

**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
MARINE CORPS CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS SCHOOL  
WEAPONS TRAINING BATTALION  
TRAINING COMMAND  
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## **STUDENT OUTLINE**

**GREEN CELL**

**CAC-PLAN-206**

**CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS PLANNER COURSE**

**M020AQD**

**NOVEMBER 2015**

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

a. **Terminal Learning Objectives.** Given commander's intent and guidance, and CMO planning products (e.g. CMO staff estimate, CMO COA graphic and narrative, and a synch matrix, etc.), provide input to a Green Cell, to integrate diverse perspectives and skill sets into the planning process and produce appropriate products or dialogue that strengthens the overall planning effort in accordance with MSTP Pamphlet 2-0.1, part 2. (CACT-PLAN-2003)

### b. **Enabling Learning Objectives**

(1) Without the aid of references, define the purpose of a green cell, in accordance with MCWP 3-33.1 appendix B. (CAC-PLAN-2003a)

(2) Without the aid of references, identify the actions of a green cell, in accordance with MCWP 3-33.1 appendix B. (CAC-PLAN-2003b)

(3) Given a mission statement, commander's wargaming guidance, and approved COAs, participate in a war game turn, in accordance with MCWP 3-33.1 appendix B. (CAC-PLAN-2003c)

## 1. GREEN CELL FUNDAMENTALS

a. Introduction. The Green Cell is a working group (WG) which assists the commander, staff and the operational planning team (OPT) in understanding the effect of the civil environment on both friendly and threat forces. The cell articulates the actions and dynamics of selected individuals, groups, tangible assets, and societal-cultural factors in the civil environment which may significantly impact friendly operations. Like the Red Cell, the Green Cell is used throughout the entire planning process, but with a focus on developing a "civil environment model" for testing, improving, and modifying friendly courses of action to enhance the desired friendly effects on the civil environment, and to mitigate potential negative effects.

b. Definition. An ad hoc WG consisting of individuals with a diversity of education and experience capable of identifying and considering the perspective of the population, the host nation government and other stakeholders within the operating environment. The Green Cell helps to inform the commander, his staff and the OPT, creating a better understanding of the operating environment throughout the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCP). (MSTP Pamphlet 2-0.1)

c. Purpose. While the role of a Green Cell is to consider the population in order to promote a better understanding of the environment, at a minimum, during the Course of Action (COA) Wargame step of MCP, the Green Cell provides for the independent will of the population. The Green Cell may also provide consideration for non-Department of Defense entities, such as intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

d. Staff Cognizance. Whenever practicable, the Green Cell should fall under staff cognizance of the senior civil affairs (CA) staff member in the command (whether that is within the G-9 or the G-3, or the S-3 of the Regiment/MEU). When this is not feasible, staff cognizance of the Green Cell should fall to a staff member in the Intelligence section, or even under the OPT leader. In any case, the Green Cell should have a clearly designated staff cognizance relationship in order to ensure effective advocacy for resourcing, staffing, and other issues.

### e. Staff Composition

(1) The cognizant staff officer, in close coordination with the OPT leader, will direct standup of the Green Cell and

designate the Green Cell officer-in-charge (OIC). The OIC will direct and oversee the detailed work of the Green Cell, coordinate Green Cell efforts with other command and external planning organizations (Intelligence section, Red Cell, higher and adjacent Green Cell equivalent organizations, etc.), and serve as the primary "voice" and "face" of the Green Cell to the command and the OPT. The OIC can be a Foreign Area Officer, Regional Affairs Officer, or expert in a civil-military operations (CMO) functional area relevant to the command's battlespace (such as public works or governance) - but above all the Green Cell OIC should be an experienced MAGTF professional who can synthesize, apply and effectively articulate relevant Green Cell input to the command planning process.

(2) Other factors influencing cell composition include the security classification level of the planning evolution, "high demand-low density" subject matter expertise (SME) availability (in some cases, the Green Cell may "share" a SME with another planning organization (intelligence section, red cell, combat engineer section, etc.), and in the case of non-Department of Defense (DoD) / U.S. interagency organizations, the willingness of those organizations to participate in a military planning evolution - by the very nature of the civil environment, the Green Cell will often require "non-traditional" cell membership - to include interorganizational, coalition / host nation civil officials, cultural / academic SME, and in some cases members of the civil population in the battlespace - this "non-traditional" membership requires creative ways to physically integrate members into the cell and to integrate their intellectual input and products into the process. Additionally, non-DoD personnel may only be available on a limited or part time basis. Despite these challenges, the Green Cell OIC should make the necessary effort to integrate "non-traditional" member expertise and input because it is often critical to understanding the civil environment and the character of the population with whom we must interact.

