



Creating COIN: The Determinants of U.S. Military Innovation in Counterinsurgent Wars

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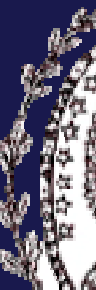


Why Study Innovation in the

Context of COIN?

...whether a nation's military...can effectively innovate during protracted periods of limited conflict may be critical for its success in regional conflicts.”

- Michael



HOW TO DEFINE INNOVATION?

change in one of the primary combat arms of service in the way it fights or operates, or, alternatively, as the creation of a new combat arm...[It] involves a change in concepts of operation...that is, the ideas governing the ways it use[s] its force in a campaign...[and] a change in the relation of that combat arm to other combat arms and a down-grading or abandoning of older concepts of operations, possibly of a formally dominant weapon.”

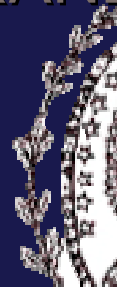
- Stephen

2

specific military, innovation is manifested by the development of new fighting concepts and/or new means of integrating technology. New means of integrating technology might include revised doctrine, tactics, training, or support.”

- RAND

3



The Problem:

Measuring “combat effectiveness” in COIN is the central issue (metrics).
Subjective vs. Objective.

Philippines = territory/villages secured/body count
WWII effectiveness = territory controlled (classical)
Vietnam = territory/body count?

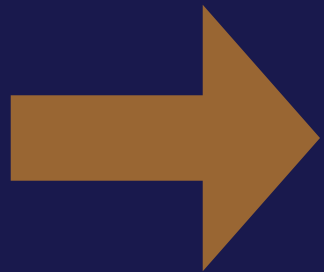
(OIF) “insights” into the problem of measuring combat effectiveness



Testing Theories

innovation occurs because...

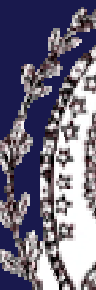
Internal Factors
Internal Factors



CREATE NEW METRICS
WHICH SHIFT THE ORIGINAL
METRICS IN PLACE GOING INTO
THE CONFLICT

The battlespace is redefined/ re-imagined.

HOW are the METRICS CHANGED?



Method

identify cases of metric shifting...

Philippines 1898-1902

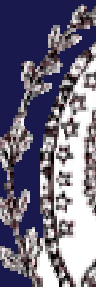
(successful metric shift? = successful COIN)

Vietnam 1962-1975

(tentative/wrong metric shift? = unsuccessful COIN?)

Iraq 2003-2008

(metric shift? = tentatively successful COIN?)



Method

evidence of metric shifting...

Philippines 1898-1902

BG J.F. Bell's "Telegraphic Circulars"

1. 2.

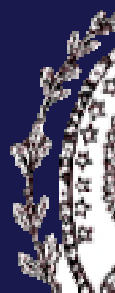
DECEMBER 8th, 1901.

ALL STATION COMMANDERS:

In order to put an end to enforced contributions, now levied by insurgents upon the inhabitants of sparsely settled and outlying towns and districts, by means of intimidation and assassination, commanding officers of all towns now existing in the provinces of Batangas and Laguna, including those at which no garrison is stationed at present, will immediately specify and establish plainly

marked limits surrounding each town bounding a zone within which it may be practicable, with an average sized garrison, to exercise efficient supervision over and furnish protection to inhabitants (who desire to be peaceful) against the depredations of armed insurgents. These limits may include the barrios which exist sufficiently near the town to be given protection and supervision by the garrison, and should include some ground on which live stock can graze, but so situated that it can be patrolled and watched. All ungarrisoned towns will be garrisoned as soon as troops become available.

