IED Defeat Gated Training Strategy

A Holistic Approach to Preparing Units and Soldiers for Combat

By Colonel Kenneth J. Crawford

Warfighters and leaders across the United States Army often face the same challenge as they create and execute their directed mission-essential task list (DMETL) training. Once they receive orders for deployment, their interests quickly adjust to their future operating environment and the threats therein. The most common and lethal threat experienced on today's battlefield is the improvised explosive device (IED).

Of the 4,865 fallen warriors in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom,[1] 3,830[2] are a result of hostile action, and 2,350—or 61.4 percent—are the direct result of an IED.[3] Thousands more have been wounded by the devices. These deadly IEDs consist of various types and configurations of explosives, munitions, triggers, and arming and firing methods. However, there is one constant element—it took an enemy to design, finance, manufacture, transport, emplace, arm, and (sometimes) detonate an extremely lethal device against our fellow warriors. The purpose of this article is to furnish leaders and resource providers with a holistic and practical approach to prepare and train Soldiers and units for combat. Specifically, it is meant to provide a methodical approach along the three lines of operation laid out by the Joint IED Defeat Organization (JIEDDO),[4] which calls for—

- Defeating the device.
- Attacking the network.
- Training the force.

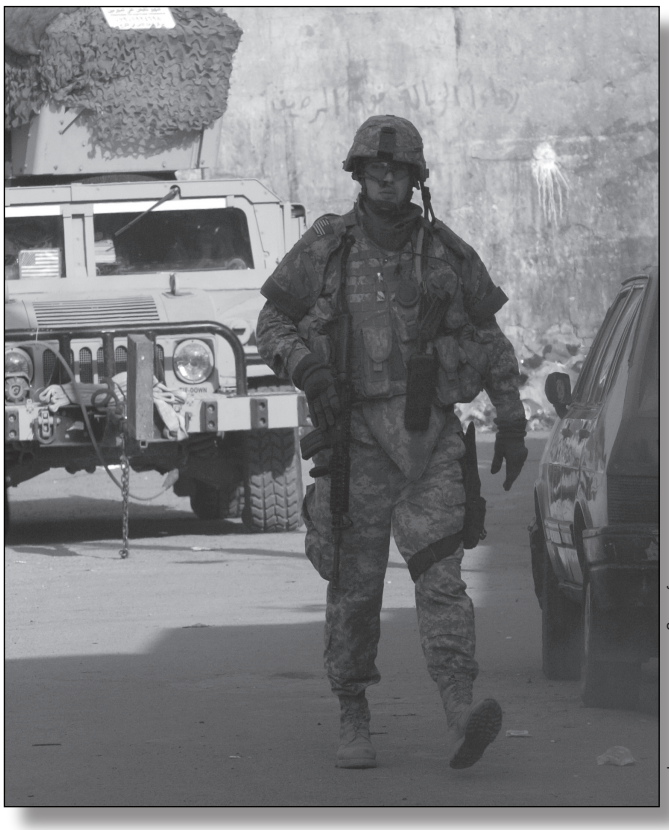


Photo by Sergeant First Class Kap Kim

IED defeat skills are important for Soldiers whether mounted or on foot.

