



Adding Realism to Mortuary Affairs Operations in the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center (JPMRC)

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Simulated Human Remains (HR) Benefits at JPMRC:

In the fast-paced environment of large-scale combat operations (LSCO), managing HR is a critical yet often overlooked aspect of mission success. During the JPMRC exercise, the absence of a dedicated Mortuary Affairs Company and realistic HR simulation limited the effectiveness of training. To address this gap, incorporating simulated HR will significantly enhance the realism of future exercises.

Simulating HR is a great way to mitigate part of this issue and add realism to the next exercise. The training could incorporate Human Remains Pouches (HRPs) and Rescue Randy dummies, sandbags, or water cans to replicate the weight of the actual HR. The simulated HR can then be used in mock missions where Unit Recovery Teams (URTs) or units move them to a Mortuary Affairs Collection Point (MACP) or Personnel and Equipment Holding Area (PEHA).

Mortuary Affairs simulation is critical to prepare for LSCO:

Simulating HR missions in training, exercises the logistical and transportation requirements, pulling personnel and equipment away from the fight, and forcing units to rely on their URTs for recovery operations. This enables commanders to identify shortfalls and strengths in personnel management and security requirements during exercises. As a result, they will have a better understanding of how to allocate their personnel in future training and actual operations.

As the exercise progresses, incorporating enough simulated remains would allow Role 2 and 3 medical facilities to simulate any HR they might generate while treating patients. These HR require transportation, adding to the logistical complexity and enhancing realism, instead of simply moving living soldiers to a holding area. This shift would require the use of actual equipment, eliminating the reliance on notional methods and forcing commanders to contend with the practical challenges of recovery operations. Additionally, this element would introduce a sense of urgency and chaos, reflecting the stress that comes with handling both an influx of patients and the associated HR in a high-pressure combat environment.

Adding recovery operations into the exercise would also provide valuable practice for URTs to conduct their mission. This allows them to apply everything they've learned, building muscle memory and fostering team cohesion. In actual operations, they would

then be better prepared, knowing exactly what to do and understanding which team members excel in specific tasks during recovery missions.

Mock engagement areas could be staged with vehicles such as HMMWVs or LMTVs where simulated HR and personal effects (PE) would need to be recovered, documented, and transported to the nearest MACP, further enhancing the realism and practical training for the URTs.

Multi-agency Collaboration:

Implementing multi-agency collaboration during these exercises can further simulate the complexities of Joint Operations, preparing units for coordination with external agencies in actual combat situations. Inviting either the 54th Quartermaster Company from Fort Gregg Addams or the 962nd Quartermaster Company from Hawaii to participate in future exercises by operating a MACP would significantly enhance the realism and overall training value. This collaboration would provide an opportunity for the Mortuary Affairs units, which are rarely included in such training to practice their vital mission, but also expose them to new and innovative concepts. By engaging in these exercises, all units involved can better prepare for the intricate challenges they may face during actual operations.

By inviting a Mortuary Affairs unit to participate in the exercise, After Action Reviews (AARs) are enhanced by enabling an additional combat multiplier to provide valuable insights into logistics operations. Their observations can lead to constructive feedback on strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately benefiting the 2nd Light Brigade Combat Team (2LBCT) in future JPMRC or Field Training Exercises (FTX). In return, 2LBCT can offer similar insights to the Mortuary Affairs unit, fostering a mutually beneficial exchange of information. This collaboration not only enhances the capabilities of both units but also strengthens their bond, paving the way for more effective joint operations in the future.

With a stronger relationship established between the two units, the Mortuary Affairs Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) in 2LBCT can engage in cross-training with both reserve and active-duty personnel. This collaboration would provide new Mortuary Affairs Soldiers with invaluable insights and hands-on experience in a support operations role, an opportunity that would be extremely beneficial in later assignments. This unique mentorship not only benefits the NCOs but also enriches the development of Soldiers who aspire to take on these roles in the future. Many 92M Soldiers rarely have the chance to learn directly from their peers in a SPO capacity and often receive

little training about this critical position during Advanced Individual Training, Army Leadership Course, or The Senior Leader Course.

Conclusion:

Ultimately, the successful execution of mortuary affairs training hinges on the effective use of simulated remains. By prioritizing the development of realistic HR simulations, we can create more immersive scenarios that challenge units to apply their skills in a controlled yet dynamic environment. Investing in the production of these simulated remains will not only enhance the training experience for Mortuary Affairs personnel but also prepare all units involved for the complexities of HR management during actual combat operations. This focus on realism ensures that soldiers are better equipped to handle the challenges they may face, reinforcing the critical importance of effective HR management.

Enhancing Mortuary Affairs training through the integration of simulated remains and multi-agency collaboration is essential for developing a capable and resilient force. By creating realistic training scenarios, we not only prepare URTs for the complexities of HR management in real-world situations but also foster valuable relationships between units.

The opportunity for mentorship and cross-training will empower soldiers with the skills and knowledge they need to excel in their roles. As we continue to prioritize these elements, we will cultivate an environment of continuous improvement and innovation, ultimately strengthening our operational readiness. By investing in the realistic portrayal of human remains and the collaborative efforts of all units involved, we can ensure that our personnel are fully equipped to navigate the challenges of large-scale combat operations. This commitment to enhancing Mortuary Affairs training will significantly contribute to the overall effectiveness and cohesion of our military forces.

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