



Assessing the transmission of Commander's Intent

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Presentation Plan

Introduction

Command structures

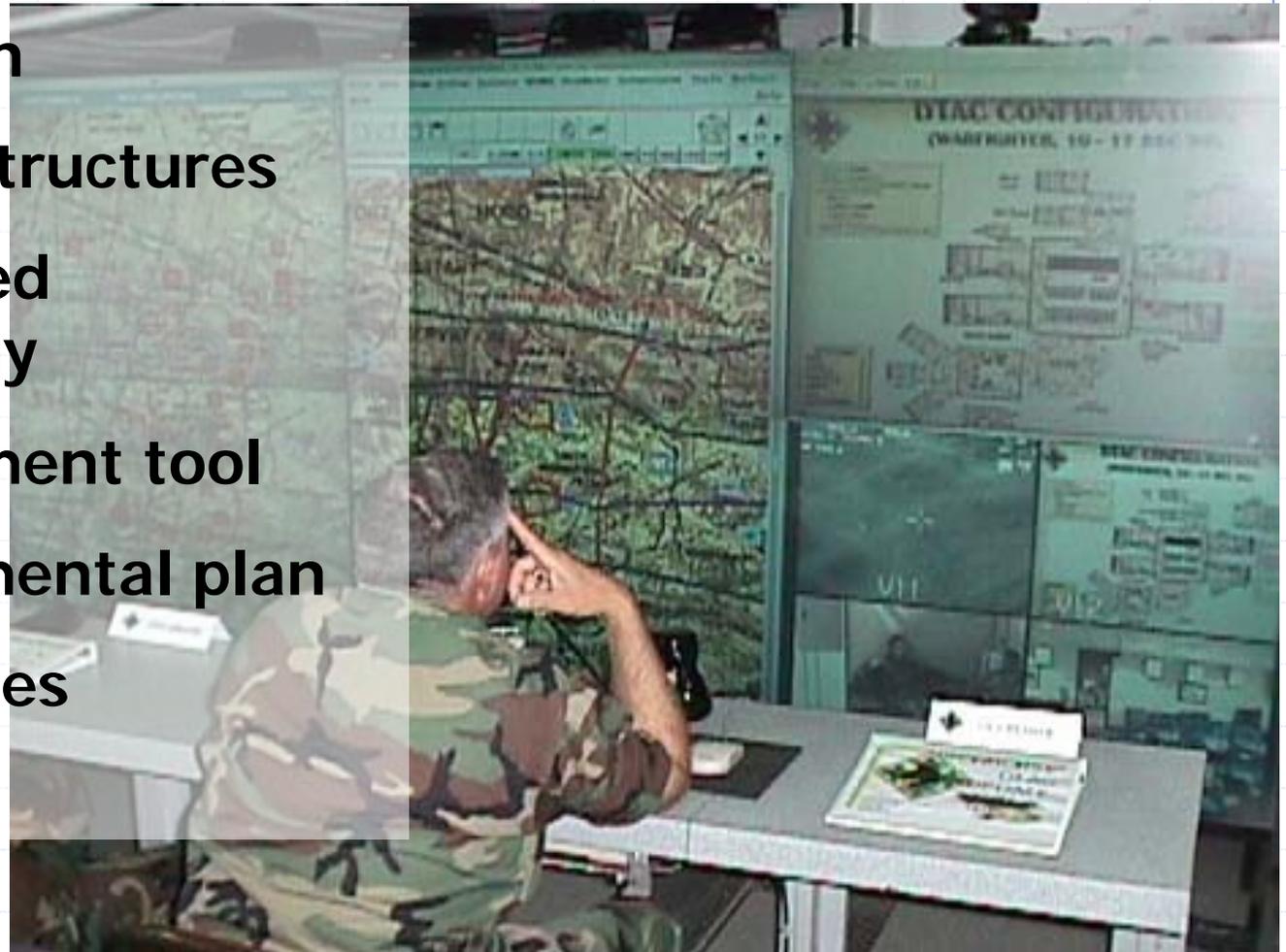
**The proposed
methodology**

The assessment tool

The experimental plan

Potential uses

Conclusion





Introduction

Orders are fundamental to any military operation

They pass down the command chain in several forms:

Warning

FRAGO

CONOPS

Confirming

If the original Commander's Intent is lost then the operation is probably heading toward failure!



Assessing Intent Transmission

The basic problem is how to assess transmission of the lower level orders.

