



Background:

Fairly or unfairly, US forces have been severely criticized for their part in damaging or failing to protect cultural properties when occupying archeologically sensitive areas in military theatres of occupation. In military operations where winning hearts and minds is a critical component of success, protection of cultural property becomes vital to the success of the mission. Archeologists working at the installation level recognized serious gaps between higher level initiatives for site protection and actual “hands on” training of military personnel who would be occupying archeologically sensitive areas.

Objective:

The objective of this project is to provide practical training materials that are easily available to military personnel at all levels. Specifically, this project is designed to produce four products:

- Playing cards with information about antiquities, cultural property, and proper behavior when discovering or occupying an archeological site
- Soldier information cards containing critical information on this same subject
- Informed cultural preservation training modules containing slides and scripts that can be presented by anyone at any time
- Construction of mock cultural resource assets to be included in realistic in-theatre training scenarios like MOUT sites

Summary of Approach:

A key to the potential success of this project is the goal of bringing together representatives of the military archeology community with the academic archeology community, many of whom were unaware that a military archeology community even existed. The project approach is to fund classical archeologists to provide research background material to support soldier training and then to transform this information into useable tools like playing cards. This approach provides concerned archeologists from the academic community an opportunity to provide and share their detailed and vital information where it can be used effectively to support soldiers. The idea is to use military archeologists who are familiar with teaching soldiers and who understand the mission as conduits in this information transfer. The goal is to produce effective training materials that military personnel at all levels will actively use and understand.

Proposed Time Line

Summer 2006

- Construction of Mock Cultural Resource Assets in Target and Training Areas
 - Status: Preliminary Designs Complete, Acquiring Materials
- Construction will begin late June early July, first asset on line mid July, Ft. Drum, Aerial Gunnery Range 48
- Research Phase Underway

- Status: Dr. Ulrich on Board, Student Assistants Identified
- Correspondence with Colleagues Established

Fall / early Winter 2006

- Research Continues
- Evaluation of Mock Cultural Sites as Training Assets
- Possible Travel to Afghanistan, Meeting with Archeologists

Winter 2006-2007

- Research Synthesized and Provided to Designers, Including Images and Information
- Soldier Cards Designed, Playing Cards Designed, Draft Training Support Packages Prepared

Spring and early Summer 2007

- Printing and Distribution of Playing Cards and Soldier Cards
- Completion and Distribution of Training Support Packages

Benefit:

The long term benefit will be better education of US and coalition military personnel when it comes to occupation and possible protection of cultural sites in areas of military deployment around the world. In addition to improved site preservation, this project provides DOD with an opportunity to increase public awareness of the fact that the Department of Defense has a strong conservation ethic and has played a major role in discovering and preserving cultural properties not only in the US but on its holdings around the world. A long term goal would be consistent inclusion of accurate archeological and antiquities information in the cultural awareness training process.

Accomplishments:

The networking aspect of this project is already paying off. The selection of Dr. Roger Ulrich of Dartmouth College as the liaison to the Classical Archeology community has resulted in spontaneous offers of help from across the United States. Contact has been made through the Embassy in Kabul with programs supporting cultural preservation in Afghanistan and concerned Afghan archeologists. Representatives of a wide range of related training programs are beginning to discover each others' efforts so that training materials and initiatives for customs inspectors, law enforcement, museum professionals, and military personnel are being shared much more effectively.

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