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# Military Police Corps Regiment: *Continued Relevance*

By Major Matt Mularoni

*The United States has just welcomed a new administration. The current economic situation will affect military funding. The war in Iraq will be dramatically reduced, and there will be changes made in Afghanistan. How will these changes affect the military?*

In keeping with its full-spectrum operational concept and principle of multifunctionality, the U.S. Army will train, educate, and prepare the full-spectrum force to execute stability operations rather than build large-scale, dedicated force structures to accomplish these missions. The Army consists of many organizations that were built for relatively narrow sets of tasks and that can be integrated into the large, modular force that is required for full-spectrum operations. The success of military police depends on the level of operational support they provide to the maneuver commander. To continue to be relevant to the Army and to the joint community, military police must improve their core capabilities.

The concept of full-spectrum operations is not new to military police. For years, our doctrine and training have allowed us to rapidly adapt based on the changing situation. We are comfortable working among the local populations behind the maneuver forces; and recent activities in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay (Cuba) continue to illustrate our “purple” capabilities. According to Field Manual (FM) 3-19.1, “The [Military Police] capabilities and . . . operational and supporting tasks are as integral to stability and support operations as they are to offensive and defensive operations.”<sup>1</sup> We have proven that we can be successful in joint, interagency, and intergovernmental operations. The Military Police Corps is a combat force multiplier to the maneuver commander.

The five main functions<sup>2</sup> of the Military Police Corps are—

- Maneuver and mobility support.
- Area security.
- Law and order (L&O).
- Internment and resettlement.
- Police intelligence operations.

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These diverse requirements ensure full-spectrum dominance in an operational environment.<sup>3</sup> There are aspects of every level of our operations in deployed theaters that are important to our continued success with full-spectrum operations. Military police forces will remain the “force of choice” as long as we remain relevant to the maneuver commander.

In this era of persistent conflict, resources are limited and where and how the Army will operate is uncertain. Training must focus on tasks that will prepare units for the most likely and most critical missions. Traditional training and operational models for military police leader development have focused on maneuver and mobility support and area security, while the other three main military police functions have taken a backseat. However, military police leaders must be fully trained in all functions and capable of performing across the full spectrum of operations. For example, L&O represents a core competency for all military police officers. The skills necessary to carry out L&O operations are covered extensively in training and professionalizing indigenous security and police forces.<sup>4</sup>

One excellent resource that is available, but is underutilized by many military police, is the installation Directorate of Emergency Services or Provost Marshal’s Office. Military police can enhance their core competencies by executing daily, stability-related tasks, such as L&O and confinement services, in support of Army communities and critical Army facilities and resources. This develops and reinforces the skill sets needed to support the wartime mission of providing stability and order within a given area of operation through L&O, criminal investigation, customs support, dislocated-civilian assistance, and host nation policing operations. Then, when military police step into the shambles of a third-world police station, they have a better idea of what is “right” and they can begin formulating a plan to achieve it.

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Regardless of the changes in the Commander in Chief and missions supporting the War on Terrorism, the Military Police Corps Regiment needs to change to remain relevant and continue to be the “force of choice.” Our skill set is optimal for supporting the maneuver commander on the current battlefield and into the future. The Military Police Corps must not lose this focus!

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> FM 3-19.1, *Military Police Operations*, 22 March 2001, p. 11-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Department of the Army (DA) Pam 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*, 11 December 2007, p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 146.

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