integrate human terrain collection plan with unit intelligence collection plan.

- Maintain the human terrain component of the common operating picture (COP) using the CPOE.

- Develop human terrain information requirements.

- Act as secondary collector of human terrain data from supported forces.

- Collect and develop information pertaining to human terrain.

- Identify specified and implied socio-cultural data requirements.

- Manage the team's RFRs from subject-matter experts, the reach-back research center, and intra-theater resources.

- Analyze available sources of local socio-cultural information.

The human terrain analysts are the primary human terrain information researchers and data collectors. They are the team members who take the information requirements of the supported unit and conduct field and open-source research. They take guidance for research methodologies from the social scientist. The human terrain analysts participate in debriefings and interact with other key organizations and agencies also operating in the AO. They generally have a military background in tactical operations and/or have experience with other governmental or nongovernmental agencies (U.S. Agency for International Development and provincial reconstruction teams).

Human terrain analyst METL:

- Act as primary collector of human terrain data from supported unit.

- Develop a human terrain collection plan.

- Develop human terrain information requirements.

- Analyze unclassified and classified socio-cultural data.

- Assist in the development of the IO annex.

- Identify socio-cultural data and knowledge gaps.

- Identify specified and implied socio-cultural data requirements.

- Analyze the AO against socio-cultural data.

- Analyze available sources of local socio-cultural information.

- Assess other characteristics of the operational environment (leaders, population, demographics, social, ethnic, and religion).

- Determine indicators and specific information requirements for supporting CCIR, decision points, and named areas of interest.

Roles and Responsibilities of a Human Terrain Team

The HTT has five mission essential tasks to accomplish. The first task is to conduct a CPOE. This continuous process is similar to the traditional intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) but focuses on the socio-cultural information of the AO. Prior to and during the deployment, the team researches the AO using academic and other sources. During the deployment, the team conducts key leader engagements and qualitative and quantitative research on the local population. The longer the team is on the ground, the clearer the CPOE will become. Using the CPOE as a baseline, the team identifies the socio-cultural knowledge requirements for satisfying the CCIR as well as the information requirements for each of the lines of operation and lines of engagement. This process assists the team in creating a research plan. The research plan allows the team to coordinate its socio-cultural research activities across the unit staff and maneuver elements. For more information on CPOE, refer to Appendix A.

The second mission essential task of the HTT is to integrate human terrain information into the unit's MDMP. Before operations are conducted, the HTT seeks to incorporate the CPOE into the unit's mission analysis. The HTT proposes nonlethal COAs, identifies the second- and third-order effects of possible COAs, and takes part in the war-gaming process from the population perspective. During the order's development step of MDMP, the HTT works with the staff to incorporate HTT information into the appropriate places in the plan.

The third mission essential task is to provide support to current operations. During unit operations, the HTT is invaluable. The team takes part in the operation by both monitoring events and conducting on-the-ground assessments, which provide the commander and staff with input for cultural decision points and the anticipated effects of possible responses. These quick adjustments and mitigating strategies to the operation could be keys to swaying the population away from insurgent groups and other actors operating contrary to the commander's objectives. These actions also feed the socio-cultural aspect of the commander's COP. Examples of HTT support include preparing the commander for key leader engagements, building relationships that facilitate meaningful engagements with local power brokers, conducting ethnographic interviews/collection during medical civic action programs/veterinary civic action programs, developing tribal/genealogical link charts, and facilitating civil affairs and foreign humanitarian assistance missions. All of these events create an opportunity for the team to gather local socio-cultural information that helps shape the unit's planning.

The fourth HTT mission essential task is to continually assess the human terrain effects on the AO and the effects of friendly and enemy unit operations on the human terrain. During full-spectrum operations, the HTT is continually assessing what effect U.S. military operations as well as threat operations are having on the local population. The HTT's job is to assess effects and to predict the second- and third-order effects of possible future operations. In support of the unit, the HTT also assesses the civil-military and information operations measures of effectiveness and performance and recommends adjustments and/or outcomes of the current assessment framework.

Finally, the HTT can support the unit by training all elements on relevant socio-cultural issues. This training may benefit the BCT and division staffs but will be most effective at battalion level and below, since these units have the primary responsibility for the AO and have the most contact with the local population. The most basic training involves cultural awareness training similar to that conducted prior to the unit's deployment but may also include education on cultural and religious holidays and classes on tribal dynamics and local socio-cultural power structures.

HTT METL:

- Conduct a CPOE:

    ° Develop human terrain information requirements based on the CCIR and identified socio-cultural knowledge gaps.

    ° Assist commander and staff by providing feedback on CCIR.

    ° Design a human terrain research plan.

    º Develop the human terrain collection plan.

    º Coordinate socio-cultural research activities.

