Morale & Ethical Decision Making
U.S. Soldiers and Marines in Iraq
(18 SEP 06)

Date:

Unit:

Location:

Interviewer(s):

I. Introduction and Basic Demographics.

Introduce self and team (very briefly)

Go around room and get basic info on group:

Demographic and Military Experience (Note: Do not record names. Try to capture the gender and rank of all recorded comments and quotes. For example, M E4 - morale is low - if a Male Specialist says that morale is low)

(Record participants rank/gender/how long in the Military/how long deployed to Iraq/ how many times deployed).

Rank	Gender	Time in Military	Time in Iraq	Times deployed	Marital Status	# of Kids

Ground Rules:

Don't talk about any ongoing UCMJ investigations, if you aren't sure if it is something that could be result in a UCMJ action, be sure not use any names.

This is not an investigation but lessons learned to improve training.

We are not here to judge any of your decisions or actions. We're here to learn from you what it's like to make these kinds of decisions day in and day out in a combat environment.

II. Morale and Mission Success

1. We would first like to know, how you are doing, so how are you doing? How would you describe your personal morale? Is it high, low, very high, very low? Why?

2. What are you doing to maintain your morale?

3. What are you guys doing to take care of each other?

4. What can your leaders do to help maintain your well-being?

5. How are your families doing?

6. How is the mission going? Do you think you are being successful? Is the mission what you expected? Why or why not?

7. Do you feel that you are doing something that is important? Do you believe that America is better off for you having been here in Iraq? Do you think the Iraqis are better off for you having been here?

8. What would you like to see done differently in terms of conducting your mission?

III. Ethics Training

Now we're going to shift gears a little and talk about ethics. These decisions involve ethics -- your personal sense of right and wrong. The goal today is to talk about some of these difficult decisions so we can learn about what goes into these decisions, the good and the bad, so we can understand these decisions better and improve the training for the Soldiers who are going to replace you.

9. Briefly describe the ethics training you received prior to deploying (if any)?

10. Did you receive ethics training during the deployment?

11. Was this *(pre-deployment training, during deployment or both?)* training adequate to help you make the right decision in difficult situations like ones we discussed earlier?*")*

12. What kind of situations have you encountered that made it difficult for you to decide how to respond? What factors impacted on how you responded?

IV. ROE and Orders

We've also talked to Soldiers after they got back and they've told us about how the rules of engagement or orders from their NCOs/leaders affected the kinds of decisions they made.

13. Describe what role ROE and orders have had on decisions you've made. Do members of your team always follow the ROE?

14. Do you always follow the rules of engagement or orders? Did you "modify" them or interpret the ROE to fit the situation you were in?

15. What factors determine when you do or don't follow the ROEs?

16. Would you turn a fellow team member in for not following the ROEs? Why or why not? How would you handle this?

17. What about General Orders, do you know someone who has violated one of the General Orders? What did they do? Did you turn them in? Why or why not? How would you handle this?

V. Future Training

18. What might be done in future ethics training to better prepare Soldiers to face difficult ethical decisions in combat?

19. Why do you think the U.S. military is interested in the issue of ethical decision making?

20. How important do you think ethics are for U.S. Soldiers? Why?

VI. End of Session:

Summarize themes briefly to pull concepts together, normalize to some extent, don't judge but do NOT condone.

Thank the Soldiers for taking part in the group.