Do they convey exactly what was in the original orders ?

or

Have they lost such things as urgency, timings, interoperability, or more of those details that sum to the spirit and INTENT of the original orders?



Command structures

Most Army and Marine structures are hierarchical

The details, and ranks involved, may change

We may talk of a few men, or a full brigade

There will usually be a Commander

Commander will have two or three subordinates

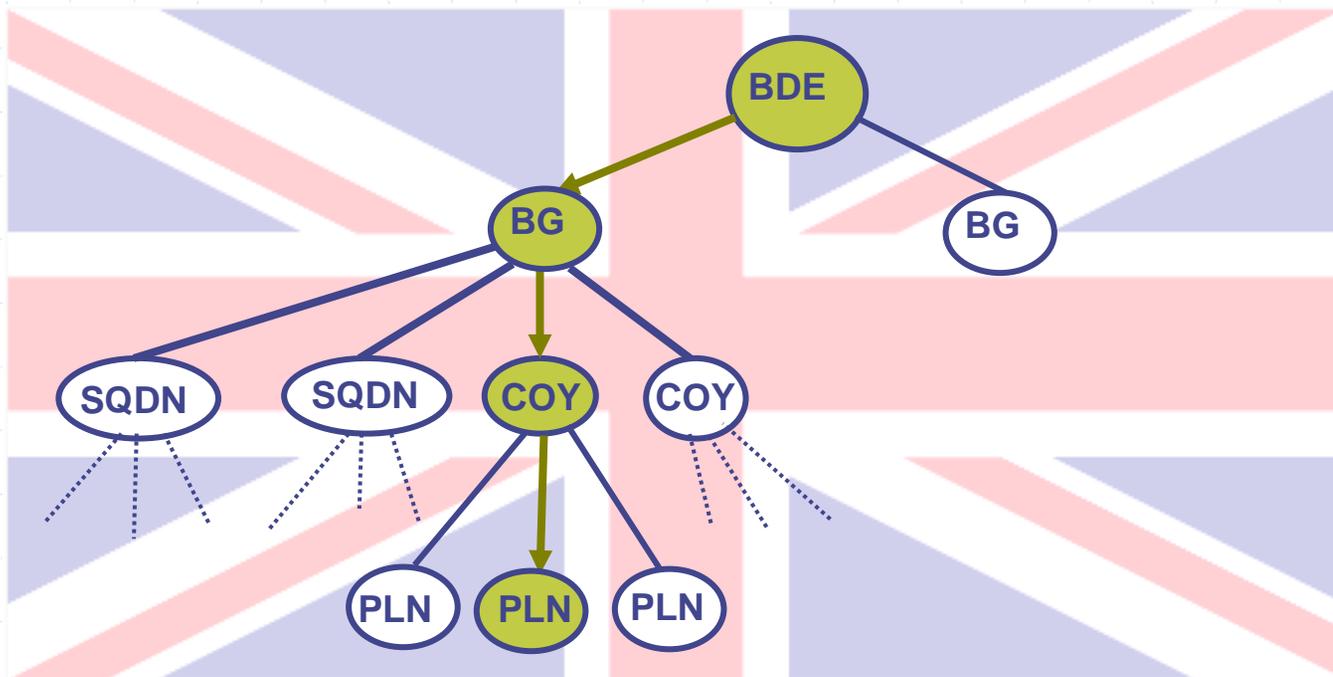
These in turn have two, three or four subordinates

***Only at Platoon and below* will a Commander normally give instructions direct to all ranks. Most orders are written.**

The British Battle-group



These are formed from a mix of Infantry and Armour
Typically two Battle-groups form one Brigade



Now we can identify levels



Level 1

BDE

CMD
(Brig)

Level 2

BG

BG

SUB 1
(Lt Col)

Level 3

SQDN

SQDN

COY

COY

SUB 2
(Maj, Capt)

Level 4

PLN

PLN

PLN

(Lt)

Multi-level Assessment

There are now three points to consider:

- What can be assessed?
- Where can it be assessed?
- Who can assess it?

What can be assessed?

A commander is the best person to judge if his intent has been properly transmitted down the command structure.

Two stages of assessment are possible:

- An overall rating
- A detailed rating

Our aim is to minimise possible constraints on the commander's judgements.



Where can it be assessed?

