

As Web services came on line at the DSA it became apparent to Major Sobey that an alternative was available to solve E-mail forwarding problems experienced by key personnel (CG, ADC, Chief of Staff, etc.) as they moved between Division CPs. Using the skills of Lieutenant Colonel Glen Edison, Staff Sergeant Hall, and with the support of Major Roger Stanfield, email servers were allocated to the DSA. These servers, for secure and non-secure email, used the same communications links as the Web Server but allowed consistent and reliable e-mail service for the entire Division Battle Space while simultaneously providing a single stable receipt point for e-mail forwarding from Camp Pendleton. E-mail was critically important to the modern battlefield for commanders, key staff officers, and Division CPs. This initiative was highly successful in meeting this operational imperative. Headquarters Battalion Communications Company tackled a series of like issues in preparation for combat operations.

The number of Liaison Officers, full staff participation, and the additional requirements for radio, telephone, and data support threatened to overwhelm the communication support available. The computer support network needed to be changed from a simple 'flat network' to a more complicated series of Virtual Local Area Networks (VLANs), which took time for the Marines to learn. With practice and the implementation of new procedures, the Communication Company Marines were able to streamline setup and operation of the Division Main CP to six hours rather than the twelve to twenty four hours it had previously taken.

Personnel Issues - Assigning Troops to Tasks

Once deployment decisions were made, the Division faced the task of getting its Fleet Assistance Program (FAP) and Force Protection Marines back from the Marine Corps Bases (to which they were temporarily assigned.) On 6 January, at the Division's request, the MEF published a plan for returning Marines that were currently serving in these billets. The Division implemented a plan to ensure these Marines were included in the deployment preparations of their combat units right along with non-FAP personnel. Base Commanders at both Camp Pendleton and Twenty-nine Palms gave urgent, whole-hearted support to this time-sensitive issue. This was consistent with their continued strong support of deployment requirements, Key Volunteer Networks (KVN), casualty notification, and a host of other requirements. The home base and station commanders scrambled to fill the void left by deploying combat units, providing unwavering support throughout the campaign.

On 8 January, Headquarters Marine Corps released Marine Corps Bulletin (MCBUL) 1900 establishing a 'Stop Loss/Stop Move' personnel policy. This stabilized personnel numbers and mitigated many of the problems with planning and tracking for Permanent Changes of Station (PCS), End of Active Service (EAS), and retirements. Although required to stabilize deployment planning, the policy was not without impact on individual Marines. Many Marines had to cancel new job opportunities, freeze career changes, cancel retirement ceremonies, or extend on the Unit Deployment Program (UDP). The fidelity, valor, and patriotism of the Marines asked to give the Corps 'just a little more' were noteworthy. The Division CG did not hear a single request from the many hundreds of effected Marines who unselfishly put the needs of the Corps and country ahead of their personal wishes. Always leaning into the next fight, Lieutenant Colonel Powalski and her team began efforts that anticipated early release of these Marines once their talents were no longer required.

Public Affairs Preparations

At this time, the 1st Marine Division Public Affairs Office (PAO) was informed that a large number of media personnel that had worked with the Marine Corps in Afghanistan had asked to accompany the Marine Corps should they deploy to Iraq. The PAO, led by Captain Joe Plenzler, started building a positive relationship with them and putting together a 'by name' list of requested media to embed in 1st Marine Division in the event of combat operations.



Marines show their courage to the world through embedded media personnel.

of Fox Company, 2^d Battalion, 5th Marines (F/2/5) on the nation's airwaves as they readied for deployment. The ratings for the show significantly increased as a result of the weekly broadcasts. As the unit deployed, *Nightline* increased the number of broadcast episodes to two per week. The reports were so popular that ABC began re-broadcasting the stories on *Good Morning America* and other news shows. Other news outlets followed smaller Division units, including squad-sized elements from 7th Marines. The collaboration between journalist Mike Cerre, the PAO, and F 2/5 brought the fine young Marines and Sailors of 1st Marine Division right into the living rooms of America.