## 2. CONTRIBUTIONS TO MCPP

a. Overview. While the main contribution of the Green Cell comes with COA Wargame, it plays a part in each step of MCPP. During Problem Framing, Green Cell members may assist in developing the CMO Staff Estimate, scoping the Problem Statement, providing input to the MAGTF OPT Battlespace orientation and support development of civil preparation of the battlespace (CPB). During Course of Action Development, the Green Cell provides input to civil impacts to COA development

and civil input to the Red Cell. During COA Wargame it provides civil input (reactions) to the wargame moves, and during Orders Development the Green Cell provides civil inputs to the "Situation" paragraph.

b. **CMO WG**. As "owners" of the CPB process, the CMO WG and Green Cell should be in close, continuous coordination - and may be physically collocated. There should be tight integration between designated Green Cell members and the CMO WG, especially during the initial stages of CPB, and the two groups will often share SME and "divide" the CPB labor. The Green Cell may also be reliant on CMO WG support to develop planning products; the group OICs should make an early determination / agreement on the amount and type of support that the CMO WG can provide to the Green Cell (and vice versa). It is critical to ensure a common understanding of the civil environment among all members of both organizations throughout planning; and where there is analytical disagreement on aspects of the environment; the leaders of both organizations should discuss and identify disagreements to the senior CA Marine / CMO planner or CA OPT representative for resolution.

c. **Problem Framing**

(1) During problem framing, a critical function of the Green Cell will be the development and approval of the Civil Environment Model concept. As early as possible in this step, the Green Cell OIC should brief his staff cognizant officer and the OPT leader / selected OPT members on the key influences that the cell intends to portray in the planning process. The key influences the cell portrays will determine the direction and scope of Green Cell activities for the remainder of the process, and drive the commander, staff and OPT to understand the civil environment and its effects on friendly planning / operations.

(2) The cell will work in conjunction with the CMO WG and in coordination with the intelligence section in the CPB / Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (IPB) processes. During the early stages of problem framing, the Green Cell in coordination with the CMO WG, should provide the OPT with a civil environment orientation (similar to the intelligence section threat orientation) based on the CPB effort up to that point.

(3) Other activities during this step include cell members gaining situational awareness, providing civil environment input to the commander / OPT "design dialogue," and ensuring that aspects of the Civil Environment Model are applied

to the center of gravity analysis, suggested commander's intent, proposed commander's critical information requirements, assumptions, task analysis, and the other staff actions performed during the problem framing step. The cell will also coordinate with the CMO WG to provide relevant input for the OPT problem framing brief, which at a minimum should include a summary of significant aspects of the civil environment (individuals, groups, infrastructure, and belief sets / intangibles) as well as associated potential friendly planning considerations.

d. **COA Development**

(1) During this step, the OPT develops one or more options for how the mission and commander's intent might be accomplished. As options are developed, the Green Cell, in coordination with the CMO WG and CMO OPT representative, ensures that the OPT considers the civil environment - the cell assesses how friendly actions might affect the civil environment, provides the OPT with feedback on these effects, and suggests possible enhancement or mitigation measures that can be built into COAs. In addition, the Green Cell begins COA wargame preparation, and continues to refine the Civil Environment Model.

(2) The Civil Environment Model can be used to provide specific recommendations to COA development. Examples include:

(a) Identification of key influences. Key influences (individuals, groups, tangible assets and societal-cultural factors) become potential engagement targets for friendly leadership, units, and organizations - in particular, the command effects and assessment cells may identify key influences for further information collection and nonlethal shaping. Key influence engagements will often translate into COA tasks for subordinate elements.

(b) Identification of grievances. By identifying grievances of specific groups or influential leaders, the OPT can generate tasks to subordinate elements, along with intermediate objectives, that address grievances that need to be mitigated for friendly success. Likewise, grievances associated with threat actions can be used to a friendly advantage in a COA.

(c) Identification of "windows of opportunity" and "windows of vulnerability." Key events (holidays, elections,

etc.) may create opportunity or vulnerability for friendly force COAs, and influence the timing, scope and location of friendly actions. Likewise, civil events may be windows of opportunity or vulnerability for threat forces.

(d) In addition to aiding friendly COA development, the Green Cell supports the CMO WG and CMO OPT representative in developing the CMO portion of the synchronization matrix, the CMO staff estimate / supporting concepts and in providing CMO input to the OPT course of action brief. Lastly, via the CMO OPT representative, the Green Cell provides input from the civil environment perspective to assist the commander in the development of his COA wargame guidance and evaluation criteria, which may be given to the OPT at the conclusion of the COA development step.

e. **COA Wargame.** The COA wargame is used to improve the plan by examining and refining options (COAs) in relation to adversary capabilities and actions, as well as in relation to the physical and civil environments. In this step, the Green Cell "brings the civil environment to life" in the form of key influence wargame actions that describe how friendly COAs, threat actions and the civil environment will affect one another.

