

RAIDER 40: VOL 1-2



A Fictional Intelligence (FICINT) Short Story

Author: Brent Birchum

Mentored by: August Cole and P.W. Singer





The following “useful fiction” is designed to illuminate key elements of the MARSOC operational concept known as SSR — Strategic Shaping and Reconnaissance. In 2018 the MARSOF 2030 Vision showcased the original “Safe Harbor” story. “Safe Harbor II” is its sequel.

It depicts a futuristic environment to facilitate discussion about transforming the Raider force toward a new 2040 Vision and associated supporting operating concepts. This story builds upon the “Safe Harbor II,” writing and is part of Volume 1 of the Raider 40 Series, referenced as Raider 40 Origin Stories.

The intent of the story is to energize the vectors of counter threat finance to deter nefarious activity in a counter-terrorism environment, linking state sponsorship to terrorist activities, highlighting the value of the liaison network, and criticality of reach back support. In an expanding digital environment, the story juxtaposes the non-kinetic actions with the enduring requirement for a capability to have kinetic effects against adversarial forces.

RAIDER 40: IMBEDDED

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GLOSSARY

AR/HUD: Augmented Reality Heads-Up Display, typically goggles or glasses.

CENTCOM: United States Central Command.

Chalk: a group of operators deployed from a single aircraft.

CONOP: Concept of Operations.

CONUS: Continental United States of America.

CTF: Counter Threat Finance.

CubeSat: a square-shaped miniature (3-6") satellite.

FTO: Foreign Terrorist Organization.

HVI: High Value Individuals.

IAC: Inter-agency Cell.

INDOPACOM: Indo-Pacific Command.

ITC: Individual Training Course is an introductory training program at MARSOC.

MARSOC: Marine Forces Special Operations Command.

PNF: Partner Nation Forces.

RIP: Relief In Place.

SCIF: Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility.

SOCOM (also USSOCOM): United States Special Operations Command

UAV: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, any type of aerial drone.

USSF: United States Space Force.

Vic: Vehicle (Vic1, Vic2, etc.)

XO: Executive Officer, typically second in command of a company level unit.

♣ SAPO CITY, LEYTAN 0741 28 JULY 2040

Master Gunnery Sergeant (MGySgt) Smith looked out the window of the armored SUV on his way from the airport to the Marine Raider Company (MRC) Headquarters base. The fresh smell of the Southeast Asian Sea intertwined with the fish market and a constant hint of papaya in the air. He was returning for his third deployment to the same area, and the familiar smell gave him a comforting sensation almost like he was coming home. He grew to love Leytan, the charming, picturesque beaches' only competition was the hospitality of its people. Within the first few weeks of his first deployment, he had felt like a relative to the soldiers he trained and the shopkeepers he visited during his free time.

As MGySgt Smith pulled up to the company's base, he noticed a distinct difference in the atmosphere among the personnel since his last trip as a Team Chief two years ago. The innocuous base blended into the surrounding urban area. The concrete watchtowers appeared to be extensions of the surrounding buildings set amongst the urban sprawl. The Leytan Commandos aboard the base, in their multi-camouflage utilities, seamlessly blended in with the Ministry of Interior forces manning the checkpoints throughout the city. Groups of Raiders traveled to the gym, which was typical, but he didn't notice anyone with wearable devices. No one congregated among the picnic tables or smoke pits. There were no polywave stations broadcasting connectivity and no one wore MARSOC or name patches. Smith thought to himself, well, if nothing else this company is disciplined about their operational security.

He went to the Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility to meet with his counterpart from the outgoing Company, MGySgt Jason "JP" Poole. MGySgt Smith softly knocked on the open door to his office and moved across the room to give MGySgt Poole a bear hug.

"Hey brother, how the hell have you been?" said Smith. MGySgt Poole had been looking forward to reconnecting in person as they served on their respective first deployments as element members on sister teams.

"I'm not gonna lie, this deployment has been unlike anything I've ever done. It's wild in some regards and familiar in others, but damn is it a hell of a lot of work," JP said. "How was it being a proctor at ITC (Individual Training Course)? I didn't expect that move for an old guy like you." JP handed Smith a coffee mug with a faded logo of the Leytan Special Operations Command filled with jet-black coffee.