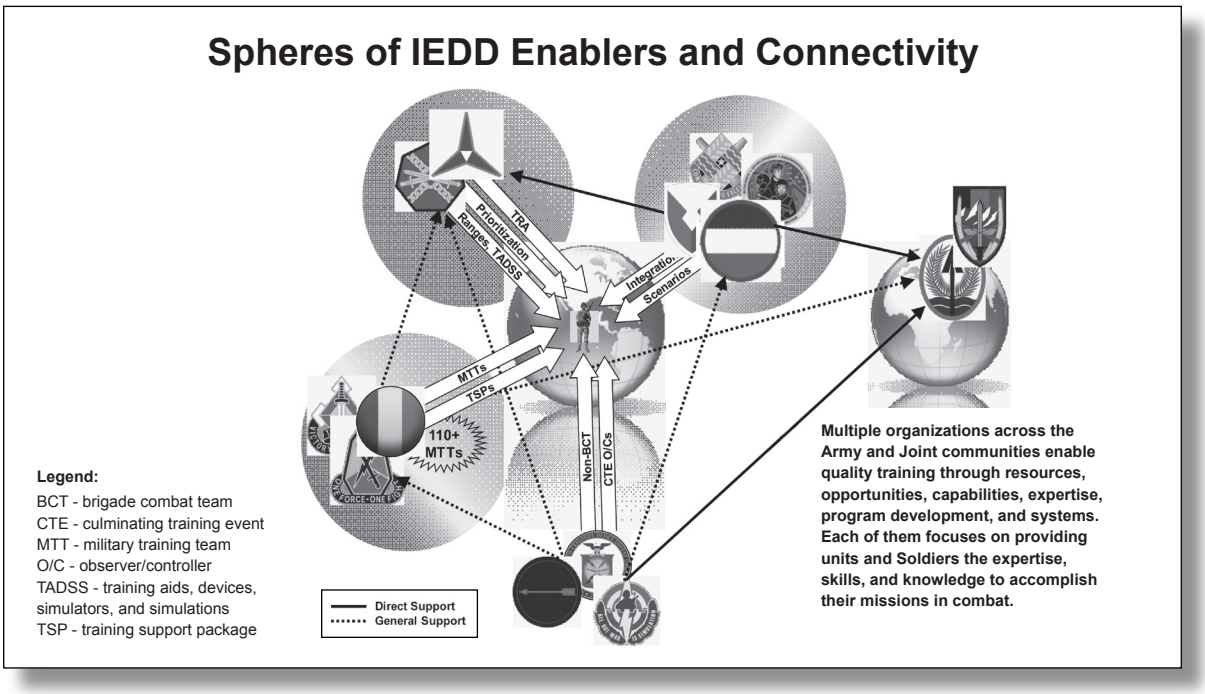


Figure 1

The readily available and supporting Joint Center of Excellence at Fort Irwin, California, supports training warfighters by "validating and propagating IED defeat (IEDD) tactics, using [tactics,] techniques and procedures (TTP) and lessons learned from theater."[5] The primary outlet for this expertise is found in our combat training centers (CTCs), which provide units with a wealth of experience and resources in a hyper-realistic training environment. The challenge is providing this quality of training experience across the Army for all deploying forces at home and mobilization stations for all Regular Army and Reserve Component forces.

Providing Quality Training

A systematic approach to providing Soldiers and units with the quality of training they deserve is to harness the resources of our installations—facilities; ranges; training aids, devices, simulators, and simulations [TADSS]—and the expertise of specific organizations such as JIED-DO, the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command's IEDD Integrated Capabilities Development Team, and Forces Command's IEDD Integration Cells. These are used in a gated training strategy (GTS) similar to the one used to conduct Bradley Fighting Vehicle and tank gunnery tables. (See Figure 1 for the interrelated resource providers for home station training.) The solution isn't simple and will require vigilance to maintain relevance as our tactical environments and enemy TTP change. Every unit leader's intent is to develop and resource the training that will best prepare their Soldiers for what they may experience downrange. Rather than complicating resource requirements, the IEDD community must enable the chain of command, which has the ultimate responsibility (inherent within senior commanders' training and readiness authority [TRA]) for preparing Soldiers and units for deployment. The cascading complexity of efficiently coordinating the resources for a senior commander requires a dedicated and focused effort to provide support to all units training at home station. Essentially, this is commanders' business and commanders must have the ability to use resources to meet their common challenge, which is the absence of a standard, relevant, and current approach to training IEDD at the individual through collective levels.

Structuring and Planning the GTS

Structuring a way to overcome this challenge through live, virtual, and constructive (LVC) training to produce a CTC-like experience at home station lets leaders and units hone their skills, battle drills, and TTP before certification and deployment. In essence, the leaders and units will arrive at the CTC or their deployed destination with heightened levels of competency and ability. The GTS is not a catchall approach for training on all predeployment tasks, but focuses on IEDD and its supporting or interrelated tactical tasks. Given the high probability that IEDs will remain a weapon of choice for our enemies in future conflicts, our IEDD training must be adaptive, structured, and holistic.

