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# The Role of the Division Provost Marshal in Warrior Police Development

By Lieutenant Colonel Bradley W. Graul

*The days of the division having a military police company are gone, and we must adapt as Warrior Police to maximize our support to the brigade combat teams (BCTs) that now form our Army divisions. We all understand, and more importantly, appreciate the fact that the Military Police Corps is “growing” in personnel; however, this growth could be stifled if we are not careful with our arrogance and how “we” employ military police Soldiers assigned to divisions.*

We must first examine what I believe is a flaw regarding the assignment of military police officers to division provost marshal (PM) or BCT PM positions without requiring prerequisites. The division PM, in a perfect world, should be a former battalion commander or Soldier who is “seasoned” with experience or has held a Department of the Army staff assignment. The BCT PM, in turn, should be a captain who has commanded a company and understands the rudimentary deployment of military police assets. But in reality, we don’t have the luxury of filling these positions with Soldiers possessing these prerequisites or skill identifiers. The system that we have in place, with military police officers filling these assignments (especially at the BCT level), creates an uneven playing field among the other staff officers that make up a BCT (note that most of the other staff members are field grade officers). So how does the BCT PM survive in the fast-paced combat arms environment? He must get support from the technical control (TECHCON) of the division PM chain.

A great case in point centers on the vital role of developing and employing military police across a division front—particularly in the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized). I experienced firsthand the criticality of the role to shape the operating environment with military police influence. It starts with organizing your division PM section, an area already resourced with a robust staff, as your senior

subject matter experts (SMEs) on military police battlefield functions and employment. This staff can provide invaluable assistance as you channel more than 250 years of military police experience to shape the operating environment. It starts with proving to senior division leadership—chief of staff, assistant division commander—maneuver (ADC-M), assistant division commander—support (ADC-S), and commanding general (CG)—that his division PM staff is a combat multiplier. You must build that trust among the combat arms community, now absorbed in maneuver and fires and the effects of the operational field. It can be done, but requires nurturing!

Prior to deployment, the military police in BCTs of the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized) were used continuously for installation law enforcement (LE) functions—our CG demanded it. He wanted the “Ironhorse patch personnel” providing daily LE within the division footprint because he appreciated the value of maintaining one of the five military police battlefield functions. This same approach was used for the remaining battlefield functions—maneuver and mobility support operations, area security operations, internment and resettlement operations, and police intelligence operations—and tangible benefits were reached throughout the division front.

When the BCTs conducted mission rehearsal exercises, we embedded portions of the division staff

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as SMEs. This practice reinforced the value-added benefit that the division PM and his staff brought to the operation. Another important means of support is conducting periodic synchronization meetings with the BCT PMs at the division level. The primary purpose of the meetings is to reinforce the capabilities that military police bring to the fight and to see how each of the BCT PMs are establishing themselves as a commodity versus staff “flunkies.” These meetings provide enormous dividends and, in turn, give the BCT PMs a voice at the division level since the division PM has the ear of the chief of staff and, more importantly, the CG when asked to provide situation reports. Once again, the whole piece of trust and how it goes through the maturation process among other staff officers is what sets you apart.

The BCT PM (and how he is coached and mentored by the division PM) drives the cycle that feeds the necessary energy and confidence required to properly advise the BCT commander. BCT commanders are very hesitant to let assets out of the BCT sphere of influence and may push back “outsiders” from the division when weighing how military police should be employed. As a division PM, I had BCT commanders asking me directly about how they could better employ their military police assets (the fact that some commanders only had a platoon speaks volumes for the weight of the division PM position).

In the War on Terrorism, our military police focus mainly on LE and internment and resettlement operations. It is very important for leadership to foster and promote the division PM and BCT PM roles throughout our Army during this campaign. Fostering an apparatus that searches for officers and noncommissioned officers with experience in BCTs or divisions will be invaluable as we continue our efforts in Iraq with police transition teams (PTTs) and detention operations. The long-term campaign for Iraqi police (IP) development will solicit the experience inherently embedded in seasoned military police leaders at all levels (from Corps PM down to BCT, company, and platoon levels). The issue impacting the campaign plan is the nonsynergy that military police leaders have at all levels. As we continue to rotate senior military police leaders deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), careful consideration should be exercised when redesigning how the IP should be trained and how this training will deviate from the current plan for development. Staying the course with the campaign plan for police development will require current and

future leaders to commit to full ownership of plan execution versus presenting branch or sequel plans that foster IP development in a different direction. Goal posts for each year should be addressed in detail within the campaign plan, and buy-in with IP senior leaders should be accomplished so that we can collectively execute each goal post and continue to improve the readiness of not only the IP but also the National Police and the Iraqi Army. Numerous coordination meetings at the division level chaired by the ADC-M proved invaluable as we continued our endeavors of pushing the effectiveness of the PTTs, military transition teams, and National Police transition teams working with their Iraqi counterparts. The division PM played a critical role—as did each brigade, battalion, company, and BCT military police leader—to work the lines of operations to improve the training readiness assessment (TRA) levels to a point where the Iraqis can operate without assistance from coalition forces. Monthly TRA briefings with the CG were conducted at the division level, with the staff lead of the division PM working closely with BCT military police operating within the division’s battlespace.

In summary, our military police community can achieve much more as we support OIF and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), using all of the military police leader assets to work whatever problems we have within the theater to support our warfighting brethren. Putting aside the traditional command relationships within the division operational environment may be a requirement to achieve the ultimate end state to a successful execution of the campaign plan for police development in Iraq and Afghanistan. This same approach could be tied to our support in detention operations. The Corps PM, military police brigade commanders, division PMs, battalion commanders, and BCT PMs are the key players working jointly to have complete ownership of how we execute and support division commanders. One approach used during OIF 05-07 involved the Corps PM chairing a monthly PM senior steering committee that included some of the key players mentioned above. This monthly meeting was invaluable and directly impacted the overall success of IP development. Practices such as these are great tactics, techniques, and procedures for all leaders to use so that we can achieve our desired end state in the OIF and/or OEF theaters of operations.

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