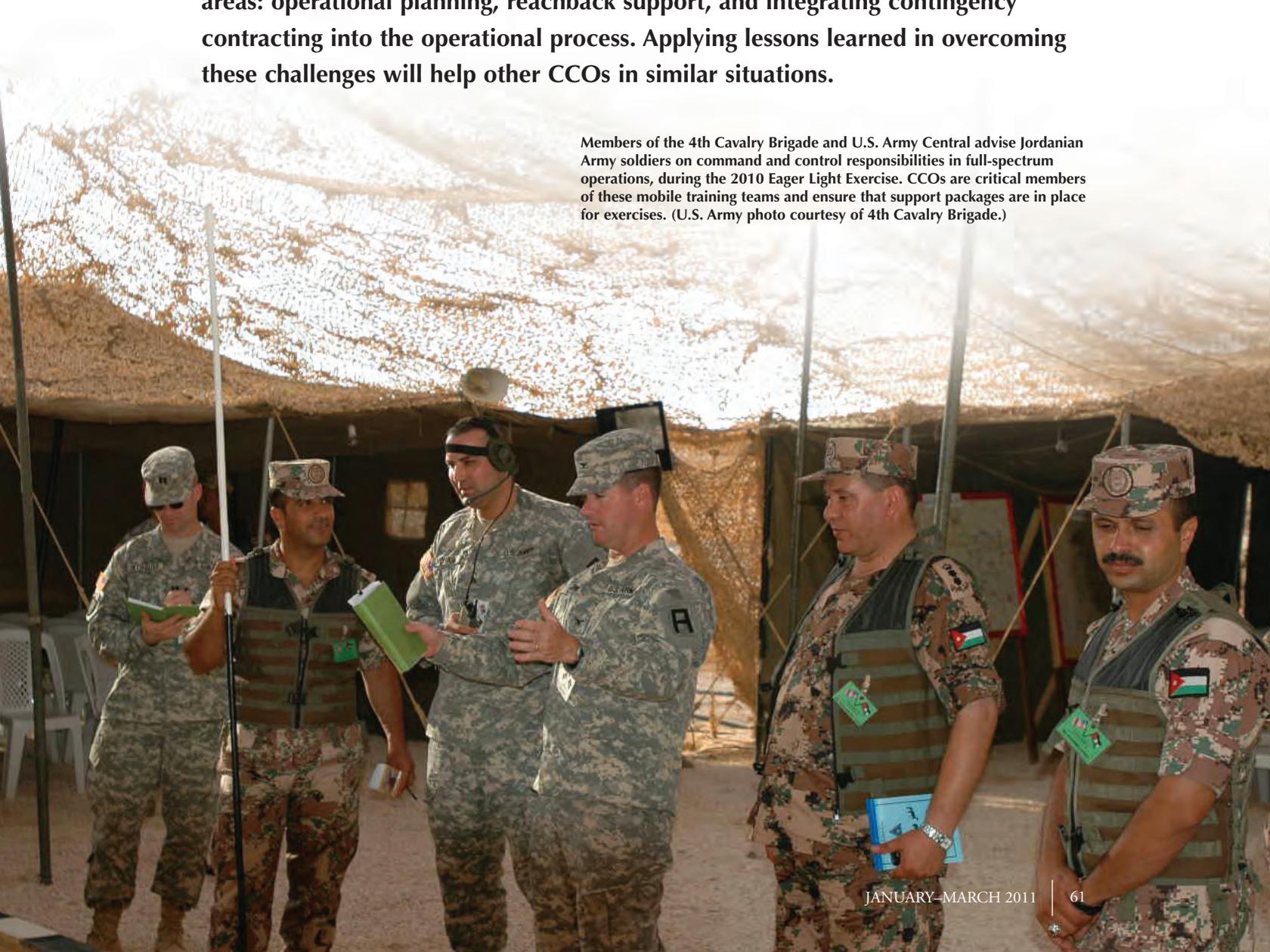


A Model of Contingency Contracting Support for U.S. Central Command Joint Coalition Exercises

MAJ Christopher L. Center and MAJ(P) Robert S. Mathews Jr.