"Not to sound too moto, it was probably the most fulfilling experience I've ever had. We are getting quality studs coming through that are hungry but don't have the same experience we did before ITC."

"What, were you teaching them about, that time we had to recover the CO's vic (vehicle) after he got it stuck in the ditch during a firefight?" asked MGySgt Smith

"I might have given hints about that clown car situation, but not too much because I had to cash in that favor Colonel Green owed me so I could be the proctor," said JP.

Smith took a drink of coffee, and nearly gagged. "Cold coffee...oh OK. It's going to be one of those turnovers. I think I still owe you some payback for the card you put in my seat from the airport."

"Don't worry, there is plenty more of that for the next week," said JP.

"I don't doubt that. Are we going to play games the entire time or did you actually do

anything productive while you were out here?" Smith asked.

"Well, while you were on vacation at the schoolhouse, SOCOM approved MARSOC to be the lead component for Counter Threat Finance (CTF)," Poole said. "It took some steep learning on our end, but the company seems to enjoy it because they've been able to get out the door and roll up some quality HVIs (High Value Individuals). We're hitting the financial network of the terrorist group and getting a lot of intel indicating state sponsorship. It's grown to be an identity for us that we are calling Deep Sea Harpoon for our CONOPs (Concept of Operations)."

"What do you got planned for us for RIP (Relief In Place)?" Smith asked.

"We got an objective that Raider Squadron 1 and we have been working pattern of life on. We have the CONOP sent for approval to do a combined op when your first chalk gets on deck," JP said.

♣ COMPANY BRIEFING ROOM 1000 30 JULY 2040

The stadium seating room had a large projection screen across the wall with a small rectangular device emitting a blue hue onto the screen. JP, wearing thick Augmented Reality Heads Up Display (AR/ HUD) glasses, stepped in front of the audience.

"Alright, glasses check-in and give me a thumbs up when you are green screen up," JP said. Thumbs began raising throughout the 40 personnel mix of the two companies and Leytan key leaders. Faces began appearing around the screen with a mixture of uniformed and civilian-clothed personnel. The glasses showed JP a green screen on the back wall. "We are up on our end and I'm seeing we have good comms with the outstations. For the incoming company, welcome aboard," JP said. "We are excited to have you on deck and want to do everything we can to set you up for success. We've put in a lot of hard work out here with our Leytan family and want to ensure the paradigm shift out here to Deep Sea Harpoon is sustained."

JP clicked his remote control and the green background morphed into a global terrain map. "I'll be leading the overall orientation brief but will have the Central and Indo-Pacific Commands Joint Inter-agency Cell, the Hive back at MARSOC, and SOCOM provide inputs. The overall mission intent is to seize enemy financial asset information in order to develop follow-on targets and ultimately achieve an upstream defeat of their drone attack network." JP winked at the Company XO, his prior Team Commander, because "upstream drone defeat" was a term he coined after his rotation at INDOPACOM's Joint Inter-agency Cell. He gave him a hard time for it because he said it sounded like he was just trying to score an award for the term. "Hive, you're up."

From a dark, honeycombed, two-story building affectionately called the Hive, the reach-back support facility had Marines



buzzing throughout the op-center back in North Carolina. The Hive comprised of tightly clustered desks of cross-functional teams of Marines facilitating information sharing on their portfolios. Sergeant Craig Thomas, an experienced intelligence analyst, looked at the comptroller Major (Maj) Jamison Morris to make sure they were both prepared to speak. Their team also included liaison representatives from Cyber Command, US Space Force (USSF), a regional linguist, and an Information Operations Marine.

“Good to see you again, Master Guns. I’ll be the primary briefer for the intelligence portion of the operation,” said Thomas.

Sgt Thomas used his computer to overlay the map of the area with a wire diagram from Tianou, the largest country in the Pacific region, to places throughout the globe with a myriad of different icons at the end of the wires. Symbols representing businesses, banks, weapons, and personalities created an intricate web across the map.

