

Counter-IED Kriegsspiel by Ed Farren



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Summary of Game Concept.

The aim of the wargame is to exercise troops in a theoretical simulation involving the prediction, detection, neutralisation and, if unsuccessful, the explosive consequences of IEDs with a view to improve their understanding of CIED (Counter Improvised Explosive Devices) procedures. This is a two sided game that aims to force the players to compete to out-think each other in the counter IED battle. Casualties in the wargame means the BLUE player will then rehearse the procedures in dealing with these casualties in different situations

Introduction.

The wargame simulates a theatre of war in the contemporary operating environment. Two teams; RED Insurgent team and a BLUE Counter Insurgent team will compete in a set scenario.

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) is an effective 'homemade' bomb that is typically utilised by guerrilla, militant and other insurgent forces. Designed to destroy or incapacitate enemy personal or vehicles, it aims to cause casualties, limit freedom of movement or acts as distraction as part of a wider ambush. They are also commonly referred to as road side bombs. In the Second Gulf War in Iraq they caused approximately 63% of coalition casualties.

Set Up.

Issue both teams a copy of the wargame with a master copy held by the Directing Staff (umpire). The umpire is to designate the following locations as a minimum; one BLUE Patrol Base and one RED Weapons Cache (Cache), these locations should be far enough apart to allow for a decent degree of movement between the two.

Team Objectives.

Friendly forces have received a radio message saying there is a possible arms cache at the point indicated on the map. They are to conduct a dismounted patrol from their patrol base to the location in order to investigate and return in the time available (4hrs).

The area has been quiet with no incidents for several months, but there have been attacks in neighbouring areas recently.

The RED team must plot their IED/Scouts/Ambush screen to prevent/frustrate the BLUE team's likely route.



BLUE Force Composition.

The BLUE team have:

2 x Multiples (fireteams) capable of operating independently:

- Each multiple has 4 x Men (equipped with 4 x Personal Role Radio (PRR), 2 x SA-80, 1 x Underslung Grenade Launcher (UGL), 1 x LMG, 1 x LSW and 1 x ECM Jammer).
- Each multiple has 1 x Afghan interpreter (equipped with a mobile phone scanner).
- Both multiples are able to conduct OP Barma drills using Vallons (mine detector), but will move much more slowly whilst doing so.
- Each team has a full suite of ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) jammers providing protection in a 50 m radius from the centre of their position.
- Note that the Jammer will interfere with the radios and the mobile phone scanner held by the interpreter, so it is not possible to have both on at the same time. The Friendly Force player will then be faced with the choice of stopping and turning off the Jammer every few minutes to listen for phone chatter and communicate – or moving with the Interpreter behind the patrol outside of the Jammer's coverage (something he really will not be very keen to do...).
- The two fireteams are capable of operating independently.



1 x Desert Hawk UAV operated from the Platoon Base.

- The UAV that could spot RED team's scouts and RED fireteam ambush. The UAV has a limited duration and it's reports take time to get to the player; it can only thoroughly search an area 100m in radius at a time. The UAV can be recovered and recharged (see the umpire's guidance on timings below).

Red Force Composition:

The RED team have:

1 x Ambush Team of 4 x Men (equipped with 3 x AK-47 and 1 x RPG-7).

- These are capable of moving location, but they are in communication using mobile phones. Each time they move, there will be an indication based on analysis of mobile phone traffic given to the BLUE player. E.g. your interpreter will have heard someone on the mobile phone saying “move to the second position”.

6 x Spotters

- These are civilians or supporters able to communicate and pass information to the RED player. Two of them are capable of detonating the remote control IED (RCIED) or command wire IED (CWIED). They can be moved, but are not normally armed.

1 x leader representing the local commander.

- All Spotters, the Ambush Team and the leader have mobile phone communications with the local commander.

3 x simple fixed location Pressure Plate IEDs (PP).

- These are prepositioned away from buildings or frequently used pathways in order to avoid local civilian casualties. If placed on a road, there will be an indication to the BLUE player that something is wrong (E.g. ground sign) left to warn the locals that a bomb is present and the fact that the civilians are avoiding that area. If the fireteam passes over one, there is a high likelihood it will cause a casualty, unless the proper Vallon (mine detector) drills are being observed.

1 x Command Wire IED (can be placed anywhere on the map).