Soldiers are at risk of encountering IEDs while deployed, and their probability of encountering them depends on their unique operational environment. To effectively synchronize our IEDD GTS, we must prioritize the competing demands for resources and dovetail the hierarchy of training requirements with the training tasks in the four categories articulated in FORSCOM's Southwest Asia (SWA) Training Guidance[6] in November 2008—(see Figure 2, page 33). The GTS focuses the specific individual, leader, and collective IEDD training tasks (outlined in red boxes in Figure 2), builds upon each training experience,

Required Tasks by Deployment Category

CAT 1 — Contingency Operating Base/Forward Operating Base Units

Units that would rarely, if ever, travel off a COB/FOB

such as Theater Support: Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, etc.

Individual Soldier Tasks (60 Tasks)

- Complete Army Warrior Tasks (32 Tasks)
- Qualify with Assigned Weapon
- Complete Basic First Aid (11 Tasks)
- Conduct HMMWV Rollover Training
- Complete Hot and Cold Weather Training
- Conduct Desert Environment Training
- Complete Mine Awareness Training
- Complete Level 1 Antiterrorism Awareness Training
- Complete Regulatory Briefings (General Orders, OPSEC/SAEDA, Equal Opportunity, Prevent Sexual Harassment/Assault, DA Fraternization Policy, Army Values and Ethics
- Identify Combat Stress & Suicide Prevention (including Battlemind, MTBI, PTSD)
- Conduct Personnel Recovery Training
- Conduct Law of War Training
- Complete Rules of Engagement Training
- Complete Rules for Use of Force (RUF) Training
- Complete Biometrics Training
- Complete Trafficking in Persons Brief
- Complete Media Awareness Training
- Complete Country Orientation Brief
- Complete Basic Language/Culture Training

Individual Leader Tasks

- Complete Theater Briefing (Military, Culture, Economic, Religious, Political)
- Complete Level 2 Antiterrorism Awareness Training
- Conduct Casualty and Medical Evacuation
- Complete Application and Uses of Biometrics Training
- Incorporate Personnel Recovery Planning
- Complete Identify/Mitigate Combat Stress
- Complete Suicide Prevention Brief
- Supervise Proper Field Sanitation
- Individual IED Defeat Leader Tasks
- Utilize an Interpreter

Collective Tasks

- Execute Army Warrior Training Battle Drills (12 Tasks)
- Execute Culminating Training Event

CAT 2 — COB/FOB Units w/Travel Off Base (* Includes All CAT 1 Tasks)

Units that will or potentially will travel for short duration off a COB/FOB

such as Light/Medium Truck Company, Horn of Africa, Guantanamo Bay, Civil Affairs/Psychological Operations, Postal, Combat Support Hospital, Detainee Operations

Additional Individual Soldier Tasks
Expanded IED Defeat Training

- Identify Visual Indicators of an IED
- React to a Possible IED
- React to an IED Attack or Vehicle Borne IED
- React to an IED initiated Chemical Attack
- Prepare for IED Threats Prior to Movement
- Employ Man-Pack and Vehicular-mounted Electronic Warfare Device
- Perform a 9-line UXO/IED Explosive Hazard Spot Report
- Plan for IED Threats

Additional Individual Leader Tasks

- Conduct Call for Fire
- Supervise Convoy Operations
- Complete Media Engagement Training
- Supervise Traffic Control Points
- Supervise Handling of Enemy Personnel and Equip
- Conduct PCCs / PCIs of Combat Patrols
- Supervise Application of ROE/Graduated Response

Additional Collective Tasks

- Conduct Live Fire Exercises
- Execute Convoy Operations (including Crew Training)
- Complete IEDD Collective Tasks (11 Tasks)
- Maintain Base Camp Defense and Security
- Execute Culminating Training Event

