

Blockbuster: Dstl Urban Manual Wargame COTS Assessment

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Forlorn Hope

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Aim

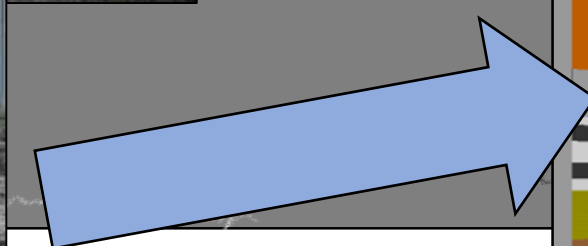
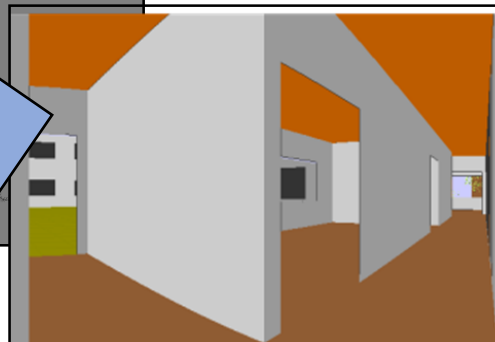
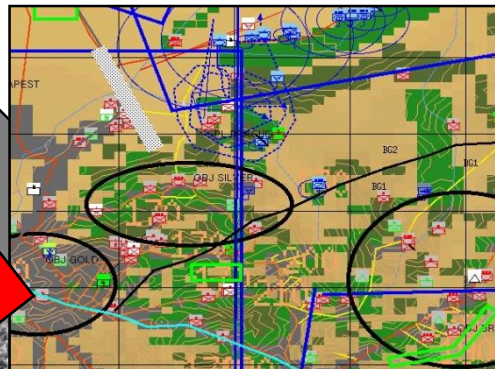
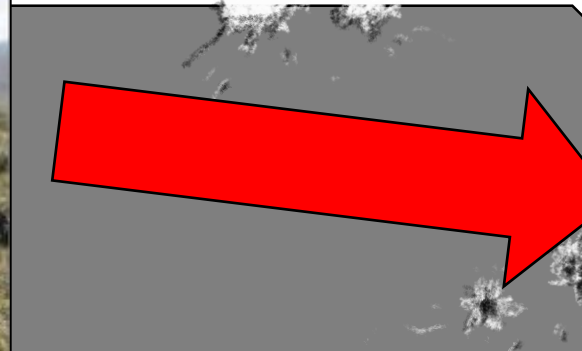
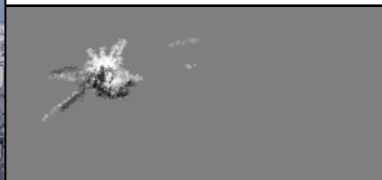
“Assess the ability of COTS urban wargames to meet Dstl *analytical* manual urban wargame requirements, and to recommend the next steps for developing a manual urban wargame which Dstl computer simulations will use” [more of that in a minute]

[My aim is to briefly chat about how that went]