- This is a bomb triggered by an electrical cable connected to the bomb. It needs to be observed by the specific scout with the firing battery and can be placed in any location, including near buildings or roads, but cannot be moved. If the fireteam passes near one, there is an extremely high likelihood of causing a casualty unless the patrol is able to spot where the cable is buried.

1 x Radio Controlled IED (can be moved anywhere, with a Spotter to operate).

- This is a radio controlled bomb which can be fitted to a movable object, such as a bicycle. It needs to be observed by the specific scout equipped with the radio controlled trigger. It can be placed in any location, including near buildings or near roads and can be moved by the scout to another location. If the fireteam passes near one and is detonated, there is an extremely high likelihood of causing a casualty, unless the patrol is operating the remote control jammer.



Counters.

Cut out the counters in the appendix on thick paper or card to use as representations of the teams' assets on the map.

Wargame Phases

Preliminary Phase.

Both teams are given the locations of the PB (patrol base) and the Arms Cache and place those counters on their map. The teams are then given 20 minutes to develop a plan for their patrol/defence. After the time is up each team briefs the umpire in turn. The umpire should make notes on his master maps to locate areas where conflict will occur.

Patrol Action Phase.

The RED team lays out their IEDs and other units on their map as per their starting plan. The BLUE team place their two multiples in the PB. The umpire now advances through the BLUE force patrol plan to a point where a contact is possible (whenever a BLUE Counter comes near a RED Counter). The umpire will then set the scene for the two teams 'Multiple 11B is moving along the track towards a series of compounds', BLUE will then outline how they are planning to continue their patrol, with specific mention of any CIED measures they are imposing. Once they have spoken RED will describe the placement of the IED/Ambush and how they intend it to be triggered etc.

Resolution Phase.

The umpire will, using their experience and knowledge, provide an outcome based on the input from BLUE and RED, for example; IED ground sign spotted, IED blown early, IED blown casualty sustained etc. If considered appropriate the use of six sided dice may be used to add the element of chance (IED found on a 3,4,5,6 for example). Some basic modifiers could be things such as the fatigue of the patrol (the later it is, in the day, the more fatigued the patrol is), the number of people conducting CIED activity, the presence of a scout to track the patrol, the ground that the IED is placed in etc.

Repeat the Patrol Action Phase and Resolution Phase in turn until the operation has been concluded or be played to a satisfactory conclusion.

Consolidation Phase.

The umpire should call a halt and give both teams 5 minutes to provide a summary of why their plan did/did not work as expected. The method for this is up to the umpire and they may, naturally, wish to embellish or add their own points based on what they have observed. This phase must not be overlooked as it is only in post mortem that the gaps in understanding will be identified.

To maximise the learning, RED and BLUE teams should swap sides and play the game again and the results from the second time around compared to the first run through

Umpire's Guidance on Timings

- Basic speed for dismounted infantry with "Patrol Rig" (body armour, radio (PRR – personal role radio), weapons, ammo and kit for 48hrs) is 100m in 2 minutes along a track or heading over open ground towards a designated point (hot and dusty).
- Sweeping with Vallon mine detector takes 5 minutes per 100m.
- Moving through crops is at half-speed and the use of Vallon is extremely difficult. (Note: on the Terrain Map, the height of the crops is marked on the crop areas).
- Crossing an obstacle such as a low wall (grey line on abstract map) or stream (muddy brown line on abstract map) takes a minute per man (including checks and shaking out afterwards).
- The Desert Hawk UAV takes 30 minutes to prepare/launch and the batteries last for 45 minutes, fully charged. This means you can take a quick look at 4 points on the map, search along a route, or do an in-depth look at 2 points on the map.

- Reaction to a detection with Vallon: takes 5 mins to 30 minutes to work out what has been detected (e.g. roll a six sided dice and multiple result by 5 to give the time in minutes). If an IED has been positively identified, the EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) team will be called to dispose of it. This will take some time and the players will need to decide whether to continue the operation or cancel it in the light of the threat.

Counter IED Kriegsspiel: Notes for the Umpire

Aim.

The aim of the wargame is not to have clearly defined teams of winners and losers but rather for everyone involved to learn about CIED tactics through both success and failure. A balanced outcome, where the patrol both avoids and strikes IEDs, is therefore the best for maximum training benefit. The success of the wargame depends on the participation of the players in the teams. You, as the umpire, have a coordinating role, but should not be speaking for more than 50% of the time. Let the teams make their own assumptions and judgements on the ability of their assets in the wargame, this will inform if they have understood the actual capabilities/threats that you know to be accurate.