“The Tianou Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) known as the Silent Hand Movement (SHM) is making purchases for lethal drones from a major Tianou manufacturer. SHM has global interest to maintain ownership of the security apparatus across key resource regions given the relative scarcity of resources in Tianou. They view any American presence as threatening to their malicious procurement practices towards the local businesses and governments. The Silent Hand Movement is responsible for a drone swarm attack on our Middle East Marine Raider Company three months ago.”

Thomas clicked on an icon with a play symbol representing a small drone geographically located in the Middle Eastern. A video played with closed circuit TV recording of a base. After a few seconds, people began to run in the screen’s periphery. A stream of tracer rounds began oscillating out of the walls. Explosions dotted the screen, detonating away from the wall, then an increasing amount getting closer until five ignited the source of the tracers.

A summation displayed over the video reading “May 7 Attack: 4 Wounded in Action, 1



Counter Aerial Asset Weapon destroyed.”

“Those four casualties got seriously wounded and had to be flown back CONUS. They are stable now, but we nearly lost one of the new sergeants that just graduated ITC,” JP said.

Smith heard this and had a visceral reaction.

He knew there were casualties from the CENTCOM Company but was so focused on preparing for his deployment he didn't ask any details about it. He realized it was Sgt Charles Ford because he was the only Marine that went to the company early for the deployment. Sgt Ford was the Gung Ho award winner for the class Smith just proctored.

“Our objective for the mission is the HVI Orca Legend. He is a chief financier that is responsible for brokering the drone parts purchase with illicit funds from SHM to the drone manufacturer. Raider Squadron 1 was developing his target package for the last four months and fixed him in the P8Q sector of Sapo City with a small security detachment. I'll turn it over to Maj Morris for further details.”

“Orca Legend typically has formidable operational security practices, but SHM's recent influx of fiat currency and non-fungible assets is overwhelming his ability to obfuscate his fiscal signature. This makes him particularly vulnerable at this time. During this mission we are looking for exploitable financial materials leading to the drone manufacturer, Middle East Cell, and derogatory information about the Tianou government's support to the SHM.”

“During mission execution window it looks like we are expecting patches of interference in low earth orbit. We have our Space Force liaison officer working assets to punch a gap during the mission to support your comm shot.”

JP said, “Over to CENTCOM.”

“Captain Williamson, former MARSOC Team Commander from Second Battalion doing my rotation over here at CENTCOM Inter-agency Cell (IAC). We are working with the host government for an import ban on flights containing drone materials linked to the SHM. I'm also in contact with the Raider Company and they are getting refined locations on the cell responsible for the attack prior to the cell rotating back to Tianou. Any derogatory information we can get on the cell will help with our no-fly list package to keep them in a targetable location. That's all from CENTCOM.”

“INDOPACOM,” JP said.

“Thanks Master Guns. Master Sergeant Dave Young here from INDOPACOM. For this mission, we will develop options based on the information received. We are building a démarche package to the Tianou government to stop the practice of unknown purchasers of drones. The intent is to require a background check and know your customer practices implemented and verifiable. We could potentially work a sanctions package to Treasury if enough derogatory material is discovered to make a sound legal case against the Tianou manufacturer. Over from IP.”

“SOCOM,” JP said.

“Great to see you JP, This is Lieutenant Colonel Wade at the Joint Task Force Center. CONOP Deep Sea Harpoon 07-01 is approved by me, J3 Ops at INDOPACOM, and the Leytan Government and Country Team. Thanks, Dave, for getting Colonel Santo Perez from Leytan SOCOM to advocate for teams to accompany them on the raid to

the country team and the Leytan President. Colonel Perez said he hopes you're more successful on your mission than America is at futbol. I still can't ever tell if that guy is joking," Wade continued.

"Thank you, sir, and agreed on Perez. I think he likes supporting us so he can keep messing with us. Alright y'all, that concludes this portion of the brief, now let's head into the simulator for the mission brief and rehearsals."

JP led the contingent into the simulator to use a virtual mock-up of the objective building to visualize the mission, contingencies, then conduct iterations of mission execution.