Telegraphic Circulars and
General Orders,
Regulating Campaign Against
Insurgents and
Proclamations and Circular Letters
Relating to Reconstruction after Close of War
in the Provinces of
BATANGAS, LAGUNA and MINDORO
PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.
Issued by
Brigadier General J. Franklin Bell, U. S.
COMMANDING BRIGADE,
FROM DECEMBER 1ST, 1901, TO DECEMBER 1ST, 1902
COMPILED BY
Captain M. F. Davis, 1st U. S. Cavalry
ADJUTANT GENERAL,
WITH AN APPENDIX CONTAINING
Telegrams of Thanks
and Congratulations
FROM
THE PRESIDENT
AND FROM THE
DIVISION, DEPARTMENT AND BRIGADE
COMMANDERS.
HEADQUARTERS THIRD SEPARATE BRIGADE
Batangas, Batangas Province, P. I.,
DECEMBER 1ST, 1902.



Method

evidence of metric shifting...

Vietnam 1950's-1972

J.F.K.-L.B.J.-R.M.N

- Kennedy tried to shift Army to COIN approach

“I know the Army is not going to develop this counterinsurgency field and do the things I think must be done *unless the Army wants to do it.*”⁵

- Army simply expanded what it defined as COIN to include the activities it was already doing.

- Used metric shifting to avoid COIN, hinder civilian attempt to innovate



Method

evidence of metric shifting...

aq (OIF)

annual until

UNIVERSAL NEED STATEMENT (UNS) Part 1a of 5 - Originator's Request

Name (Last, First, Initial) GRIFF, ROY DEWEY, GERT		Rank/Grade MAJ/SM	Phone DSN 477-8314/8343		FAX DSN 477-8709	
Authorized for public or personal use?	YES	Interested in participation on Senior Course at Joint IPTT	YES	Request used when updated by e-mail?	E-mail	RUC

Type of Need (select one that best describes the need)

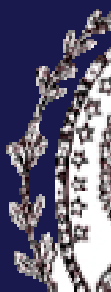
ADD a new capability that does not exist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IMPROVE or FIX an existing capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	REMOVE an existing capability	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Description of Need Describe the nature of the need and the cause (if known). Explain how the need was identified (operational deployment, training exercises, experimentation, formal study, mission area analysis, observed operating deficiencies).

MINE RESISTANT AMBUSH PROTECTED (MRAP) VEHICLE. This is a Priority 1 Urgent UNS in support of OIF EDL. Total AO requirement is 1159.

There is an immediate need for an MRAP vehicle capability to increase survivability and mobility of Marines operating in a hazardous fire area against known threats. The expanded use of IED/RPG and small arm fire (SAF) in the AO requires a more robust family of vehicles capable of surviving the IED/RPG/SAF threat as we operate throughout these areas. The necessity to operate across known GLOCs makes us susceptible to ambushes, IED/VB/IED/SVB/IED/RPG/SAF attacks at the discretion of the enemy. Marines are expected to respond rapidly, and without a large security contingent, therefore we need a vehicle that enables us to survive the first blow and then counter attack. GCE, CSSE, ACE, CAG, MEG & MHG units are acutely exposed to the IED/RPG/SAF threat as they continue to prosecute offensive operations and stability and security operations simultaneously and often within sight of each other.

This need was identified through operational combat experience and critical



Routines

Why we don't learn...

Highly-Competent-Incompetence

Highly-competence result of achieving high performance capability in an organization.

Current skill set rests on tightly coherent organizational identity and theory of purpose (what war is).

Expectations in expected combat environments become undiscussable.

Undiscussability is itself then made undiscussable.

Single-loop non-learning.

Schizoid Incoherence

- Midway point at which an organization's embedded theory in use about its expectations are challenged by the reality (measured by some metric) of its actual competitive environment.

- Either force the metric to meet the embedded expectation (JFK/Vietnam) or choose only those metrics which do meet expectations (OIF); follow metric to achieve new understanding of real environment or find new metrics (Petraeus, Nagl/OIF; Komer, Galula/Vietnam).

watching the metrics shift in 011.