The Division PAO embarked on a media blitzkrieg hosting more than 400 reporters in 40 days - blanketing the media with 1st Marine Division stories. The PAO put together media opportunities, often hitch-hiking with the media due to the scarcity of available vehicles. In one instance, a media convoy from Camp Commando visited 1st Tank Battalion at Udairi Range during a full-blown Arabian sandstorm. With visibility at less than 50 feet and battling 40 - 60 mph winds, the tanks couldn't see their targets on the range. The story of the Marines operating in harsh weather conditions carried the headlines and taught the reporters about the tenacity of our young Marines and a good lesson of what to expect should they decide to embed with the Division for combat operations

Concurrently, the Division PAO began exploring the feasibility of many TV media's request to bring along hard-wired, satellite transmission capable, 4-wheel-drive, diesel, desert colored vehicles and night vision qualified drivers to support their broadcasts while embedded with the Division. The PAO determined that allowing the media to use their own vehicles would benefit

the Division by ameliorating some of the logistical burden on the receiving units (a TV crew generally requires 15 large boxes of lift and space to haul their gear) and allow the media to broadcast “live on the fly” in combat. The Division PAO requested that I MEF appeal the USCENTCOM prohibition on media vehicles in embedded units. Most TV media opted to assign vehicles to their embedded correspondents in the hope that the verdict would be positive and fielded the vehicles on short term embeds with Division units. On all early tests, they performed soundly.

On 10 March, the Division PA section met with the 80 reporters assigned to embed within tactical units at the Hilton Hotel in Kuwait City and began the media integration process. Media members were issued NBC suits, masks and nerve agent antidote kits. They received anthrax and smallpox vaccinations and briefings on ground rules, organization, and missions. The Division PA section worked hard to answer hundreds of questions, and ensure the media were prepared to embed. During one briefing a reporter skeptically asked, “Really, how close are you going to allow me to get to the front lines?” Captain Plenzler retorted, “I can put you in the back of an AAV with 18 pissed-off grunts, drive you within 300 meters of the enemy objective and send you in the assault while the Marines you are with storm the enemy’s trench lines and drive their bayonets into the hearts of the enemy.” The room went silent. You could have heard a pin drop. “Is he serious?” whispered one skittish reporter. The Division would later deliver, in scores.

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On 11 March, the Division assembled their 80 reporters and transported them to LSA-Matilda to integrate them into the Blue Diamond family. Each battalion assigned a Marine to be the 'media buddy' for each correspondent. The PAO made it clear that, “In the 1st Marine Division the media do not have 'handlers' or 'escorts'. If you want an 'escort' take \$500 and go to Palm Springs. Here in this Division we are going to adopt you media members and show you the ropes. You are going to be part of the family.”

The following morning, the media accompanied by their 'media buddies' and PA Liaison Teams in LAVs, 7-ton trucks, and HMMWVs bid their farewell to LSA-Matilda and started their odyssey. The regiments and battalions each conducted their own welcome aboard and assigned the media to their tactical units.

The Division PA section continued to prepare for combat operations and moved with the Division Main to its tactical assembly area. Early on March 19, the Division received the directive from CENTCOM Public Affairs that no media vehicles were to be allowed on the battlefield. The Division PAO contacted the regiments to pass the bad news. In the chaos that ensued, units attempted to re-load TV media equipment onto jam-packed tactical vehicles. Some journalists opted to stay put, and follow the units in their own vehicles despite the restriction. There was an eye-opening lesson for future combat operations, as this decision made the

difference between headlining on the evening news and receiving sporadic coverage at best. For example, the US Army's embedded media, whose media vehicles found their way to the fight regardless of policy, dominated the airwaves due to their ability to broadcast on the fly. Marine embeds who relinquished their vehicles faced significant challenges in getting their product out. They eventually adapted and overcame most communications difficulties with the hard work and assistance of the Marines.



Camp Commando, Kuwait, grows in size as more forces are deployed to theater.

Chapter 3

Adjustments to the Plan and Combat Rehearsals

Now that the Marines were in-theater, the requirement to remain alert was even more important. The terrorist murder of two Army civilian contractors just outside the Camp Doha base, and repeated terrorist threats, heightened the security posture. The Iraqis had certainly attempted to infiltrate agents into the areas of Kuwait where US forces were staging, and were likely monitoring the actions of all US forces in the country. While waiting for the Division's secure communications equipment to arrive, the Division was forced