    º Conduct social science field research.

- Integrate human terrain into the MDMP:

    º Participate in unit MDMP by supporting the planning staff with mission-focused human terrain information.

    º Assist in the development of culturally astute COAs.

    º Identify second- and third-order effects of proposed COAs.

- Provide human terrain support to current operations:

    º Identify cultural decision/adjustment points that impact the population.

    º Develop responses or mitigating strategies to gain or maintain support of the local populace.

    º Populate and maintain the human terrain component of the COP.

- Evaluate human terrain effects:

    º Assess the effect of friendly and enemy operations on the human terrain.

    º Assess the human terrain effects on friendly and enemy operations.

- Educate the supported unit on relevant socio-cultural issues:

    º Determine subordinate unit cultural knowledge requirements for their AO.

    º Develop tailored cultural information based on requirements.

Chapter 3

Employing a Human Terrain Team

Units should fully implement the human terrain team (HTT) into their planning processes. The team leader and social scientist should be the principal advisors to the commander and staff. The HTT should ensure all unit activities take into account the human terrain of the area of operations (AO). HTTs should participate in a variety of working groups, cells, and meetings within the staff (e.g., S3, battle update briefing, and information operations [IO] working group). HTT personnel can be used to maximize the staff's ability to improve the understanding of human terrain within the AO. HTTs provide three primary capabilities:

- Expert human terrain and social science advice, based on constantly updated, user-friendly, ethnographic, and socio-cultural databases of the AO that leverage existing bodies of knowledge from the social sciences and humanities and ground research conducted by the team

- Focused study on socio-cultural issues of specific concern to the commander

- Tactical overwatch through a link to the reach-back research center, which provides direct support to the HTTs and access to its subject-matter expert network and learning institutions throughout the world

Beyond analysis and assessment of local attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors, the HTT can also provide analysis of how U.S. military behavior impacts the local population's willingness to work with coalition forces. This analysis allows the supported commander to evaluate the effects of his operations and tailor his interactions with the local population for best effect.[1]
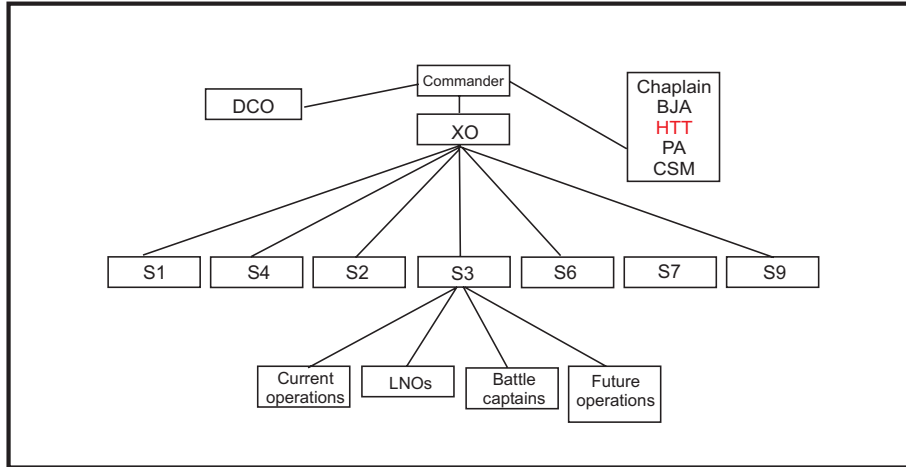
Task Organization

The HTT is attached to the unit and belongs to the commander, who employs the team as he needs them, just as he does any other asset. The HTT fits within the staff in one of several ways. One way is as a special staff element that reports directly to the commander. Another way is from within the S3 section where the team reports to the commander through the operations officer. In either case, the commander should retain the team leader as his direct human terrain advisor and recognize that the social scientists provide unique advisory capabilities.

Special staff

Treating the HTT as special staff has been the most common task organization of the HTT within a brigade combat team (BCT) staff. As a member of the special staff, the HTT has direct access and a close working relationship with the commander. The team receives command and staff direction from the commander or the deputy commander in his stead. The commander will determine the extent of the HTT's interaction and relationships with the rest of the staff and subordinate units. Because HTTs research and analyze human terrain information about the local population, they will typically interact with the S3 staff section and its attachments (provincial reconstruction teams [PRTs], civil affairs [CA], IO,

psychological operations [PSYOP], law enforcement professionals, and United States Agency for International Development [USAID]), the S2 staff section, and other staff elements. Human terrain information comes from and is provided to all these elements.