Administration.

The wargame map is best printed on A0 paper. Alternatively, it can be printed on A3 paper and laminated so it can be reused in multiple games. The teams can use water soluble colour pens and sheets of clear acetate to make traces on their respective maps. Each team will need a copy of the rules and a set of the counters (it is best to not have a complete set of the RED counters with the BLUE team as this can give away too much information). The wargame is best played indoors in a room large enough to allow the teams to be far enough apart not to easily eavesdrop on the others plans – though perhaps this adds an interesting dimension of LEC gleaned rumours/LEWT intercepts to play off.

Team Composition.

Seek to have teams of mixed experience and ability. Operational experience is preferable but this is not designed to be a rehash of the campaign in Afghanistan, it is about people coming up with their own ideas. Be sure to police teams who are getting dominated by a strong character or 'old sweat' this is about everyone getting involved. You may consider removing them to 'assist' you and thereby encourage others to think in their stead.

Execution.

The Umpire can move between the large maps in the same way as for another Kriegsspiel, or he can take the traces from the two teams and overlay them on one-another on the A3 map, where they will be able to see where the areas of likely conflict will be. It may be possible that the BLUE and RED teams will not come into contact with each other, if this is the case you may consider playing the wargame through to demonstrate why this was the case, followed by a rematch. Using the counters you can present a visual representation on your master map that will help in playing out the patrol action. The teams will only be able to see their own pieces initially but can place on the opposing pieces as events unfold thus giving them an ability to think ahead. With this in mind you may find it appropriate at some point to allow the BLUE team to deviate from their patrol trace based on their new assessment of the enemy threat and the ground. You may also give the RED team the chance to reposition some of their forces after a given point based on the path the BLUE team has taken thus far. This 'second guessing' element is an important part of the decision making process and should be encouraged once players are familiar with the base wargame.

Combat Resolution.

When a conflict is likely to occur, such as a Small Arms Ambush or IED strike it may be worth getting BLUE and RED to put forward arguments as to why they will either avoid/detect/defeat the IED or conversely that the IED will successfully detonate and injure a member of the patrol. For each BLUE point, hold up one finger, for each RED point lower one finger – if you have no fingers raised at the end then you may consider the IED attack/ambush successful. Use your own judgement and experience to temper the arguments. It is generally advised to limit the teams to 3 or 4 points each, these should be ranked in priority order.

Use of Dice.

If appropriate you may include the use of dice to add the element of chance/risk into the wargame.

Casualties.

If BLUE Team has taken casualties, these need to be evacuated according to their CasEvac procedures. They should not be allowed to continue the mission, until these have been recovered. Remember helicopter evacuation is available, but helicopters cannot be called into a so called hot LZ (a Landing Zone potentially covered by enemy fire). Securing an LZ gives rise to a whole new set of challenges.

For the purposes of the game, an LZ can be assumed to be far enough away from the enemy if it is more than 400m from enemy fire and the LZ will require a box 100m x 200m of clear ground in which to land. Of course, for the Enemy, if they manage to cause a casualty and then accurately predict where the helicopter LZ is, and succeed in placing an IED there, it will be a significant victory for them.

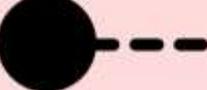
Random Events.

Once sufficiently versed in the wargame you may consider introducing random events to stimulate play. These may be things such as ECM failure, inadvertent IED detonation, the presence of civilians, Base ISTAR camera system spotting the ambush team etc. The purpose of random events is to test the reactions of the team so if you do include them then the wargame should enter 'free play' where teams can adjust their plans accordingly.

Timings.

The wargame should be easily playable once through to completion in 60 minutes provided the umpire keeps things moving. Actions need outcomes, not endless debate.



BASE 	FIRETEAM  A	FIRETEAM  B	UAV 
LEADER  Akbar	FIRETEAM 	CACHE 	MERT  CSAR
DETONATE 	SCOUT  Bashir	DETECTION 	CAR 
PPIED 	SCOUT  Maroof	CIVILIAN 	CAR 
PPIED 	SCOUT  Delawar	CIVILIAN 	CIVILIAN 
PPIED 	SCOUT  Mansour	CIVILIAN 	CIVILIAN 
RCIED 	SCOUT  RC Farukh	CIVILIAN 	CIVILIAN 
CWIED 	SCOUT  CW Gulshan	CIVILIAN 	CIVILIAN 