CAT 3 — Units Conducting Mission Off COB/FOB (* Includes All CAT 1 and 2 Tasks)

such as Security Force, Provincial Reconstruction Team, Afghan National Army, Light/Medium Truck Company (Self Secure), Engineer, Route Clearance, Military Police Police Transitional Team

Additional Individual Leader Tasks

- Perform Negotiations
- Plan and Conduct Urban Operations (OIF)
- Plan and Conduct Mountainous Operations (OEF)
- Conduct Crowd Control

Additional Collective Tasks

- Conduct Live Fire Exercises
- Coordinate With Coalition Forces
- Execute Culminating Training Event

Units that will travel and conduct majority of missions off a COB/FOB

CAT 4 — Maneuver Units (* Includes All CAT 1 , 2, and 3 Tasks)

Maneuver Units with an AE, newly formed units, units on a constrained deploy timeline

such as Brigade Combat Team, Counterinsurgency Operations

Additional Individual Leader Tasks

- IED-Defeat Training—Plan for IED Threats
- Senior Leader Orientation Training

Additional Collective Tasks

- Nonlethal Weapons Capabilities Training
- Execute Culminating Training Event

FORSCOM SWA TRAINING GUIDANCE
DATED 172035ZNOV08

Legend:

BCT - brigade combat team
CA - civil affairs
CSH - combat support hospital
DA - Department of the Army
Det Ops- detainee operations
GTMO - Guantanamo Bay
HOA - Horn of Africa
MTBI - mild traumatic brain injury
OEF - Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF - Operation Iraqi Freedom
OPSEC - operations security
PCC - precombat check
PCI - precombat inspection
PSYOP - psychological operations
PTSD - post-traumatic stress disorder
ROE - rules of engagement
SAEDA - subversion and espionage directed against the Army
SECFOR - security force
UXO - unexploded ordnance

Figure 2

and culminates in the unit's ability to systematically defeat the device and attack the network.

The construct of the IEDD GTS takes into account the following considerations:

- It must be scalable to meet the desired training objectives from platoon to brigade level. The strategy must have the ability to be tailored to a unit's mission and experience level. Commanders must tailor the concept to fit current unit training levels, especially for a combat-experienced force; the start point for training may not always be the "crawl" stage. As units head into the next higher level's training event, they must prepare accordingly. As units prepare for major combat operations gunnery, a crew is expected to execute specific tasks before operating as part of a section or platoon; platoons must master specific tasks before executing company-level operations; and companies and battalions must be able to effectively maneuver and mass firepower to support battalion- and brigade-level operations. The nesting of IEDD GTS is similar with the underlying objectives of defeating the device and maneuvering on and attacking the network.
- The training, enemy and friendly TTP, available TADSS, terrain and environment, and systems employed must be relevant and current. We should train with the same systems and platforms Soldiers will operate downrange to reduce the initial risks associated with learning while being engaged. It is absolutely necessary to field our platforms and systems first to those in the fight. To train effectively on similar systems, we can create surrogates and mock-ups to achieve the desired effects until we field the actual systems at our home stations.
- We must ensure that our doctrine and knowledge management remain relevant, current, dynamic, and adaptive to the changing threat abroad. JIEDDO provides outstanding references and resources for LVC training applications through the Knowledge and Information Fusion Exchange (KnIFE). The primary purpose of KnIFE is "to exchange information, consolidate best practices, and respond to requests for information (RFIs) related to the asymmetric application of … (TTP) by both enemy and friendly forces."[7] The KnIFE website provides leaders and units with a wealth of information to enable quality training. Keeping our doctrine current is a significant challenge. Our existing doctrine is a reference that we must expand into our digital knowledge management databases to allow the Army to remain current until the release of the next printed revision. The constantly changing conditions and operating environments mandate a requirement to have both a baseline printed reference and an individual, dynamic online database of information to maintain relevance for the warfighter's training.