Figure 3-1. BCT staff organization—as special staff
(adapted from Field Manual 3-90.6, *The Brigade Combat Team*)

Operations section (S3)

When placed with the S3, the HTT is able to interact closely with the key elements within the staff that address the nonlethal environment (PRT, CA, IO, PSYOP, law enforcement professionals, and USAID). Most of the research and human terrain information about the local population will include significant interplay with the staff elements dealing with nonlethal effects.

Future operations and plans

The HTT can also be used to support planning in the future operations and plans shop. The nature of the HTT's research, which is most effective with a long-range focus, allows the team to identify and address the long-term goals and effects the unit desires. Looking ahead three-plus months at what the unit has planned and collecting socio-cultural data that would be significant to those plans enhances the planning process. This practice also assists the planning shop in looking at assessment information to determine if the commander and his units are reaching their long-term goals and objectives.

Human Terrain Team Internal Organization

Regardless of the position within the staff, HTTs have historically organized themselves in five possible configurations in order to meet the needs of the supported unit.

Consolidated

Frequently, the HTT is kept intact and works on a set of research questions as a team. Within this internal organization, the team's primary objective is supporting the BCT commander and staff. This approach does not prevent support to subordinate units as long as the mission supports the overall team's research and the BCT headquarters' needs.

Split in support of the main effort

In a split configuration, a portion of the team focuses on the main effort for current operations, and another portion of the team prepares for future main efforts. The team splits its objectives, with one focusing on a subordinate unit and another supporting the BCT commander and staff. This orientation allows the team to focus all its efforts toward the same unit goal for the operation. This organization entails significant interaction and time with the subordinate unit.

Sub-unit orientation

Another way to organize the HTT is to allocate specific team members as liaisons/analysts for each subordinate unit. The commander can task each team member to focus on human terrain information and socio-cultural knowledge gaps for the subordinate unit. The team can then analyze and synthesize the information of each subordinate AO to provide a holistic picture of the higher headquarters' area. This orientation requires team members to spend significant time away from the team and among the subordinate units.

Geographic orientation

The HTT can also focus specific team members on geographic areas within the unit's area of responsibility. The commander can focus each team member on human terrain information and socio-cultural knowledge gaps for that geographic area. The team can then analyze and synthesize the information of each geographic area to provide a holistic picture of the higher headquarters' area. Under this internal organization, a team member would be dedicated to each separate subordinate unit's operational environment and, therefore, each subordinate unit commander. While the team would still belong to the BCT, each team member's primary objective would be his individual geographic area. This orientation could require the team member to spend significant time in the geographic area's command and away from the team.

Lines of operation/lines of effort orientation

The HTT can also be tasked to focus on the unit's lines of operation (LOO)/lines of effort (LOE). Specific analysts would be responsible for human terrain information that affects a particular LOO/LOE (i.e., governance, economics, and security), and they would focus on addressing the unit's end state for that LOO/LOE. Because information crosses over LOO/LOE, the analysts should feed data to the entire team for fusion and analysis. This information sharing allows the team to develop research based on the unit's operation plan (OPLAN)/operation order (OPORD). In addition, the team can influence the unit's mission execution through the working groups dedicated to the LOO/LOE.

Human Terrain Team Capabilities

The HTT can help the brigade assess the population's needs, interests, and grievances. This assessment occurs in cooperation with CA units and PRTs through engagement meetings with local officials, provincial government officials, and tribal leaders in the AO. HTTs also help the commander identify and engage key leaders, which assists the unit in addressing another aspect of the population: the average persons' perspective. When the HTT incorporates the "grass-roots" perspective into the government and tribal perspectives gathered by the CA, PRTs, and others, a more robust and clear picture on the needs of the entire population emerges. This in-depth picture can then be infused into the military decisionmaking process to increase positive outcomes.

In addition to drawing upon its own individual experience and expertise, each team leverages the available body of relevant, academic, field research data in its operational area. Each team requests and gathers additional data from a variety of sources operating in theater (patrols, CA, special operations, Iraqi Advisor Task Force, law enforcement programs, PSYOP, nongovernmental organizations, open-source indigenous research, and in-country population survey contractors). HTTs use this human terrain information to assist commanders in understanding the operational relevance of the information as it applies to the unit's planning processes. The expectation is that the resulting courses of action developed by the staff and selected by the commander will consistently be more culturally harmonized with the local population (a key focus of counterinsurgency operations), which should contribute to greater success. It is the trust of the indigenous population that is at the heart of the struggle between coalition forces and the insurgents.

A commander can also use HTTs to support in-depth cultural training that can complement existing cultural awareness training conducted for leaders, staff, and small units. This training can include interview techniques to help Soldiers ask the right questions in the correct way to elicit the desired responses. The human terrain information that the HTT gathers in the field is the basis for the content of relevant unit and individual training and education.