The Commandant of the Marine Corps (and former Commanding General of I MEF), General Michael Hagee, speaks to Marines as they prepare for war

to use couriers for secure communications between sites. Units still conducted non-secure business over cellular telephones operating on the civilian network, but even unclassified sensitive information was at risk of compromise. As the Division neared the final weeks before combat operations were to begin, the CG re-emphasized the force protection guidance he had provided to his Marines in August. Due caution was exercised in all activity, including armed Marines traveling in multi-vehicle convoys, Guardian Angel use, and secure Entry Control Points (ECPs) to all LSA areas. The Division carefully monitored all terrorist threat indicators. The Marines considered themselves 'hard targets', and were prepared if the enemy chose to initiate hostilities early through a terrorist-style attack. By their discipline, the Marines sent a message of intimidation to the Iraqis on the other side of the border. Despite the heightened security posture, however, the priority of effort was clearly on combat preparation. The Division focused on being 'No worse enemy' as it prepared to send a shockwave through the Iraqi army.

As expected, the operational plans continued to change even well after the Division arrived in Kuwait. The Division took these changes in-stride, and was careful not to be too wedded to a base plan. Planning now took a back seat to training and rehearsals as the Division planned to win this fight through 'brilliance in the basics'. The tactical, physical, and moral readiness of the individual Marine was going to be the harbinger of success, not reliance on a scripted plan. Mental agility, habitual relationships, and well-honed tactics, would earn the Division the speed necessary to reduce risk. Division leaders worked to reinforce the aggressive spirit and mental toughness of their Marines during the last weeks of preparation. Whatever the Iraqis were planning, the Marines of the Division would be prepared to crush any resistance in their path.

The Iraqis Welcome the New Year

The presence of the Marines in Kuwait exacerbated an already grim manpower situation for the Iraqi chain of command. Iraqi desertion rates accelerated as enemy forces heard the distant booms of US artillery firing at Udairi range during the quiet desert nights. As desertion rates continued to rise, the Regime began to take more drastic measures to enforce discipline. Reports of arrests and executions of Iraqi deserters increased. Despite the enemy's poor morale, however, the Iraqis were beginning to make some visible preparations for the coming Coalition attack. The Iraqis clearly expected an extended air campaign prior to actions on the ground, and focused their preparations on increasing their ability to survive such an attack. Over the month of January, extensive trenching and canal extensions were dug in Al Kut, An Nasiriyah, and Baghdad. Like raindrops on a pond, the surface of Iraq was soon dotted with revetments, both new and old. Survivability revetments appeared just outside the garrisons of every Republican Guard (RG) unit, and Regular Army (RA) units began to make survivability moves outside their own garrison positions. The RG Divisions around Al Kut and Baghdad gave every indication that they intended to survive a US bombing campaign by dispersal, frequent movement, and by digging in. The Marines of the Division were very impressed with the prowess demonstrated by the Iraqi engineers. The Iraqi soldiers might not have a reputation as great combat infantrymen, but their engineers were a marvel. A marked increase in the use of decoy artillery pieces in many of the new revetments was also noted in the Rumaylah and Al Kut areas. The Iraqis had been on the receiving end of US air power before, and it was clear that they had learned some lessons. There was a large body of information available from open sources regarding the recent successes the Serbians had achieved in eluding US air power, and it looked like the Iraqis had done their homework.



Kuwaiti oil wells burn in 1991 after the Iraqi Regime set them ablaze. The possibility of the Iraqis executing a similar 'Scorched Earth' campaign in Iraq was a significant threat.

Curiously, little evidence existed of integrated, prepared defensive positions. All of the revetments observed were haphazardly arranged, not seemingly oriented to defend from one particular direction or another. Apart from the revetment digging, activity levels among Iraqi units seemed to be no greater than seasonal norms. If the Iraqis were

preparing for an air attack, why were they not also preparing ground defenses? Some intelligence assessments began to make sweeping extrapolations from the limited data available. The existence of additional revetments in a given area, for example, was assessed as an indication that the unit doing the digging was about to be massively reinforced. Alarmist reporting of this type began to increase, and reports of Iraqi suicide units or terrorist forces operating in Kuwait were frequent. Reports surfaced on a variety of heinous tactics to be used by the Iraqis including electrified water obstacles, poisoned water supplies, widespread inundation warfare, chemical-laced fire trenches, and suicide commando units. In actuality, none of these tactics were ever used effectively against Blue Diamond (either because of Iraqi inability or the unexpected rapidity of the US ground attack.)