We must provide and resource the most realistic training for our Soldiers to immerse them in the environment they'll operate in abroad. The structures, civilians, smells, and sounds experienced by individual Soldiers and units serve to help "inoculate" and prepare them to instinctively respond to conditions they might encounter while deployed.

IEDD "Gunnery"

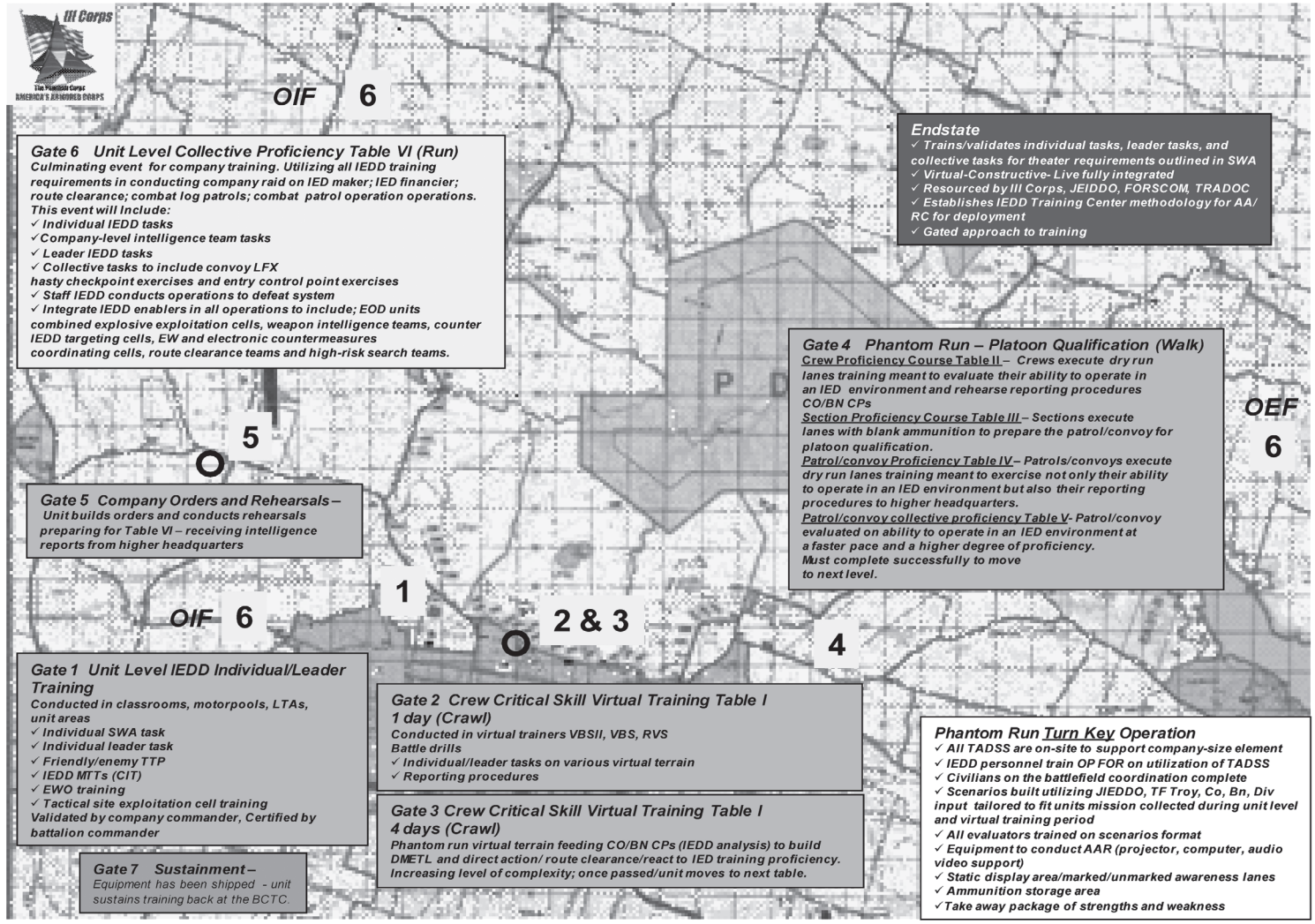
The IEDD GTS is a holistic approach to training everything from individual Soldiers to brigade-size units to defeat the device and attack the network. The overarching intent is to ensure that units understand and can effectively analyze the complexity of the IEDD fight. The IEDD GTS provides this by creating gates where individuals and units must successfully accomplish specific training objectives to standard before moving to the next higher and more complex gate. The structure of the IEDD GTS includes tables similar to Bradley Fighting Vehicle and tank gunnery tables and is focused on specific unit levels (see Figure 3, page 35).

