

# Army Seeks Records on War on Terrorism

By Lieutenant Colonel Robert G. Smith

An assessment of collected material has identified significant gaps in the United States Army Center of Military History records on the War on Terrorism. The list below identifies the specific types of electronic and other documents being sought to fill these gaps. There is a critical need to collect the classified and unclassified operational records relating to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom under the provisions of Army Regulation (AR) 870-5, *Military History: Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures*, and Field Manual 1-20, *Military History Operations*.

While many records have been collected by deployed United States Army military history detachments and other military historians, the gaps have constrained efforts by historians to chronicle the Total Army's contributions to the war. In addition, processing veterans' claims of post-traumatic stress disorder and other medical claims is extremely time-consuming due to missing or incomplete records. To date, the Army's overall collection effort has focused primarily on Regular Army and Army National Guard brigade combat teams deployed to Iraq. Coverage of the activities of smaller National Guard and United

States Army Reserve units during the War on Terrorism—especially in Operation Enduring Freedom—is sorely deficient. Also, the records being collected are considered permanent historical records that must be retired through the Army records management system according to AR 25-400-2, *The Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)*.

The Army needs help to solve this deficiency. Rather than pass the entire burden on to Army commands, the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army has tasked the United States Army Records Management and Declassification Agency and the Center of Military History to work jointly to collect these operational records. The records of the Army staff, deployed units, and commands within the continental United States that provided critical support to warfighters from 11 September 2001 to the present fall within these collection efforts. Also, individual chronicles, oral interviews, or statements collected by United States Army Training and Doctrine Command units are to be considered records for the purpose of this effort. The records being collected by the Center of Military History will be considered permanent

historical records that must be retired through ARIMS, according to AR 25-400-2. Although finished products are welcome, the Center is looking for raw operational records to capture in its War on Terrorism collection mission.

Unclassified documents and questions about handling classified materials should be sent to <GWOT\_collect@conus.army.mil>.



*Lieutenant Colonel Smith is the Headquarters, Department of the Army, point of contact for the Center of Military History's War on Terrorism records collection effort.*



## War on Terrorism Records to Look For



### Classified and Unclassified Documents of Historical Significance Required

- Command and control
- Operations plans/fragmentary orders (FRAGOs)
- Maps/charts/plans/drawings
- After-action reports
- Operations summaries/storyboards
- Award packet and witness statements
- Correspondence
  - E-mail/letters/notes
  - Meetings/minutes/messages
- Logistics plans and FRAGOs
- Senior leader guidance
- Journals
- Intelligence summaries
- Public Affairs news releases/hometown articles
- Special studies/briefings
  - Improvised explosive devices and explosively formed projectiles
  - Up-armored vehicles
  - Videos, digital versatile discs (DVDs), compact discs (CDs)
  - Interviews—oral and video
  - Mobilization/demobilization/movement orders, unit manning reports, and orders of battle

United States Army Center of Military History