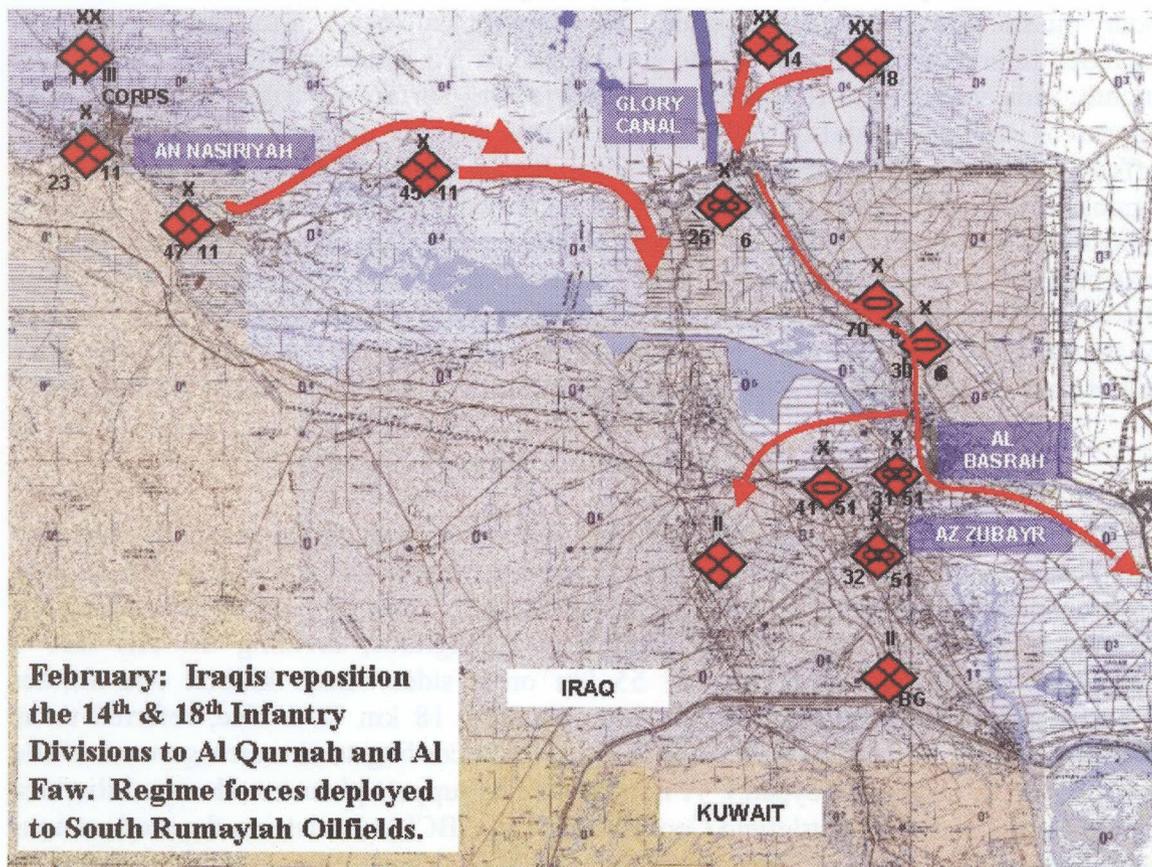
The status of the South Rumaylah oilfield infrastructure became a daily obsession for the watching Division. As visibility of these strategic objectives continued to increase, conflicting reports of whether or not they were wired for destruction were received almost daily. The Division received reports from several seemingly reliable sources that indicated that the oilfield infrastructure was not rigged for destruction. Other sources, just as reliable, referenced the arrival of Regime forces, explosives smuggled across the Syrian border, or conventional defenses as imminent risks to the infrastructure. Every intelligence report was carefully scrutinized for indications of Iraqi mischief in the oilfields.

At this time, there were also no indications that any Iraqi units had caught-on to the complex capitulation instructions that were formulated for them by staffs at US higher headquarters. Although individual and mass surrenders were anticipated, there were no reports that any organized Iraqi units planned to lay down their arms or coordinate actions with the Coalition. Multiple source reporting did indicate a continued rise in desertion rates among Iraqi units, and gave indications that some Iraqi forces were planning to surrender at earliest opportunity. In many units, officers began to punish soldiers for wearing civilian clothes under their uniforms. In other units, the officers demanded bribes to allow soldiers to remain in a leave status, and took to wearing civilian clothes themselves. Regular Army units reportedly had to be locked out of their barracks in order to get them to conduct night training. Even the Republican Guard was not immune to morale problems, as the rank and file of many RG units were fearful that they would receive 'special attention' from the US air campaign. Yet, despite the morale problems, the Regime reportedly maintained tight control over the military through intimidation and fear. Stories abounded of Regime execution squads murdering uncooperative or insufficiently motivated soldiers. Fear of Regime reprisals appeared to be the most significant motivator for keeping military forces in-line, and the Division assessed that many Iraqis would fight only out of their fear of their own Regime.