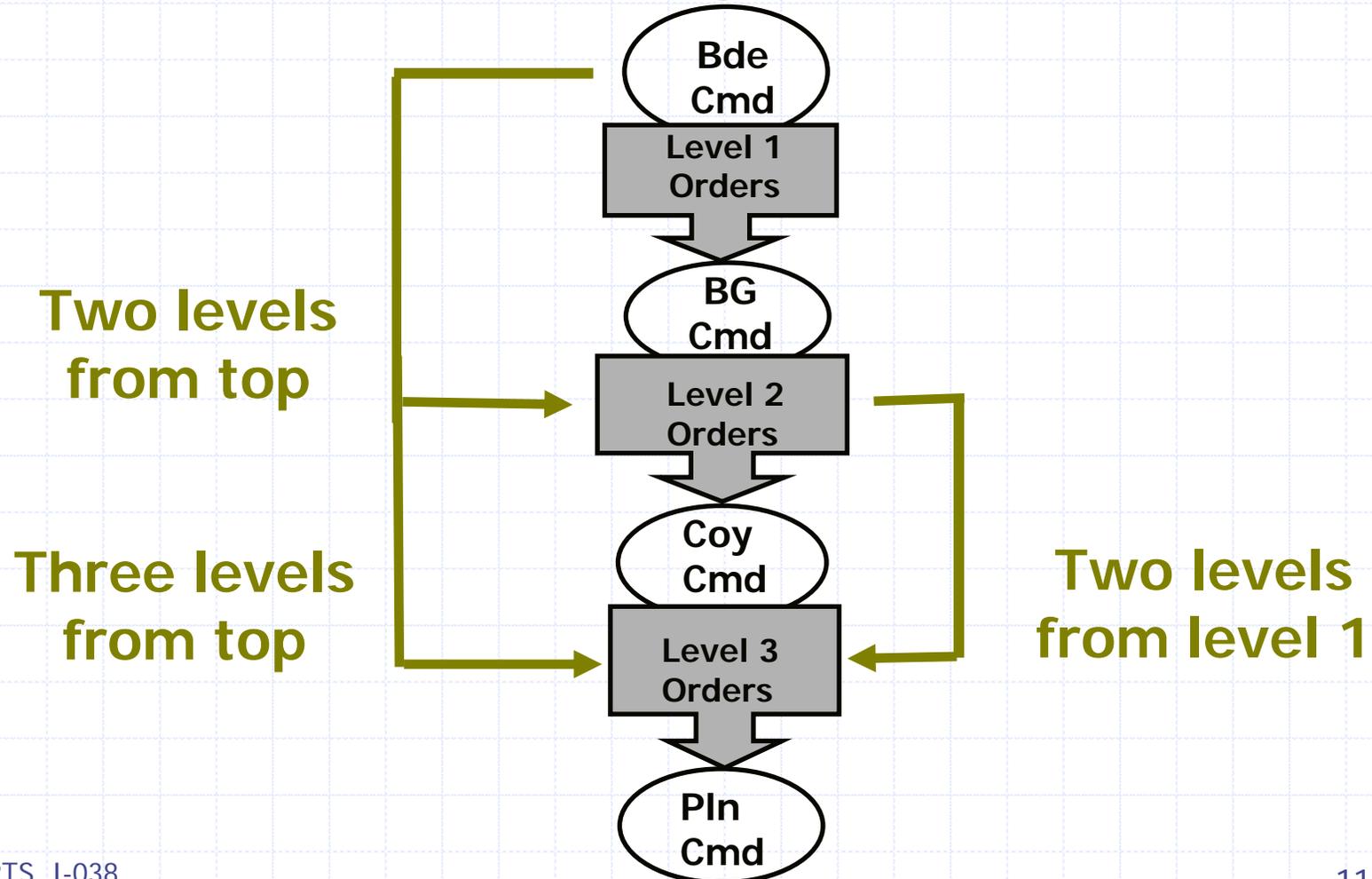
In practical terms, assessments are possible:

- Two levels down**
- Three levels down**

**Our example takes the notional (Brigade)
commander as the reference**

Who can assess it?

Top level Brigade orders





The two stages:

AN OVERALL RATING

The Commander's opinion of the 2nd and 3rd level written orders, as they reflect the original intent.

