Embeds:

- At the height of the war there were more than 500 hundred embeds. Recently it was down to two dozen. We're encouraging embeds and the numbers are creeping back up; today there are 39 embedded reporters.

- Embedding allowed reporters to enjoy maximum access while reporting objectively.

- What's missing now are the first hand accounts from our soldiers; unilateral reporters show up after the fight, after coalition forces have moved on, and invariably find a disgruntled Iraqi to comment, without balancing it with comments from the soldiers who were there.

- Thanks to the embed process, Americans saw first hand the discipline, effectiveness, and compassion of our servicemembers, who went to extraordinary lengths to protect civilians, often at the risk of their own lives.

- Some news organizations probably don't want to spend the money on embedding reporters or giving correspondents the ability to file their stories outside Baghdad.

- Of course, there's always a temptation to follow the "editorial line," reporting in a way that meets the preconceived notions of an editor thousands of miles away.

Embedding Statistics

- Slots offered to the media 920 (est.)
- Names provided by media organizations 775
- Actual embeds – more than 500
- International Media 200 (26%)
- National/Regional Media 516 (66%)
- Local Media 59 (8%)
- 251 outlets

Media Code Key	
US TV	193
US Radio	23
US Wire	59
US Newspaper	223
US Magazine	43
US News Service	25
US Photo	9
Int'l TV	109
Int'l Radio	10
Int'l Wire	27
Int'l Newspaper	47
Int'l Magazine	7
Total	**775**

The slots offered were based on the units scheduled to deploy for the operation (some of them did not deploy but subsequently will or have - 1CAV and 1AD.

The 775 names are the names provided by the media organizations in response to the 900+ invitations.

The actual number of embeds is easily 500 and more than likely 600 or so as a cumulative number – CENTCOM would really be the one who might have the details on the actual high water mark and the total cumulative number.

Our initial goal was to have 70% national/regional media, 20% international media, and 10% local media. We came very close to these goals – the main objective was to get as much coverage as possible so we could dominate the information market as a counter to the Iraqi regime's propaganda and misinformation.

Our planning efforts for the embedding program were focused on the division level and equivalent units from the other services and no forethought (to my knowledge) was placed into how we were going to allow coverage for the Guard and Reserve forces. Work-arounds were developed throughout the process but there was never a definitive plan in place to provide this important avenue of coverage.

The international media piece eventually evolved into a standardized process using assets from the State Departments Foreign Press Center (COL Machamer) and embassy staffs throughout the world. It was a difficult task to select the appropriate international media with the small percentage of slots they were allocated. The fix for this in the future is to integrate State Department assets early in the planning process and to rely on embassies to develop order of merit list for use in selecting the correct media from each country.

For several of the deployed units the 10% local media cap was not enough to cover all of the regional/local media – 4ID has units from three different regional areas – Texas, Colorado, and Washington State – their allocation was to only have 6 local media assets. We developed work-arounds to overcome this but in the future there should be a more careful assessment of how to handle and allocate the local media piece.

Three Ups

- Iraqi misinformation, lies, and propaganda were countered by the first hand reporting of the embedded journalist
- We achieved wide dissemination of news affecting the region and our operations
- The American people (families, relatives, members of congress) had a link to the hard and dangerous work our servicemembers were executing.

3

There are many examples of the important role the embeds played in countering misinformation but none of them are more to the point than when Baghdad Bob was holding his news brief touting the Iraqi victory as M1's of 3ID were being covered by their embeds as they were simultaneously rolling down the streets of Baghdad.

The embeds generated thousands of print and electronic news stories and articles chronicling the movements and actions of our servicemembers. (might want to check with COL Lee she did research on this).

Many times family members called to express their delight at having an embed with their loved ones unit because this allowed them to track the movements and activities.

Conclusion

- The media embedding program had a role in educating three different cross sections of American society
    - The embedded media now have a better understanding of how the military operates and will better understand how to report their activities in the future
    - The military units with embedded journalist will have a better understanding in the future how the media operates and how important their role is in informing the American public
    - The American Public has a better understanding of the actions and activities our servicemembers execute to accomplish their assigned missions.

An entire generation now knows how hard our servicemembers work and how dangerous their missions are.

The gap between the military and the media has been somewhat bridged as a result of the program. Commanders and soldiers are going to look differently at the press now as they encounter them in future operations and conflicts. The media are always going to be their and it is our charge to be ready to facilitate their coverage in the future.