The MRAP Case

original theory to “reset” the force. (Syria, Libya, ...).

assumed little post-major combat planning needed

prepared for insurgency.

limited by FOC (Future Operational Capabilities)

constraint – went with up-armored HMMVW.

quisitions system worked when strategic vision

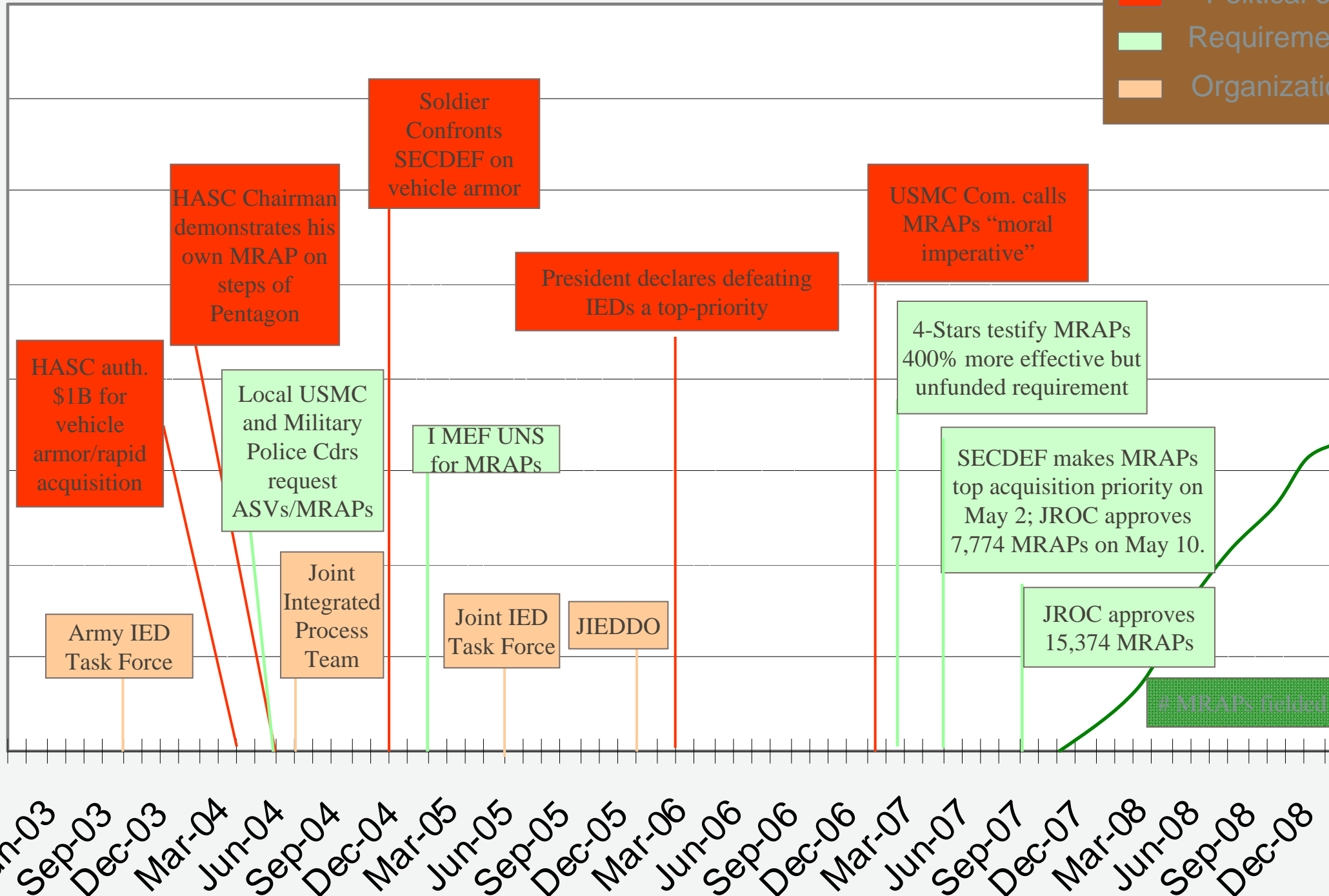
clear and articulated throughout DoD



Key Critical and Requirements Events

