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raq Issues - Lessons Learned

1) **Utilize Mandatory, Formal After Action/Lessons Learned Debriefings:** A formal process needs to be implemented to identify, document, and distribute to all relevant personnel, lessons learned during the deployments. (RDLU should be commended for its efforts in this regard; however, more needs to be done.) The after action debriefs should be mandatory for all deployed personnel. They should be formally documented and the results should be shared with all relevant parties.

2) **Overseas Operations/Deployments Must Start With A Clearly Defined and Articulated Mission:** Prior to sending Agents overseas, the FBI must be able to articulate specific, clearly defined and prioritized, goals and objectives. The Bureau should not be sending bodies merely to have an "FBI presence" nor should we have some vague and amorphous mission statement. During the course of the deployment, continual evaluations should be made in order to determine whether the "results" are worth the effort/risks.

3) **Operation of Sources Overseas:** Given our ever expanding international role, consideration needs to be given to working with the CIA (and other relevant governmental officials) to craft mutually agreeable guidelines which would, in limited situations, allow Agents to operate sources overseas. The Agents sent to Iraq were given the mission of protecting "the United States against terrorist attack and espionage activity by engaging in intelligence gathering activities" but were expressly prohibited from operating sources. The ability to be successful at that mission is severely adversely affected by the prohibition against operating sources overseas.

4) **Bureau Policy/Guidance regarding Coercive Interrogations:** During the Iraq deployment FBI Agents routinely worked with intelligence personnel from other agencies/entities whose policies and procedures regarding coercive interrogations differ from ours (i.e., military intelligence, CIA, DOD contractors, Iraqi nationals). Prior to deployment, all Agents should be briefed regarding the Bureau's policy on presence during /assistance to (etc.) coercive interrogations.

5) **Decentralized Decision Making:** Approval of sensitive site exploitations should be made by the On-Scene Commander ("OSC"), or his designee, and not by an Assistant Director ("AD") at FBIHQ, literally half way around the world. The existing policy of requiring AD approval at FBIHQ diminished our credibility, and correspondingly our perceived effectiveness, in the eyes of the military because we could not commit to operations within the short time frame which the military operates. In addition, in the military's eyes, the existing policy undermined the authority and effectiveness of the OSC because he did not have the authority to make operational decisions which are routinely made, in military operations, at the correspondingly lower levels.

6) **Overlap of Personnel In Theater:** Currently there is minimal overlap of investigative personnel in theater (i.e., WFO Agents fly out the same day that Miami Agents fly in). While improvements have been made in this regard, consideration should be given to structuring the rotational cycle to provide greater overlap. (i.e., on a 60 day rotation, 1/2 the team rotates out/in every 30 days thereby ensuring that there are always investigators with 30 days in-country experience). While this would result in twice the number of flights transporting personnel to/from the theater, the benefits in operational efficiency/effectiveness and safety outweigh the monetary costs.

7) **Force Protection - Rules of Engagement / Use of Force Policy In Iraq:** Agents sent to Iraq were admonished to adhere to the FBI's standard deadly force policy. This policy was crafted for use in a domestic law enforcement situation and needs to be modified to meet the unique conditions in a war zone - especially in light of the fact that portions of our policy directly conflict with the military's policy. (e.g., warning shots and shooting vehicles to disable them are authorized by the military and have a legitimate use in a war zone but both are expressly prohibited by FBI.) A policy consistent with that of the U.S. military should be considered.

8) **Force Protection - Vehicles:** The Bureau should ensure that armored vehicles are available for all personnel throughout the entire area of operations. [REDACTED]

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9) **Force Protection - Weapons:** Agents use the M4 as the primary weapon in Iraq - yet many of [REDACTED]

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10) **Force Protection - Training:** Additional pre-deployment training, particularly hands-on practical scenarios, should be given by HRT or other appropriate personnel regarding force protection issues. (i.e., [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] etc.): During earlier deployments Agents received about a half day of this training - which was good. However, more is needed.

11) **Communications With Military Forces in a War Zone:** If Agents are going to be [REDACTED]

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telephonic communications.

12) Communications With Local Population in a War Zone: In pre-deployment briefings, Agents should, at a minimum, be given some basic language instruction so that they are able to issue basic commands in the local language (i.e., "Stop", "Drop your weapon", "Don't shoot", "Don't move"). In addition, Agents should be issued a language card, which they can carry on their person, that explains how to issue these commands - and other relevant phrases - in the local language.

13) Communications With FBI Personnel in a War Zone: During portions of the Iraq deployment, personnel not based in BIAP (i.e., those at the Mosul Operations Base) had repeated trouble communicating with BIAP by both voice and electronic medium [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

teams. (HRT had experience with both these communication systems and their experience was invaluable in troubleshooting and maintaining this gear. BIAP had dedicated communications technicians.)

14) Standardization of Gear Issue: The HRT and Fly Teams do an excellent job in identifying and procuring mission appropriate gear. Unfortunately, this gear is not provided to the regular agents who are rotating through Iraq. Examples of gear available to HRT/Fly teams but not available to regular agents includes [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

This gear should be available to all agents who deploy. In addition, a RDLU supervisor should deploy with each major deployment to handle logistical issues as they develop during the deployment.

15) Pre Brief re Country/Culture/Players: Agents need to have a better "nuts and bolts" briefing regarding the country, its culture and the relevant players before deploying. For example, if Agents are deploying to Northern Iraq, someone should brief them on who and what the PUK and KDP are (the two political parties who run northern Iraq), how they differ, what their interests are, how to deal with them, what we had done with them in the past, what they will want from us, etc.

16) EAP: An EAP debriefing should be mandatory and should occur immediately upon return from deployment. In addition, the Bureau should consider providing some type of assistance to families of deployed Agents. The OSC and D-OSC deployed for six months. HRT Agents are deployed multiple times each year. These deployments cause their families to bear significant burdens not routinely borne by the families of regular Agents. The Bureau should attempt to determine whether it, as an institution, can provide assistance to these families similar to those that the military provides to the families of its deployed personnel.