During February, the Iraqi high command was attempting to execute the elements of some defensive plan, but it was difficult to ascertain exactly what that plan was. Small-scale deployments of battalions and battery-sized artillery units were noted in the vicinity of Al Basrah and Al Faw. In early January, the RA 14th and 18th Infantry Divisions showed indications they were deploying from their Al-Amarah garrisons to the Al Faw

peninsula and the Al Qurnah regions, drawing the attention of US leaders at all levels. The deployment of the IV Corps infantry to strategic defensive ground was logical, especially given their limited mobility. If the Iraqis did not make strategic moves during this permissive environment (prior to the commencement of US air strikes) they would probably lose their chance. Given the penchant of Saddam Hussein for using the international press as his own intelligence tool, the Division was not surprised to note that the Iraqi artillery and infantry units began to appear in the Al Faw peninsula just a few days after the international press reported a planned British amphibious assault in this location.

It was not just the Iraqi RA that was moving. The Division noted throughout January that the Regime was reinforcing the southern zone just across the border from the Marines. This reinforcement included elements of the RG, the Mujahadin E Kalq (an Iranian dissident group beholden to the Iraqi Regime), and Fedeyeen troops. These forces had much higher loyalty to the Regime, and were likely sent to bolster the stamina of the RA in zone. The internal security situation in the south appeared to be deteriorating, with anti-Regime opposition seething among the Shia inhabitants. The Regime needed to do something about the security environment in the South, especially in the Al Basrah and An Nasiriyah areas. The Regime forces were reportedly spending 75% of their effort controlling internal dissent, and only 25% preparing for a ground invasion. Baath party officials were relocating to schools and mosques, and the military



In late February, the Iraqis began to reposition Regular Army forces in the South, but there was still no discernable coordinated defensive plan.

was enduring more frequent officer purges. This context helped explain much of the Iraqi's apparent inaction. Even with the presence of US forces in Kuwait, the Regime likely thought that a ground invasion was not inevitable. Perhaps the Regime knew it could not prevail on the ground, so was taking every precaution to ensure that the mere threat of an invasion did not precipitate a popular uprising. If so, many military forces in southern Iraq were tied down in the vicinity of their garrisons because that is where their internal security mission was most pressing. As the Regime shored-up its internal security situation, it



The BM-21 Multiple Rocket Launcher System was a highly mobile Iraqi missile system that could rapidly mass fires.

began to threaten tribal leaders, military commanders, and the southern populace with retaliation for any failure to provide a vigorous defense against the Americans. The Republican Guard also continued to give every indication that it would give battle closer to the Regime centers in Baghdad and Al Kut.

