

Training is intimately related to doctrine. Without sufficient doctrine, service-wide training lacks a basis for commonality in tactics, techniques, procedures, and standards.

That Army units are not proficient in MOUT is evident from their performance during CTC training rotations. A considerable majority of units completing Shugart-Gordon MOUT facility rotations at Fort Polk's Joint Readiness Training Center during the latter half of 1997 demonstrated critical shortcomings.¹ As few as eighteen opposing force defenders successfully held up attacks by multiple companies in MILES mock combat scenarios. Deficiencies ran the gamut from improper actions on contact by individual soldiers to commanders' and staffs' inability to plan effectively. Unsurprisingly, areas neglected or only poorly covered in doctrinal manuals were frequently those in which units were weakest. A further deficiency is the offensive character of virtually all MOUT training scenarios. Defensive MOUT receives little attention.

The USMC partially compensated for its previous lack of sufficient MOUT doctrine by supplementing it with expertise from outside the Marine Corps and observations made during its own operations and training. Selected marines underwent instruction at the British Army's Copehill Down MOUT training facility, received training from a variety of U.S. law enforcement organizations and fire departments, and attended the USMC's own Marine Expeditionary Force

¹Author interview with Michael Browder, U.S. Army Joint Readiness Center, Fort Polk, LA, September 17, 1997.

MOUT Instructors Course. These individuals then applied their many lessons learned by assisting during unit training and by helping to create a program of instruction used for testing MOUT concepts.²

Regardless of the service, MOUT preparation is hindered by a lack of facilities in which to conduct tactical training for company-size or larger units. The National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin has no MOUT site at all until a new one is constructed to replace the one that was lost due to environmental considerations.³ Command Training Center (CTC) facilities that do exist are often used less for commanders' development of their unit's expertise than during rotations when organizations pass through training centers.

This lack of larger facilities can to some extent be overcome through the imaginative use of what resources are available on posts throughout the United States and on installations overseas. Employment of abandoned buildings for training on entry and room clearing techniques is often possible. A unit can use its own barracks to demonstrate proper methods. Similarly, commanders and staffs can conduct leader training using on-post structures or terrain walks in nearby towns and cities.

²G. W. Schenkel interview and G. W. Schenkel e-mail to author, June 5, 1998.

³Rick Travis, National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA, telephone interview with author, September 30, 1997. An interesting concept for aviator MOUT training is under consideration for construction near Yuma, AZ. A 200-250 "building" urban complex would be replicated, likely with structures built using shipping containers, for use in fixed and rotary-wing pilot training. Floyd Usry, USMC instructor, telephone interview with author, November 26, 1997.