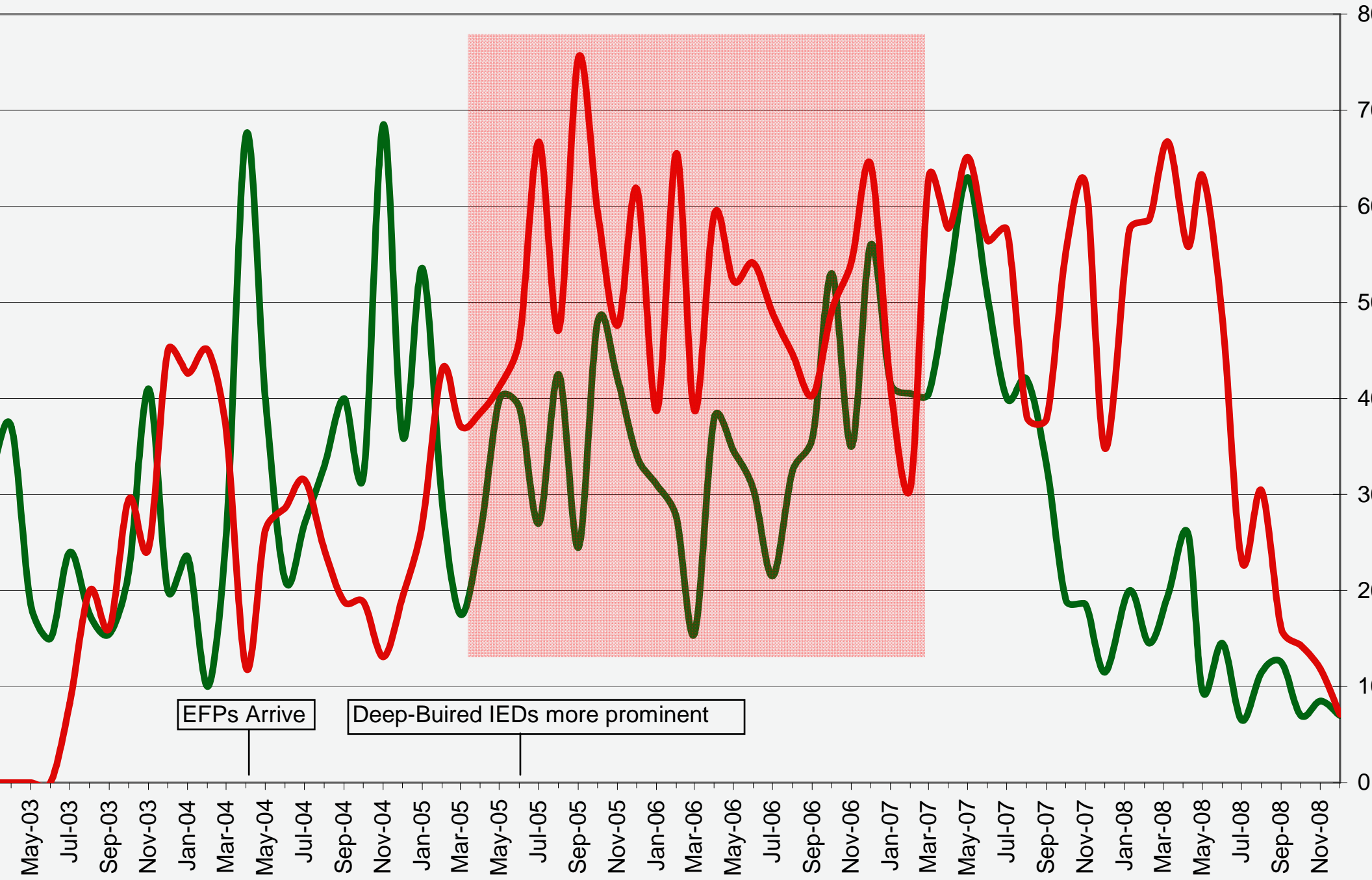
Legend

- Political events
- Requirements
- Organizational



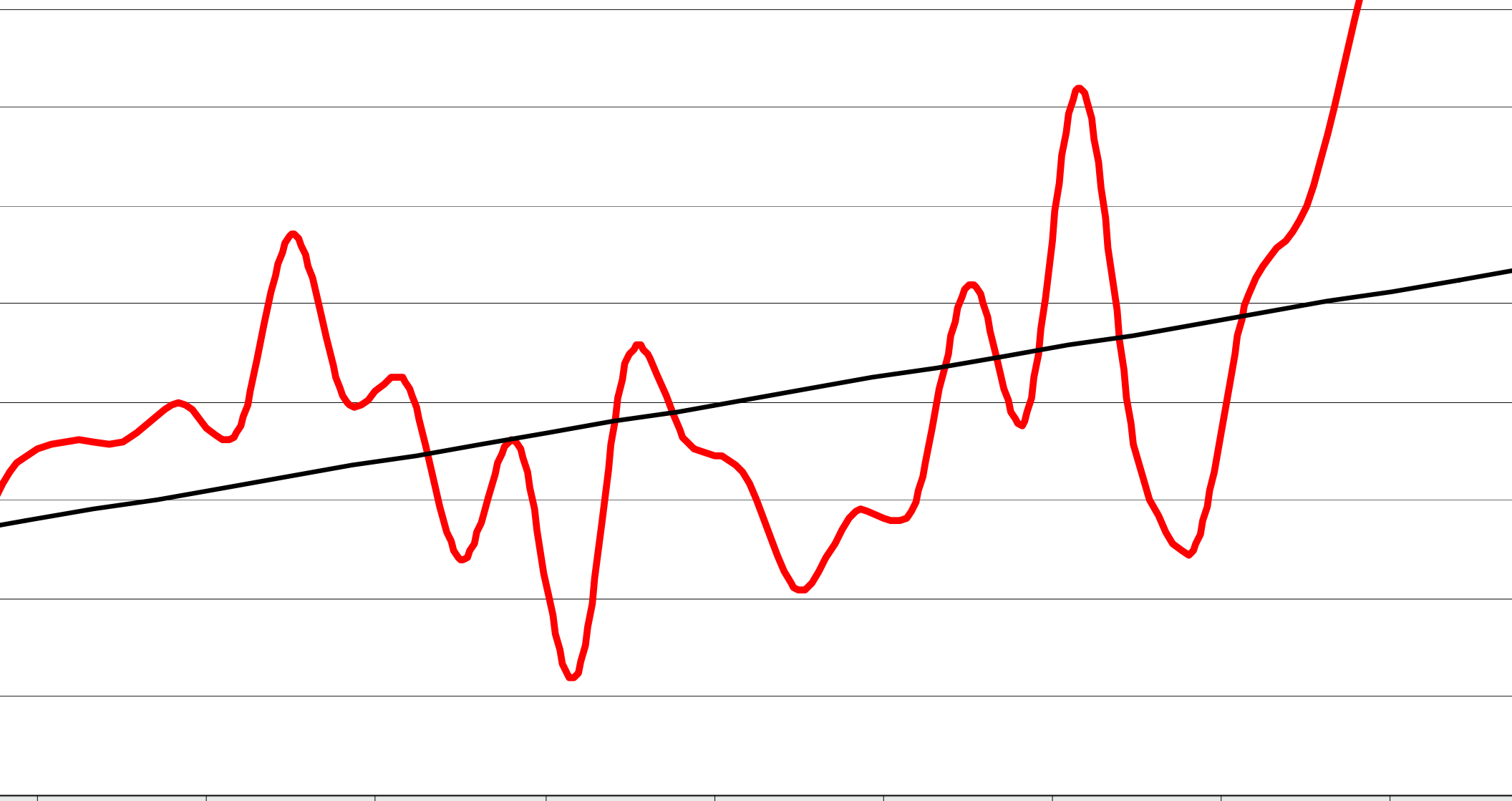
Percent Fatalities IED-Caused/Total Fatalities