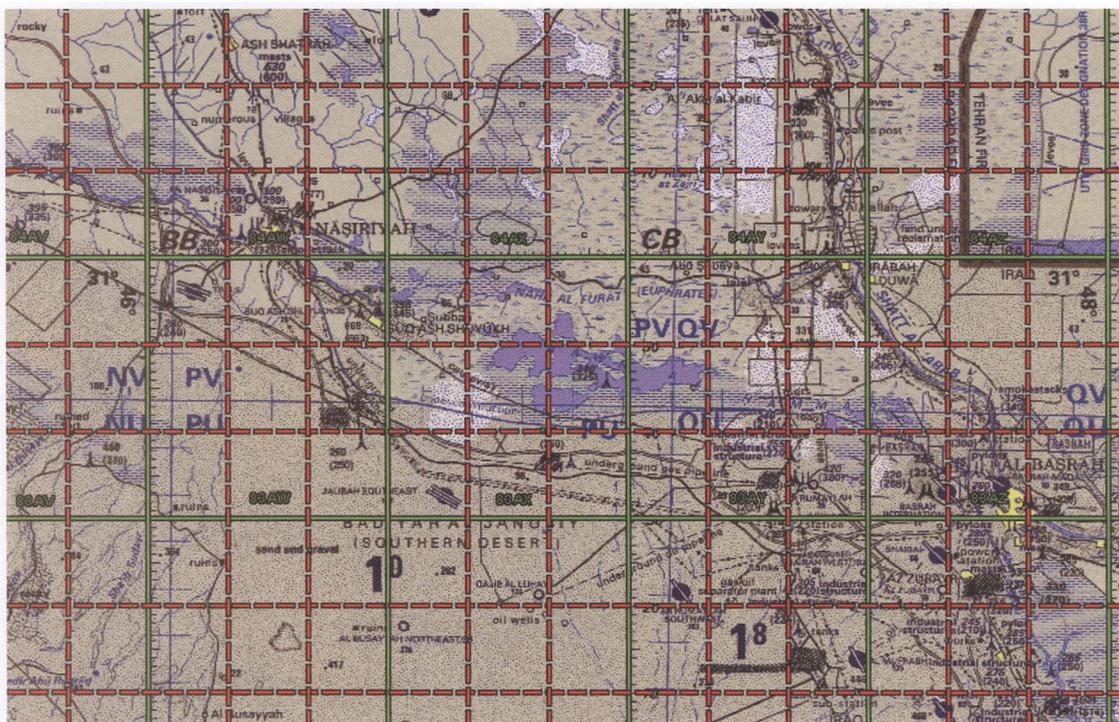
On 2 February, Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, promised a massive 'zero hour' missile attack if the US invaded Iraq. Regime statements in the public press also included references to missile counterattacks against US forces in Kuwait. Later in the month, indicators of the redeployment of Surface-to-Surface Missiles to southern Iraq appeared, lending credibility to this threat. It was possible the Iraqis were preparing to offset their poor conventional defensive capability by using preemptive chemical attacks against US forces. The combination of an increased chemical threat, and the possible repositioning of potential delivery systems within range of the Division's assembly areas was received with some attention. Later, the Division was to detect even more specific threats, and would drive the targeting cycle against these missile systems. The Marines of the Division remained alert, but now steeled themselves for the possibility that they might have to fight their way up to the border under the long-range artillery of the enemy.

Developments in Fire Support Planning

The Division became familiar with the 'killbox' system, a geographical reference established by the Combined Forces Air Component Commander (CFACC). The Killbox Interdiction (KI) reference grid system was defined by drawing parallel lines along the 00-minute and 30-minute lines of latitude and longitude, dividing the AO into a patchwork of squares approximately 55 km on a side. Each killbox was further subdivided into nine smaller sections approximately 18 km on a side, referred to as 'keypads' (from the practice of designating them according to the arrangement of the numbers on a telephone keypad.) A number of fire support planners advanced the idea that killboxes made the Battlefield Coordination Line (BCL) obsolete on the modern non-linear battlefield. These officers argued that the BCL was not necessary in this situation,

since the MEF could open and close killboxes wherever it chose to focus or deny the fires of the MAW, including Close Air Support (CAS). This concept was generally referred to as the 'Kick-CAS' CONOPS, taking its name from CENTCOM's concept of operations for the employment of KI and CAS. To facilitate the permissive engagement of high-payoff targets with air short of the BCL, the Division's planners turned to killboxes to meet the requirement.

With killboxes as a centerpiece of its fire support coordination plan, the Division became very comfortable with them. For example, many FACs who did not receive the Special Operating Instructions (SPINS) of the Air Tasking Order (ATO) used killbox corners as geographic references for the control of CAS, instead of more conventional measures like holding areas and contact points. In fact, the general familiarity with this system eventually rose to the point that regimental air officers contacted the DASC directly to open up killboxes in their zones short of the BCL, posing a new battlespace management challenge to the Division FSCC. Fires planners came up with a prioritized target list (eventually numbering about seventy targets), which was planned to be pasted into the final hours of the last pre-hostility Operation Southern Watch ATO. This would allow for a planned sequence of shaping fires, even if a short decision timeline did not allow for wholesale ATO rewriting. MAW planners later indicated that they would need about eight hours to service these targets. In the case of a simultaneous A-day and G-day, the MEF would be prepared to make up for the deficit of shaping by using CAS sorties to prep the battlefield. Accordingly, the MAW planned to 'spike' to generate a high volume of CAS sorties during the first ATO of the Operation. As with maneuver, timing was critical because of the need to achieve tactical surprise and simultaneity of