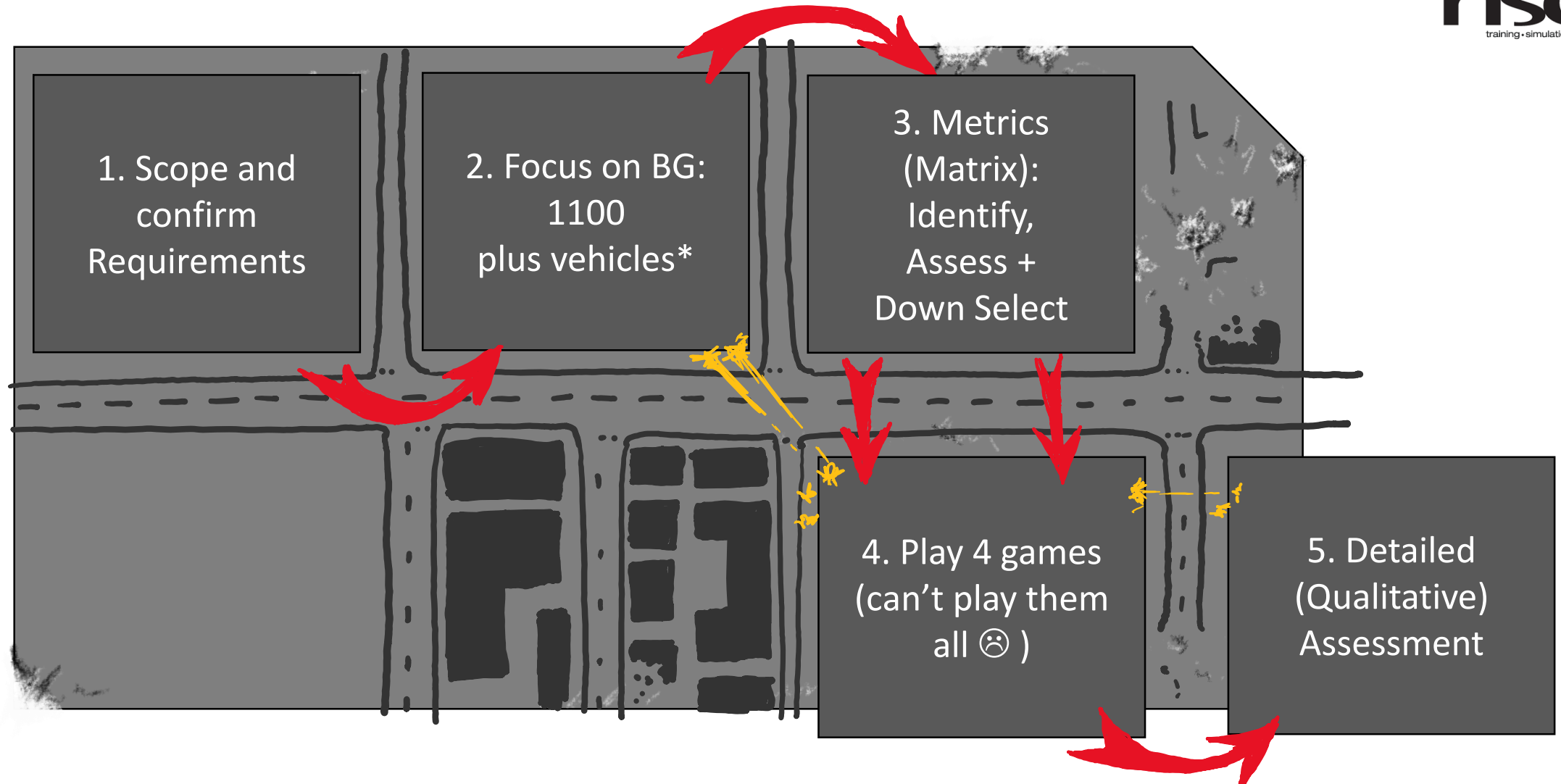
Spoilers

- No single COTS product meets the requirement
- Analytical requirement different:
 - Evidence Framework Assessment
 - Manual into constructive simulation
- Few Urban games available- because urban is hard
- BUT a great deal of useful commercial best practise
 - Good design is good design...

