

### An invitation to help shape UK doctrine

*'They're not fighting like we thought they would,' one IDF soldier said. 'They're fighting harder. They're good on their own ground.'*<sup>1</sup>

In conflict the side that learns and adapts fastest makes its own luck. As a result of intensive operations over the past several years, this generation of British Servicemen and women, alongside our civilian colleagues who have deployed with us, have acquired a depth of hard-won experience, unparalleled since the Second World War. As Director General at DCDC the question I have been asking is whether we have the optimum system that allows us to draw upon that experience, evaluate it, codify the most profound insights and so use these campaign lessons to educate and train the commanders and staff of tomorrow? The answer is 'no': you may be able to help us do better.

How? The clue is in the name: the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre is responsible for the timely production of a body of work, based upon the enduring lessons of the past but informed by relevant recent experience. Doctrine offers a guide rail; it helps us think about our craft. Anyone who has ever received professional military education or training – most of the readers of this journal – will have been exposed to doctrine, whether they knew it or not. Few read it for fun, but it is a key element in any successful, serious military organisation. And where doctrine goes wrong – as the Israelis found to their cost during 2006 in Lebanon – the consequences can be profound.

A young soldier involved in the battle later lamented, *'The commanders told us that the infantry had already cleared the area, and then the tanks started getting hit, tank after tank. Why did they send us into this hell? Why did they send us into the missile trap? We already thought we were going to go home smiling and with the flags flying - instead, we go to our fellows' funerals.'*<sup>2</sup>

DCDC produces and continually revises UK doctrine for the joint strategic and operational levels. In other words, the business of deciding how to apply National power through the design and conduct of campaigns. Below that level, in the vital area of tactics, techniques and procedures, we work closely with the Service Warfare Centres and the Permanent Joint Headquarters who have the lead. If you can make a contribution that you think could help us improve our doctrine and thus what is taught to the commanders and staff officers of the future, then get in touch.

I am not expecting (but would be delighted to receive) award-winning Service papers. It could simply be you want to share an insight on a relatively narrow area, perhaps a planning approach that worked well in a joint or multinational Headquarters. Do not assume that 'they' never listen: we at DCDC will. I do not promise to put every nugget straight into our next Joint Doctrine Publication, nor will I become your pen-friend. I will, however, guarantee that your views will be read and considered carefully.

#### Notes

1 *The Long War Series Occasional Paper 26*, Chapter 4, p 44, US Army Combined Arms Center, Combat Studies Institute Press, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

*2. Joint Center for Operations Analysis  
Journal on Second Lebanon War, p 32,  
Volume X, Issue 1, December 2007.*

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