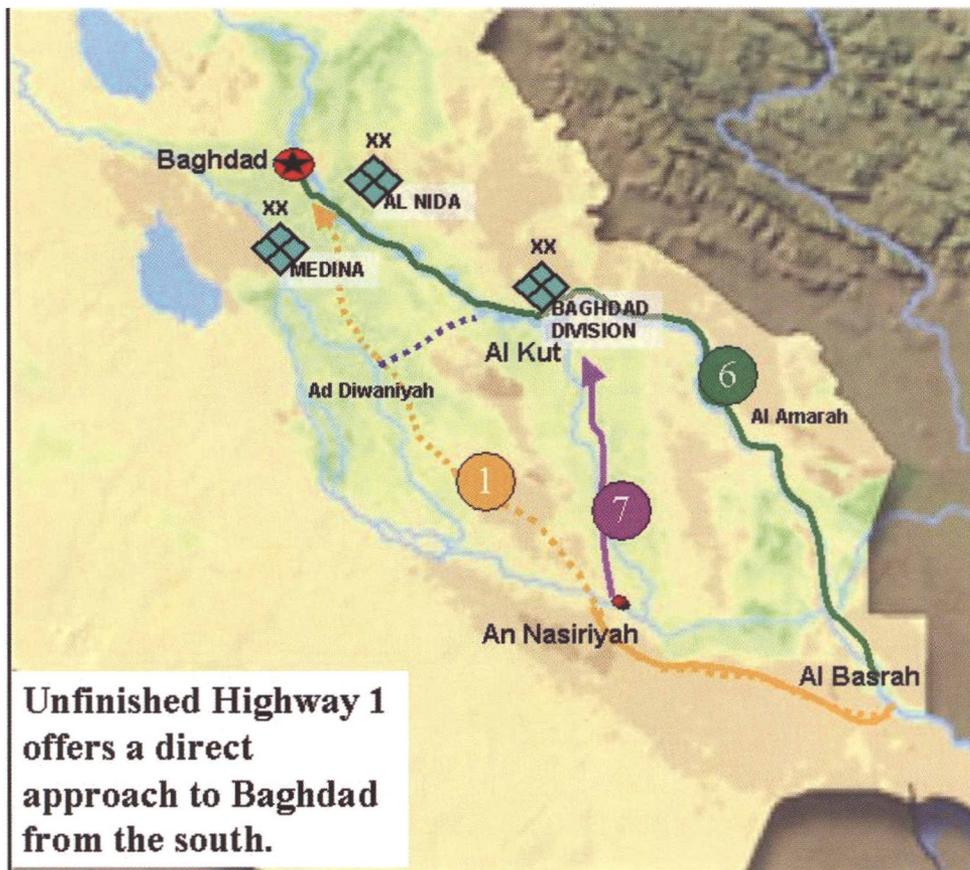
The 'Killbox' Grid System divided the battlespace into a two-letter grid system, with subdivisions similar to a numeric keypad. The grid was used to standardize target reference information.

action across the CFLCC objectives east and west of 1st Marine Division's zone.

The entire targeting process was significantly hampered by the thousands of sites placed on the Restricted Target List (RTL) at the theater level, based on general characterization alone. This meant that many Iraqi combat units and tactical objectives were protected by a somewhat arbitrary restriction on shaping fires. Some of the most important Division shaping objectives had been placed on the RTL by this nation-wide generalized approach, with no coordination with tactical units or apparent thought to specified objectives. The Targeting Guidance Working Group, and the detailed planning that followed, allowed the early clearance of Division shaping targets on the RTL, and prepared the Division well to adapt swiftly to a rapidly changing situation as the final hours counted down to G-day.

Operational Planning Update – The Highway 1 Corridor

On 9 February, the Division was to benefit from a fortuitous change in battlefield geometry. The unfinished Highway 1 corridor had previously been in the V Corps zone, just to the west of the 1st Marine Division zone. When complete, Highway 1 was going to be Iraq's Baghdad to Basrah expressway. During the previous summer, the Division had explored the possibility of using this battlespace to enable the envelopment of Al



Highway 1 offered a better route to threaten Baghdad from the south in support of the main effort. The boundary shift that gave this unfinished highway to the Division was a critical factor in the successful attack.