Study Need



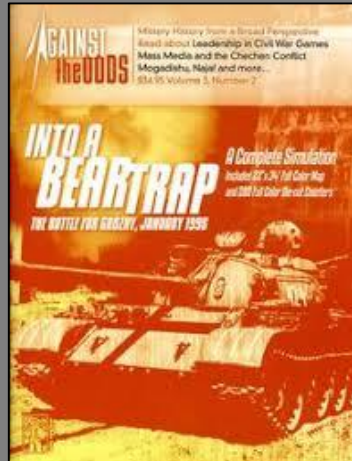
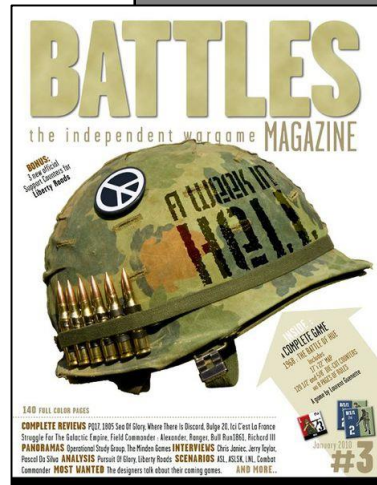
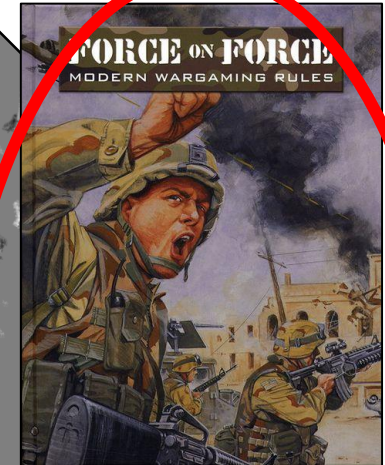
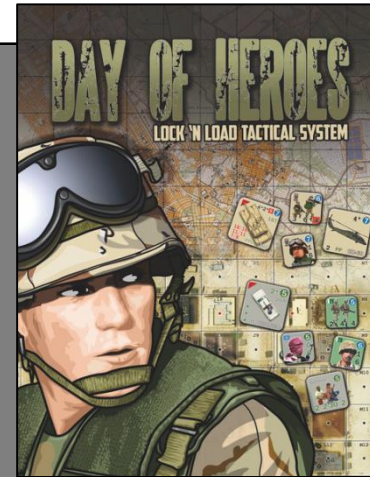
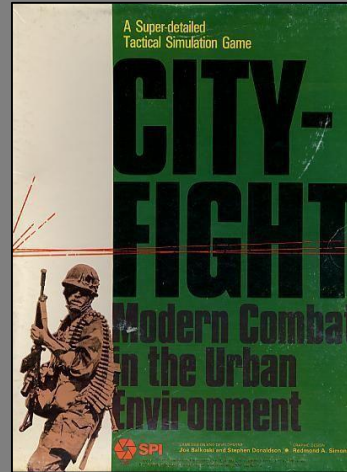
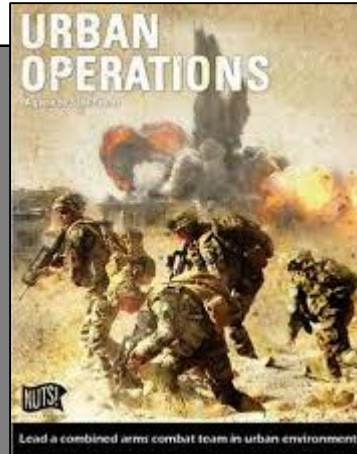
Method