Gate 1 establishes a baseline to ensure that every individual, crew, and squad can successfully execute the common individual and leader training tasks. It also guarantees that they possess a common frame of reference based on FORSCOM training guidance, doctrine, unit standing operating procedures (SOPs), and current enemy and friendly TTP. KnIFE's training

Photo by Sergeant First Class Kap Kim

The environments where IEDs are encountered range from rural to inner-city slums. Knowing local residents is just as important as knowing TTP and Army systems.

IEDD Gated Training Strategy Concept
(Live-Virtual-Constructive)



Legend:

BN - battalion
CIT - capabilities integration team
CO - company
CP - command post
EOD - explosive ordnance disposal
EW - electronic warfare
EWO - electronic warfare officer
LTA - local training area
MTT - military training teams
RVS - reconfigurable vehicle simulator
VBSVBSII - Virtual Battle Simulation/Virtual Battle Simulation II

Figure 3

Photo by Colonel Kenneth J. Crawford

As the sun sets over Baghdad, a Buffalo crewmember prepares for a night mission.

resources can enhance unit capabilities when Soldiers attend courses, participate in distance learning, or apply the training support packages available for download. Similar to the gunnery skills tests, commanders certify that individuals and crews are ready to begin the LVC training tables outlined in the IEDD GTS before allowing crews to move into Table I (Crew Skills Virtual Training).

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Table I

Table I includes *Gate 2* and *Gate 3*, which build on previously gained experiences and knowledge. Unit training is applied and refined through virtual training with simulators and simulations to validate the TTP units will adopt in their SOPs for tactical operations. The focus of Table I is to ensure that crews can effectively perform individual and leader tasks in virtual terrain, provide proper contact reports, and successfully execute crew battle drills, such as rollover drills using the high-mobility, multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV) egress assistance trainer (HEAT). *Gate 2* is executed in generic virtual terrain and includes graduated skill levels. Once crews successfully meet the standards of performance, they pass into the second half of Table I *(Gate 3)*, which provides a more complex and realistic training experience for the crew and unit. The simulated terrain replicates actual terrain they will encounter in Tables II to V. At this point, the scenario provides a comprehensive experience from the individual crew up to the battalion and brigade commander and staff levels. This takes advantage of the way units manage, report, synthesize, and analyze reports and information for future decisions and action. Every report from Table I to VI (collective proficiency) is meaningful, eventually leading to the ultimate objective of successfully "attacking the network" and ensuring a holistic training experience.

Tables II to V

Platoons normally serve as the lowest level called on to execute patrols in a combat environment. Thus, Tables II to V build to platoon-level proficiency in live scenarios with a crawl-walk-run approach. Crews, sections, and platoons execute their mission and focus on their ability to operate in a combat environment, defeat the effects of IEDs, and submit effective reports as staffs analyze the reports and build actionable intelligence for direct action. Platoon leaders execute one or more missions, similar to what they could experience while deployed. Missions might include—

- Mounted or dismounted navigation.
- Tactical questioning.
- Reaction to contact.
- Establishment of traffic control points.
- Crowd control.
- Detainee operations.
- Other tasks, depending on training objectives selected from FORSCOM training guidance.