— Total Fatalities — Percent Fatalities IED-Caused



Trendline of IED Fatalities '05-07'

— Total IED-Caused Fatalities
— Linear (Total IED-Caused Fatalities)

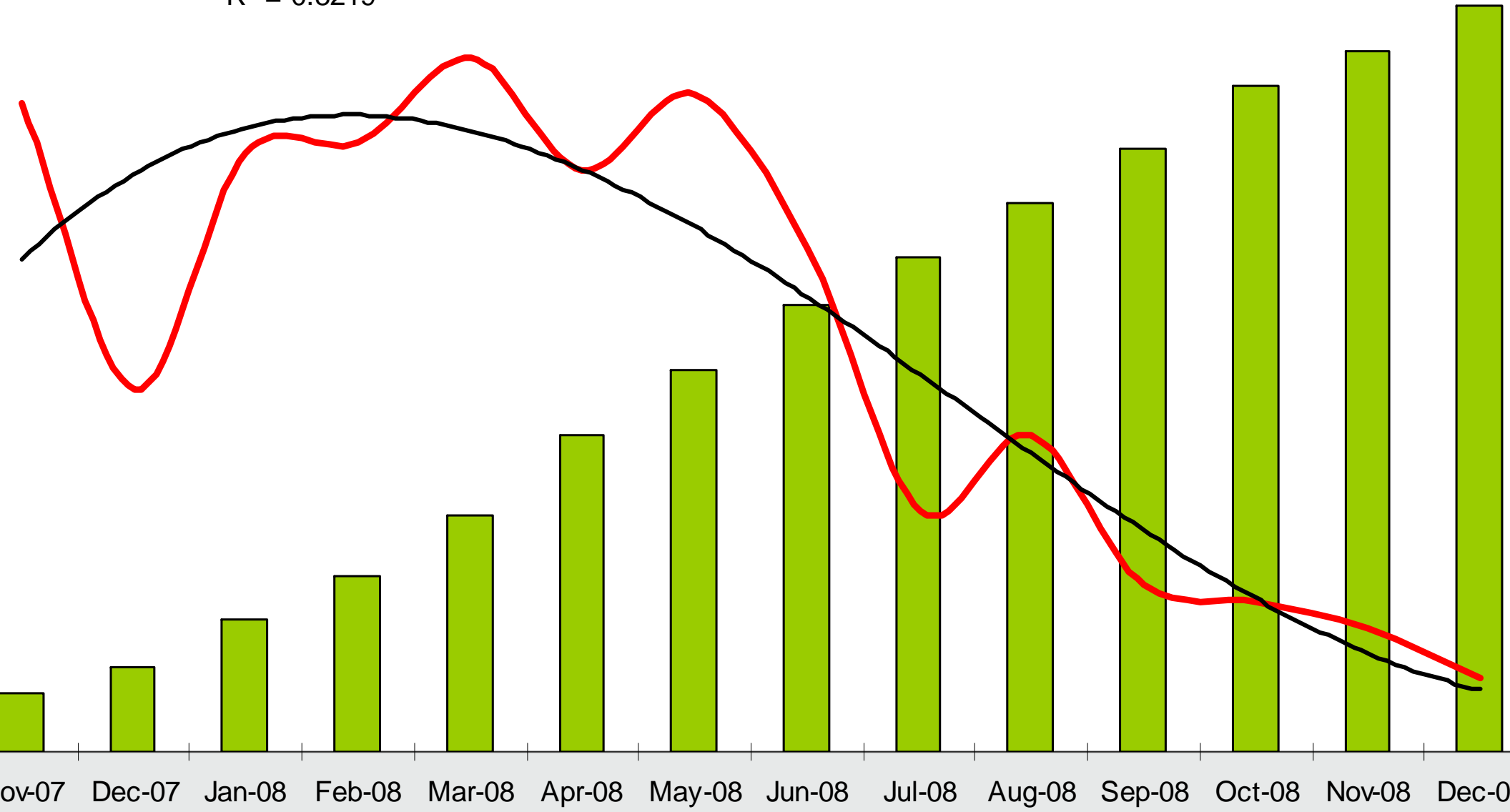


Jun-05 Sep-05 Dec-05 Mar-06 Jun-06 Sep-06 Dec-06 Mar-07 Jun-07

MRAPs - % of Total Casualties IED-Caused

$$y = 0.0838x^3 - 2.3725x^2 + 14.72x + 34.868$$

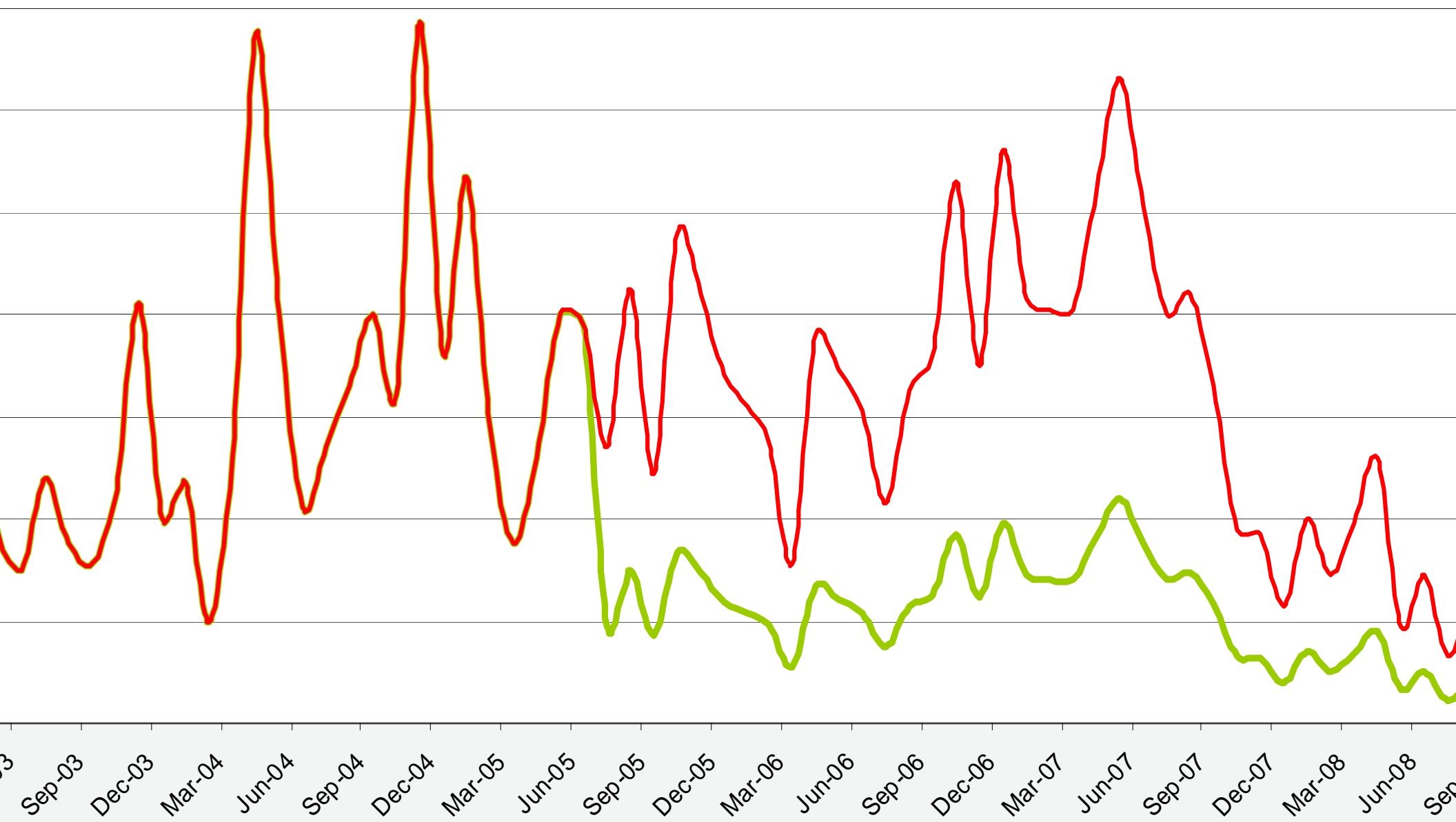
$$R^2 = 0.8219$$



4,221 KIA vs. 2612 at 65% IED Save Rate

Fatalities Assuming 65% MRAP "Save Rate"

Actual Total Fatalities



Tentative Findings

Innovation in COIN is determined by the designation of a novel metric for victory which shifts strategy of allies and enemies depending on the institutional desire of the combat arm:

Metrics in conventional war largely assumed.

Metrics largely determined by military not civilian leaders; thus predisposed to use “military” assumptions to define them. “LEAD AGENCY”.

Asymmetric nature or U.S. inexperience with COIN generates greater variance in metrics used.

Past metrics frequently forgotten



Tentative Findings

U.S. public, different combat branches, and