♠ 2300 31 JULY 2040

MGySgt Smith requested to depart friendly lines as he rode in a Hilux pickup with Master Sergeant (MSgt) Samuel Ortiz, who led Team Two. Smith was happy to have Ortiz leading the team because he was previously the Chief Instructor for the Applied Ballistics Section at the schoolhouse. The force was split between 10 Raiders and an equal amount of Leytan Commandos. Smith knew Ortiz would ensure the commando PNF members got some extra pre-operational sets and reps on the more dangerous aspects of weapons and munitions integration across the joint teams. To Smith, the planned raid seemed all too familiar: a personal security element, a probably armed HVI, and a trove of documents and data to exploit faster than was humanly possible.

As the convoy made their way down the narrow streets of the city, MGySgt Smith could smell that same familiar salt water blended with papaya smell. He felt like he was truly in his element again. The convoy launched a series of small Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) as soon as they entered the P8Q sector. The drone operator scanned the route ahead of the convoy, then began providing feed of the breach point. As the team pulled up to the target compound, they kept a 50-meter distance in their vehicles from the courtyard that surrounded the objective building.

They had the compound effectively cordoned when they turned on the vehicles' white lights, and the partner force began shouting instructions from a loudspeaker to walk out of the compound with their hands raised. One by one the individuals began exiting the courtyard gate.

"Vic (Vehicle) 4 this is Vic 1, I've got my commandos and doc with me moving to the compound," Ortiz said.

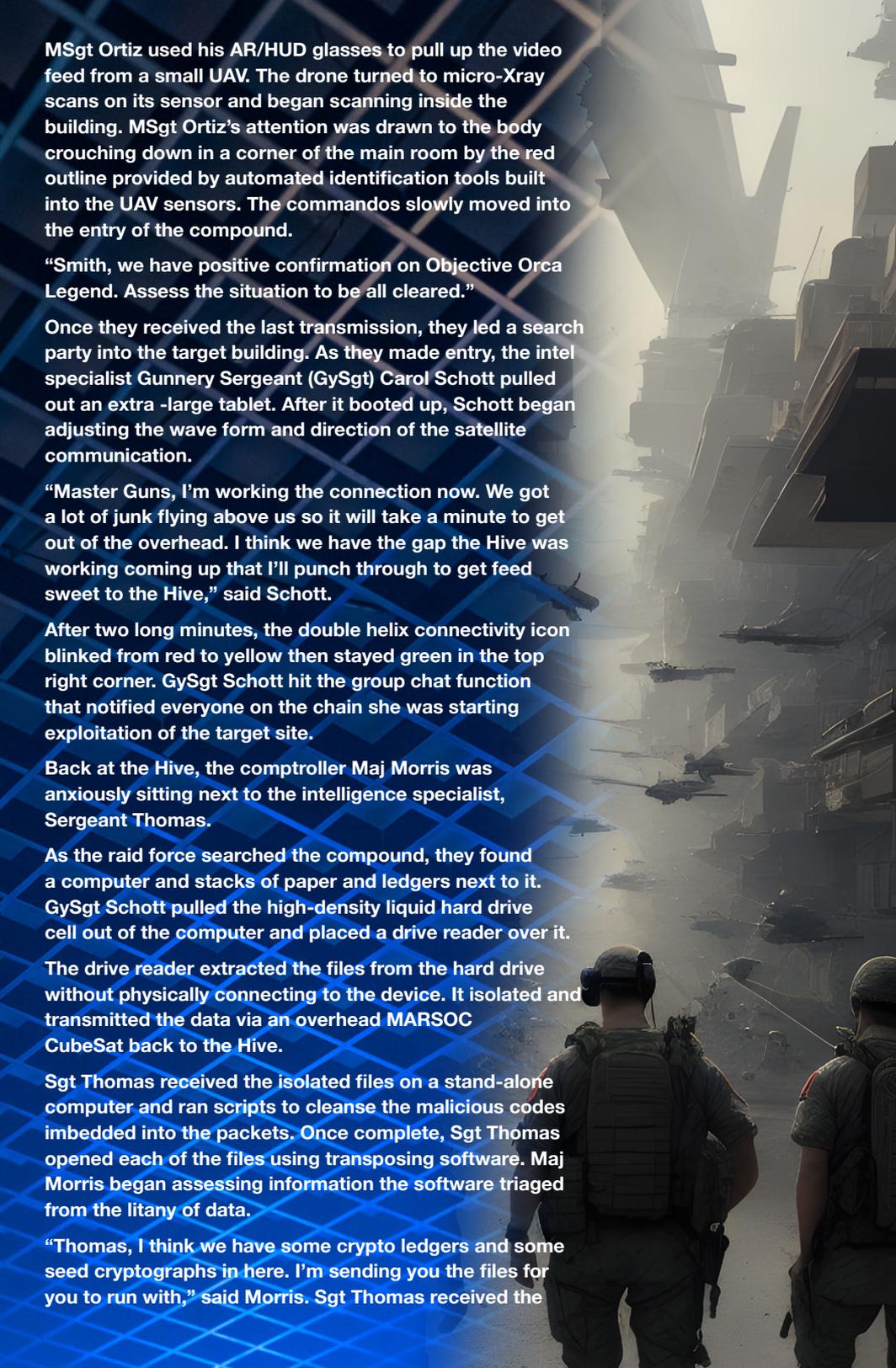
"Smith, I got the commandos making entry, about to make an internal callout."