Support to preplanning information gathering (assessments)

Units will want to understand the socio-cultural landscape prior to initiating planning. The staff will want to understand the governmental, economic, security, educational, and health care institutions within its operational environment. The HTT can assist in providing assessments of attributes of the human terrain in response to staff requests for information and provide the supported unit with a comprehensive understanding of its AO. Assessments will typically fall into one of the following categories:

- **Social structure.** The composition, hierarchy, and influence of different strata of the social structure (tribal groups, ethnic groups, religious groups, class groups, professional groups, and networks).

- **Identities.** How a population identifies itself socially, culturally, religiously, within a family structure, globally, and individually.

- **Culture.** The beliefs, values, and attitudes of the local population; the myths, symbols, rituals, and historical narratives of the population.

- **Social and behavioral norms and sanctions.** The expected social behavior and the consequences of perceived violations of those norms in a given society.

- **Conflict resolution mechanisms.** How local groups and individuals typically resolve internal or external conflicts.

- **Legitimate authority figures.** The most influential individuals in respective societies and communities, their social networks, the source of their influence, and how they can be engaged to further the unit's purposes.

- **Political system (formal and informal).** The formal political system of the AO, including ministry systems, party politics, and federal institutions; the informal political system, including which informal groups have power in a society and why and how they maximize their access to resources.

- **Economic system (formal and informal).** Systems of production, distribution, and consumption in the society to include indicators of economic health of neighborhoods, food insecurity, and black markets.

- **Institutions.** The structure, function, and influence of the area's extant and historic institutions (formal and informal) such as banking, education, health care, and postal.

- **External factors influencing the operational environment.** The influence of neighboring countries and foreign religious bodies.

- **Demographics.** The composition of the population to include literacy, employment rate, religious sect membership, education, race, age, gender, and socio-economic status.

- **Cultural geography.** Comprehensive assessments on designated areas, whether regional or provincial or simply a neighborhood block.

- **Essential services.** The local population's interface and interaction with the nation's infrastructure (rail lines, oil pipelines, sewage and water system, electrical grid and capacity, communications infrastructure, and agricultural lands).

- **Religious factors.** The area's primary religious influences and its identity, history, motivations, structure, organization, beliefs, doctrine, holidays, and views on extremism.

- **Popular attitudes.** Assessing a population's collective mentality; attitudes toward modernity, religion, and foreign presence; attitudes toward bureaucracy, violence, capitalism, corruption, business practices, and negotiations.

Once the unit determines and analyzes these human terrain elements during mission analysis, it incorporates the analysis into planning during working groups and other meetings to enhance the mission analysis brief and add to the OPLAN/OPORD.

Support to unit engagements

The HTT can assist the commander to prepare for and conduct key leader engagements. The team systematically conducts network analysis of power structures and spheres of influence within the AO to identify who the commander and staff should be interacting with and in what capacity. Working with the appropriate staff element, the team can then identify and foster the building of relationships with those power brokers to facilitate positive engagements and cultural understanding between the parties. Post-engagement, the team provides the commander a back-brief and/or report that provides an analysis of the human terrain information gathered at the engagement and cultural cues (spoken and unspoken) identified throughout the event and their significance.

Support to reconciliation

By identifying the local tribal and religious cultural structures and using them to bring the required local leaders to the negotiating table, the HTT can be a key resource in promoting the reconciliation process. HTTs can build relationships with local power brokers, particularly actors previously viewed as irreconcilable.

Support to information operations

The HTT can provide significant socio-cultural input and recommendations to IO and PSYOP, such as making recommendations on IO themes and PSYOP products, identifying population sentiment toward the unit and its IO, and providing consequence management of messages. The team also reviews the IO measures of effectiveness and measures of performance for their applicability in assessing the human terrain. Identifying key persons of influence for leader engagements can also fall within the realm of IO.

Support during relief in place/transfer of authority

The HTT facilitates a smooth and complete transfer of local area knowledge, helps to maintain relationships between the brigade and local civilians, and helps to maintain momentum during unit relief in place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA). Teams are geographically located, and their tours of duty are carefully managed to overlap those of the rotating supported units
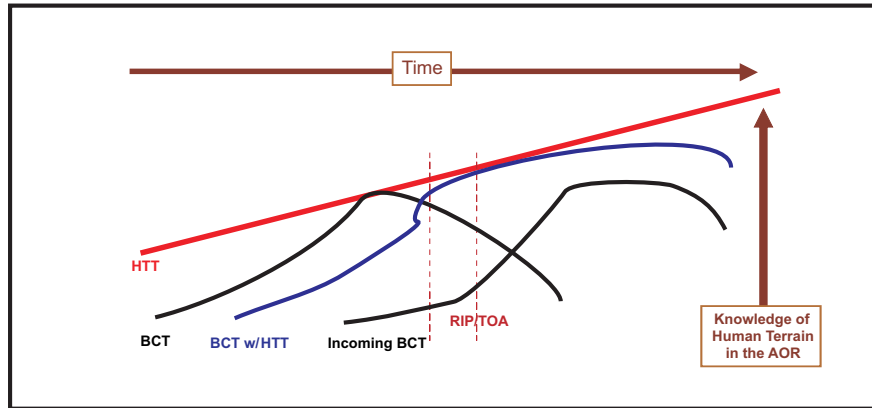
Figure 3-2. RIP/TOA learning curve