(1) The importance of a well-developed Civil Environment Model and the proper selection of key influences will become readily apparent during the COA wargame. If the model does not have sufficient detail and/or if too many, too few, or the "wrong" key influences have been selected, then the ability of the Green Cell to assist the OPT in assessing, refining, and modifying friendly COAs will be degraded.

(2) COA wargame can take many forms, from a quick tabletop discussion at the small unit level to a complex multi-day event at higher echelons. In most cases, a normal wargame "turn" consists of a friendly action portion (friendly force representatives brief actions along warfighting function or lines of operation (LOO) which are then followed by a threat reaction portion (Red Cell briefs reactions in response to friendly actions). Following the Red Cell reaction, the Green Cell should brief civil environment reactions by key influences - a significant point is that civil environment reactions are in response to both the friendly action AND the threat reaction within that turn. The "reaction" portions of the turn are then followed by a "counteraction" portion - based on the outcome of "action / reaction," the friendly initial action may be

"modified" based on the results of the turn. Note that this modification is an improvement / enhancement to the initial friendly COA action and not an additional friendly "turn" within the wargame turn. Note also that, while the Red Cell may have created its own undesired effects in the civil environment due to its "reaction" during that turn, the Red Cell will not normally modify (counteract) the threat COA - it is worth discussing in the OPT, but the purpose of the COA wargame is not to "improve" the threat COA.

(3) From a civil environment perspective, the Green Cell helps improve the friendly COA by realistic and well-developed Green Cell reactions portraying key influences, as well as by providing feedback to the OPT on opportunities / risks in the friendly COA and identification of 2nd and 3rd order effects of friendly actions that may impact the mission.

(4) The green cell continues to work with the CMO WG and CA OPT representative in developing the CMO staff estimate, supporting concept, etc. The cell also provides relevant input to the CMO OPT representative for the COA wargame brief, with emphasis on advantages / disadvantages of COAs from a civil environment perspective.

f. **COA Comparison and Decision**

(1) The Green Cell should be prepared to provide input to this process by explaining how the wargamed COA(s) affected the civil environment and key influences, and if COAs are compared, which COA was most and which was least effective in achieving friendly objectives / end states in the civil environment.

(2) Once a COA is approved, the cell will support the CMO WG and CMO OPT representative in refining the staff estimate / CMO Concept of Support, providing input to any warning order updates, and the development of any branch (or sequel) planning directed by the commander.

g. **Orders Development**. During this step, the decision could be made to stand down the Green Cell. This should be a mutual decision involving the staff cognizant officer and OPT leader. A recommended technique is that the Green Cell OIC remains with the CMO section to support orders development and serve as a resource to other staff sections as they develop their portion of the orders. The cell OIC should have communication means established with former cell members in

order to clarify / answer requirements in their specific areas of expertise.

h. **Transition**. This step is a wide range of activities conducted to ensure a successful shift by the force from "planning" to "execution" of the plan. From the CMO perspective, this often involves transitioning planning products and orders to CA tactical asset leaders and their personnel. Similar to the orders development step, having the Green Cell OIC available during transition can greatly facilitate translating the products and rationale of planning to the assets that will execute the CMO Concept of Support.

### 3. **SAMPLE GREEN CELL COA WARGAME TURN**

a. Effective turn portions are concise, complete and capture actions that are significant in evaluating the friendly COA. Because the Green Cell will represent multiple and diverse "key influences" in the reaction portion of the turn, organization and clear presentation are important to smooth wargaming and conveying understanding of civil environment factors to the OPT.

b. Below provides an example of the Green Cell COA Wargame reaction. The Green Cell uses the reaction to highlight key influences, associated actions and the objective of that action.

Key influences: Identification of the individual, group, place/asset, or intangible factor ("who").

Actions: Concise description of "what," "how," "where," and "when."

Objectives: Rationale and purpose of the actions.

Example Green Cell reaction: *"Sheikh Abdul withholds his participation in the Ramtha City Governance Council beginning immediately due to his anger at insufficient project funding in his tribal area compared to neighboring tribal area funding. He does this in order to pressure coalition forces into increasing funding in his area."*

### **REFERENCES:**

MCWP 3-33.1 MAGTF Civil Military Operations  
MCWP 5-1 Marine Corps Planning Process