Requirements



Candidates



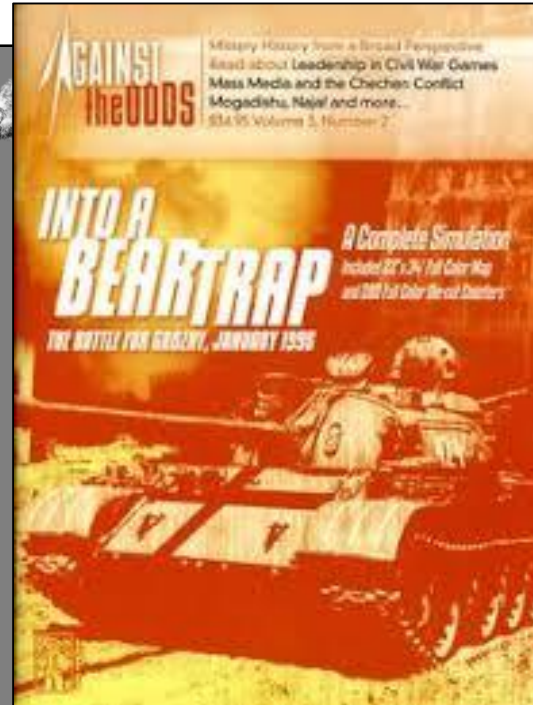
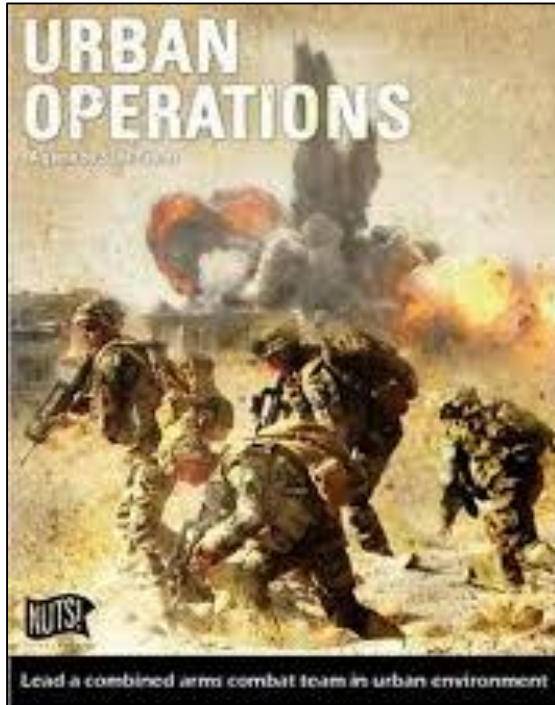
Matrix

Game	Individual Unit	CAM	ISTAR LoS	FoW/ Closed	C2	CEMA	Levels +UTZ	Dest. Bldg	Spec Wpns	CSS	CIV/ Other	Obs.
Urban Operations	Squad		Inc Day+ Night	Blocks and dummies	Command and limited activation ability		Upper+ Lower only Tunnels		No Thermobaric (TB) CBRN	CSS as single 'CE' value CSS units present		Barricades Mines IED TIC/TIM Breaching Wrecks
Lock and Load-Day of Heroes	Squad		Inc Day+ Night	Limited to gaining LoS +stacking	Comds, Activation, Command Points (CPs)		Upper+ Lower only Tunnels		No TB	Ltd to ATGW depletion		
Phantom Fury	Squad		Inc Day+ Night No LoS	'Suspect' markers and stacking	Comds and activations		Roofs, 'Top down' and 'Bottom up' assaults No tunnels		No TB	Ltd to simplistic ammo resupply		IED and ruins and breaching only
A Week in Hell	Platoon	Inf and Avn (SH) only	Inc Day+ Night	Infiltrate (Night) Random NVA units	Comds, CPs Urban C2 issues		Within engagement rules Bridges		Teargas No TB	Convoys, wounded + abstracted CP 'uplift'		
Into a Bear Trap	Platoon	Limited Air/Avn	Inc Day+ Night	Stacking: inspected if in LoS	Comds, CP+ Activation		Upper+ Lower only Intra- bldg. engagement		TB		HVT/ViP No Civilians	Barricades