This overlap will allow the incoming commander and staff to have an immediate source of socio-cultural knowledge for key leader engagements. In addition, the HTT will be able to influence the commander's planning processes from the moment the unit hits the ground.

"We were way off the mark on cultural awareness. We did not study the different tribal affiliations or extremist interoperations and their effect on the areas we operated in. We expended too much effort trying to understand what was offensive or polite interaction with the populace."

– Battalion command sergeant major,
Center for Army Lessons Learned Handbook 07-27,
First 100 Days, Commander and Staff

During RIP/TOA, the unit should include the HTT in operations between the incoming and outgoing units, particularly with introducing the incoming military leadership to the local community, government, and tribal leaders.

Sustainment of the Human Terrain Team

HTTs do not have organic transport or sustainment equipment for operations away from the unit's headquarters. The unit provides all logistical support to include billeting, rations, security, and working space.

Transportation

The commander ensures the HTT is included in preplanned patrols and missions designed to utilize the team on the ground. The teams' movements around the AO require unit support. Field research work is closely coordinated with PRTs, CA, PSYOP, and local maneuver organizations (battalion and lower) in the AO. Essentially, any element that is able and willing to transport and utilize the team is leveraged for movement.

Equipment

Team members have organic computing equipment, including hardware and software (Analyst's Notebook, ArcGIS, Anthropac, UCINet and NetDraw), that allows it to analyze and manage the human terrain data collected in the field. Deployed teams and the continental U.S. reach-back research center use these systems to facilitate data sharing and cooperation.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the HTT enables commanders and their staffs to operate with specific, local population knowledge, which gives them the ability to make culturally-informed decisions. This knowledge enables commanders and staffs to increase support for the elected government and reduce support for belligerent actors and their operations. Additionally, using this knowledge prevents creating new friction points between the populations, the elected government, and U.S. military forces. Commanders and staffs that use this knowledge can reduce public support for illegitimate, nongovernmental organizations and, over time, reduce the motivation that underpins social upheaval, insurgencies, and radicalism.

For questions or further information, contact the Human Terrain System at <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil>.

Endnote

1. Bryan Karabaich, "Human Terrain Team (HTT) Debrief, 31 October-1 November 2007," a debrief of the first HTT leader and social scientist, Center for Army Lessons Learned.

Appendix A

Sources of Human Terrain Information

There are many sources that team members can leverage to collect human terrain information within their area of operations (AO) and support unit planning.

Secondary Source Research

Secondary source research is what most people commonly think of as open-source research. In this form of research, researchers collect data from the completed research of others. This data can take the form of existing data sets (canned data) or data in scholarly articles and books. Archival research can be found in both print and digital formats and in both libraries and online. The unit itself will provide secondary source research to the human terrain team (HTT) in the following formats:

- Local unit reports that cover current activity to include intelligence updates, assessments, and traffic analyses; human intelligence reports; situation reports from the various functions (psychological operations [PSYOP], civil affairs [CA], and Iraqi Advisor Task Force); reports generated by maneuver units; Red Team assessments; and region/conflict-specific reports (sectarian reports and host nation law enforcement evaluation reports).

- News sources, both domestic and international.

- External agency reports produced by research think tanks, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and the U.S. government.

Process observation

The unit's patrols and missions into the AO are prime opportunities for the HTT to engage in process observation. Process observers attend but do not engage in the activity or event that is being studied. The event, all the people at it, and whatever occurs are observed and noted. The key to being a good process observer is to maintain distance from the event and its participants (being at the event but not in it) and capturing what it is observed. The HTT typically conducts process observations in the following settings:

- External agency meetings

- District council meetings

- *Shuras*

- Local political group meetings

Participant observation

In participant observation, the researcher observes and participates in events. In contrast to process observation, the participant observer becomes part of the shared

experience with the intent of capturing an insider's viewpoint and group knowledge of the proceedings. The key to a good participant observation is to relax, become as much a part of the group and event as possible, experience the event, and then prepare good notes to capture the experience and observations.

The HTT typically conducts participant observation during unit meetings where the dialogue allows the team a glimpse into the unit's priorities and future operations. The HTT can use these opportunities to determine what kind of socio-cultural analytic support the unit will require.