They called out to the person in hiding. Watching on a tablet from the assembled Raider vehicles, Smith tracked the pursuit from one of the commando's helmet cameras. The audio feed hinted at what was going to happen next. Deep, heavy breathing came from behind the pile of trash. It steadily began to be more rapid panting and shallow breaths, like a trapped animal taking its final inhalations of air.

A volley of fire rang out from inside the building. Ortiz raced into the building and saw the armed individual dead with his pistol now lying flat on his open palm.

"Shots fired, it looks like one of the commando is hit. I got Doc triaging him but doesn't look bad. The shooter appears to be KIA (killed in action). Commandos doing search and clear now then I'll start the verification process."

MSgt Ortiz made his way to the dead, previously armed individual, and used his tablet to start the biometric assessment. Based on the facial recognition and biometric data in the system, he confirmed this was the HVI they were after.

A futuristic city street scene with flying vehicles and a blue grid overlay. The scene is viewed from a low angle, looking down a street lined with tall, dark buildings. Numerous flying vehicles, including drones and larger aircraft, are visible in the sky. A prominent blue grid pattern is overlaid on the entire scene, creating a digital or augmented reality effect. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day, with some lens flare effects.

MSgt Ortiz used his AR/HUD glasses to pull up the video feed from a small UAV. The drone turned to micro-Xray scans on its sensor and began scanning inside the building. MSgt Ortiz's attention was drawn to the body crouching down in a corner of the main room by the red outline provided by automated identification tools built into the UAV sensors. The commandos slowly moved into the entry of the compound.

“Smith, we have positive confirmation on Objective Orca Legend. Assess the situation to be all cleared.”

Once they received the last transmission, they led a search party into the target building. As they made entry, the intel specialist Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt) Carol Schott pulled out an extra -large tablet. After it booted up, Schott began adjusting the wave form and direction of the satellite communication.

“Master Guns, I'm working the connection now. We got a lot of junk flying above us so it will take a minute to get out of the overhead. I think we have the gap the Hive was working coming up that I'll punch through to get feed sweet to the Hive,” said Schott.

After two long minutes, the double helix connectivity icon blinked from red to yellow then stayed green in the top right corner. GySgt Schott hit the group chat function that notified everyone on the chain she was starting exploitation of the target site.

Back at the Hive, the comptroller Maj Morris was anxiously sitting next to the intelligence specialist, Sergeant Thomas.

As the raid force searched the compound, they found a computer and stacks of paper and ledgers next to it. GySgt Schott pulled the high-density liquid hard drive cell out of the computer and placed a drive reader over it.

The drive reader extracted the files from the hard drive without physically connecting to the device. It isolated and transmitted the data via an overhead MARSOC CubeSat back to the Hive.