Joint coalition exercises in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility pose unique contracting challenges, while providing lessons learned for contingency contracting officers (CCOs) tasked to support exercises and combat operations in theater. During the biennial Eager Light training exercise in Jordan during summer 2010, CCOs faced challenges in three areas: operational planning, reachback support, and integrating contingency contracting into the operational process. Applying lessons learned in overcoming these challenges will help other CCOs in similar situations.

Members of the 4th Cavalry Brigade and U.S. Army Central advise Jordanian Army soldiers on command and control responsibilities in full-spectrum operations, during the 2010 Eager Light Exercise. CCOs are critical members of these mobile training teams and ensure that support packages are in place for exercises. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of 4th Cavalry Brigade.)



Background

Eager Light is a joint coalition exercise directed by CENTCOM and executed by Third Army/U.S. Army Central (ARCENT). Eager Light trains U.S. and Jordanian military personnel in brigade-level battle staff functions. The training is conducted through command post exercises or field training exercises. The most recent of these exercises took place July 11–Aug. 12, 2010, involving nearly 60 personnel from the supporting 4th Cavalry Brigade and ARCENT, and an equal number of Jordanian soldiers. The next exercise is scheduled for March 2011.

The success of Eager Light was due largely to detailed coordination between ARCENT and Jordanian senior leadership during three planning conferences of about 5 days each in February, March, and June in Amman, Jordan.

A Key Role in Operational Planning

The challenge faced by CCOs in operational planning is a common one: balancing the expectations of the requiring activity to receive what they want, when they want it, with those of the contract support brigade (CSB), which ensures that the acquisition is

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secured using maximum competition from host nation small businesses. In Jordan, there is an additional layer of complexity in the acquisition process, due to force protection considerations: CCOs must coordinate with the U.S. Embassy's General Services Office (GSO) for a list of vetted contractors who have been cleared by CENTCOM Force Protection Teams.

To overcome the challenge of balancing key stakeholders' expectations, CCOs in Eager Light did significant mission analysis and coordination with the requiring activity and the CSB providing the CCOs with their warrant authority. CCOs reviewed previous exercise contract files, solicitation methods, and vendor awards to establish a baseline of how well customer needs were met while remaining compliant with the *Federal Acquisition Regulation* and *Defense Federal Acquisition*

Regulation Supplement. While compliant, there was clearly room for improvement. The first step taken by the CCOs was to establish a collaborative knowledge website through Army Knowledge Online (AKO) to provide a central hub of previous contracts executed, current contracts, and lessons learned. (Access is available upon request to christopher.l.center@us.army.mil or robert.s.mathews@us.army.mil.)

To address the GSO's vetted list of contractors, the CCOs met with key embassy personnel in planning conferences to ensure a common understanding and that customer intent would be met during the final exercise. The CCOs documented in their Determination and Findings the restriction of competition to only those vendors vetted by CENTCOM. In addition, a memorandum for record



Market research in diverse markets such as Amman, Jordan, requires detailed analysis and support from the GSO of the U.S. Embassy to ensure that CCOs are working with responsible contractors. (Photo courtesy of MAJ Christopher L. Center.)

FIGURE 1. CONTRACT AWARD TRACKER

No.	Purchase Request & Commitment	Description	Purchase Request Commitment	Contract #	Purchase Order Obligation	Rolling Total	Vendor	Period of Performance End Date	Unit
1	W80UUU01180600	RENTAL CAR PACKAGE	\$ 49,933.70	10-P-0001	\$ 28,383.43	\$ 28,383.43	Avis	8/8/2010	ARCENT
		MODIFICATION	\$ -	P00001		\$ 28,383.43			
		MODIFICATION	-	P00002		\$ 28,383.43			
2	W80UUU01180601	HOTEL ROOMS	\$ 71,426.75	10-P-0003	\$ 48,675.07	\$ 48,675.07	Hyatt	8/8/2010	ARCENT
			\$ -	P00001	\$ -	\$ 48,675.07			
			(\$ 8,512.19)	P00002	(\$ 8,512.19)	\$ 40,162.88			
		MODIFICATION	\$ 4,016.29	P00003	\$ 4,016.29	\$ 44,179.17			
			\$ 6,198.31	P00004	\$ 6,198.31	\$ 50,377.48			
			\$ 263.74	P00005	\$ 263.74	\$ 50,641.22			
3	W80UUU01180602	HOTEL ROOMS	\$ 85,000.00	10-P-0004	\$ 81,603.10	\$ 81,603.10	InterContinental	8/6/2010	ARCENT
		MODIFICATION	\$ -	P00001	\$ -	\$ 81,603.10			
		MODIFICATION	(\$ 1,614.29)	P00002	(\$ 1,614.29)	\$ 79,988.81			
4	W80UUU01890600	NON POTABLE ICE	\$ 800.00	10-M-0329	\$ 592.38	\$ 592.38	Hyatt	8/4/2010	ARCENT
5	W80UUU01890601	NON POTABLE ICE	\$ 2,320.00	10-M-0330	\$ 569.82	\$ 569.82	InterContinental	8/4/2010	ARCENT
			Total Purchase Request Commitment		\$ 209,480.45				
			Total Purchase Order Obligation		\$ 159,823.80				
			Total Modifications		\$ 351.86				
			Contracting Officer Negotiated Savings		\$ 49,304.79				