Extended interviews

Accompanying a unit on a mission provides the HTT with an opportunity for extended interviews with the local population. Extended interviews involve in-depth interviews with a single person at a time. These extended interviews are either unstructured or semi-structured.

An unstructured interview starts from a broad general question, and once the subject of the interview begins answering, the interviewer encourages the subject to continue the dialogue. During a semi-structured interview, the researcher asks the subject to clarify his or her answers and asks directed follow-up questions based on those clarifications. If the extended interviews are part of a large, ongoing project, the first several interviews are of crucial importance because the themes that become apparent in the first interviews become the basis for directed follow-up questions. As the team conducts more interviews, the data will further confirm these themes, confirm and suggest new ones, or disconfirm the themes and suggest new ones.

Once the HTT has a solid idea regarding the themes important to the local population and the unit, it can generate questions and avenues of exploitation for the unit to pursue. The HTT can draft an appropriate list of questions for Soldiers to ask when engaging the local populace. The HTT can benefit from conducting the following sorts of extended interviews:

- Debriefing patrols and interviews with subordinate units. Because the HTT will not be able to participate in every patrol to gather the information necessary to support its research, it will be necessary to debrief/interview members of patrols. Many times these individuals have information they do not consider particularly valuable, or they never think to report the information because it does not appear relevant. Gathered properly and from the right people, this information paints a comprehensive picture of the operational environment.

- Debriefing U.S. government entities to include CA, PSYOP, information operations sections, provincial reconstruction teams, Department of State personnel, United States Agency for International Development personnel, agro-development teams, operations detachments-alpha, other governmental agencies, and other specialized military and government personnel in the region. The team may need to further validate the information by interviewing the local population.

- Debriefing individuals from host nation organizations, government offices, businesses, law enforcement and military units, community organizations, and contractors.

Survey interviews

Survey interview research involves a sample of a large, randomly selected group for data that the team can analyze quantitatively. HTTs do not normally conduct this type of research.

Appendix B

Human Terrain Team Products

> **"The greater part of mankind are so narrowly and so complacently satisfied with their own standpoint that it never occurs to them to imagine themselves in other men's positions, or to endeavor to analyze their motives. What a different world it would be if we all did so!"**
>
> **–Sir John Bagot Glubb (Glub Pasha),** *War In The Desert*, **1960**

Human terrain teams (HTTs) can produce a variety of products to include assessments and informational reports.

Assessments

Socio-cultural

The HTT conducts a socio-cultural assessment to acquire a more robust socio-cultural, political, and economic awareness of an operational area to provide the supported unit with operationally relevant information to better understand the human terrain. The team in consultation with the supported unit sets out the objectives of the assessment. The assessment may include identifying tribal friction points, local economic opportunities and constraints, local perceptions of the government, and avenues for dispute resolution.

Information operations themes

The HTT conducts an information operations (IO) themes assessment to support effective IO, which may include a review of pre-existing themes or identifying new themes that are culturally accurate, meaningful, and effective. Ideas for these themes will surface in meetings, during review of media, and while observing Soldiers' interactions with the local population and assessing locally generated psychological operations (PSYOP) products.

Media

Assessing trends in the media is intended to provide the unit a longitudinal view of events in the region that it generally does not have the time or means to exploit. Tracking these themes and occurrences allows the HTT a broader temporal view of events and the ability to place other local events in a more accurate context.

Informational Reports

Media summaries

Media summaries include items that have direct or indirect relevance to the area of operations or that might provide information on issues or events that units may encounter on their patrols or in intelligence traffic. These items allow the unit to place these references in a more accurate context.

Biographies

A biography describes a subject's life story, ideology, loyalties, beliefs, and genealogy. The HTT creates this report to inform the commander and staff of a particular local leader. A biography is usually associated with a key leader engagement or other governance-involved meeting and requires coordination with other staff elements such as the S7.

Cultural knowledge report

At the request of the unit, a cultural knowledge report offers an explanation and analysis of a socio-cultural issue. The HTT may also provide a cultural knowledge report if it feels the unit needs to be aware of other issues such as conflict mitigation strategies in the local culture or upcoming religious/cultural holidays. The HTT or the reach-back research center in conjunction with the team may generate these reports

Trip report

The HTT generates a trip report based on a combination of process observation and extended interviews. Trip reports provide a vehicle to convey these observations about the local population to the supported unit. The following is a list of observations the HHT could include in a trip report:

- The unit's interaction with the local population

- The reaction of the indigenous population to the presence of American forces

- Status of the infrastructure

- Economic indicators

- Host-nation security presence

- PSYOP products produced by extremist groups

- Spheres of influence encounters and engagements

Engagement debrief report

An engagement debrief report is based on a specific meeting or event (key leader engagement, Iraqi neighborhood council, and district advisory council). The report is based on a human terrain analysis of cultural cues that occurred during the engagement and is in a narrative format. This narrative format includes a brief executive summary that highlights key points that address pertinent issues.