THE DETAILED RATING

A set of specific points are examined for each of the 2nd and 3rd level written orders (the same set for each level)



Detailed assessment framework

The 5-Paragraph Model for orders is standard across UK, US and NATO. The five main heads are:

**SITUATION
MISSION
EXECUTION
SERVICE SUPPORT
COMMAND & SIGNAL**

Command Intent features strongly in the first three

The detailed question set

We aim to establish a generic question set (about 8-10 questions), which can be applied to any set of orders by a commander. Such items as:

- Urgency
- Timeliness
- Locations
- Deconfliction
- Clear Bounds
- Use of assets

must feature in the question set.

Only an experienced Commander (as SME) can help to establish the necessary questions



The Assessment Tool

Based on the Osgood Semantic Differential

Asks a question with an indeterminate answer

A continuum links two extreme descriptors

The respondent marks a position between them

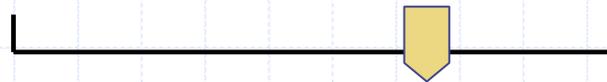
This is a NO-POINT scale – and there are no fine shades of opinion to choose from – and no forced choices to be made

**The technique is well proven
We have moved it from paper to computer**

The Tool Appearance

How well did these orders convey your intent ?

Minimally



Totally

OK

The Hidden Tool

Behind the line is a 100-point scale, which can be:

- used as numerical data
- grouped into as many points as needed
- grouped into asymmetric divisions