The crews, sections, and platoons encounter a hyperrealistic environment while responding to civilian role-players, enemy elements, urban structures, and other battlefield effects that replicate indirect and direct fire, IEDs, and homemade explosives. Once platoons meet the training standards of Table V *(Gate 4)* and the battalion or brigade establishes the IED network hierarchy and probable locations, the company gets orders to prepare to execute lethal operations. Since operations may be led by U.S., combined, or host nation forces, additional complexities and considerations may be included, based on the theater of operations, the established rules of engagement, or the status of forces agreement.

Table VI

Table VI *(Gate 5* and *Gate 6)* focuses on company-level planning, rehearsals, operations, and mission execution. Once all the platoons of a company successfully pass through *Gate 4*, the company receives its mission and begins troop-leading procedures on their forward operating base. On order, the company executes a direct-action mission to destroy or defeat the network by a raid, a cordon-and-search operation, or destruction. Depending on the available training terrain, Table VI could culminate in a combined arms live-fire exercise (LFX) on a multipurpose range complex where battalion and brigades can integrate combat multiplier resources, such as tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (TUAVs), precision fires, or attack aviation.

As units approach their deployment date and ship their equipment, the availability and application of simulations helps them sustain their skill sets and capabilities. *Gate 7* focuses on sustaining these skills and enables the training of Soldiers who arrive after a unit has finished its CTC rotation and shipped its equipment (normally 60 days before the unit's scheduled latest arrival date). These same Soldiers reap the benefits of the unit's training and quickly learn "what right looks like" as they study their unit's TTP and SOPs before deployment.

Figure 3 lays out the IEDD GTS as it is being developed at Fort Hood, Texas. The intent is for all units to have access to world-class home-station IEDD training facilities that enable them to successfully accomplish the desired DMETL tasks and deploy with validated TTP and SOPs. Due to shortened dwell times and the fact that not every type of unit can deploy to a CTC, these resources and training strategy enable units to attain readiness more quickly at their home stations. Additionally, this training can be integrated as part of a battalion or brigade combat team's gunnery scheme of maneuver with minimal effort and resource overhead. The commonality of training tasks and threat allows the Army to adopt the IEDD GTS concept and apply it across every installation for Regular Army and Reserve Component training.

The Desired Effect

The IEDD GTS allows units to build on realistic training scenarios to "defeat the device" as they execute missions and provide reports to battalion and brigade tactical operation centers in virtual and live environments. Staffs synthesize the information gained from the reports into actionable intelligence and build target decks, as well as develop and direct missions, and commanders decide how and when to "attack the network" as they will during deployment. The outcome—or desired training effect—is a unit that is fully trained to operate, adapt, and decisively act in an extremely lethal environment with positive results. Units will deploy well-trained, able to defeat the device, and able to successfully attack the network.

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Endnotes

[1] Madonna Lebling, Magda Jean-Louis and Rena Kirsch, "Faces of the Fallen," *Washington Post*, *<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/about/>*, accessed on 21 February 2009.

[2] "Global War on Terrorism, Casualties by Military Service Component—Active, Guard and Reserve," October 7, 2001 through February 14, 2009, Defense Manpower Data Center–Data, Analysis and Programs Division, *<http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/gwot_component.pdf>*, accessed on 21 February 2009.

[3] "Global War on Terrorism, by Reason," October 7, 2001 through January 31, 2009, Defense Manpower Data Center–Data, Analysis and Programs Division, *<http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/gwot_reason.pdf>*, accessed on 21 February 2009.

[4] Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), "Train the Force," *<https://www.jieddo.dod.mil/CIEDTRAINING/CIEDTRAINHOME.ASPX>*, accessed 21 February 2009.

[5] JIEDDO, "Joint Center of Excellence (JCOE)," *<https://www.jieddo.dod.mil/CIEDTRAINING/CIEDTRAINHOME.ASPX>*, accessed 21 February 2009.

[6] FORSCOM Training Guidance for Follow-on Forces Deploying ISO Southwest Asia (SWA), updated 11 February 2009.

[7] Knowledge and Information Fusion Exchange mission statement, "The KnIFE Mission," *<https://knife.jfcom.mil/Pages/KnIFEPublic.aspx>*, accessed on 22 February 2009.