Appendix C

Human Terrain Team and the Military Decisionmaking Process at the Brigade Combat Team Level

Mission Receipt	**Mission Analysis**	**COA Development**
• Analyze/determine commander's intent • Initiate assessment of human terrain (HT) and development of HT research plan	• Brief HT effects in the operating area • Develop HT staff estimate • Develop HT information requirements that support CCIR and IR	• Assist the BCT staff in development of courses of action (COAs)

COA Analysis	**COA Comparison**
• Evaluate the HT against friendly and enemy COAs	• Identify HT impacts on each COA • Recommend best to worst COA based on HT

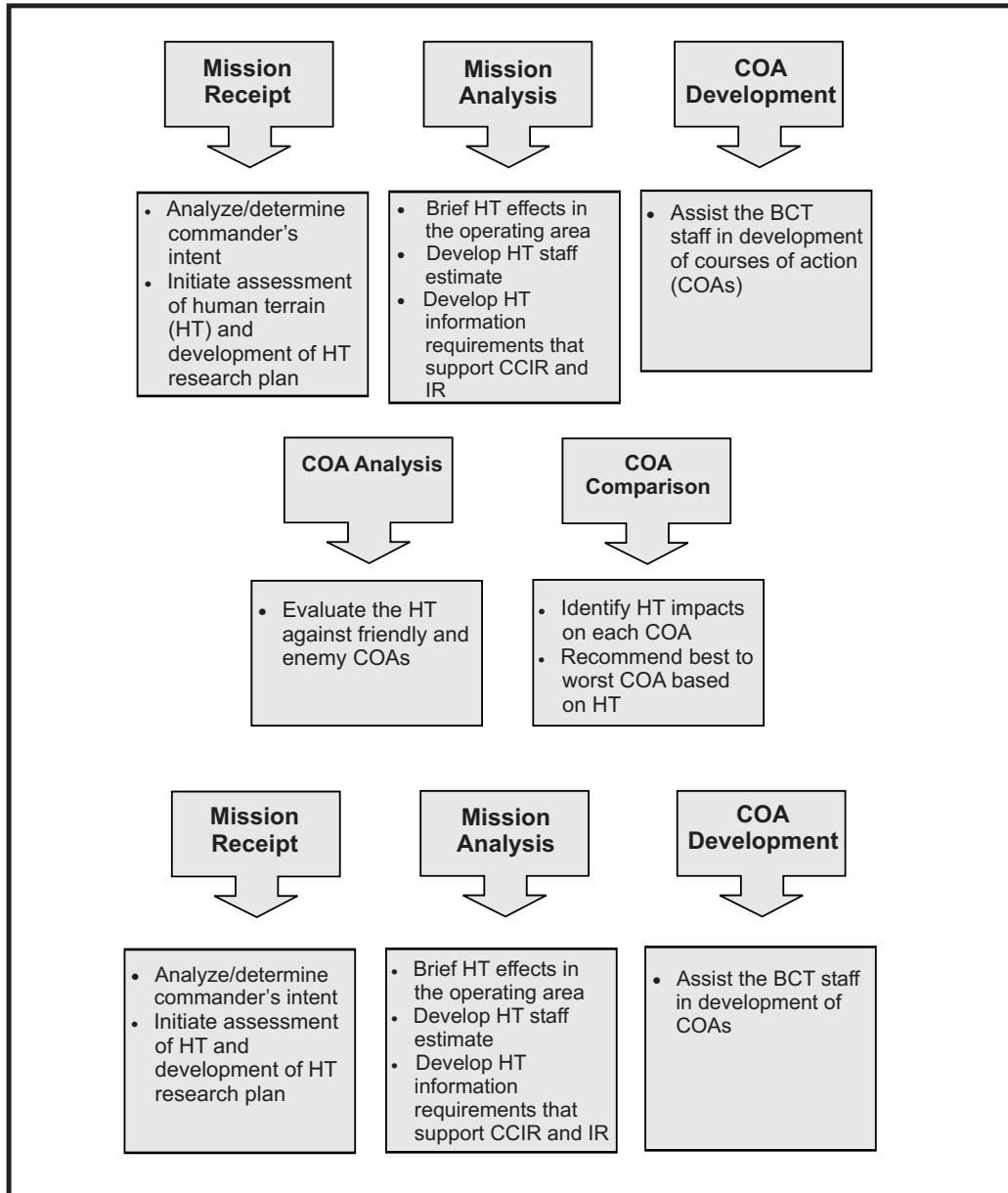| **Mission Receipt**	**Mission Analysis**	**COA Development**
• Analyze/determine commander's intent • Initiate assessment of HT and development of HT research plan	• Brief HT effects in the operating area • Develop HT staff estimate • Develop HT information requirements that support CCIR and IR	• Assist the BCT staff in development of COAs

Figure AC-1. Human Terrain Team Contributions to the Military Decisionmaking Process

Appendix D

Human Terrain System Terms of Reference

Socio-cultural information: Information about the social, cultural, and behavioral factors characterizing the relationships and activities of the population of a specific region or operational environment.