Practical Features include

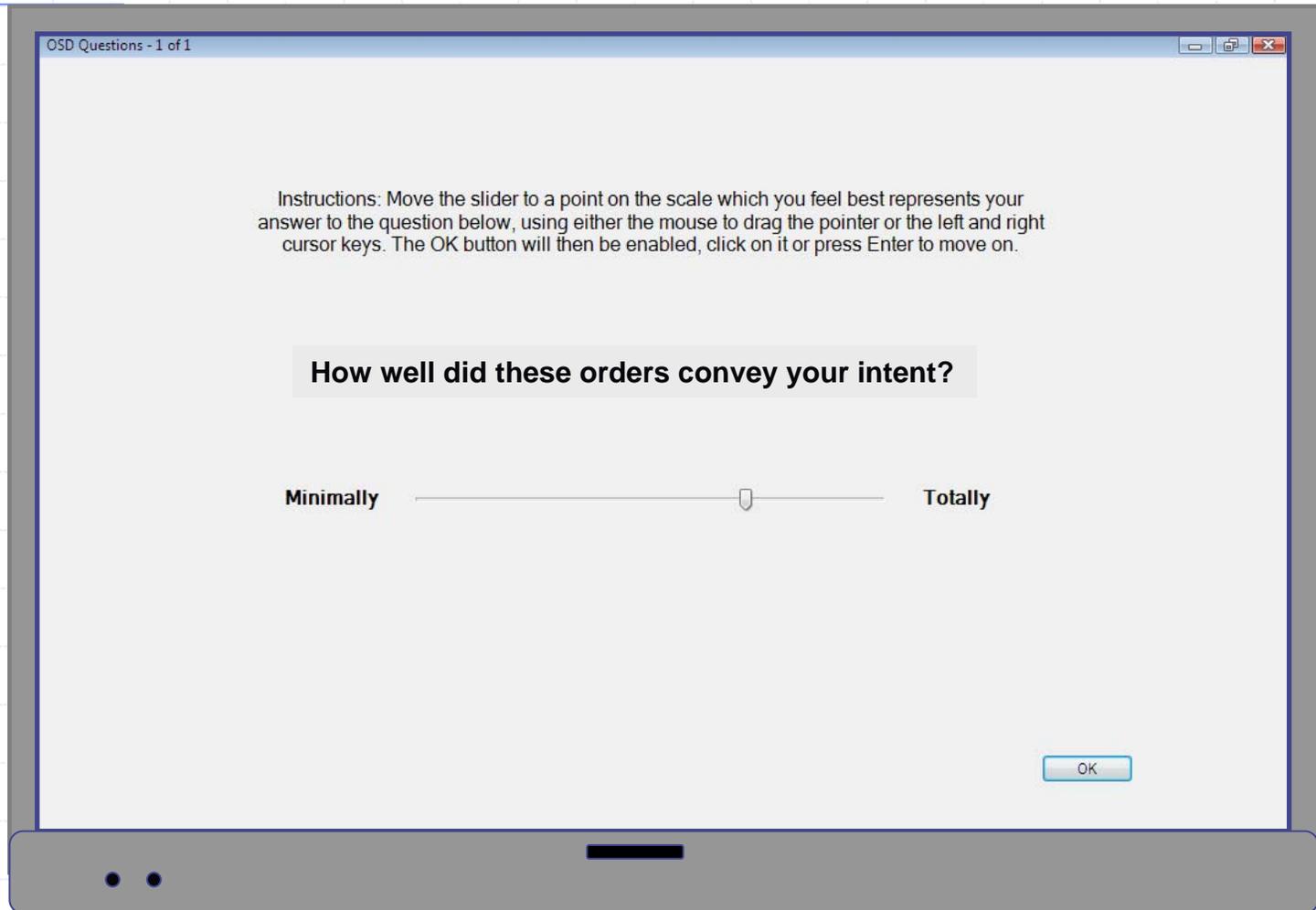
Auto-save

Auto-move to next Question

Data export in standard format

But it must be usable in the field

Lap-tops are small



OSD Questions - 1 of 1

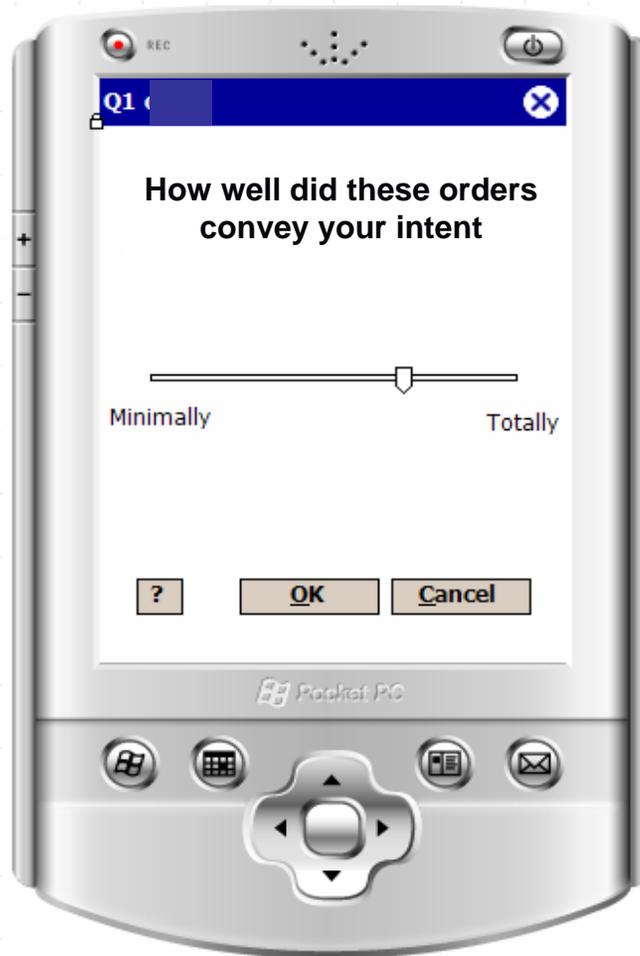
Instructions: Move the slider to a point on the scale which you feel best represents your answer to the question below, using either the mouse to drag the pointer or the left and right cursor keys. The OK button will then be enabled, click on it or press Enter to move on.

How well did these orders convey your intent?

Minimally Totally

OK

PDA's are smaller





The Experimental Plan

This requires a Commander in either:

- a Simulator/Command Post exercise
- a Field Training Exercise

**Commander does the overall rating (first stage)
on all 2nd and 3rd level Orders.**

**Commander then does the detailed rating on the
same Orders.**

Responses can then be analysed and correlated



Validation

**Validation of the second stage question set is by:
working with SMEs
correlation with the first stage question.**

**Content of the question set can be modified in the
light of any comments made by Commanders.**



Potential Uses:

This work is aimed at the transmission of intent;

- It can help to establish measures to determine the merit of any set of orders (identifying problems)**
- It can be used as a tool in Command Training**
- It can be used upward (by Junior Commanders) as a possible Risk Assessment tool**
- It may identify measures to help reduce fratricide**



But, potentially more valuable:

Given a valid technique for the assessment of the transmission of Command Intent, we may be able to relate this to other observable behaviours / indicators of potential problems

This could then be extended to multi-force and multi-national operations

Conclusion

The tool principle has already been tested.

The use of PDAs in field environments must be confirmed as practical survey tools.

This work has reached the point where the concept must be tested in a genuine command situation.

The question-set must have military approval.

- In a single-service / single-nation case, this presents no serious problem
- A coalition environment may require a new question-set
- Direct comparison with the single-service / single-nation case may be difficult



The Small Print

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