Sgt Thomas received the isolated files on a stand-alone computer and ran scripts to cleanse the malicious codes imbedded into the packets. Once complete, Sgt Thomas opened each of the files using transposing software. Maj Morris began assessing information the software triaged from the litany of data.

“Thomas, I think we have some crypto ledgers and some seed cryptographs in here. I'm sending you the files for you to run with,” said Morris. Sgt Thomas received the

files and instantly uploaded it to the Joint Inter-agency database network. The feed produced an endless number of names on the transfer documents.

“Sir, I think Orca Legend was one of the top bookkeepers for the entire SHM. Judging by the uptick in activity we’ve seen, it looks like this guy got completely overwhelmed with his security protocols. We’ve got two major anomalies we were tracking before. One looks like it’s associated with a fishing area, and another is tracing to the arctic circle.”

“No wonder he fought to his death. He knew he’d be as good as dead when his boss found out he gave us the keys to their empire. I’ve got some long days ahead of me. I’ll be working with the IACs to get their support on deep diving the data, especially those two anomalies you mentioned,” said Maj Morris.

Staying behind after everyone left into the early hours of morning, Smith and Poole were alone drinking coffee together. “Dude, that was a hell of a mission,” said Smith.

Once the search was complete, the raid force loaded back into their vehicles and made their way back to the base. Immediately upon arrival, they fueled up the vehicles, called in full accountability, cycled the batteries, cleaned weapons, went to the chow hall for a late-night meal and to conduct their mission debrief.

“Yeah man, I think you are set up for targets for the rest of your deployment and probably into the next one.”

“Hey brother, I can’t thank you enough for doing this joint op. That was solid to hold onto this one to get our feet wet,” said Smith.

“You guys are going to run far with this mission,” Poole said. “I’m going to go back and walk the next company at Raven and make sure they keep the momentum going after y’all.” “Hell yeah. I’m going to hit the rack for a bit. I doubt I get any sleep today after all that, but I’ll try. ‘Night brother.”

“‘Night, I’ll see you in a bit.”

With that they gave each other a hug and walked in opposite directions towards their rooms.



As MGySgt Smith made his way through the open area across the compound, he could smell that old familiar smell; sea salt and papaya. A sense of relief washed over him knowing he was back in his in his comfort zone operating with his Raiders in a place he regarded as his home.

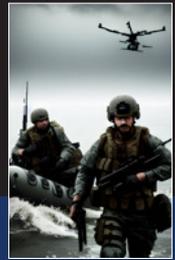
As he lay on his bed, his mind and body wound down, he considered the new targeting possibilities on this deployment that had not been there in the past.

He knew the Raiders he taught, not that long ago, were so well suited to thrive in this new world. He felt a sense of fulfillment knowing he did his part to ensure the longevity of the Marine Raiders to the next generation. As he finally shut his eyes to sleep for the night, he thought to himself: this really will be different.

↑ CONCLUSIONS:

- The story provides a scenario to demonstrate direct action raid, sanction, demarche, and no-fly list as opportunities presented in the counter threat finance domain against state sponsorship of illicit activity.
- Relationships with the host nation, inter-agency, and liaison network are pivotal in connecting the cross-boundary networks to ensure the actions taken in one area of operations support the actions of another area.
- Reach back support is key to enabling real-time assistance in analysis by mission specific capabilities that are not able to be onsite during mission execution.





The contents of this pamphlet are unclassified.

MARSOC CD&I G5 appreciates the time you have taken to read this RAIDER 40 Origin Story. It will be used to develop the Future MARSOF 2040 Vision, Strategy and Operating Concepts. Your involvement and feedback are a critical tenant to making MARSOC successful in the future.

MARSOC would like to continue the annual FICINT publication to promote and shape the MARSOF community's understanding and investment in the future. It takes readers like you to generate and promote ideas, write papers and tell your tales to resonate across the force for generations.

FICINT is a mechanism for telling the future through stories that make people think, respond and get involved. Topics for writing are nearly unlimited, the majority of which will directly affect the MARSOC future force design, force development, and force employment.

For more information please send your inquiries to:
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