Human terrain: The element of the operational environment encompassing the cultural, sociological, political, and economic factors of the local population.

Human terrain information: Unclassified, open-source information about the human terrain that is geospatially, temporally, and relationally referenced.

Human terrain analysis: The analysis of human terrain information through multiple social science methodologies in support of the commander's operational decision-making process.

Social science field research: Multi-disciplinary, qualitative, and quantitative social science research conducted in situ within the population under study that adheres to academic standards for scientific rigor and research ethics. Social science field research:

- Leverages all the relevant tools from sociology, anthropology, political science, and psychology.

- Utilizes survey research methods, interview methods, and ethnographic methods.

- Includes a description of the methods by which data was collected and an estimation of the validity of the data.

- Is conducted by individuals with social science experience and qualifications.

Human Terrain System (HTS): An Army project administered by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command G-2 that: (1) deploys teams of social scientists and military analysts to provide focused support to field commanders in understanding human terrain; (2) supports these teams through a reach-back research center and a subject-matter expert network; (3) conducts open-source social science research and analysis; and (4) databases this information in the Mapping the Human Terrain (MAP-HT) Toolkit.

Human terrain team (HTT): A team deployed by the HTS to support brigade combat team (BCT)/regimental combat team (RCT) commanders. The HTT integrates into the BCT/RCT staff, conducts unclassified open-source and field research, and analyzes human terrain information in support of the commander's military decisionmaking process (MDMP).

Human terrain and analysis team (HTAT): A team deployed by the HTS to support echelons above BCT/RCT. The HTAT integrates into the commander's staff, conducts unclassified open-source and field research, synthesizes the

information from HTTs deployed with subordinate units, and analyzes human terrain information in support of the commander's MDMP.

Social science research and analysis (SSRA): A team deployed by the HTS at division or higher echelons to conduct large-sample social science field research in support of HTTs, HTATs, and their supported units.

Reach-back research center (RRC): A continental United States-based research and analysis element within the HTS that provides direct support to deployed HTTs, HTATs, and SSRA teams.

Subject-matter expert network (SMENet): A network of experts from government, academia, and industry maintained by the HTS to provide on-demand informational, consulting, research, and analysis support to the HTTs, HTATs, SSRA teams, and the RRC.

MAP-HT: A software toolkit for human terrain analysis deployed within the HTS.

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Center for Army Leadership (CAL)

CAL plans and programs leadership instruction, doctrine, and research. CAL integrates and synchronizes the Professional Military Education Systems and Civilian Education System. Find CAL products at <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/CAL/index.asp>.

Combat Studies Institute (CSI)

CSI is a military history "think tank" that produces timely and relevant military history and contemporary operational history. Find CSI products at <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/csi/RandP/CSIpubs.asp>.

Combined Arms Center-Training: **The Road to Deployment**

This site provides brigade combat teams, divisions, and support brigades the latest road to deployment information. This site also includes U.S. Forces Command's latest training guidance and most current Battle Command Training Program Counterinsurgency Seminars. Find The Road to Deployment at <http://rtd.leavenworth.army.smil.mil>.

Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD)

CADD develops, writes, and updates Army doctrine at the corps and division level. Find the doctrinal publications at either the Army Publishing Directorate (APD) <http://www.usapa.army.mil> or the Reimer Digital Library <http://www.adtdl.army.mil>.

Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO)

FMSO is a research and analysis center on Fort Leavenworth under the TRADOC G-2. FMSO manages and conducts analytical programs focused on emerging and asymmetric threats, regional military and security developments, and other issues that define evolving operational environments around the world. Find FMSO products at <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/recent.htm> or <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/products.htm>.

Military Review (MR)

MR is a refereed journal that provides a forum for original thought and debate on the art and science of land warfare and other issues of current interest to the U.S. Army and the Department of Defense. Find MR at <http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/CAC/milreview>.

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United States Army Information Operations Proponent (USAIOP)

USAIOP is responsible for developing and documenting all IO requirements for doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities; managing the eight personnel lifecycles for officers in the IO functional area; and coordinating and teaching the qualification course for information operations officers. Find USAIOP at <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/usaiop.asp>.

U.S. Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency (COIN) Center

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