More Matrix

Game	Individual Unit	CAM	ISTAR LoS	FoW/ Closed	C2	CEMA	Levels +UTZ	Dest. Bldg	Spec Wpns	CSS	CIV/ Other	Obs.
Force on Force	Individual		Inc Day+Night Limited Hidden Mov. Obscurants	Some dummy counters	Activation and command distance	Jamming and Direction Finding	Buildings actual models Bldg robustness represented			Optional representation CasEvac detailed representation	Optional play rules for Civ/factions	Barricades, mines, IED
DropZone Commander	Squad	Represents aviation in urban	Obscurants	Limited to gaining LoS	Activation and command distance	Jamming	Buildings actual models Bldg robustness represented		Sci-Fi weapons: mod required		Civ/factions can be represented	Obstacles only
We are Coming Nineveh!	BG	Capability cards	No LoS (scale prevents this)	Blocks	High Level	SIGINT		Scale abstracts this		Heavily abstracted		Abstracted
CityFight	Squad		Inc Day+ Night, Weather	Closed	Comds and Aps (CPs)		Detailed, including 'fire up and down' rules		TB	Ammo and Cas	Police and 'Irregulars'	Barricades Mines Breaching Wrecks
Berlin- Red Victory	Squad/ Platoon	Number of 'off board' capabilities: Arty and Air	Day/ Night and Smoke	Limited; Blank + dummy counters	Command Influence, morale and C2		Building levels & terrain contours Limited tunnels	Destructible buildings and rubble	Provides rules for flamethrowers, satchel charges etc	No CSS representation	Lacks civilian play	Barricades Mines Ditches etc