A Contract Award Tracker enables CCOs to accurately track the number of modifications, cost savings, inherent periods of performance, and the current situation of all supporting contracts.

was co-developed and signed with the Embassy's Military Assistance Program Office to identify vendors approved to work with U.S. personnel. These items are now part of the shared website and have been provided to the embassy, the CSB, and the supporting units to ensure contracting continuity for follow-on exercises.

Reachback Support

The CSB with regional contracting authority provided reachback support

through all phases of the exercise. This reachback included sharing contract support plans from previous exercises, information technology (IT) support with the Procurement Desktop Defense (PD2) system, policy support, and legal advice. The CSB validated all warrant packets for the assigned and attached CCOs. The Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC) issued warrants based on previous exercise support and the experience of the individual CCO. Procurement

history helped the PARC to determine the appropriate number of warrants and procurement authority for the CCOs.

The CSB and its S-3 Policy Chief provided the CCOs with the PARC's Acquisition Instruction (AI), which established general contracting procedures for the CSB and PARC. It was issued pursuant to Section 5101.304 of the *Army Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (AFARS)* and provided internal guidance, including

designations and delegations of authority, assignments of responsibilities, workflow procedures, and internal reporting requirements. The AI contains procedures that are required by regulation to be established by the Head of Contracting Activity, procedures that implement policies, and procedures necessary to ensure that business practices are consistent throughout the CSB and PARC. The Policy Chief ensured that the CCOs met the AI's intent and operated within its parameters.

The establishment of IT support for the assigned CCOs was essential during all phases of the mission. The CCOs required access to the CSB's PD2 system or legacy contract management systems. This was another area where

the CSB provided reachback support to ensure that the CCOs had connectivity with the CSB's domain through Citrix. The CSB provided a point of contact that could be reached 24 hours, 7 days a week. This included the use of a database (or shared drive) to store critical information and documents during execution of the exercise. The database retains historical files for future exercise support. In the most recent exercise, the CCOs created their own internal shared drive through AKO.

Integrating Contingency Contracting

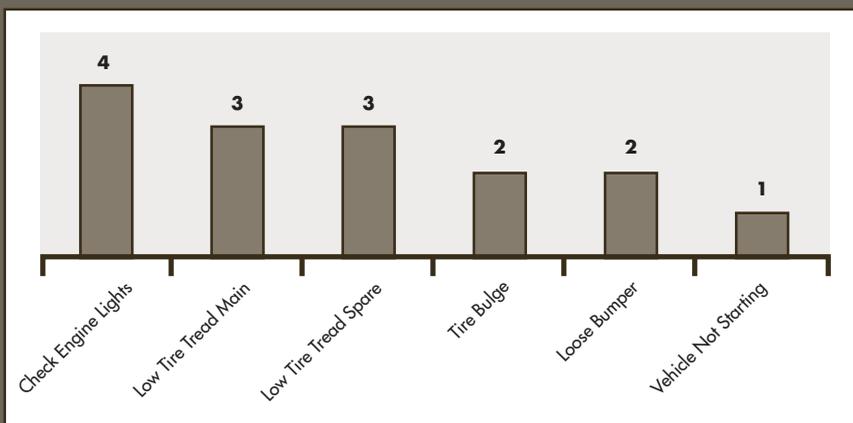
Mission analysis and coordination with the CSB and PARC enabled the CCOs to set conditions for successful integration into the supported unit's operational plan. Once the

above-mentioned conditions were set, the CCOs integrated the contracting capability into the unit's planning. The supported unit then fully integrated the CCOs into their exercise planning and resource management. Attendance at the initial planning conference allowed the CCOs critical time to conduct detailed market research in the host nation and to meet key personnel at the U.S. Embassy. Meetings at the embassy helped the CCOs understand the intricacies of the host nation's vendor base and force protection issues. The GSO, which is the procurement authority for the U.S. Ambassador, can provide a list of vetted contractors already determined responsible through previous business dealings with the Embassy and vetting by CENTCOM.