man leaders face a more difficult time reaching
reement on metrics for COIN.

“Subjective” metrics are established as the subjective
agreement of the above groups. THIS SHIFTS THE
FOCUS OF EXPLANATION AWAY FROM
INTERNAL EXPLANATIONS TO
EXTERNAL/ORGANIZATIONAL ONES (Johnston,
Nagl, Krepinevich, Bacevich, etc.)



Further Questions

What role can organizational theory play in explaining innovation, esp. concerning the interplay of public, political, media, and military leadership roles?

Does this represent a new approach to studying civil/military relations? (See also the next slide.)

How have the metrics changed over the last century? If not (see the Bell circular?) why has the U.S. military not been able to institutionalize the knowledge?



Credits

TO CREDITS

Opening photo of U.S. Army Soldiers in Iraq: AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic.

Opening photo of U.S. Army E-5 Ricky Cox, 1970.

Opening photo of U.S. Army Angeles Outpost in Philippines, 1899, U.S. Military History Institute.

Task Force Eagle, Tuzla, Bosnia, courtesy NATO, IFOR, 1996.

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Michael McNerney, "Military Innovation During War: Paradox or Paradigm," *Defense Security Analysis*, Vol. 21, No. 2, June 2005.

Stephen P. Rosen, *Winning the Next War*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1991), p.7-8.

Jeffrey Isaacson, Christopher Layne, and John Arquilla, "Predicting Military Innovation," RAND Arroyo Center, 1999.

Telegraphic Circulars & General Orders Regulating Campaign Against Insurgents, Separate Brigade, Philippine Islands, Batangas, December 1, 1902, National Archives, Washington, D.C. box 415839.

Interview with Elvis J. Stahr by Robert H. Farrell, CMH, 18 Aug., 1964, (cited in Nevich (1986), p. 31, footnote 10, p. 280.)

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and the same political object may produce
totally different effects upon different people, or
even upon the same people at different times; we
can, therefore, only admit the political object as the
measure, by considering it in its effects upon those
masses which it is to move, and consequently the
nature of those masses also comes into
consideration.

See *On War*, Book I, Chpt. 11