Kut, but had been rebuffed by CFLCC. The Army plan had changed, and the Army V Corps planned to shift much of its combat power to the western attack corridors in their zone, leaving this major avenue of approach unused on their eastern flank. Out of concern for the main effort's open flank, CFLCC offered the Highway 1 corridor and the surrounding battlespace to the MEF. The MEF planners solicited the opinion of the Division, as it was not known if the incomplete highway was suitable as a maneuver corridor. The Division planners were dumbstruck at their good fortune. Where the Division scheme of maneuver had been previously dependent on a tenuous combination of goat-paths, canal roads, and cross-country marches, the Division was being offered a well-developed highway bed, large sections of which were paved. Using JSTARS Moving Target Indicators, recent U-2 imagery, HUMINT reporting and map studies, the G-2's Sergeant David Auwen, Sergeant Christopher Cloutier, and Lance Corporal Marcellus Moore did an exhaustive study to independently verify the viability of the Highway 1 corridor. They found it to be well-suited for a maneuver force. Iraqi civilian traffic was known to use the route, and it seemed to offer solid trafficability for military vehicles. Better still, the route could be improved to carry large-scale logistics traffic with some effort. With the recommendation of the G-2, the Division requested and received the Highway 1 corridor battlespace.

Based on this intelligence and new battlespace, the Division reconvened the OPT and briefed the CG on 11 February. There was an immediate recognition among the Division's tactical planners that this avenue of approach could significantly improve the Division's speed to Baghdad. Opening the Highway 1 corridor would also allow the Division to disperse in its maneuver to the Tigris over multiple avenues of approach; presenting less of a target for WMD, and reducing reliance on a single route (Highway 7). The CG made it clear that his ideal was for each RCT commander to have his own attack route. In addition to offering additional maneuver flexibility, a portion of Highway 1 north of Ad Diwaniyah had even been turned into an airstrip by the Iraqis, complete with a control tower and a collapsible railing in the median. This airstrip, the Sheikh Hantush highway airstrip (usually shortened to 'Hantush' or 'Hantush airstrip') was in a perfect position to serve as a KC-130 serviced FARP. If the airstrip could be seized and defended, it would provide a critical refueling point for forces before they crossed the Tigris. The result would be the Division getting across the Tigris with tanks nearly full, ready to push on to Baghdad.

There was another advantage to Highway 1, made clear when the Division Intelligence planner mapped out the detailed laydown of the outer defenses of Baghdad. This analysis revealed an interesting gap in the enemy's assessed indirect fire support plan. The Iraqis had pulled the Al Nida Division tight up against the Diyala River, blocking the routes to Baghdad from the east. At the same time, the Baghdad RG Division had gone to ground in Al Kut, establishing a positional defense primarily oriented to the east and south. In between, there was a 50-kilometer gap between the indirect fire range fans of the two defensive positions. At this stage in the planning, the Iraqis had not yet attempted to close that gap. The 'seam' between these defensive belts would make the Baghdad RG Division even more vulnerable to Blue Diamond's planned enveloping attack, and now the Highway 1 corridor offered an ideal way to exploit it.

Highway 27, which branched off Highway 1 near the Hantush airfield, offered a narrow, paved route that ran all the way to the Tigris River Bridge in An Numaniyah.

Operational Planning Update - Running the Seam

The Division planners immediately went to work to exploit the opportunity of running the seam between the enemy's defensive belts. The Highway 1 corridor stabbed straight at the underside of Baghdad, perhaps opening up an attack route for the Division to arrive in Baghdad even faster than previously thought possible. The Iraqis did not have any positional defenses blocking this route. In the enemy's eyes, the unfinished Highway 1 roadbed probably did not appear to be a credible attack corridor for American forces (similar to many US assessments.) The narrow Highway 27, slicing to the northeast between the defensive belts of the enemy, probably seemed even less credible, as it went in a direction away from Baghdad. For the Division, the opportunity to attack an unprepared enemy from an unexpected direction seemed too good to pass up. Feinting an attack up Highway 1 would at least fix the Medina Division in support of US V Corps (the CFLCC main effort). The plan offered better support to the main effort, and an opportunity to achieve tactical surprise. By using Highway 1, the Division could satisfy the CG's intent of offering alternative corridors for the RCT commanders, and could use the 'fix and bypass' tactic against the Baghdad Republican Guard Division in Al Kut.

The Blue Diamond CG and G-3 review the operational plan in light of the changing enemy situation on the ground.