FIGURE 2. PARETO OF ISSUES FOR VEHICLES AND HOTELS

Issues	Weighted Occurrence	Total Occurrences	COR Time Cost (Hours)	Resolutions
Check Engine Lights	4	2	2	COR identified problem and vendor replaced with new vehicle
Low Tire Tread Main	3	1	3	COR identified problem and vendor replaced tire on same vehicle
Low Tire Tread Spare	3	1	3	COR identified problem and vendor replaced tire on same vehicle
Tire Bulge	2	1	2	COR identified problem and vendor replaced tire on same vehicle
Loose Bumper	2	2	1	COR identified problem and vendor fixed on same vehicle
Vehicle Not Starting	1	1	1	COR identified problem and vendor replaced vehicle

10-01 Eager Light Contracting Issues



Weighted Issue = Total Issues x COR Time in Hours to Resolve

A Pareto Chart captures issues gathered by the CORs through successful execution of the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan. Mitigation of reported issues at the lowest level ensures successful contract execution.

Information gathered during the initial planning conference permitted the CCOs to assist the supported unit in developing Statements of Work (SOWs) for exercise support. The CCOs had to ensure that all information acquired from the GSO, to include force protection guidance, was addressed in the SOW. The goal was that contractors fully understand all requirements for lodging, communications, and transportation. CCOs were responsible for ensuring that all contractors solicited were cleared to support all contracted requirements.

The final planning conference was a critical point when operational and contracting timelines were synchronized. The supported unit finalized its operational plan for the exercise with the U.S. Embassy and the host nation's armed forces. Concurrently, the CCOs notified the successful contractors verbally of their award decisions.

The post-award conference enabled the CCOs to ensure that transportation, communication, and lodging contracts were synchronized with the arrival and departure of U.S. Army personnel throughout all phases of the exercise (see Figure 1 on Page 63).

The post-award conference ensured that nesting occurred between the awarded contracts and the operational plan. Contractors had to understand they were an essential part of the operational plan, and the determination to award contracts was based on their past performance in dealing with force protection protocols and vetting by the GSO.

During the final planning conference, CCOs identified, trained, and appointed contracting officer's representatives (CORs). The CORs served as enablers to the CCOs in a joint exercise because they defused support issues with the contractors and verified compliance. If the CORs were unable to

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correct deficiencies that might change the scope, cost, or time of the contract, communication was streamlined from the appointed CORs to the CCOs.

Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans (QASPs) executed by the CORs ensured that the supported unit received excellent contract support (see Figure 2 on Page 64.) The QASP documented performance of the contractor and provided evidence of the contract's execution. The trained CORs enabled the CCOs to focus on administrative duties for the contract closeout phase at the end of the exercise.

Conclusion

CCOs are essential members of the advance party and trail elements in exercise execution. As members of the advance party, the CCOs ensure that the contracting and operational timelines are synchronized throughout arrival and accountability of all U.S. personnel and equipment that support the exercise. The CCOs meet with contractors to brief changes in the flight schedules of U.S. personnel, minimizing difficulties with the scope of lodging and transportation contracts. The CCOs also assist in the staging of equipment and the procurement of supplies and services from the local market through the use of Standard Form 44 or petty cash. At the conclusion of the exercise, the CCOs are the last to exit the country. They ensure that all contracts are closed and that the U.S. government is released from all claims.

Synchronization throughout all phases of the exercise with contracting and

operational plans maintains a shared vision among the CCOs, CSB and PARC, supported unit, contractors, and the U.S. Embassy. CCOs must always analyze their assigned mission to fully understand the environment in which they will be operating and the limit of their authority to procure within the PARC's area of responsibility. This analysis and preparation will result in successful execution of the contracting mission and will enable warfighter staffs to operate at a fast pace in austere environments.

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