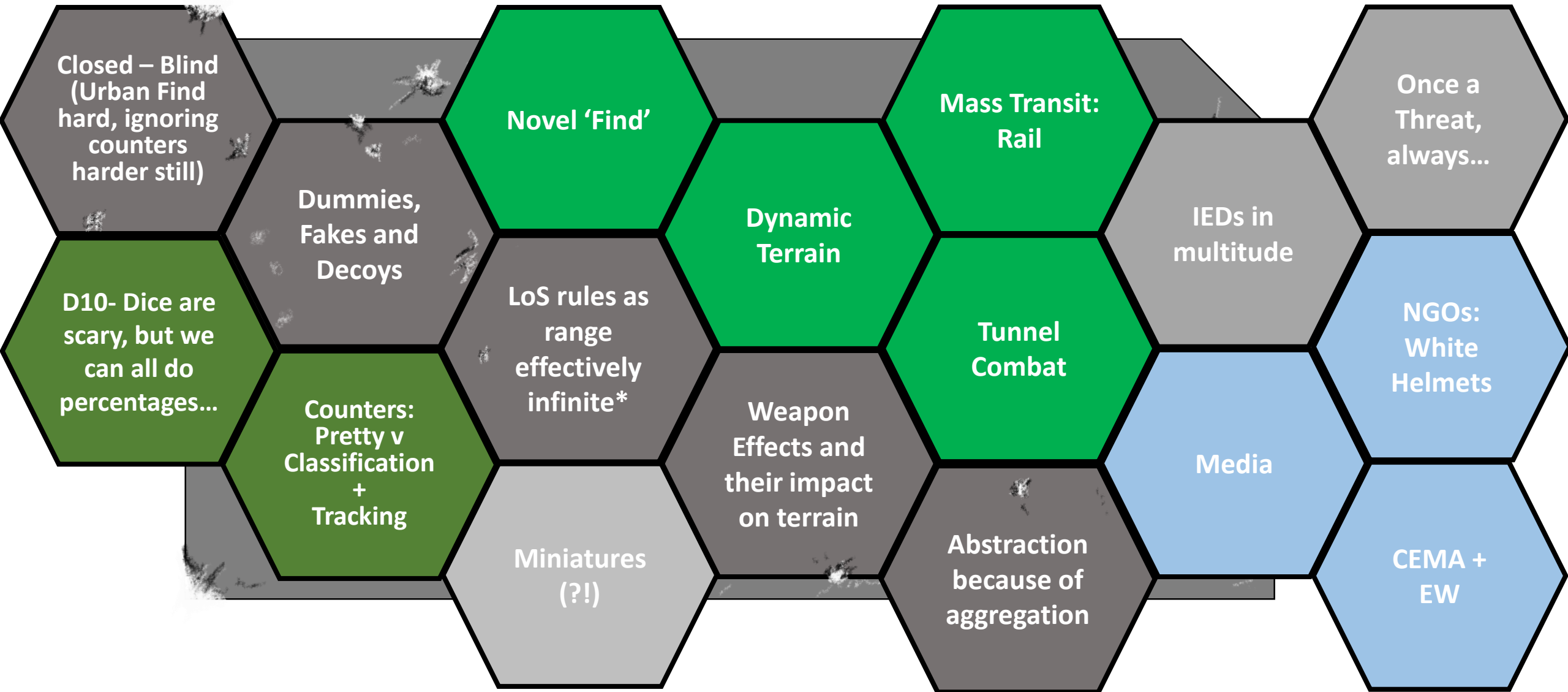
Playtest



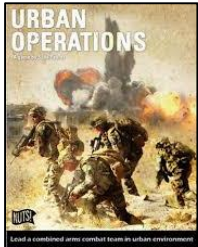
Connections
Competition:
'We Are Coming
Nineveh!'
Box Art...



Refine by Assessment



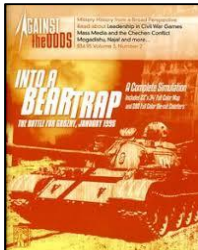
And?



- ✓ Good Coy+ representation, ticks nearly all elements, uplift to BG with wrap potential
- ✗ No CEMA, terrain would need a redesign and additional rules for upscale



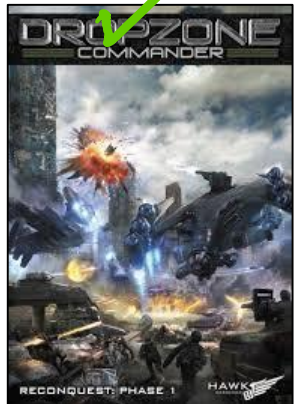
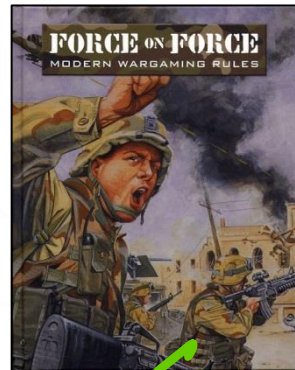
- ✓ Dynamic and flexible (scalable) rules
- ✗ Rules and mechanics would need a lot of modification to modernise



- ✓ Specialist weapons and pop up representative insurgent mechanism
- ✗ Mechanism specific to this battle, buildings cannot be 'rubblised'

WACN

- ✓ Operational level, including elements of CEMA (SIGINT)
- ✗ Scale out of scope, BG interactions aggregated: one to watch for Bde +



Insights

- **None of them exactly do what we want to do:**
Requirements need them to do quite a lot
'Dull' stuff like time to actually clear, or logistics, not priority
- **Very few 'modern' (contemporary) manual wargames at BG scale:**
World War Two hugely popular
Conflicts where you know how it went, and so interactions not classified
- **Representing 3D and 'deformable' terrain:**
Makes tracking harder as the board gets busy
- **Commercial Presentation an asset:**
Clear counters and maps ideal for tracking and recording
- **Higher representation requirements:**
Longer and more complex: not necessarily bad, although resources limited

Analysis is Different (but..)

- Evidence Framework: important decisions made on the outcome
- Manual feeding into constructive simulation
- Hiding classified data
- Lots of stuff to represent (buzzword bingo):
 - Cyber, Hybrid, Peer, 3D, NGO, IoT, LoS, AFV, Med, CSS
 - Things we may want to have [never, *ever* giant walking robots]
 - Battlegroup not a 'popular' scale (squad or BG+)
- BUT:
 - Tracking events smoothly is the same
 - Generating representative interactions, outcome and environment
 - Good design = engaging = engagement = 'better' evidence

QUESTIONS?

Specific Speaker Trigger Warnings (SSTW) as follows:



Did/do you have a favourite game?



'Better' evidence indeed- can you be more precise?



Tanks/Tanks in Urban/Walking Robots

